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Turning Around Failure: System Triage  
for Severely Under-Prepared Adults in  
Higher Education



**Jam  
Report**

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# Turning Around Failure: System Triage for Severely Under-Prepared Adults in Higher Education

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## I. Introduction

In late June 2011, the Lumina Foundation held a convening: Developmental Education Strategies for Success. Representatives from over 30 programs, research organizations, institutions, and states working to improve the delivery and success of developmental education, along with five other foundations that are providing resources and leadership around the issue, participated. Convening participants Knowledge in the Public Interest, the Education Commission of the States, and Jobs for the Future heard a pressing need among participants the need to better understand and address systemic barriers to college success for the nation's most underprepared students. The three organizations moved quickly to get a handle on the contours of the issue from a diverse group of stakeholders to discuss: Understanding the Challenge: Who are the Low Level Learners?; Institutional Policy and Processes: Triage for Low Level Learners; Getting it Done: 180 Day Action Agenda; Pedagogy and Curriculum; and State and Federal Policies that Facilitate Success for Low Level Learners.

Knowledge in the Public Interest, Getting Past Go, and Jobs for the Future organized **The Jam on Turning Around Failure: System Triage for Severely Under-Prepared Adults in Higher Education**, which took place on August 4, 2011. The Jam focused on soliciting ideas and sharing resources among a range of participants and viewpoints on how to first understand and address the needs of those students who are assessed at the lowest academic levels.

Two hundred and seventy five (275) people completed the pre-jam survey. Jam participants included a diverse group of 151 registrants from 32 states and the District of Columbia. Community college presidents, full-time and adjunct faculty, college staff, public officials, foundation program officers, policy researchers and advocates participated in five discussion threads moderated by 23 expert moderators (see Appendix E). According to the Post-Jam survey, between 75% and 100% of respondents thought the Jam was effective or highly effective in all areas. Many noted that they intend to make concrete changes in the next 180 days based on the discussions, including: looking at current assessment tools, using new teaching and advising strategies, and pursuing new connections that resulted from the Jam (see Appendix C). Respondents identified 32 "go-to" resources relevant to developmental and adult education (see Appendix D).

In this Executive Summary, we highlight the significant findings of the Jam. The findings are based upon the analysis of all 481 Jam discussion posts as well the analysis of both pre- and post-Jam surveys (Appendices A, B, and C). The Jam was designed, supported and analyzed by Knowledge in the Public Interest, for the Getting Past Go initiative of the Education Commission of the States and funded through the Lumina Foundation. KPI's team included: Rachel Verni the primary analyst and author of this report; Dr. Brett Stout, Dr. Valerie Futch, and Lisa Levinson conducted the pre- and post jam analysis.

We hope that the Jam and this analysis will make a contribution to the conversation about system triage for the most underprepared students. We are certain that a large network of small acts can move the agenda more rapidly than trying to galvanize a single effort. We hope you hear your voice in this report and will take at least one action that changes a part of your system.

Diana D. Woolis *and* Susan G. Restler  
Knowledge in the Public Interest Co-Founders

Bruce Vandal, Getting Past Go  
Lara Couturier, Jobs for the Future

## II. Executive Summary

Jam participants, implicitly and explicitly, assert that it is eminently feasible for a significant part of the low-level learner population to move to college or workforce readiness in a reasonable period of time. This report presents the domains in which educators must come together to tackle the issue of low-level learner success.

***Assorted definitions of who constitutes the low-level learner population prevent streamlined tactics for delivering optimal services.*** An underlying issue is that we do not fully understand who low-level learners are, why they are considered low-level learners, and how many there are to serve. ***Lacking a single definition hinders the ability to establish proper assessment strategies and specific cut scores within institutions. Students are often placed haphazardly, depending on factors such as their state and the college where they tested.*** While there are clearly some students, because of profound physical or mental disability, who are not likely to be successful in postsecondary education, the real question is, what can be done to serve those low-level learners that have the capacity to succeed? A substantial percentage of the low-level learner population is not disabled and can be effectively prepared for college and/or the workforce in a reasonable period of time; it is imperative to find ways to identify the low-level learners that we can serve and expose them to the best teaching and learning practices to make success a reality. Schools and agencies must be cautious when categorizing students as low-level learners, especially when working toward securing state or federal funding for program and testing policies; shared language promises to provide a more robust foundation on which to obtain financial support.

***Comprehensive strategies that combine both academic and social supports for students are key. Setting a “floor” for remedial education is easier said than done and is insufficient as a sole measure of competence and need.*** Using a “floor” appears to be of value if it is one component of holistic diagnostic and assessment processes. The complexity of students’ lives demands acknowledgement of the personal, social, economic, and cultural factors that shape pathways to success in addition to academic factors. Severely underprepared students include those who are socially and emotionally underprepared. Supporting wraparound services for academic as well as non-academic aspects of the educational experience seems to lead to persistence and retention. And being mindful of potential hurdles, such as lack of confidence and confusion within the system, is essential. Those colleges that meet with success counsel students on their options and refer them to the best opportunities and services possible to support their achievement.

***Aggressively tackling reading skills may be the first step to improving outcomes for underprepared students.*** Reading provides a robust foundation on which to hone writing and math abilities for low-level learners and reading assessment processes are central to determining potential success in remedial education. ***Educators and administrators should consider using reading as a central measure of potential success and build interventions around basic literacy as a tool for moving students into remedial education.***

***Leadership and alignment across agencies, programs, and legislators is essential for the most advantageous learner outcomes.*** State and system leaders do not prioritize low-level learners. ***All parties need to face the issue holistically and communally, adopting a sense of mutual responsibility for the success of these students.*** Alignment is key because at this moment, across a large swathe of the United States, programs and institutions are operating in competition and sub-optimizing student success. Beyond ABE and developmental education alignment, other programs such as workforce training, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and programs that focus on transitioning people into the workforce must be woven together in a coordinated strategy for the best return on investment. Governors and legislatures need to own the problem as they are well positioned to make alignment come to fruition.

### III. Overview of Report

With input from a variety of educators, administrators, and program directors across the country, the five discussion threads in the Jam generated rich conversation and clustered around six major themes. The overarching themes rest on fundamental action imperatives that serve to guide instructors, administrators, and legislators invested in student success, and are nested within each theme. A number of the concerns that surfaced in the Jam point to long-standing challenges, but the discussions also introduced new insights, rising above familiar frictions and policy barriers to focus on the learner in identifying strategies for success. The table below outlines the predominant themes in the Jam, broken down into sub-themes running through participant comments. In addition to the ideas collected through the Jam exchange, participants posted a substantial number of resources, models, pilots, and best practices that offer examples of alignment in practice (see Appendix D).

<b>Re-imagining Diagnostic &amp; Assessment Processes</b>	<b>Integrating Context &amp; Encouraging Students through Personal Connection</b>	<b>Aligning Supports to Improve Learner Outcomes</b>	<b>Shifting the Focus: A Forward-Looking Approach</b>	<b>Envisioning New Pedagogy &amp; Practice</b>
Distinguishing Subject Areas – Reading is Key	Building Competence through Confidence	Leadership is Essential for Effective Collaboration	From the GED to College- and Career-Readiness	Reflecting on Educators’ Best Practices
Moving from a “floor” to a Holistic Approach	Tackling the Issue from Multiple Angles	Barriers of State and Federal Policies & Programs	Attention to Career Exploration & Work Experience	Innovative Teaching Strategies & Structures
		Increasing Communication among Stakeholders		Engaging Students through Active Learning
		Spurring Creativity through Faculty Empowerment & Collaboration		Embracing Technology

## IV. Findings

### 1) DEFINING THE POPULATION: WHO IS THE LOW-LEVEL LEARNER?

Unpacking the term low-level learner is a necessary starting point from which to identify aims and practices for serving those adult learners who are navigating various systems in the pathway toward college. At present, we do not have a clear scope of the problem, which is necessary to making it difficult to effectively identify the population and build effectual services. Assorted agencies and schools employ the term low-level learner, but draw on distinct meanings that often eclipse the full spectrum of students and their unique abilities. Whereas some institutions define low-level learners as those whose placement scores put them three or more levels below college level, others say this term represents students who score below 13 on the ACT, or those below a seventh-grade reading level. There is a critical distinction between those who test poorly and those with severe disabilities, a demarcation with profound implications in designing delivery models. Most importantly, these markers do not capture the full essence of a student's abilities and motivation to succeed.

- “I feel that the definition of low-level learners goes beyond a standardized test score (and that's my primary work!). These learners lack the “how to learn” skills such as meta-cognitive skills (how to organize time, focus on a topic, break a problem into steps, etc.) and suffer from lack of opportunity, attention, and lack of background knowledge.” (POSEY)

Another key distinction in discussing low-level learners concerns students' fluency in the English language and their native language. English language learners need instruction that is more focused on English language fluency, as opposed to fluent speakers who need attention with respect to building academic literacy. Several participants argued that it might be useful to incorporate a diagnostic component that directly assesses one's English literacy level to better place these students in the ideal academic setting.

- “On the ESL side, I think that the practitioners have been much more explicit and consistent about the kinds of problems that different students have. For students at the introductory and intermediate levels of foreign language acquisition, there have always been pretty effective workbooks that allow them to place grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure, which is why technologies for that are fairly advanced too.” (NENON)

Students across the diagnostic categories can most often succeed; however, they must have the optimal support systems in place to meet their individual needs.

- “I don't like the term ‘low level learner’ either, since it seems to imply that the individual has a low level of ability to learn. I think the key is to not put a ‘low level’ label on the learner. They are under-served and under-prepared, but not under-able to achieve levels of preparedness required for college success.” (CONGER)

Most notably, when classified as severely underprepared, it is crucial that agencies and institutions acknowledge the social and emotional “under-preparedness” that contributes to that categorization, as it feeds into the process of targeting ideal interventions.

It is imperative that agencies, institutions, and funders are deliberate when using terms such as low-level learner in their efforts to design learning environments for adult learners, as it encompasses a range of individual needs and skill sets. Moreover, labeling students as such can underestimate their

potential for success and mistakenly place them in settings that stifle their potential. A related finding from the pre-Jam qualitative survey results shows that many participants feel compelled to remove the stigma attached to learners in developmental education; emphasizing respect and the potential of adult learners necessarily influences how the various stakeholders design and deliver services.

- “The danger of classifying this group of students as ‘low-level,’ is that we design ‘low-level’ learning environments for them and deny them access to the kinds of challenging curricula where their under-developed capacities could flourish.” (HERN)

Pausing to reflect on who falls under the category low-level learner helps ensure students receive the services suited to them; and these efforts should be driven by a shared goal of college- and career-readiness.

## 2) RE-IMAGINING DIAGNOSTIC AND ASSESSMENT PROCESSES

One of the major challenges in utilizing a consistent definition for low-level learners stems from the assessment tools used to assess and place adult learners. Current assessment strategies are often norm-referenced, rather than criterion-referenced, rendering instructors unable to gauge how far the student is from being college-ready, which is the ultimate aim. The assessment tools that agencies and schools rely on are perceived as insufficient because a single test score cannot meet the task at hand; they cannot measure the specific competencies that students are lacking or possess, preventing a precise diagnosis of what they need. As a result, students must endure courses that may or may not address their specific needs.

Acknowledging the assorted perspectives on low-level learners, participants consistently questioned existing assessments. Most often the diagnostic strategies currently in place were criticized for being too narrowly focused on isolated scores and academic markers, and consequently, providing misleading student profiles. The Jam conversations echoed pre-Jam survey results, which revealed that a majority of respondents thought that developing improved assessments is one of the most important issues to address. This was particularly pronounced among policymakers, all of whom categorized the issue as most important, or important, to strengthen. And only a small percentage (ranging from 4-13%) ranked the issue of assessment data as “not very or at all important to strengthen” across the various groups of participants.

### *Distinguishing Subject Areas – Reading is Key*

One piece of the puzzle, as expressed by a myriad of participants, is to understand the distinctions between math, reading, and writing. The three subject areas factor into current diagnostic approaches, but represent unique skill sets and diagnostic tools do not capture each piece as effectively as educators see fit. Participants argued that, while the focal point is often on math, reading level is a key indicator of student potential to succeed among low-level and severely underprepared learners. Because these subjects address separate content areas and ways of thinking, they demand separate methods for diagnosis and assessment.

- “Diagnostic information provides faculty with the ability to target instruction to particular areas, and this allows for the development of modularized approaches to mathematics instruction as will be implemented system-wide in Virginia. The use of diagnostics in English composition, reading, and ESL is much less clear to me. There seems to be some support for using diagnostic information to do a similarly targeted modularized approach to instruction in these areas, but in conversations with English/ESL faculty, I

don't get the feeling they think that diagnostics are as important as they are for mathematics faculty." (LIEU)

- "I am also convinced that reading is at the core of everything. If one cannot read or if one has not developed the awareness that reading is key to everything...then the student whose test scores indicate a potential for lack of success will have even more difficulty in any course regardless of that level. The students whom I see as severely underprepared have not been afforded the experiences that expose them to appropriate learning strategies or opportunities to read a wide range of materials." (GRIMES)

Time and again, participants maintained that reading is fundamental to successful learning, providing a robust foundation on which to advance in other academic subject areas, including writing and math.

### ***Moving from a "Floor" to a Holistic Approach***

An equally important piece of the diagnostic puzzle revolves around the notion of a "floor." A pre-Jam survey indicated that roughly 70% of respondents were in favor of a "floor" for remedial education, below which students are assigned to alternative educational options such as adult basic education. The data suggested that policymakers, instructors, and administrators most strongly supported a "floor" (ranging from 69-74%). However, within the context of the Jam, many participants expressed surprise and hesitance at adopting this stance.

- "70% of our survey participants said they think there should be a floor for developmental education – students scoring below which would be assigned to alternatives. I was so surprised by this. If there is one thing we know, it's that a single test score is not that useful...Setting a floor would also be a lengthy, contentious process that could eat up years of political attention and will. In the meantime, delivery wouldn't be changing." (COUTURIER)
- "A single score, without recognizing the other credentials of a student...can track many students into the wrong sequence of courses...[r]eally understanding who the student is and taking a more diagnostic approach would eliminate some of the hurdles students face in developmental education, especially for non-traditional adult students who may bring a unique set of skills that aren't recognized in a single test." (HELMCAMP)

In addition to the difficulty of agreeing upon a set cut-off score, participants felt that a "floor" approach is misleading when taken in isolation; using a single assessment score risks denying access to those with the potential to succeed in developmental education classes. Similarly, qualitative responses from the pre-Jam survey indicated that those who did not support a "floor" expressed concern over the psychological and developmental experience of the student.

Widening the lens to look beyond student scores, participants promoted the idea of identifying "how to learn" skills, including meta-cognitive skills and lack of opportunity.

- "Perhaps what we need is a diagnostic that tells us more about the student and less about the skills, to help us better determine fast and slow learners, open and closed mindsets, educated and never-taught, etc." (MCKUSICK)

Rather than dismiss the utility of a "floor" altogether, some participants endorsed the notion of using a cut score as a stepping-stone toward successful placement. Instead of automatically placing

students in developmental education courses as a result of a low assessment score, students could be referred to counselors who conduct a short interview to assess students' needs that may not have been captured by the diagnostic tool.

- “I think that a floor for initial screening is a good idea...[H]owever, that floor should not be a hard and fast way of excluding students. It should be a trigger that would involve additional measures to indicate likelihood of success before a final admissions decision and that also, in the case of students who are admitted to a program, indicate what kinds of support that student will need based on the kind of learner (adult vs. traditional, disabilities, ESL, etc.) and the kinds of challenges that student faces and his or her strengths. It should include not just yes/no admissions decisions, but prescribed support and tracking of success to help refine those decisions and improve the support systems.” (NENON)

Participants offered numerous proposals for re-thinking assessment processes, such as introducing a writing assignment on the first day of class that allow instructors to effectively determine if students are under-prepared for the course. The assessment would allow the instructor to tailor their teaching for a particular student.

Similarly, others discussed ways of enmeshing diagnostic tools within more comprehensive assessment processes, to gain a deeper sense of an individual's ability in order to ascertain the best strategy for meeting their needs.

- “I am wondering if a reading/writing assessment might be designed so that a more authentic assessment might be generated for placement upon intake? The common reader selection would be available for all students before they entered the university. Those students who must be assessed would be informed that determinations about placement/learning support for writing/reading would be based on their response to this assessment. This assessment would involve both writing and reading faculty, but it might result in a reading/writing placement result based on an authentic task.” (GRIMES)

Several participants pointed out that certain testing companies offer non-cognitive assessments to measure a student's ability to persevere. Ultimately, the assessment processes need to better diagnose both ability and motivation as part of a more holistic approach to understanding a student's skills, educational needs, and potential for success.

### **3) INTEGRATING CONTEXT AND ENCOURAGING STUDENTS THROUGH PERSONAL CONNECTION**

#### ***Building Competence through Confidence***

Early and continuing interventions addressing both academic and non-academic hurdles were deemed invaluable in student persistence and success. Participants insisted on more comprehensive intake processes that include attention to social, economic, and emotional issues that threaten to impede student success. A marked theme infused throughout the Jam was around the topic of self-efficacy among students. Numerous comments urged educators and policymakers to expect more, rather than less, from motivated students.

- “In my experiences in working with adult literacy learners...for those who lack basic skills, who lack a GED or just got one, school is scary, faceless,

and unbelievably intimidating. Colleges, even technical schools are more so. School is where this person feels least powerful, least competent, and most 'at risk' for failure." (THOMPSON)

Many participants posited that a fatalistic mentality is prevalent among these learners and that countless students feel overwhelmed trying to navigate the educational system, therefore significantly hindering success.

- "So often, my GED graduates come to see me and they are totally flustered because they did not understand their advisors. Advisors, like all of us, tend to routinize our procedures and we forget that the newcomers are new to this and they need a little time to process the information so they don't get lost in the system or worse, never complete their enrollment." (DANIELS)

Putting the responsibility of education back in students' hands ensures self-confidence, assuming they are connected to the necessary support systems that are in place.

- "The biggest 'fix' I have been able to find is the ability to be frank with students and put the situation back into their hands. Once they realize THEY are responsible for their education and performances in a class, they start to also discover ways to effectively change their personal situations or behavior or attendance issues to ensure their academic performance improves." (KNIGHT)

Instilling confidence in students who have been labeled as academically struggling is a necessary piece of efficient student support.

### ***Tackling the Issue from Multiple Angles***

Circumventing issues of learned helplessness among adult learners is vital for students to traverse the path to success. Helping adult learners both inside and outside of the classroom demands a coordinated and holistic approach that meets both academic and non-academic needs. Under the umbrella of wraparound services, participants outlined strategies for ushering students on the pathway to success by providing assistance from multiple angles.

- "We are identifying first-year students and placing them in a 'learning community' where they take a basic skills English course with a corresponding mandatory tutoring session after each course combined with a counseling course to help provide them with the necessary student services that the college provides." (McGRATH)

Intrusive advising, connecting students to housing and transportation services, offering ongoing support, and counseling must go hand in hand with academic skills preparation. Relying on the benefits of human connection, educators stressed implementing personal tactics for empowering and encouraging students who may feel lost in the system or deflated when grappling with personal issues.

- "Because so many of these students are facing issues outside the classroom that severely interfere with their performance, and add to this the fact that too many of them would not normally seek outside help, introducing myself and letting them see that I am a regular person, who truly cares about their success makes it a bit easier for them to approach me if the need arises." (KNIGHT)

Continual assistance as students move through the system can take many forms. One suggestion was to have students who are placed in developmental education meet with a counselor prior to registration; they can have the freedom to drop any classes but cannot add additional courses without first obtaining a counselor's consent. This structure ensures close attention to a student's course load and promises to facilitate the easiest route to academic completion.

A nuanced approach to student services is challenging, in terms of time and resources, but not impossible. Not surprisingly, participants noted the dearth of financial and temporal resources available for more comprehensive services; however, the discussions elicited a number of potential strategies for overcoming this hurdle.

Capitalizing on the various services and offices invested in student success, institutions can craft spaces in which learning communities and support systems thrive. For instance, several participants contemplated requiring first-year students to have mandatory tutoring sessions as a complement to basic skills coursework.

Others brainstormed potential resources within their own institutions that could expand student support services. For instance, participants considered the possibility of tutoring and mentoring by graduate students receiving work-study assignments.

- “Graduate students in counseling, community college affairs, higher education administration and other fields may benefit from receiving work study appointments to help mentor adults that enter community colleges. With institutions receiving financial aid from the federal government, why not use those funds to give graduate students contextualized experience and to shore up some of the points where institutions cannot or will not fund additional counseling positions?” (SMITH)

Participants recognized that time and money were significant challenges in moving toward a more holistic approach to addressing low-level learners' needs, but actively collaborated to generate innovative strategies for developing the comprehensive services they feel students desperately need.

#### 4) ALIGNING SUPPORTS TO IMPROVE LEARNER OUTCOMES

Clearly, a reconfiguration of intake processes, bolstered by comprehensive support services, is a critical task in improving outcomes for low-level learners. This course of action requires efficient and organized communication and collaboration. Aligning faculty, college administration, and state, federal and funding agencies, solidifies a foundation on which students can reach their goals. The Jam conversations mimicked pre-Jam survey results, which demonstrated that collaborating with other systems was considered the most important, or important area, to strengthen; only 8% of all respondents categorized this category as “not very important to strengthen.” This was especially pronounced among funders and consultants, who all ranked collaboration as highly important to address.

- “How do we get state policy leaders to establish a culture to bring ABE, WIA, developmental education, K-12, and post-secondary education to the same table when we are scattered in so many ways?” (BERRYMAN)

#### *Leadership is Essential for Effective Collaboration*

A tight team effort is integral to student success and must rely on enhanced communication and collaboration on multiple levels. Disparate priorities and language abound across state, federal, and institutional levels, hindering effective collaboration and student success. Although the conversation

should include voices from all aspects of the system, leadership and financial support from state and federal parties must chart the course. Along with heightened leadership, the pre-Jam survey indicated that a majority of participants thought state and federal funding mandates represented strong barriers to serving those most in need of remediation services; accordingly, heightened leadership must be effectively coordinated with funding structures to produce successful outcomes.

- “There needs to be greater clarity both for the student and among ABE, WIA, developmental education about what they have to offer and what they are best equipped to address...I think leadership from governors and legislatures about how to serve these students would be very helpful to developing a better system. Dollars attached to better coordination and collaboration would be key.” (VANDAL)
- “Regionalization...has led to exciting and creative thinking in my part of the state [Michigan]...I anticipate we will cut costs by non-duplication of services, and we will modify our roles so that we, as a region, can become more efficient and coordinated, leading to serving more students more effectively without increasing costs. We will be able to refer students smoothly from one program to another, from Adult Education to Community college, and, since we will be funded as a group, there should be no competition for the students...As more people learn more about the ‘other,’ opportunities for cooperation – and cost savings – will present themselves.” (SPOELMAN)

Drawing on shared language and mutually established goals provides the scaffolding for optimal delivery structures.

- “Communication is important – inside and outside the institution. Practitioners should engage both institutional and state/system leaders. All the while, it is important to think about the expectations that each set of leaders has for low-level learning programming. Departments are key advocates for developmental education. Departments are the busy bees – as institutional leaders and practitioners, we need to develop both innovative programming and thoughtful advocates on the issue of low-level learning. They can be found among the faculty. Building off the first two takeaways, mismatch of expectations between what can be done and what should be done. All too often, it is easier to think in the current context, rather than to think about how the current reality of governance, instruction and funding can be modified to fit the academic and social challenges of low-level learners.” (SMITH)

Lamenting the disjunction among ABE, WIA, K-12, GED, post-secondary institutions and developmental education programs, participants argued that state and system leaders fail to prioritize low-level learners. Multiple agencies take responsibility for them, but a lack of synergy means ineffective results. Nevertheless, promising alliances have led to productive configurations and serve as useful models for moving forward.

- “All 23 of our Community Colleges are involved in ABE-college partnership project to some extent. We are stressing the concept that these referred students should be co-owned by the ABE and college. Those emerging partnerships that appear to be developing particularly strong partnerships generally have firm referral policies, designate a staff member (either ABE or

college) to help referred students transition to ABE and back to college, engage in mutual planning between ABE staff and college faculty, treat referred students as a cohort, provide ABE class space at the college, offer students some college privileges, and have strong support at some level of the college administration.” (SCHEID)

A coordinated strategy among the various parties has the potential to yield academic success. The pre-Jam survey found that 95% of respondents, most notably policymakers, funders, and consultants, felt that this was highly important in establishing successful services. Participants reported that students feel more support when agencies and schools are connected.

- “We approached the various agencies that work with the students and put together a ‘Collaboration for Success’ committee. The end result was a change of policy and procedures within the individual organizations and the school system that increased student retention and completion significantly. One place to start is with the support systems for your low-level learners. If they are agency connected that is where you best student advocates are located. The students reported that they felt more support having the agencies and school connected. They felt that the educational institution had more of a buy-in to their success if their support agencies were ‘talking amongst themselves’ on the student’s behalf...Additionally, the students saw that the school and agencies handled issues related to learning, accommodations and payments that had been significantly slowing down their ability to full participate in classes.” (MATUSOW)

### ***BARRIERS OF STATE AND FEDERAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMS***

A substantive obstacle centers on the barriers posed by state and federal policies and programs. Variations across states and institutions, and the threat of financial cuts throughout, encumber the ability to develop effective and timely educational supports.

- “In Maine, the GED test is free. In the past the Legislature had picked up the bill. With changes to a more ‘market-driven’ model, it remains to be seen if the state can afford to continue this practice. Given the economic status of many of our customers this could be a real blow to students.” (MCINTIRE)
- “As a member of the [Tennessee] Developmental Redesign Task Force, we had many discussions as to how we can address the federal financial aid guidelines while supporting students who need more than a review of less than high school competencies. Since federal guidelines do not allow the use of financial aid for ‘less than high school level’ – as defined by the governing agency of the state, our institutions must design interventions to support these students. They cannot award credit that uses federal financial aid.” (THOMASSON)

With ongoing threats to funding, such as Pell grants, educators and administrators worry that students will inevitably be shut out of possible educational opportunities. Educators must perpetually strategize to maneuver around such obstacles.

- “One other thing looming on the horizons is the cuts to Pell Grants. If there is likely to be less money going around, are we going to cut each student the

same or are we going to need to focus on specific sets of students where we think the payoff or the need is greatest? Expanding or keeping the same pool of persons in a program with less and less money is going to have everyone coming up short.” (NENON)

- “Funding is important because it reveals the priorities of state legislatures and/or post-secondary systems. A growing number of states/systems have identified that, on balance, older students and students of color complete postsecondary credentials than the overall college-enrolled population. Some have moved beyond awareness of this and piloted funding models that ‘give a little extra’ for persistence and completion for these learner populations. This investment can spur innovation not so much because of the funding but because of the realignment expectations.” (SMITH)
- “We have figured out about what scores on the GED test will equate to transitioning to college-ready (credit) courses, and incentivize students to get these scores on their GED tests (by paying for the cost of their testing if they are willing to study to ‘do well’ rather than just pass the GED tests).” (HARRIS)

### *Increasing Communication among Stakeholders*

A rich discussion ensued across the discussion threads around how to achieve synergy among agencies and institutions, such as putting ABE and Developmental Education under the same roof. Another suggestion was that states should manage their own ABE through post-secondary agencies. The pre-Jam survey results indicated that nearly half of all respondents thought the community college system should administer a state’s ABE system. This standpoint was most prevalent among instructors (59% of all instructor participants), administrators (48%), policymakers (50%), and consultants (54%). Notably, there was a marked difference between the aforementioned participants and funders, with the latter group suggesting that the Department of Education should administer a state’s ABE system (34%).

One participant shared an example of effective alignment:

- “At one of my community colleges, I managed the combined college-level learning center and also was director of the ABE/GED center located on our campus that served the community. When people came to the combined learning center, no one could easily detect who was in the Center working on what level of material. The ABE/GED and college tutors worked in a common area and shared access to computerized tutorials and other materials. We saw students work through the ABE/GED process, continue accessing services in the center for college courses and then graduate with an associate degree. This response works into the policy area about where to locate ABE/GED centers and their alignment with college learning centers.” (ARENDALE)

Fluidity across all levels of the educational process can facilitate wraparound student services. Participants articulated a number of wraparound services that have flourished, premised on flexible

and customizable models that accommodate individual student needs through the team efforts of multiple forces.

- “I run several ‘intrusive advising’ initiatives that enlist the help and participation of several other individuals/offices on our campus to make those programs effective...The faculty members in our department are also crucial to the success of our intrusive advising initiative because THEY alert me when they are concerned about students that need interventions. Our advising department is also crucial because I am allowed to sit in on their training to ensure that when I ‘advise’ students I am doing this correctly...I can also moderate between instructors and students when there are issues of attendance, performance, or behavior in class.” (KNIGHT)

Articulating goals and implementing coordinated efforts among agencies and educational institutions can also lead to more financially effective models. Mention of funding obstacles and limited resources was interspersed throughout the Jam, compelling participants to strategize time-efficient and cost-effective tactics for designing student services.

- “If ABE, developmental education programs, WIA programs could agree on a common set of competencies for college/work readiness, then we could develop multiple ways to deliver instruction outside of a course. The models could move from self-directed study, to tutoring, study groups, learning laboratories. If we could then find ways for students to demonstrate the competency, then students could receive acknowledgement of what they know on their transcript...and then students could have access to low or no cost opportunities to address their needs.” (VANDAL)

### ***Spurring Creativity through Faculty Empowerment and Collaboration***

Enhanced communication, improved collaboration, and sharing data enable faculty to continually evaluate best practices and “think outside of the box” to constantly improve. An underlying, yet significant, part of this process is empowering faculty by trusting them to know how to best instruct their students and granting them the flexibility to do so.

- “My hope is that we now have a framework that will encourage us at the institutional level and the specific faculties to look carefully at what we have been doing and see if we can’t find things that work better. If it is actually going to work, what we will need to do is bring together faculty from the areas to learn from each other and gain confidence that some changes really can make a difference. That’s very different from having a set of directives come in from a central office that they do not trust. Since the faculty are the ones who have to make it work, we need to find better ways to encourage them to try new things and provide support for them when they do it.” (NENON)

A re-evaluation of current approaches to student support entails risk-taking and faculty need institutional support to stretch their imagination.

- “[I]nstitutional practice could motivate faculty to give direct feedback to students, especially adult learners. CAEL supports the notion of instructor as ‘learning facilitator.’ That doesn’t mean the opposite is true: that content knowledge is not important. Rather, we should note the influence that faculty has as the first line of support and as a bridge to student services...[I]

nstitutions can be a facilitator too, by reshaping expectations for workload. Giving instructors more time to communicate expectations to students and receive feedback from them could impact instruction in ways that are powerful yet underemphasized.” (SMITH)

## 5) SHIFTING THE FOCUS: A FORWARD-LOOKING APPROACH

### *From the GED to College- and Career-Readiness*

The discussions consistently pointed to a shift in focus from a primary goal of obtaining the GED to college-readiness for adult learners. Adopting a forward-looking stance that moves beyond GED completion to college and career readiness was implicit throughout the Jam.

- “A one-size-fits-all approach doesn’t make sense considering that specific knowledge and skills are needed for different jobs. What we need are multiple pathway models that allow for on/off ramps at many levels. How can the GED (one test) successfully cover all the competencies that employers seek? Same question for all the different academic programs out there...we need a more customizable approach.” (REINERT)

This credential is often a stepping-stone for those who want to enter post-secondary education. Nevertheless, participants emphasized moving beyond a testing pass/fail mentality to a broader goal of preparing students for post-secondary education or employment. Various strategies for maximizing the GED preparatory practices and smoothing the transition to post-secondary education or career-related environments emerged in the Jam.

- “I run an Adult Education program that runs GED prep classes. We facilitate enrollment at our local community college for GED students BEFORE they have completed their GED. So, many students are studying to complete a test or, 2) they may have left to get their GED and also taking a class or two at the college. When a student is still enrolled in Adult Ed, we can provide the ‘wraparound’ that is often needed for students to be successful.” (HARRIS)

### *Attention to Career Exploration and Work Experience*

A recurring topic running through the Jam discussions was attention to career exploration, work experience, and career counseling. Contextualizing GED classroom work to a career appears to be quite successful and participants voiced positive experiences of contextualizing GED classroom work to careers. Similarly, the qualitative responses to the pre-Jam alluded to the importance of making class materials relevant to students’ lives. Jam participants also noted that schools consider career counseling a key core student service that must be implemented across programs.

- “[Students] have very messy lives that interfere and few back-up resources. The class we will now provide has integrated reading and writing and material is contextualized with a career ‘world of work’ focus. We just want to help these students find their way, whether it be continuing up into developmental education or becoming trained for a job in landscaping.” (McKUSICK)

Participants noted that ACE and Pearson are currently collaborating to introduce a GED in 2014 aligned with Common Core State Standards. As a result, the test would essentially serve as an assessment exam from high school as well as a college entrance exam. The links between

educational stakeholders in this endeavor encouraged participants to contemplate the possibility of combining the last two years of high school with the first two years of college.

- “Starting dual enrollment by the 11<sup>th</sup> grade helps students to get a realistic understanding of the academic and social/emotional demands of college while their executive functions in their brains are developing. Dual enrollment like it is used in Early Colleges is coupled with mandated support for the academics and college skills and has the potential to help students who come into high school below grade level in reading and math.” (CUNNINGHAM)

The pre-Jam survey results indicated that 44% of all respondents supported having students transition to credit course work upon graduating from ABE, as opposed to 22% in support of developmental education. (The support for transitioning to credit course work was especially pronounced among funders, although they represented the smallest sample within the larger group of survey participants.)

Within the Jam, some participants posited that early college high schools are a viable strategy; programs that accelerate students into higher education, in which they earn credit and obtain credentials quickly, offer an exceptional way for high school students to get ready for college by being immersed in it. Additionally, this solution can soften financial burdens by having students obtain some college credit while they are still officially in high school.

- “I think early college high schools are the way to go. I am less enthused about state based college preparation programs and more interested in programs that accelerate students into higher education, earning credit and getting a credential sooner. There is no better way to get ready for college than to do it. Throw in the potential savings from students getting some college out of the way in high school and it is a no-brainer. There are many models of early colleges that are working with ‘at-risk’ and first generation students that show great promise.” (VANDAL)

Casting a wide net to encompass the diversity of low-level learners, and simultaneously steering them toward college-readiness, allows for an appreciation of the multifarious experiences and skills users bring to the learning environment. Participants struggled to identify how best to entwine career experiences and aspirations with curriculum development. Many states have recognized the need for career and technical education programs and certificates, but are only now warming up to having industries help develop curriculum. Participants posited that systems and institutions should consider industry-recognized competencies when developing curricula.

Embracing the diverse work and life experiences of returning adult learners enriches the student experience for all, especially when students are awarded credit for past work experience. Participants asserted that awarding credit is the key to student persistence and urged for state and system willingness to support the formal acknowledgement of previous work experience.

## 6) ENVISIONING NEW PEDAGOGY AND PRACTICE

### *Reflecting on Educators’ Best Practices*

Within the realm of institutional policy and practices, participants engaged in a fruitful discussion around activity within the classroom and beyond. Re-directing the focus to the pedagogical capabilities of instructors and agencies, rather than “deficiencies” on the part of students, is essential.

- “I simply asked the question, ‘What if the thing that needed to be fixed was not any lack in the students, but rather the way they had been/were being taught?’. The point is, that it is a really simple, and phenomenally successful, approach based on two things: the way that humans actually learn and a willingness to abandon the deconstructivist, information-deposit model of teaching and learning...when we consider curriculum, the delivery method and the underlying ‘androgogy’ is significantly more important than content.” (SALYERS)

Participants reinforced the value of sharing best practices and resources to strengthen educators’ knowledge and expertise. Conversing with colleagues to make more consistent terminologies regarding competencies and objectives helps clarify opportunities for students and simultaneously fosters a sense of mutual support for faculty. The Jam discussions reaffirmed pre-Jam survey results, in which the majority of respondents pointed to the dissemination of best practices as the most important, or important, to strengthen (92%).

Participants encouraged the exchange of successful teaching tactics as a way of maximizing existing strengths and resources. Making class rubrics more systematic and explicit, for instance, enables transparency for both students and faculty across departments and programs.

- “As an Achieving the Dream pilot in Spring, 2009, our Transitional (Developmental) English instructors created a list of in-class interventions strategies that individuals were finding really worked with their students. After a few weeks of robust discussion, the chair compiled a list and distributed it to everyone – full and part-time instructors – and asked for each instructor to incorporate three strategies and document any out of class intervention with students...We have since scaled this up to Developmental Math and estimate over 5,000 students are benefitting from this ‘Embedded Interventions Project’.” (MILLER)

### *Innovative Teaching Strategies and Structures*

Appropriately assessing students was closely linked to a reconfiguration of instruction strategies and class composition. The Jam discussions built on pre-Jam survey results, which revealed that building faculty pedagogical skills is the most important factor to address in improving remediation services. Ninety-eight percent of all respondents marked this area as very important, or important, to tackle. Although it was most strongly endorsed by instructors and administrators, participants in all categories of respondents highlighted this area as important. Similarly, 94% of all pre-Jam survey respondents (most frequently, policymakers and funders) classified the development of effective curricula as one of the most important areas to strengthen.

The discussion threads were ripe with innovative ideas leading to creative and efficient teaching strategies. Short-term, cohort-based, intensive contextualized classes with computer support and educational assistants are considered central to a successful learning environment.

The introduction of modules rather than semester-long courses was repeatedly introduced as a strategy for accelerating academic advancement for low-level learners.

- “Jackson State took what had formerly been 3 developmental math courses and divided them into 12 modules. Students have more opportunities to experience success and to complete all their work more quickly. Each successfully completed module demonstrates mastery of the competencies within that module. Students are encouraged to complete as many modules

as possible in one semester. Many have completed all 12 modules (formerly 3 semesters' worth of coursework) in one semester.” (BASSETT)

Other places, such as Illinois, have also implemented a module approach where math department chairs have requested that faculty identify the competencies required for each course; based on their reports, the curriculum committee designed modules to tackle the fundamental learning objectives and help promote student advancement in a timely fashion.

Because research has shown that getting students into college-level courses quickly is critical to retention, time is of the essence in remedial coursework. Too often, participants complained, the focus is on remediation, preventing students from moving beyond basic learning skills and nourishing their critical thinking abilities.

- “In Tennessee, one of our most successful models for getting students through developmental education faster, increasing student retention, and improving success in college level courses is the Supplemental Learning Assistance model. Students are fast-tracked with the non-developmental education students into college level courses, but are required to attend a supplemental lab for 2 hours/week for ‘just-in-time’ remediation. This works well for students that are only one level below the developmental education cut score.” (BERRYMAN)

Another major innovation in curriculum design that many faculty endorsed is Universal Learning Design (ULD), which enhances access and success for all students (including low-level learners) when they enroll in credit courses. In this structure, faculty embed best practices into many of their first-year classes. For instance, instructors make PowerPoint slides available for everyone ahead of time, not just for students with visual impairments. In so doing, barriers crumble because the playing field is leveled. Making accommodations within the context of the classroom can enhance the learning experience for all students, not only low-level learners. And participants alluded to the benefits of nurturing a classroom culture in which mixed skill sets overlap to breed a rich learning environment for all students.

- “ULD asks the instructor to carefully decide what are the essential elements of the course and what can be shortened or eliminated. Time must be found to embed new activities and provide new approaches for learning that are more accessible for all students. My history classes are two hours long. I offer three major exams along with other low-stakes graded assignments. I design my in-class exams to require 75 minutes by most students. This provides ‘extended time’ for all students in the class. Some students do not qualify for extended time. I work to take some of the test anxiety out of the situation by providing more time for thought, reflection, and better exam performance.” (ARENDALE)

### ***Engaging Students through Active Learning***

Participants emphasized the importance of in-class activity as a way of engaging students in the learning process. Talking less and doing more by having students spend time practicing in class can have a profound impact on the learning process. Incorporating in-class computational drilling, for instance, can help students with content as well as adopting better study habits.

- “While study can be more or less efficient, the primary factor in learning boils down to time-on-task (TOT); that is, more time spent cognitively engaged with the content equals more learning.” (BRAMUCCI)

- “Students are no longer engaged in our classes/lectures so their minds are turned off to what we have to say long before they come into our classrooms. We need to find a way to turn their minds back on when they are in the room with us...We need to offer them the same kind of opportunity for interaction and engagement.” (KNIGHT)

These sentiments push educators to reflect on the how and why of teaching, rather than merely being content-driven. Breathing life into the classroom, through engaging learning practices, is indispensable for retention and persistence. Mastery does not happen all at once and instructors must maintain a growth-mindset orientation when approaching students, such that mistakes are considered a necessary part of learning and a useful tool for understanding the challenges students face.

- “The more I can facilitate (students) having a growth–mindset approach in my class, the more they will invest and take the risk of trying to learn, and the more they engage, and the more they learn...I can teach someone to write a thesis statement in my sleep. The real challenge is how do I support a student in moving from a shut–down, academically insecure place to a willingness to stay engaged and try, especially in the face of challenging readings and writing assignments?” (HERN)

### *Embracing Technology*

Underlying this shift in approach is attention to the value of using technology in instruction. Participants grappled with the area of online education, arguing that it will not disappear in the near future. The literature suggests that it can hinder progression for some under-prepared students in that it may lead to a sense of isolation.

However, others asserted that harnessing the power of social media could be beneficial as well. Participants advocated for more attention to the value of online tools and technical education as a serious career goal, offering strategies for incorporating it into existing curricula.

- “I’ve interviewed students who were using the (Pearson online) program. I heard comments like ‘This is the first time I’ve really understood the math, and it’s because I can go as slowly as I need to.’ And another, ‘I always have to take the test twice. The first time, I know I’m just really nervous, so I just take the test and get out all my anxiety. The second time I take the test, I can really do the math.’” (NEUBERGER)

Jam participants argued that state policy should indeed support online learning, but not in place of class instruction. Rather, the use of technology should be woven into the classroom to enhance teaching delivery. As an alternative, or in addition, instructors should build online learning environments in a way that prevents isolation.

- “If an instructor is simply delivering information in an online course, then students are going to struggle. If an instructor creates an online environment/space where students can interact, share resources, SEE each other, they are more likely to connect and succeed. (The [technological] tools today make it possible.)” (REINERT)

Games were especially applauded as a possible tactic for incorporating technology into the learning environment. At the City University of New York, faculty are using games in developmental education courses, and others have employed game-like tools to hone meta-cognitive abilities.

- “I think we need more time, better communication, improved collaboration and sharing of data and a focus on training faculty to look at their own data and then think out of the box to improve. New technologies give many more options, but also create fear. It is critical that faculty understand that it is not the new technology that makes the difference – but rather how the faculty use it.” (BERRYMAN)
- “Last spring I taught in a classroom with 100 students, arranged in circular tables of 9 each, flat screen TVs and jumbo projectors...It was exciting and humbling. It reminded me that layout, space, and technology can work together or not to improve student learning outcomes.” (ARENDALE)

Encouraging faculty to communicate and collaborate in designing creative, dynamic teaching practices can lead to innovative strategies for success.

- “We know how real learning happens – it is situated, connective, meta-cognitive, learner center/owned, co-constructivist, play and sensory based (embedded cognition), and pitched at the precise and unique (and ever changing) learning style of the study. This means fluid curricula – though not necessarily fluid outcomes – and organic, adaptive, teaching practice... We need each other, and discussions like this, to help us distinguish and learn from what is going, to name it so we can talk about it, to explore how and why something works...” (SALYERS)

## V. Summary: Moving Forward on the Path to Success

This report presents the chief concerns around which educators and stakeholders must come together to address the issue of low-level learner success. Noting the various definitions of low-level learners, participants called for enhanced diagnostic strategies to tailor preparation effectively and efficiently. Fostering support for students on the pathway to college- and workforce-readiness demands ongoing, comprehensive support that enables students to make informed choices in their learning trajectory.

The educational systems and structures currently in place can pose obstacles in maximizing opportunities for student success, but many different models can work, as referenced in the Jam discussions and attached resources. Numerous examples across the country demonstrate that students can achieve when preparation matches need, and is concurrently integrated with wraparound supports. The core requirements are to remain focused on the outcome for under-prepared adult learners and to coordinate the efforts of system stakeholders for optimal academic success.

Moving forward, an appraisal of the low-level learner population (and particularly the distinction between severely disabled and those who can become college- or workforce-ready), in conjunction with the proper supports, is necessary to build ideal service systems. Identifying the size of this population, its rate of growth, and the time and financial resources necessary to serve low-level learners is critical to establishing the best strategies for adult education.

## VI. Appendices

### Appendix A: Qualitative Pre-Jam Survey Analysis

#### **Should there be a "floor" for developmental education?**

In general, most registrants (70%) feel that there should be a "floor" for determining which students should be placed in developmental education and which students should be referred to other options like Adult Basic Education (ABE). There did not appear to be any key differences in terms of the role of the registrant and their opinion (e.g., the yes and no responses seemed relatively consistent across instructors, administrators, policy makers, etc.).

Among those who *support* the floor, many of the arguments were based in practical concerns. Many respondents also pointed out that there is a qualitative difference between developmental education (which focuses on remediating high-school level skills) and ABE (which focuses on grade-school level skills). The argument seems to be that setting a floor is more efficient, sets more realistic expectations. Moreover, separating the students would lead to better success/improvement rates at the college-level and prevent students from wasting their financial resources on credit courses with a low chance of success.

The arguments in support of a floor clustered around the following dimensions:

- Student-level concerns: some students simply aren't ready for DE courses (corollary: they won't make it anyway); DE can't be everything to everyone; unfair to recruit students into courses that are beyond their skill set
- Campus/Instructor-level concerns: DE teachers have different training than ABE teachers and students need to be placed with the appropriate instructor; ABE inherently does not mesh with semester schedule and should instead be flexible for students who only need remediation on specific skills
- Macro-level concerns: the burden of preparation should go to CBOs and not dilute the college curriculum; money that is allocated for college-level education should not be wasted on elementary-level education

Slightly less than one-third of the registrants *do not support* implementing a "floor" below which students are referred to ABE. In general, their reasons are more globally based – they focus on the psychological/developmental experience of the student and consider the broader issue of a failing/flawed education system.

- Logistical concerns: the instruments to assess students and determine the floor are ineffective and don't take into account aptitude and ability; there is poor articulation between high schools and colleges; ABE programs are the worst-resourced and it is unfair to students who get sent there; impractical to expect ABE programs to handle students who already have a diploma

- Holistic concerns: the floor could work but it can't be unidimensional (would have to be flexible to account for students' varying needs); directionally problematic – how do you refer a student "down" to ABE and then hope that they will come back and complete college?
- Ideological concerns: the floor imposes a barrier to access that is antithetical to the core mission of community colleges (open-admissions); imposing a floor leads down a dangerous path of diverting students, denying them credit-bearing work, and forces students to take the burden rather than fixing the actual problem of a deficient education system; a floor does not acknowledge that everyone is on a spectrum and has different skill-levels in different areas

### *Clarifying funding structures*

It seems that there is a lot of variation in terms of how ABE and DE courses are funded, the amount of financial aid students receive, and what the limits on this aid are. This seems relevant to how people responded to the floor question because some worry that students will use up valuable financial aid without obtaining credit while others argue that having a floor is fine because ABE courses are free for students. This may be a state-by-state variation but seems very influential.

### *English Language-Learners?*

The issue of ESL students was only mentioned twice. The fact that community colleges tend to be serving language learners and students who are coming from their home countries with varying levels of education was surprisingly absent from the responses. It may be that it is simply implied that this makes up a bulk of the population, or if there needs to be more explicit emphasis on delineating the needs of language-learners vs. students who came out of the K-12 system under-prepared.

From these responses it is clear that there is a lack of articulation and agreement between community colleges and public school systems. This lack allows for at least two things: finger-pointing or absolving of blame, and students being left in the resulting gap.

### **If you had the power, what three things would you do to ensure success in DE and college?**

The responses to this question cluster loosely around different distinct spheres connected to students and developmental education.

- Microsystem/Individual level: success in DE and college can be supported by improving the home environment for the student, providing more individual attention and creating a flexible curriculum that suits the specific needs of the student; providing increased student support services and intensive academic counseling/advising (some use the term "intrusive" advising); at the individual level only take students who are serious and teach students to "love" reading, writing and math

- Specific College environment: better placement tests and policies; make sure those teaching DE are appropriately trained (and have the desire to work with that population); clearer alignment between student support services and DE programs; provide professional development on learning for all faculty
- Meso-level (in between the student/individual and the college/system): improve communication between community colleges and employers in terms of the skills/knowledge needed; work with the state to identify areas of career focus; clear alignment of ABE and DE standards
- Macro/cultural level: DE students are not second class citizens (work to remove the stigma, remove the term "remedial" and learn to respect adult students); the material needs to be made relevant to students' lives and no topic should be treated as trivial; create a community college culture that emphasizes the importance of basic skills and a culture where DE faculty are treated as equals with other faculty

In general, registrants highlight the need for *consistency* and *integration* across the various levels (and institutions the students will encounter) as well as the need for contextual interventions that are flexible enough to consider the student's unique needs.

While the bulk of responses fell into the above categories, there were a few responses that stood out as "outside-the-box":

- Innovative pedagogy: develop hybrid DE and credit-courses; integrate service-learning (presumably to make it more relevant); develop intensive mentoring programs that follow the student through all levels (from ABE to credit-bearing); stop 'teaching' (depositing knowledge) and start 'facilitating learning' (student-owned)
- Structural changes: completely eliminate DE courses and switch to campus-based learning centers; match the diagnostic to the specific coursework area of interest (instead of a blanket diagnostic for determining ABE/DE); meet the students' external needs (childcare, transportation, vision, hearing, nutrition, healthcare)
- Global issues: fix K-12 (decrease class size, increase funding, eliminate NCLB); work with the already existing ABE/DE professional organizations that have history and expertise (but are presumably left out of the conversation)

#### **What do you hope to get out of the Jam?**

- Practical: scope of all the issues from various perspectives and a sense of the "climate" of DE/ABE discussions; developing a common language for discussing the issue across the various stakeholders - where are the points

for articulation?; get ideas from other states and what is working for them; learn advocacy methods for the DE student; to see how a “Jam” works

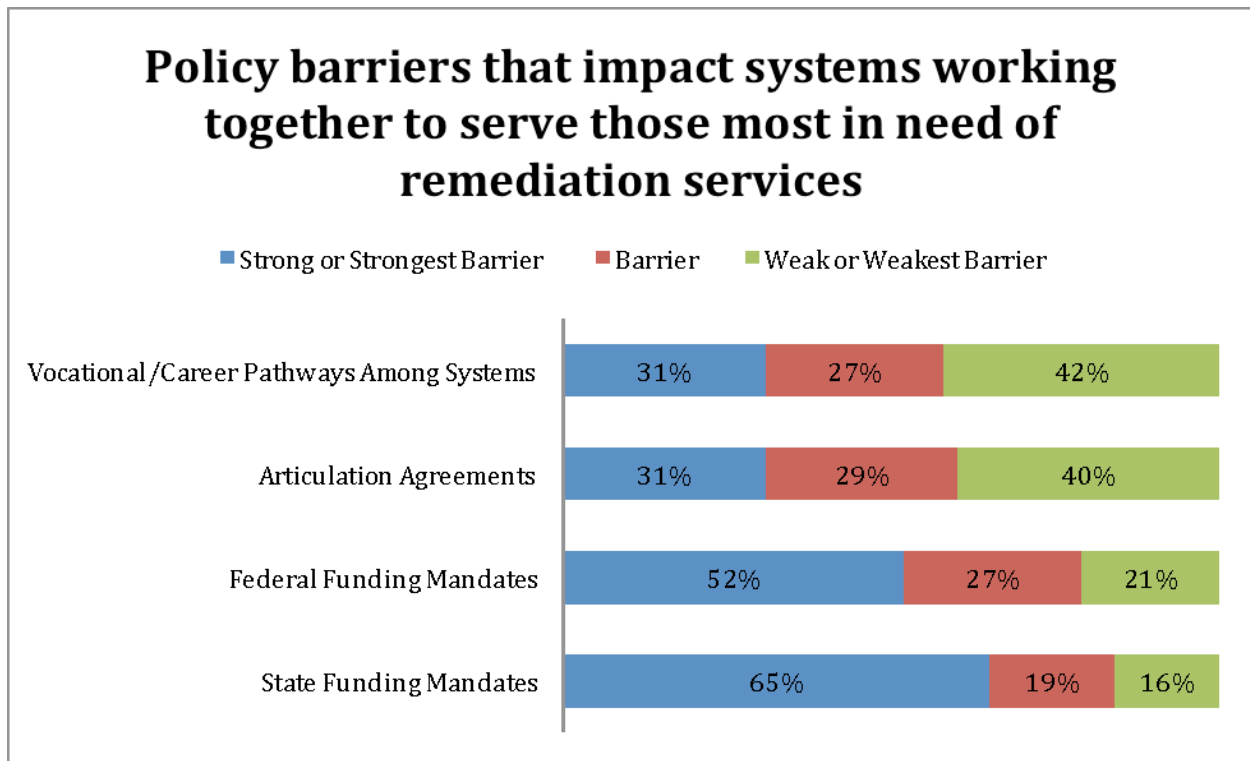
- Personal: voice – to be heard, to hear the voice of the actual practitioner in the discussion (which tends to be dominated by policy makers, foundations, research universities); inspiration – a chance to collaborate and innovate together and reassurance that they aren’t in a vacuum

## Appendix B: Quantitative Pre-Jam Survey Analysis

### Policy Barriers of Remediation Services

Participants in the Jam Session were asked to rank which policy barriers, from strongest to weakest, impact systems working together to serve those most in need of remediation services. A five-point scale was used ranging from strongest barrier, strong barrier, barrier, weak barrier and weakest barrier. For the purposes of this analysis, the categories of “strong” and “strongest” were collapsed and so were “weak” and “weakest.”

As can be seen in the graph below, the majority of respondents thought state and federal funding mandates (65% and 52% respectively) represented strong barriers to serving those most in need of remediation services.



**Policy Barrier Ranges** (smallest to largest): Strong or Strongest Barrier (31% - 65%); Barrier (19% - 29%); Weak or Weakest Barrier (16% - 42%)

The next four graphs present barriers by job categories. Differences exist in perceived barriers and job categories. However, where and to what extent depends on how you interpret the graphs. The meaning of the graphs (and the graphs throughout this report) should be examined and further discussed from at least four angles.

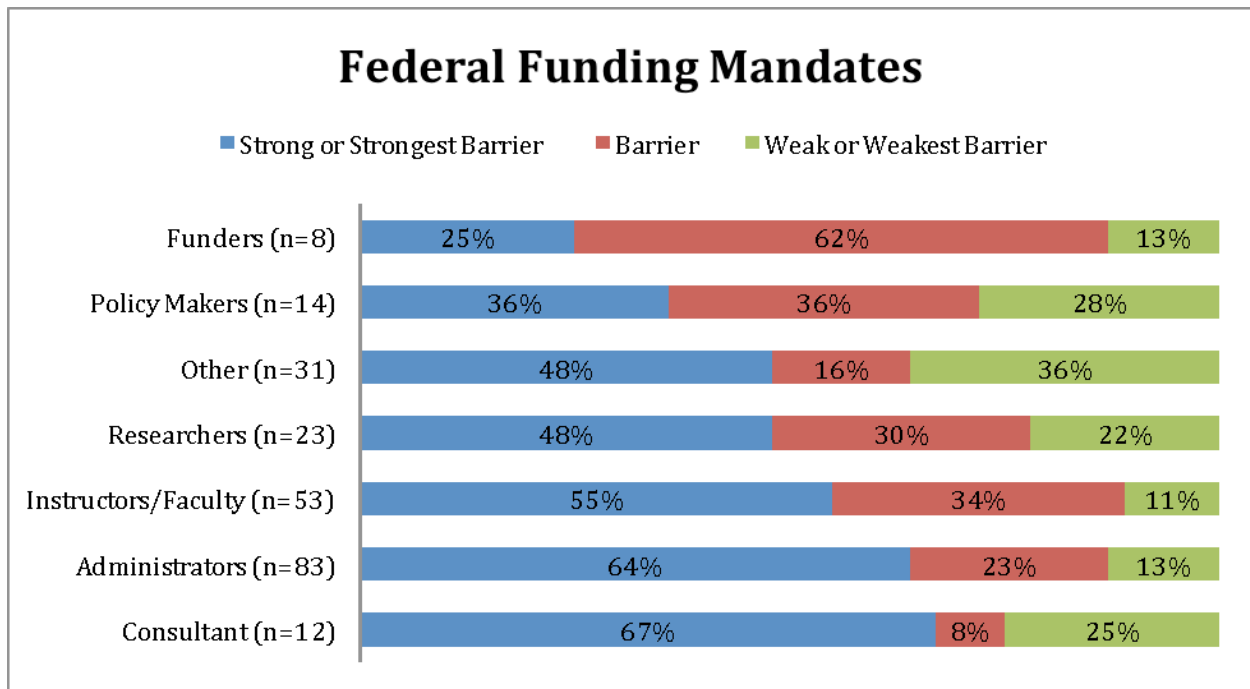
1. *Interpreting Strong or Weak:* For the purposes of this analysis, the categories of “strong” and “strongest” were collapsed and so were “weak” and “weakest.” As can be seen in the graph below, for ease of interpretation, job categories were sorted in the “strong or strongest barrier” category from the smallest percentage (top) to the largest percentage (the bottom). Therefore, of those respondents who identified as funders, 25% reported that federal funding mandates represented the strong or strongest barrier as compared to 67% of the consultants who reported that federal funding mandates were a strong/strongest barrier. However, since many of the respondents consider federal funding mandates a barrier of some kind (e.g. including “strong/strongest” and “barrier”), the more meaningful analysis could be those who chose “weak or weakest.” Therefore, another approach to this analysis is to closely examine the right side of the graph. For example, researchers (22%), policy makers (28%) and consultants (25%) were more likely to report that federal funding mandates were a weak/weakest barrier as compared to funders (13%), instructors/faculty (11%), and administrators (13%).

2. *Strength of Difference:* Within each barrier category (e.g. within “strong and strongest barrier”) the *percentage point difference* (e.g. the difference between any two percentages) can be used to determine the extent of the difference; the larger the number, the greater the difference. For example, there is a 42 percentage point difference between funders and consultants in their response to federal funding mandates being a strong or the strongest barrier. How meaningful this difference is depends entirely on the context of this particular issue (however, as a very crude rule, a difference of 10 percentage points or greater might be considered meaningful for the purpose of this analysis).

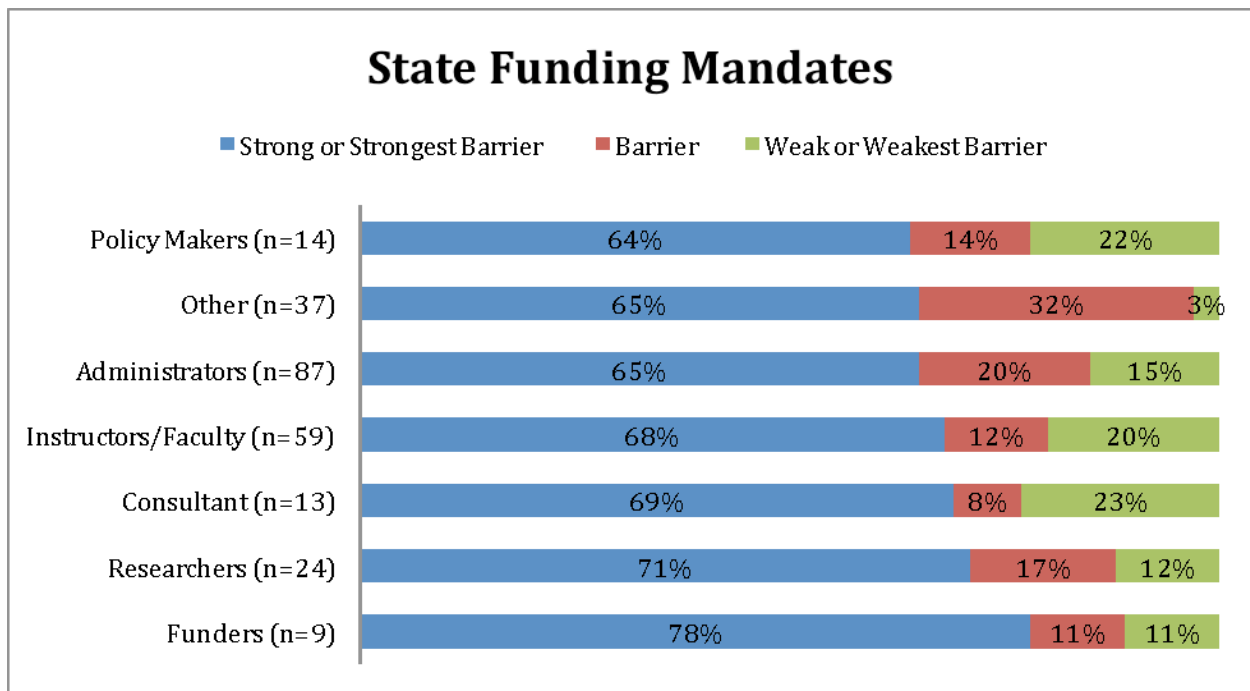
3. *Sample Size:* On the left hand side of the graph, towards the end of each job category name, contains the amount of people who answered the question in parentheses (e.g. “n=8”). This was not a random sample. However, the larger the sample size, the greater the confidence you can have that the range of percentages are more closely representing attitudes in that job category. There were 8 funders and 13% of them said that federal funding mandates were a weak or the weakest barrier. However, when considered more closely, 13% in that category represents 1 individual. On the other hand, given the power that funders have, that single individual contextualized within the socio-political reality of adult education services, may far outweigh the 6 instructors/faculty who responded that federal funding mandates were the weak or weakest barrier.

4. *Job Category Meaning:* Respondents could identify with more than one job category and as a result, their answers were included in each of the categories they identified (e.g. some funders also identified as policy makers or administrators). Due to small sample sizes, analyses disaggregating differences between multiple and single job categories could not be presented. However, given the multiple identities held by the individuals in this sample, one needs to

consider closely how and to what extent respondents' attitudes are a reflection of the job category.

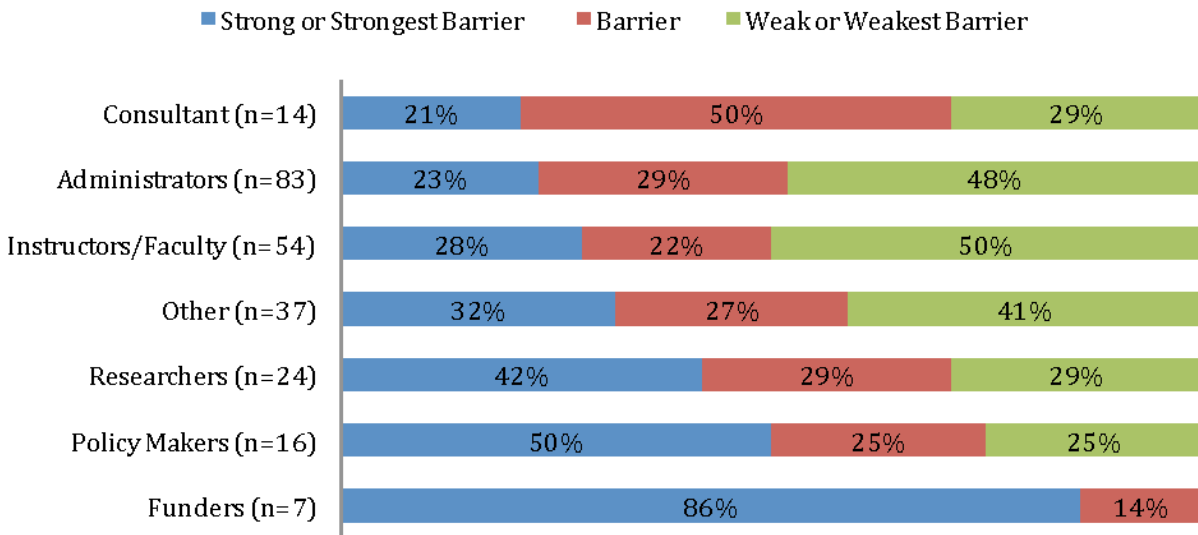


**Federal Funding Mandate Ranges** (smallest to largest): Strong or Strongest Barrier (25% - 67%); Barrier (8% - 62%); Weak or Weakest Barrier (11% - 36%)



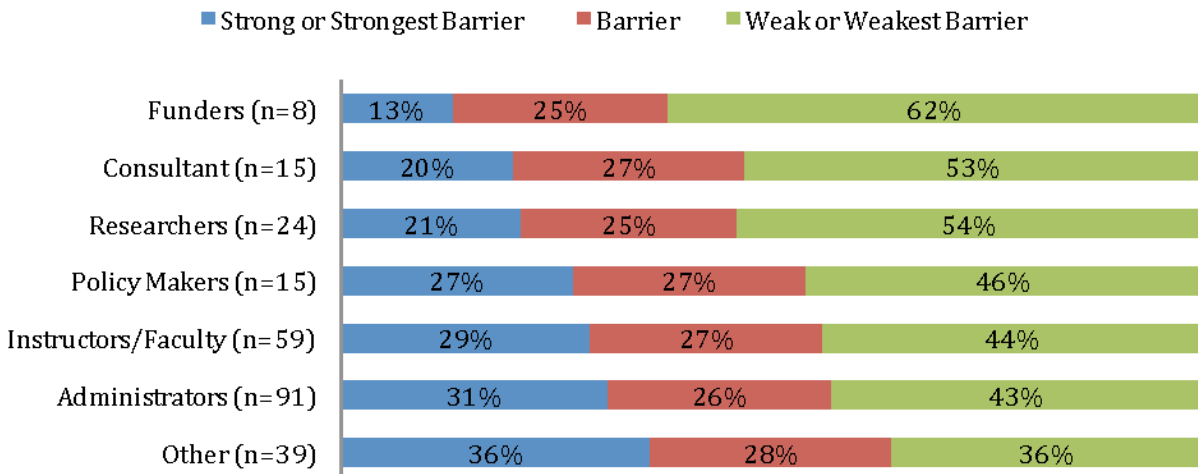
**State Funding Mandate Ranges** (smallest to largest): Strong or Strongest Barrier (64% - 78%); Barrier (8% - 32%); Weak or Weakest Barrier (3% - 23%)

## Articulation Agreements



**Articulation Agreements Ranges** (smallest to largest): Strong or Strongest Barrier (21% - 86%); Barrier (14% - 50%); Weak or Weakest Barrier (0% - 50%)

## Vocational/Career Pathways Among Systems

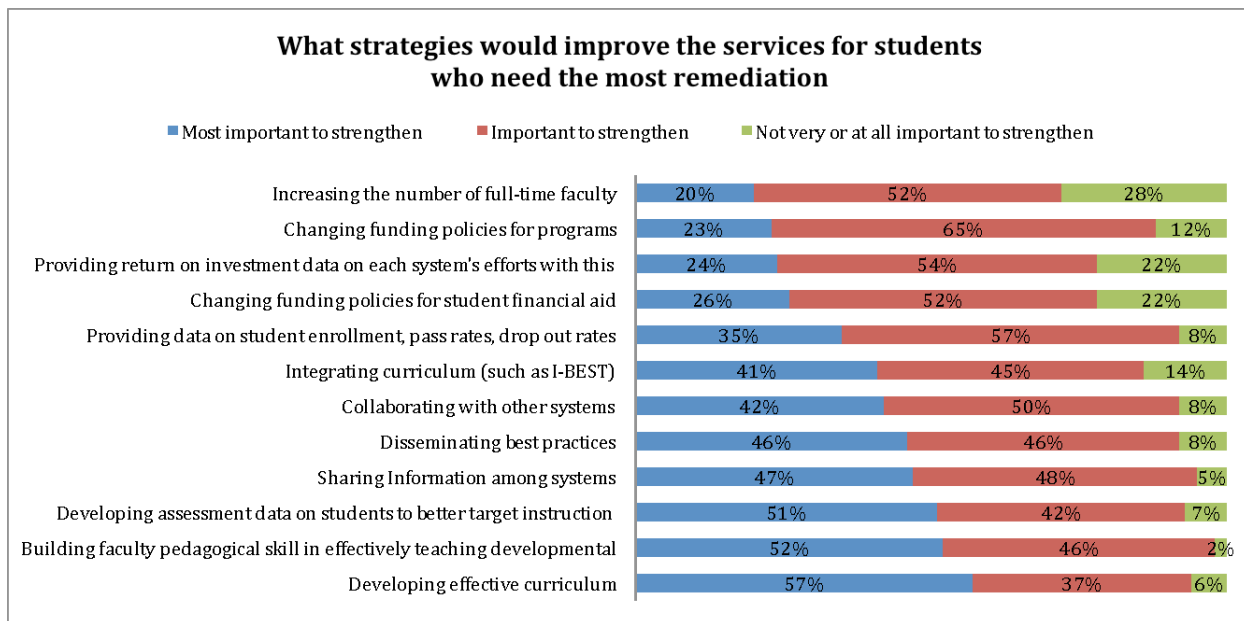


**Vocational/career Pathways Among Systems Ranges** (smallest to largest): Strong or Strongest Barrier (13% - 36%); Barrier (25% - 28%); Weak or Weakest Barrier (36% - 62%)

Strategies for Improving Remediation Services.

Participants of the Jam Session were asked what strategies would improve the services for students who need the most remediation. A four-point scale was used ranging from most important to strengthen, important to strengthen, not very important to strengthen, and not at all important to strengthen. For the purposes of this analysis, the categories of “not very” and “not at all” were collapsed.

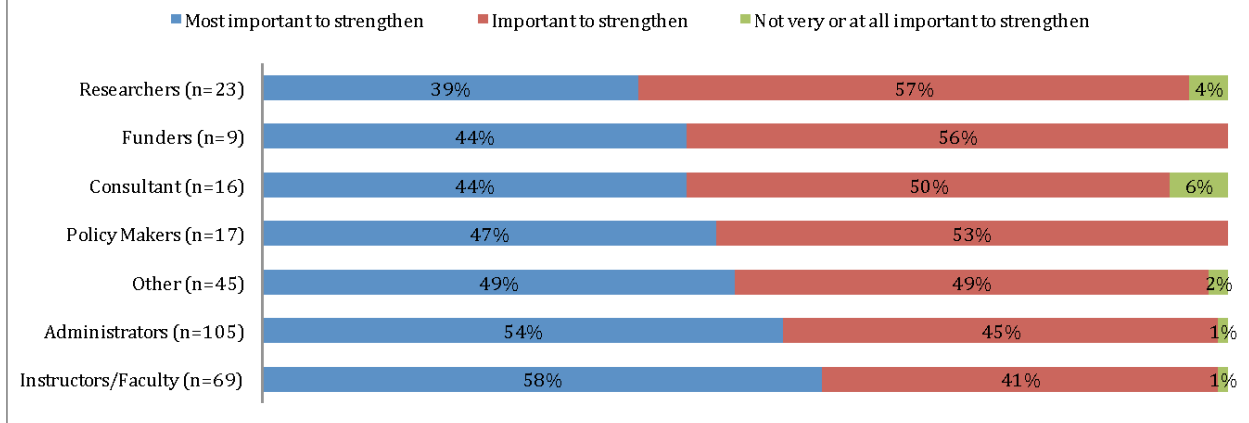
As can be seen in the graph below, the majority of respondents thought that developing assessment data, building faculty pedagogical skill and developing effective curriculum are most important to strengthen.



**Strategies Ranges** (smallest to largest): Most important to strengthen (20% - 57%); Important to strengthen (37% - 65%); Not very or at all important to strengthen (2% - 28%)

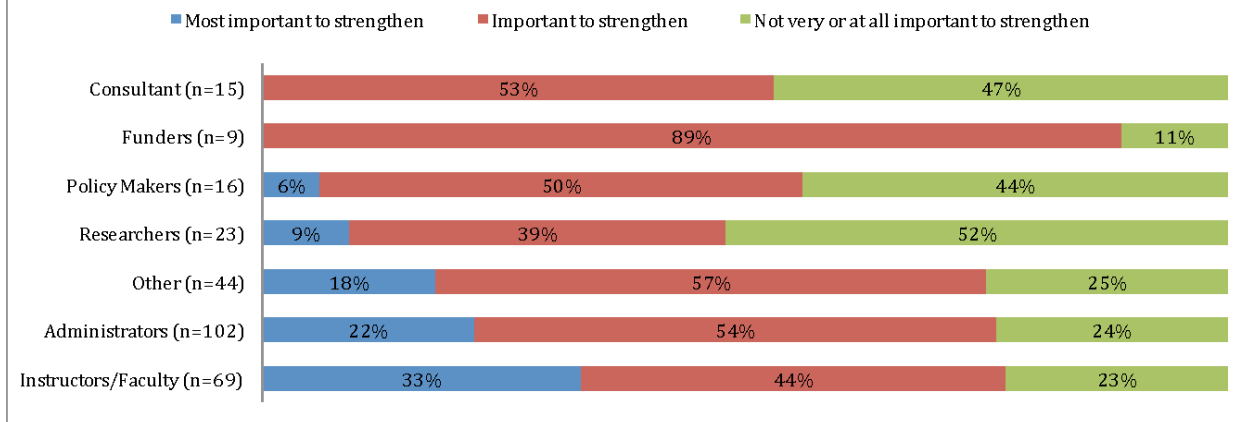
The next twelve graphs present the strategies most or least important to strengthen by job categories. Differences exist in perceived importance of strategies by job category. However, the four interpretation suggestions described above should be considered closely when examining these graphs.

## Building faculty pedagogical skill in effectively teaching developmental education students

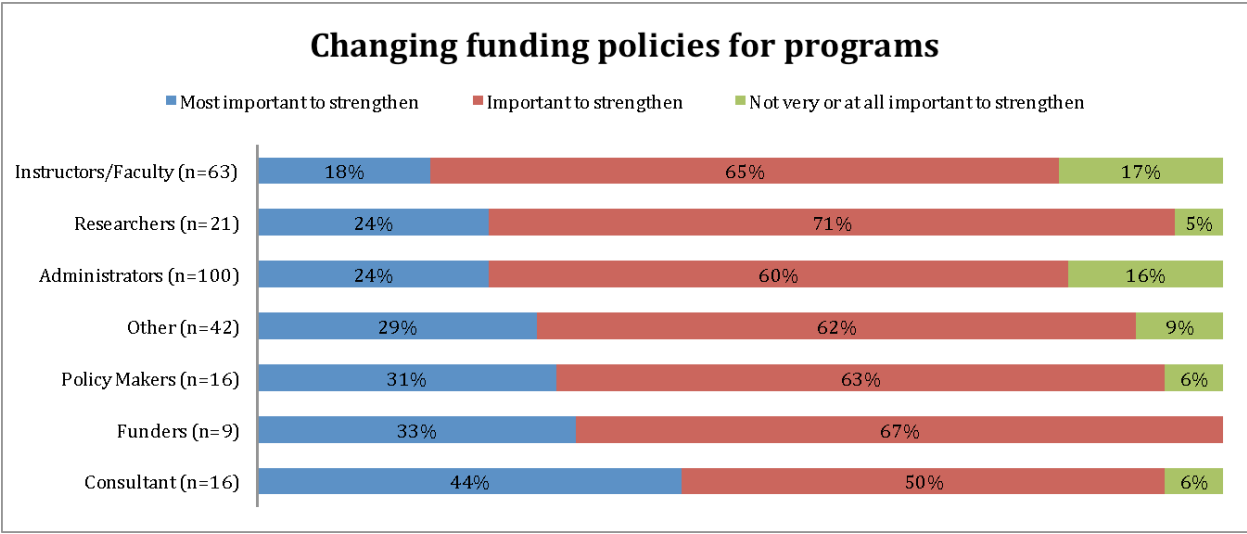


**Ranges** (smallest to largest): Most important to strengthen (39% - 58%); Important to strengthen (41% - 57%); Not very or at all important to strengthen (0% - 6%)

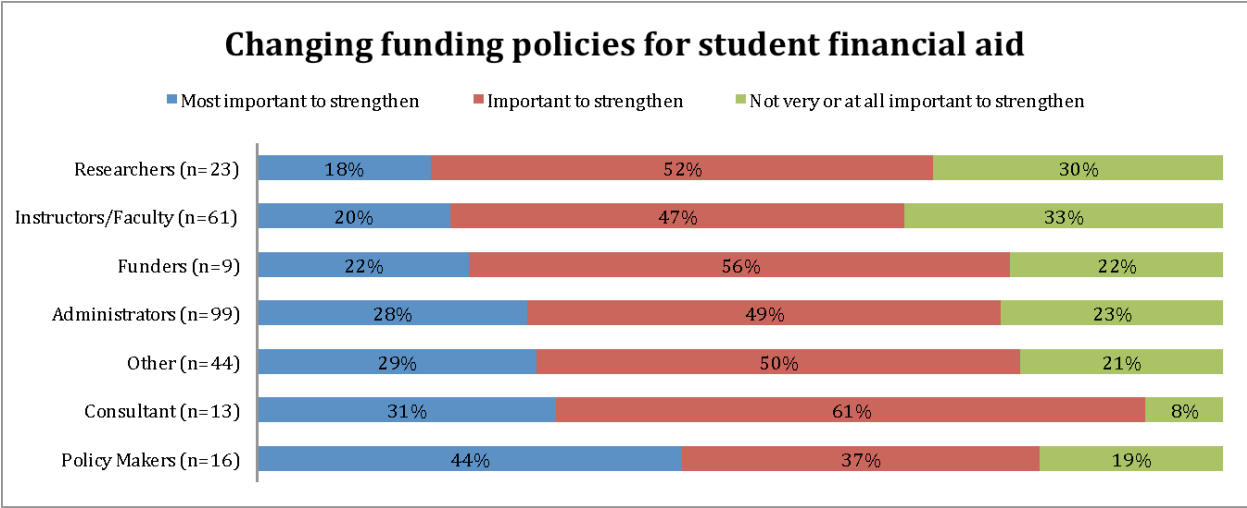
## Increasing the number of full-time faculty



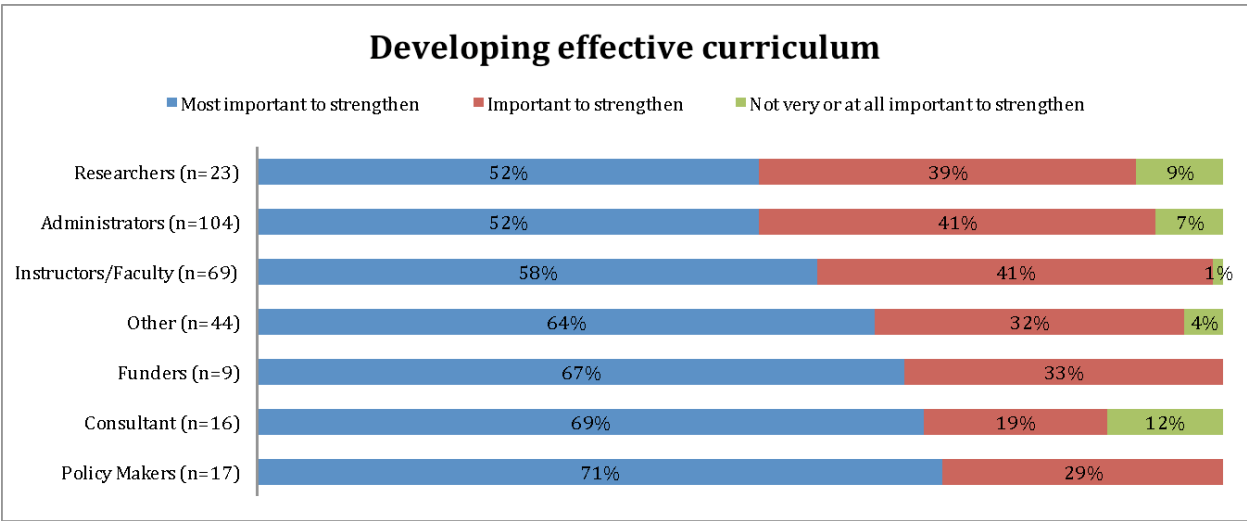
**Ranges** (smallest to largest): Most important to strengthen (0% - 33%); Important to strengthen (39% - 89%); Not very or at all important to strengthen (11% - 52%)



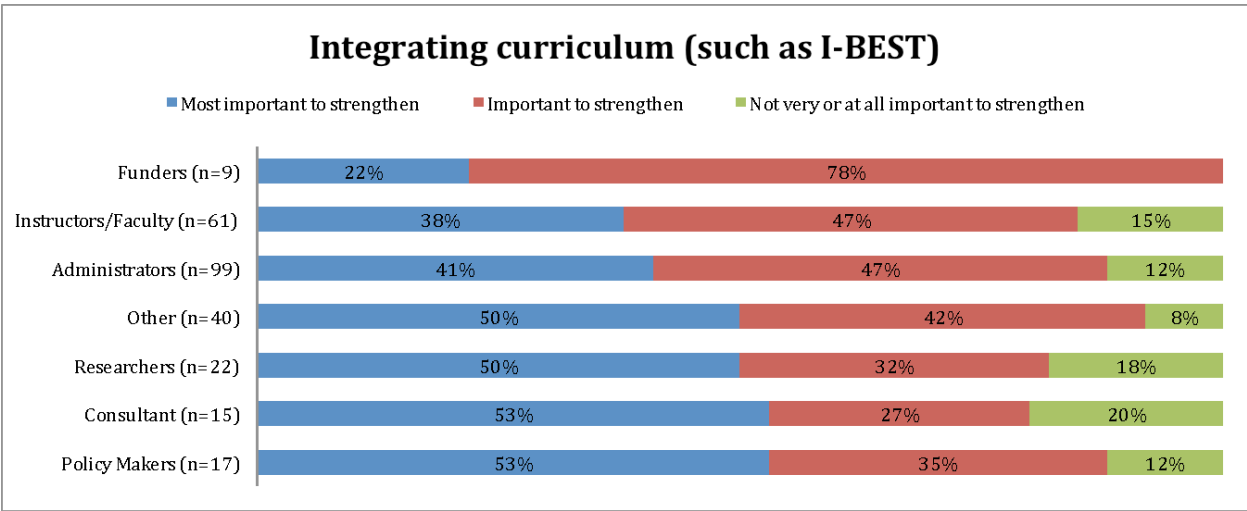
**Ranges** (smallest to largest): Most important to strengthen (18% - 44%); Important to strengthen (50% - 71%); Not very or at all important to strengthen (0% - 17%)



**Ranges** (smallest to largest): Most important to strengthen (18% - 44%); Important to strengthen (37% - 61%); Not very or at all important to strengthen (8% - 33%)

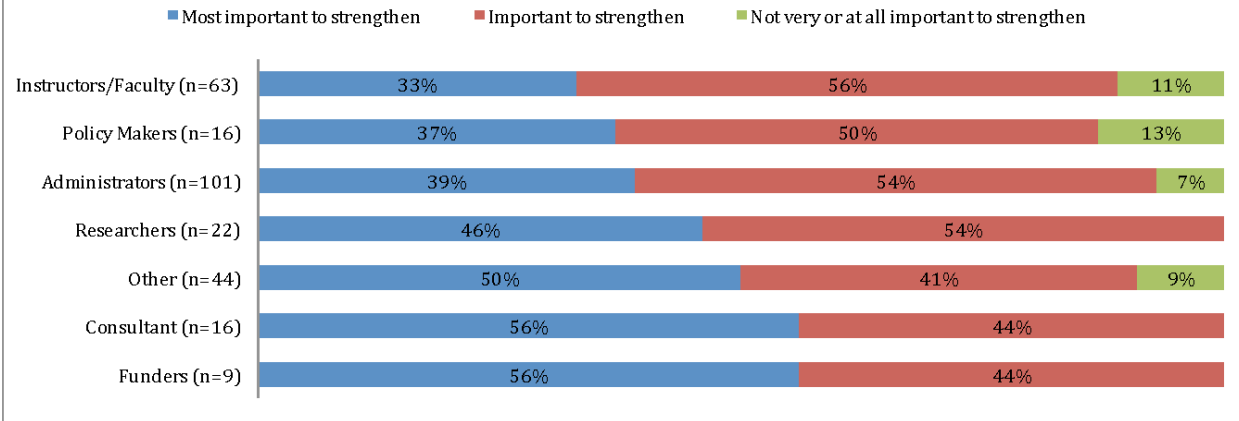


**Ranges** (smallest to largest): Most important to strengthen (52% - 71%); Important to strengthen (19% - 41%); Not very or at all important to strengthen (0% - 12%)



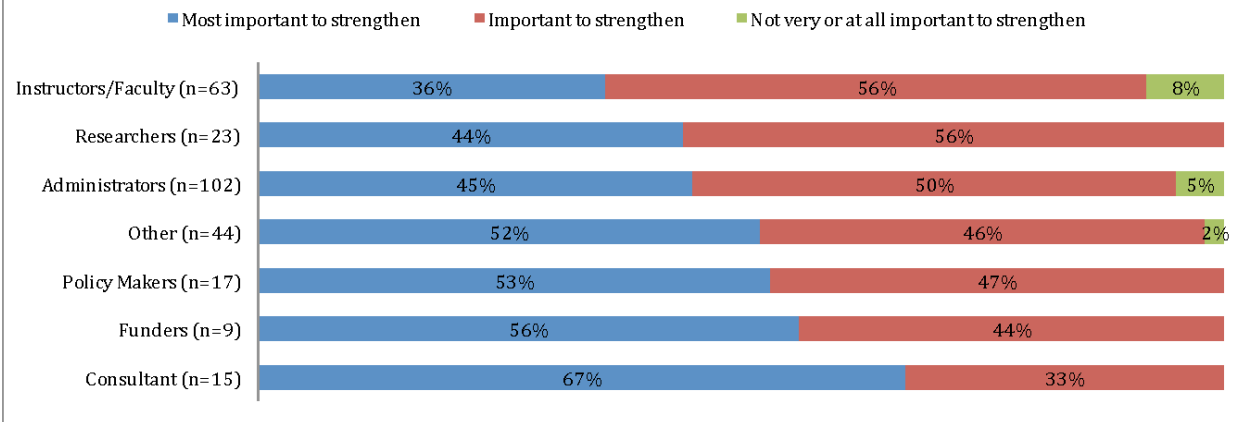
**Ranges** (smallest to largest): Most important to strengthen (22% - 53%); Important to strengthen (27% - 78%); Not very or at all important to strengthen (12% - 20%)

## Collaborating with other systems



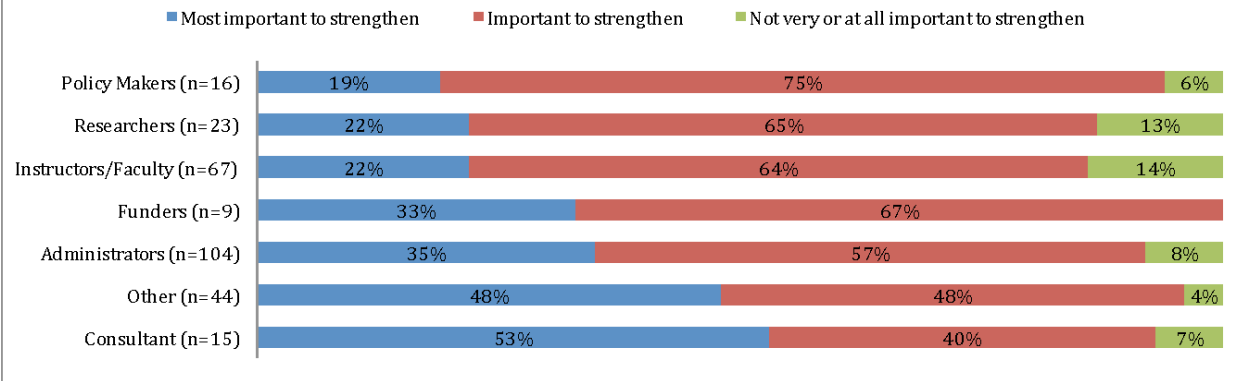
**Ranges** (smallest to largest): Most important to strengthen (33% - 56%); Important to strengthen (41% - 56%); Not very or at all important to strengthen (0% - 13%)

## Sharing Information among systems



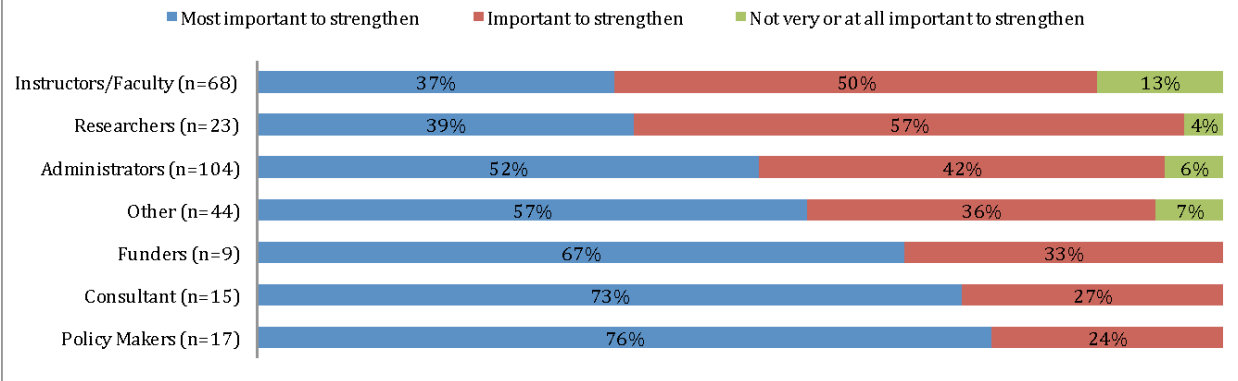
**Ranges** (smallest to largest): Most important to strengthen (36% - 67%); Important to strengthen (33% - 56%); Not very or at all important to strengthen (0% - 8%)

## Providing data on student enrollment, pass rates, drop out rates



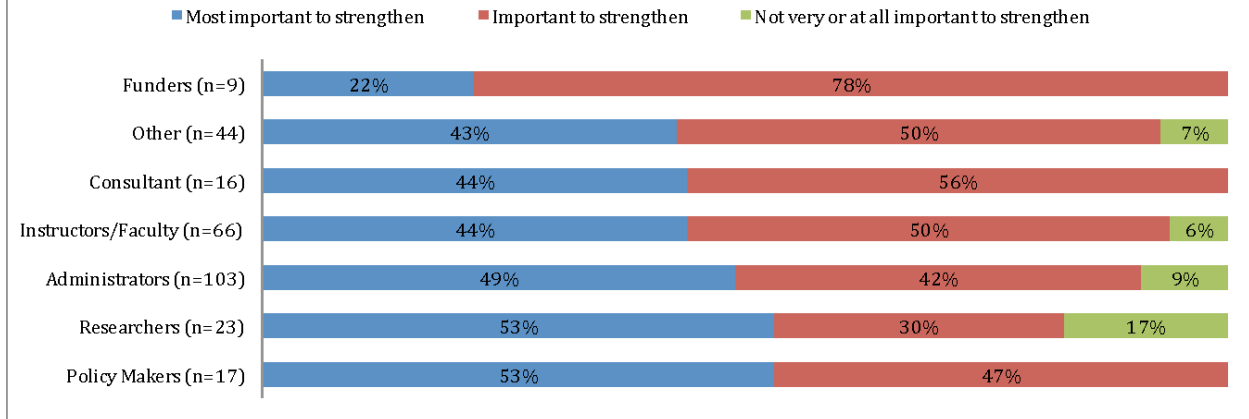
**Ranges** (smallest to largest): Most important to strengthen (19% - 53%); Important to strengthen (40% - 75%); Not very or at all important to strengthen (4% - 14%)

## Developing assessment data on students to better target instruction



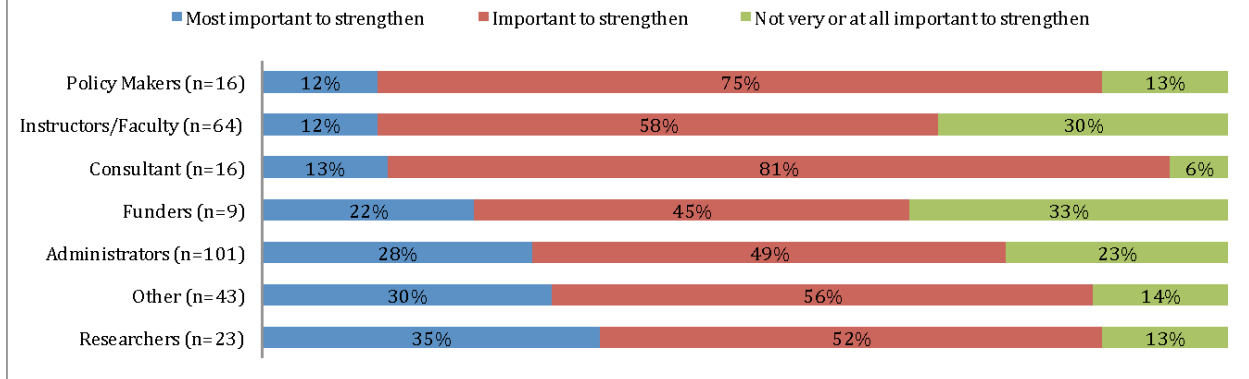
**Ranges** (smallest to largest): Most important to strengthen (37% - 76%); Important to strengthen (24% - 57%); Not very or at all important to strengthen (0% - 13%)

## Disseminating best practices



**Ranges** (smallest to largest): Most important to strengthen (22% - 53%); Important to strengthen (30% - 78%); Not very or at all important to strengthen (0% - 17%)

## Providing return on investment data on each system's efforts with this population

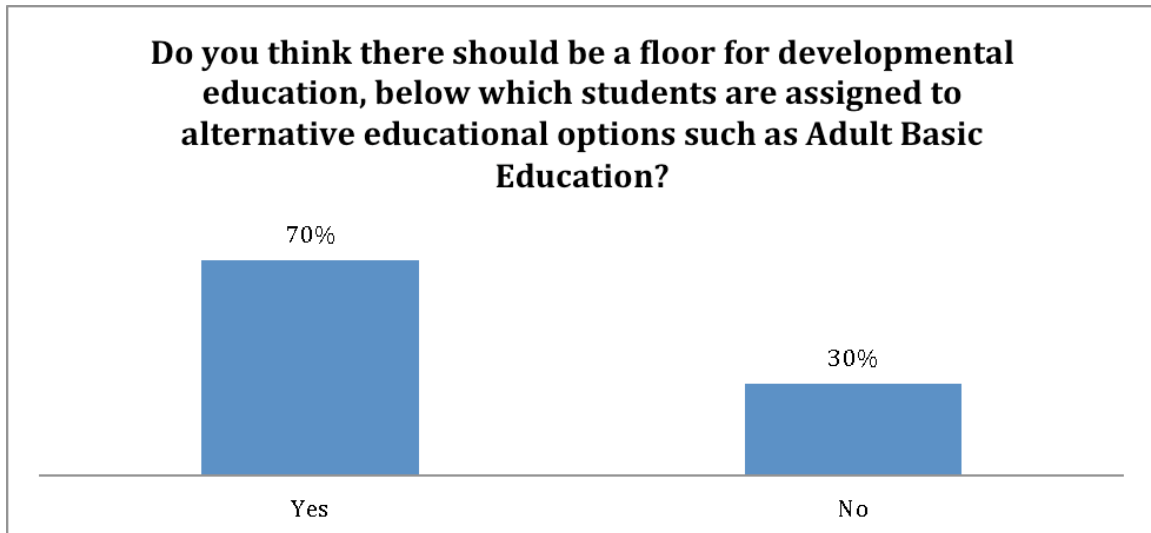


**Ranges** (smallest to largest): Most important to strengthen (12% - 35%); Important to strengthen (45% - 81%); Not very or at all important to strengthen (6% - 33%)

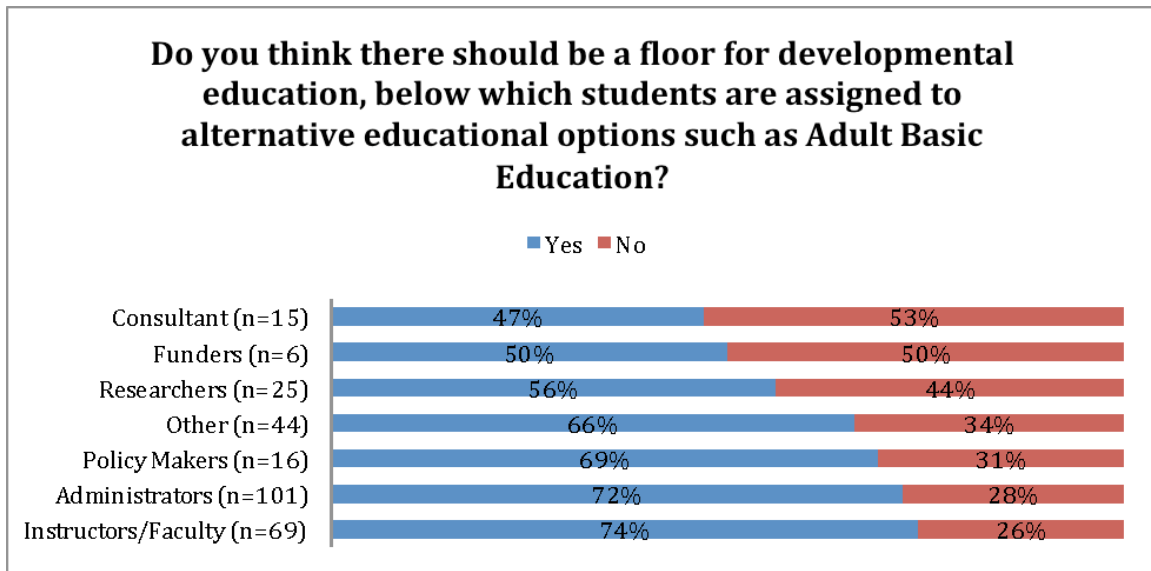
### Floor for Developmental Education?

Participants of the Jam Session were asked if they think there should be a floor for developmental education, below which students are assigned to alternative education options such as Adult Basic Education.

As can be seen in the graph below, the majority of respondents believed a floor for developmental education should exist.



Endorsement for a floor differs depending on the job category.

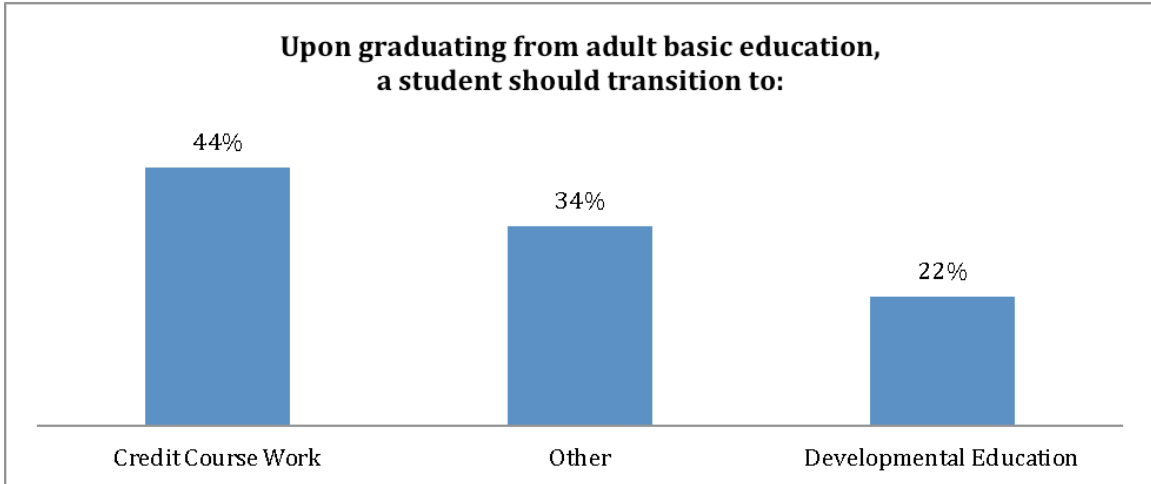


**Ranges** (smallest to largest): Yes (47% - 74%); No (26% - 53%)

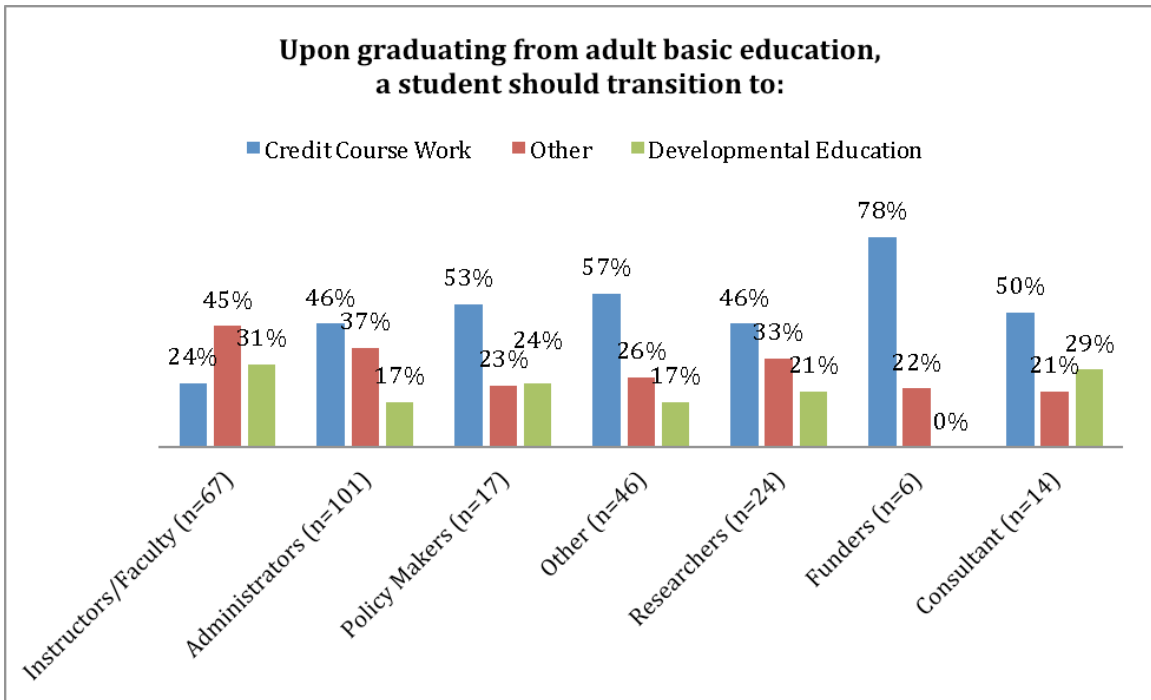
### Transition from Adult Basic Education

Participants of the Jam Session were asked where a student should transition to upon graduating from adult basic education.

As can be seen in the graph below, nearly half of the respondents selected credit course work.



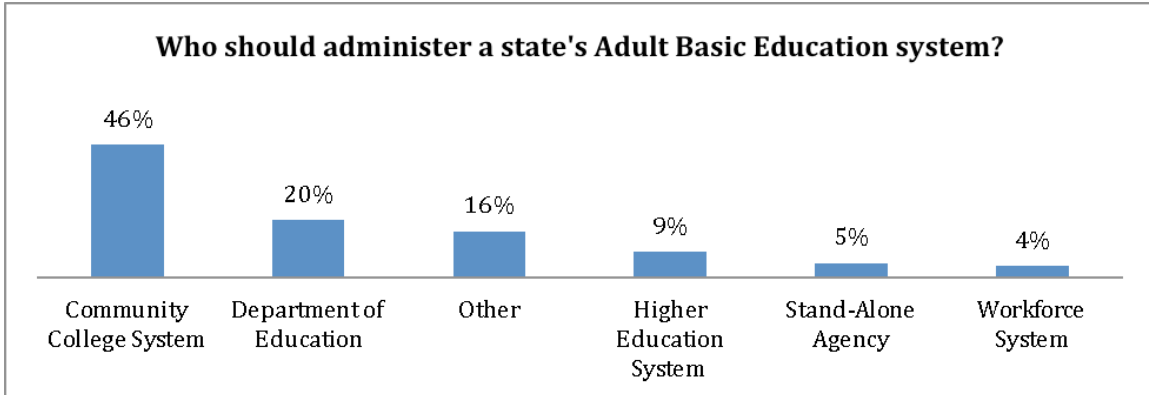
Answers differed depending on the job category.



### Who Should Administer State's Adult Basic Education

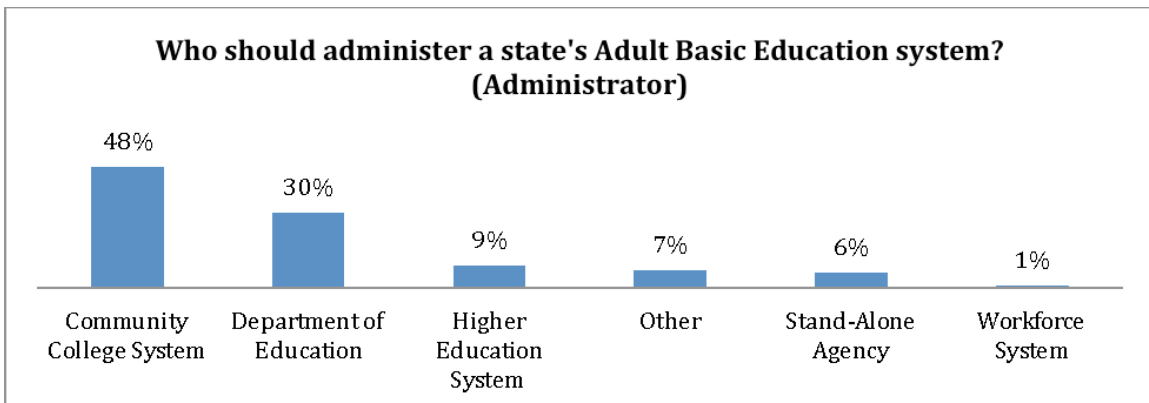
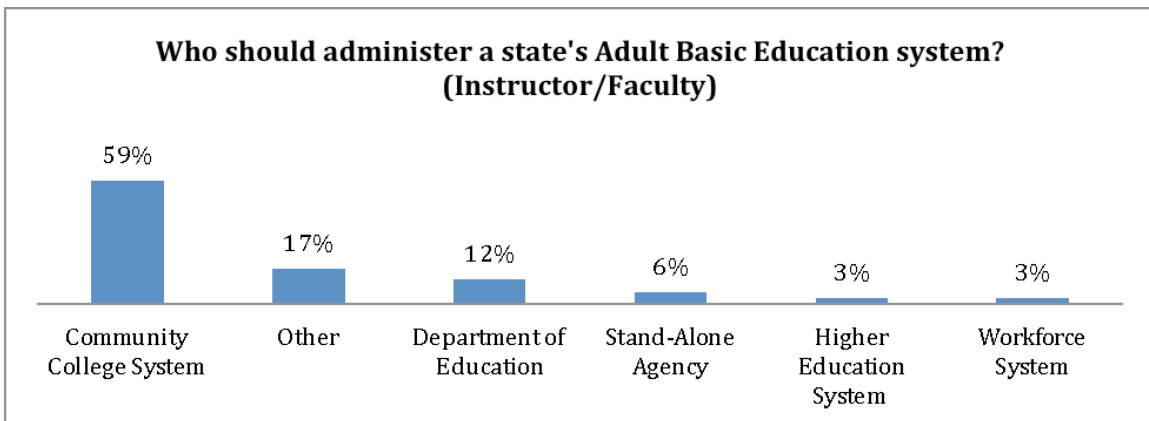
Participants of the Jam Session were asked who should administer a state's Adult Basic Education system.

As can be seen in the graph below, nearly half of the respondents selected community college system.

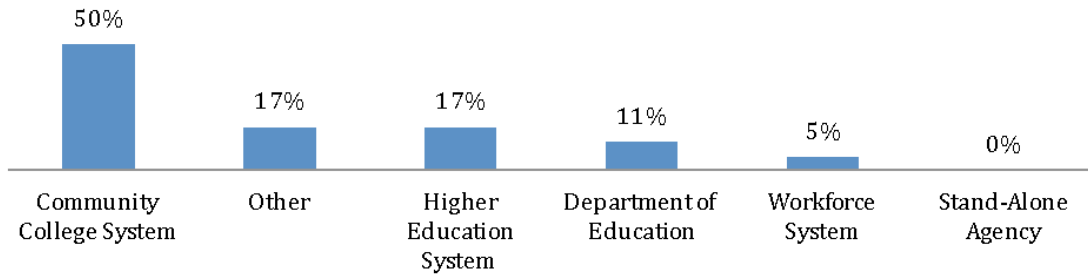


The next seven graphs present the answers by job categories.

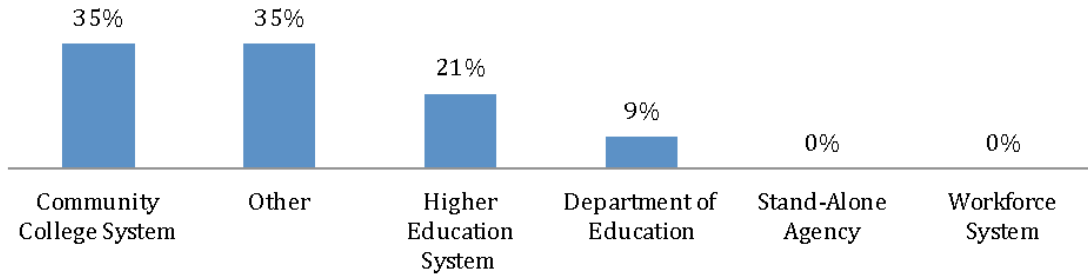
Answers differed depending on the job category.



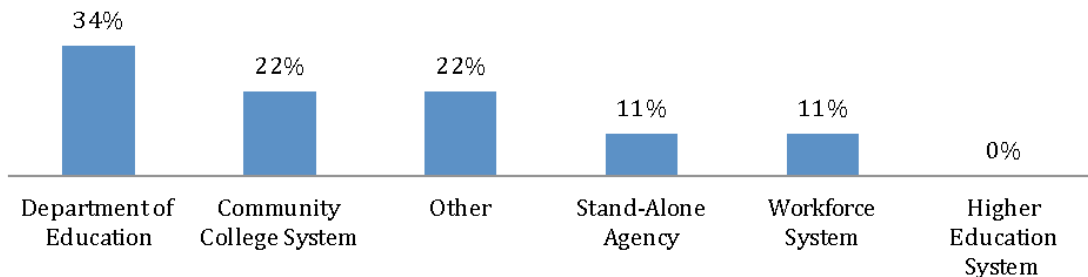
**Who should administer a state's Adult Basic Education system?  
(Policy Maker)**



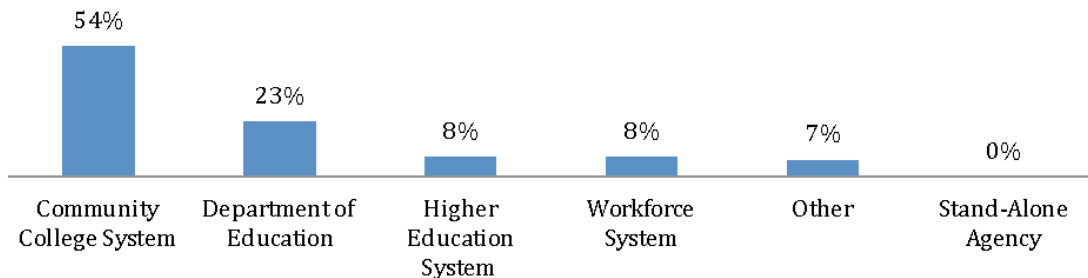
**Who should administer a state's Adult Basic Education system?  
(Researcher)**

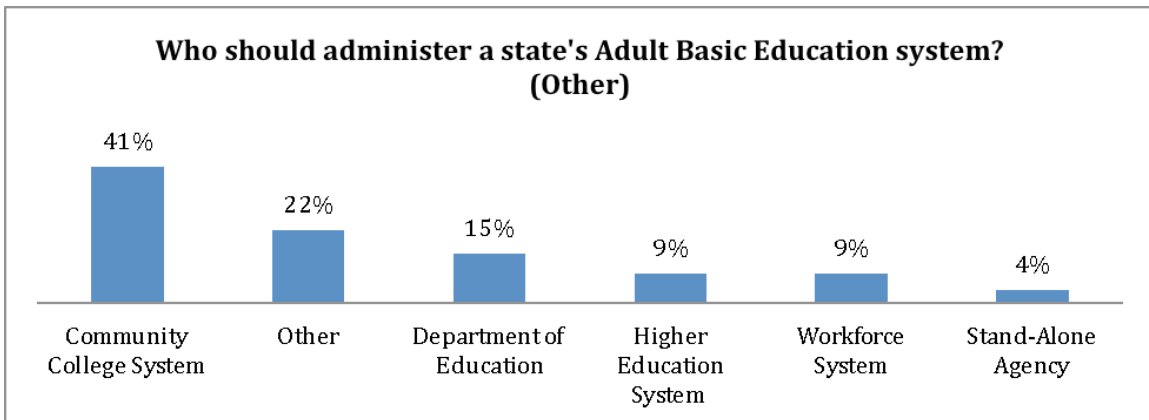


**Who should administer a state's Adult Basic Education system?  
(Funder)**



**Who should administer a state's Adult Basic Education system?  
(Consultant)**





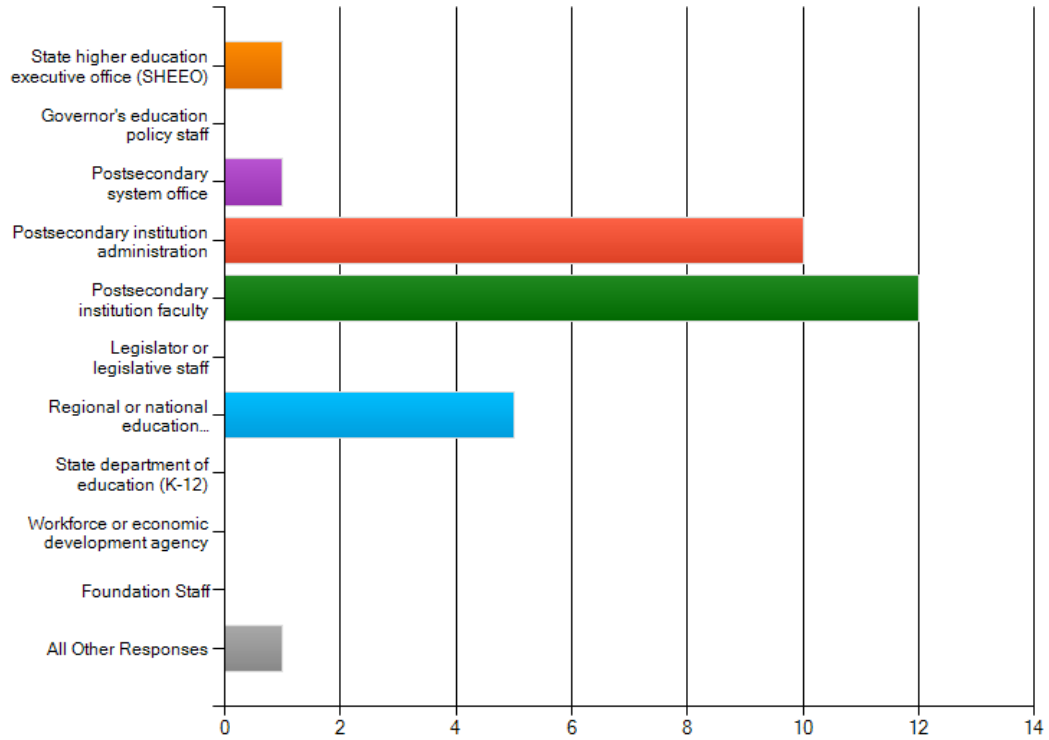
### **Appendix C: Post-Jam Survey Analysis**

At the conclusion of a Jam, it is the common practice of Knowledge in the Public Interest to collect feedback from Jam participants on their perceptions of, and learning from, the Jam experience. The post Jam survey was made available to Jam participants during the last hour of the Jam, and was announced through emails to Jam participants. Direct links to the survey were provided both on the Jam site and in the subsequent emails.

Although a concerted effort was made to gather post Jam survey responses, 31 (or 21%) of the 151 Jam participants completed the post Jam survey (an additional 4 responders did not complete every question). As a result, the following post Jam survey analysis represents the trends of respondents, and does not represent a statistically significant analysis.

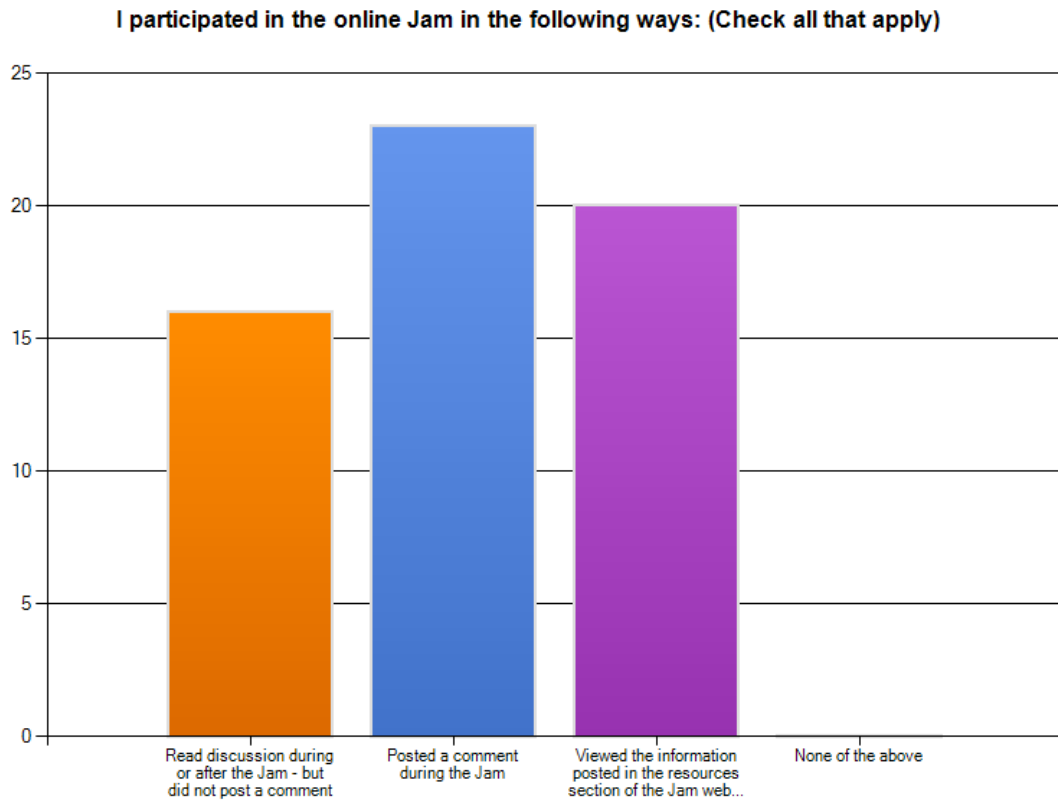
The majority of the responses (73.3%) were from those in the post secondary institution sector: 33% post secondary administrators (n=10) and 40% post secondary faculty (n=12). The responses are therefore heavily weighted from the post secondary perspective. The following chart shows the distribution of responses by identified roles:

The following best represents my professional role (choose only 1).

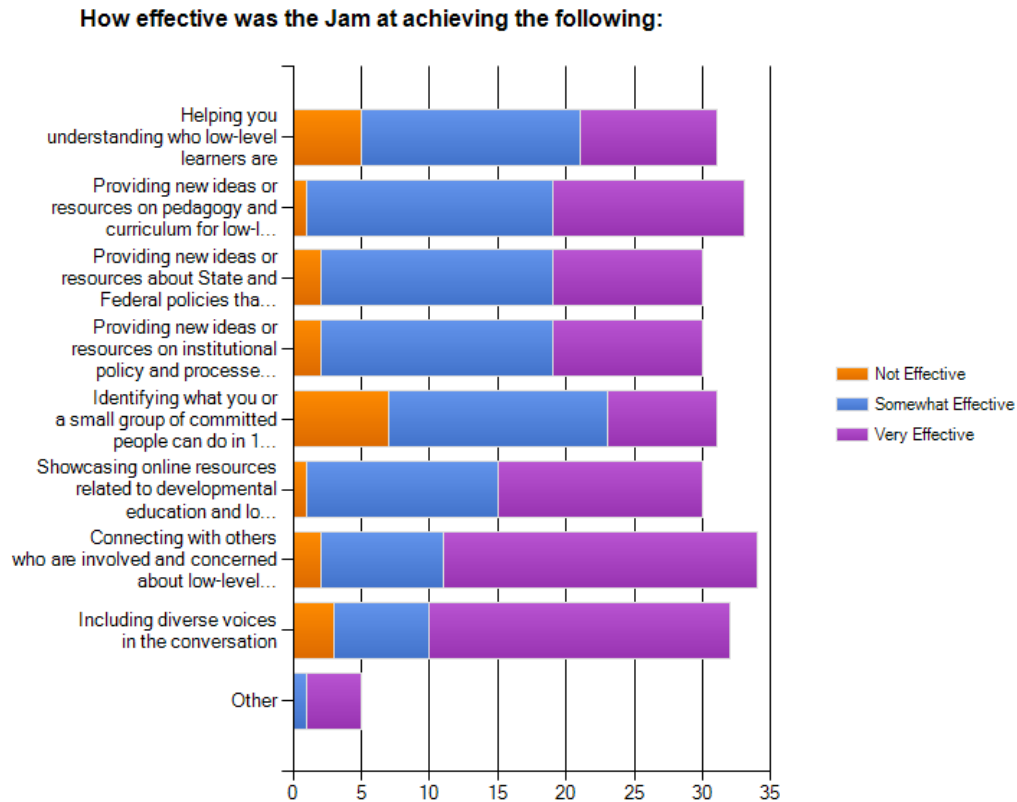


It should be noted that there was not a role category for Adult Basic Education administrators or instructors. The 6 responses from the Other category do include Adult Basic Education roles: State Adult Education team, ABE director, Adult Ed Administrator, Professional Developer-Adult Education. Other categories identified were: Community Based Organization, Post-secondary adult/vocational staff.

1. Of those responding, most participated in the Jam in more than one way. The following chart shows that most of the responders posted comments during the Jam (n=23 or 67.6%). Two of the responders to this question were Jam moderators, and one respondent monitored multiple threads during the Jam.



2. Respondents were asked to rate the effectiveness of the Jam at achieving the Jam objectives and creating new learning. Respondents indicated that the Jam was very effective at including diverse voices in the conversation, connecting with others who are involved and concerned about low-level learners, and showcasing online resources related to developmental education and low-level learners. The Jam was least effective at defining low-level learners and identifying the 180-day agenda for action, although only 16.1% (n=5) and 22.6% (n=7) thought so. Overall, between 100% and 75% of respondents rated the Jam as effective or highly effective in all areas. The following chart shows the breakdown of responses.

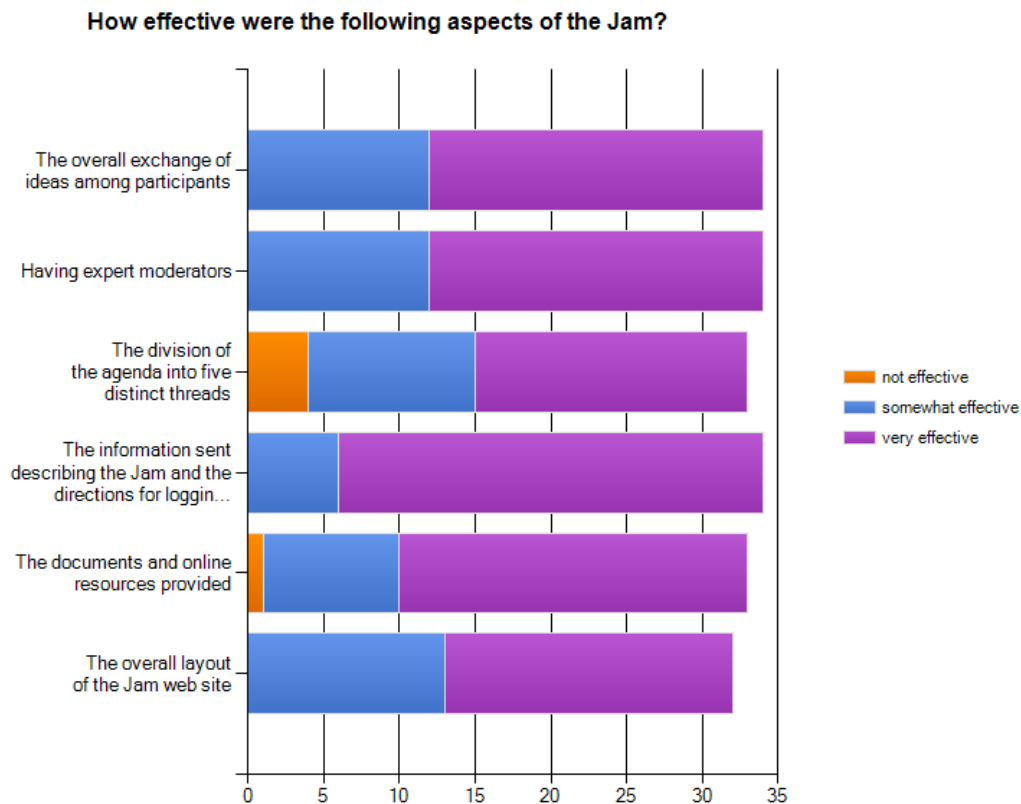


Five respondents indicated that they found the Jam effective or highly effective for the following reasons:

- This was my first JAM experience. The forum was easy to follow and interesting. Because I was away at a conference, I wasn't able to participate until two hours before the JAM closed. Therefore, I didn't feel comfortable jumping in w/comments.
- Reconnecting with ideas: I was suffering from post-conference (7/6-9) withdrawal.
- Gave me insight into the postsecondary view of 'our' adult education learners – how do they see our learners, our programs, the issues of low-level learners.

- It was happening so fast that I missed a post and missed an opportunity to get a contact address from someone who had a great idea.
- There are whole sections of the jam that I haven't gotten to you -- resources page, topic threads, the 180-day idea...I've left a lot of the above blank for that reason...

3. Next, respondents were asked to rate aspects of the Jam. Overall, the majority respondents said that each category was very effective. Of the categories, respondents reported that the division of the agenda into five distinct threads was the least effective, with 12% (n=4) choosing the not effective category. One respondent reported that: *the chat formats of this type of presentation difficult to follow in real-time* while another wrote: *Very well organized and accessible*. The following chart shows the distribution of responses:



4. When asked what was the most important thing that participants took away from the Jam, the 22 respondents said:

- It was good to know others were looking at the same problem. "Encouragement that others are looking at the same issues." "People are working on this from all over the country. This type of exchange and sharing is absolutely necessary if we are to move fast!" "How important it was to begin the conversation that many institutions had tried to have on their own"

- The Jam was a catalyst for changing their own practice. They learned new ideas and approaches. “Ideas on use of MyMathLab” “It instigated me to look at more ideas for change in my professional work.”
- State policies are crucial to moving this agenda, as they define parameters. “State policies are critical to the delivery of services to under prepared students. They give the boundaries as to what is and is not possible.”
- “The diversity of experiences and information was important. It was also reassuring to hear from others who share my concerns.”
- “There is still much to do.”
- Some found validation in what they or their state was doing, while others thought there was much to think about and do yet. “That in our ongoing work here in WA we've got a good handle on the key issues and potential strategies for addressing this issues”
- Some found validation of the assessments they were using with this population, while others thought different types of assessments would better serve this population. “I think that we need to be intentional about how we assess students and look at other avenues than have been explored so far.” “Confirmation: we know who our population is, and we're using appropriate placement testing and methods, materials. “
- Appreciation of the resources found in the Jam and the site “Resources for further examination”
- Learning the national perspective on the issue.
- Better understanding of the college system.
- Distinctions in types of adult students. “That people want a distinction between different types of adult learners.”
- Role of Adult Basic Education in college transitions and connections with colleges. “Adult Educational professionals need to make sure they have a strong supportive presence in the transition to post-secondary conversation. How we are preparing them, what skills/confidence/information they need to succeed. A/E needs to focus not just on helping students reach assessment scores, but be prepared for and honest about their needs. We need to help post-secondary fine-tune intake and support processes for our learners.”
- Meeting people and following up later with them. “Intention to follow up with several individuals about specific things they posted on, highlighting topics I'd like to learn more about...”
- “How to structure a jam.”

5. When asked if the Jam changed any opinions or plans for serving under-prepared students, 71.4% (n=20) said no, and 28.6% (n=8) said yes.
6. Asked what action they will take in the next 180 days, respondents indicated:
  - Discuss the Jam content with others. “Will discuss JAM results with administrators and staff.” “Initiate discussions with faculty”
  - “More policy work.”
  - Look at assessments used. “Work harder at developing effective methods and assessments to help under-prepared students to get through instruction/college quicker.”
  - Use new teaching and advising strategies. “I will adopt a new teaching strategy that I got from the jam. I didn't spend much time on the 180 days agenda thread so I don't know what was discussed. I will review the Jam and see what fits my situation.” “Our college will be proceeding with intentional advising.” “Pass along information to the appropriate faculty about successful programs elsewhere.” “Investigate ‘walk in advising.’”
  - Incorporate the Jam information. “I will incorporate information from this experience into current initiatives geared toward serving our adult learners and their families.” “We're beginning to plan in the fall, will incorporate info picked up from ECS conference and the Jam.”
  - “Re-examine some areas, esp. reading”
  - “Tell people about the power of jams.”
  - Already have an agenda--will go forward. “Nothing specific to the Jam--we'll be following up on our own system recommendations and beginning to pursue particular strategies, resources permitting.” “WV is already in similar discussions; will take longer.”
  - “Monitor the Getting Past Go web site – look for reports from this Jam, and pass them along to those working on transition processes for AE in TN. Pass along how the Jam worked to my colleagues who are interested in using this format for focused discussions on AE topics.”
  - Share resources with others. “Share with members of my staff the “Pedagogy Matters Manifesto” for the purpose of renewal and discuss its application to teaching/education in general.”
  - Unsure. “Not sure. I still need to skim through the posts and summaries. It was a lot of information at once and I needed a little bit of time to digest it all.”
  - “Encourage my facility to make meaningful connections to colleges.”
  - Follow up on connections. “Seek out info on the common core... talk with people encountered in jam (those who said something I want to

follow up on, and those who want to follow up with me on things I said).”

7. Ideas for improvement, general comments, next steps included suggestions for fewer threads in the discussion, more summaries for each thread, moderators staying longer than an hour, white papers as a product, more Jams on this and related topics, and a listing of the 180 day agenda ideas.

- Too many threads. “Five threads were a little much to follow, three probably would have been easier to follow.” “First time trying this format--interesting process, challenging to monitor multiple threads and stay on top of exchanges and issues, but manageable” “Maybe fewer threads? I didn't feel like I could engage in all the questions I wanted to, and I felt several of them had a lot of overlap...”
- More summaries. “I would have liked more summaries from the moderators throughout the day – or perhaps someplace with a running summary of each thread I could have skimmed before jumping in? Seems like participation in the 4pm – 6pm range was very light – as was moderation.”
- “I'd like to see some white papers come out of discussion topics.”
- “I was hoping that someone was going to share the ‘magic’ solution and that I could use this amazing information to develop a plan on our campus.:-)) My plan is to take some of the discussions, some notes I've already forwarded to my deans, and to start some a broader discussion on our campus about using contextualization in more areas of your basic skills courses.”
- Posting in the Jam: “I wish we could have posted as replies to various sub threads of discussion. Because posts came so fast, a reply to one post might follow three or more intervening posts.”
- More Jam discussions. “I look forward to the opportunity to participate more fully in the future. Again, the entire process was very well organized and completely user-friendly. Thank you!” “Great idea--do it again.” “There needs to be much more discussion on this topic, in particular, about the legal implications. The K-12 concept of "inclusion" has no place in college -- and yet there is no specific discussion of this in state or federal policy.”
- Comments on moderators: “Would have liked to see people stay longer than an hour... or at least come back and re-engage if they have to step away.” “Good interaction with moderators. Would like see reaching out to more front-line teachers” “Moderators could have done more to spur conversation; the start was quite slow.”
- Jam report will be valuable. “My perspective is different than many of the JAM participants. It was a great opportunity to gather a lot of information in a short time. The summary analysis will be the most

beneficial result. It is exhausting for me to stay focused as I did no this day. THANKS for the hard work and commitment!!”

- “I thought it was going to be about the lowest students, but many seemed to think it was about all developmental learners.”
- “Provide an extracted listing of the 180 next day thread of ideas”

## Appendix D: Programs and Resources Identified in the Jam

### *Developmental Education:*

Hern, K. (with Snell, M.) (June/July 2010). Exponential Attrition and the Promise of Acceleration in Developmental English and Math. Perspectives. Berkeley, CA: RP Group. Available online at:

<http://www.rpgroup.org/resources/accelerated-developmental-english-and-math>

Students who choose the accelerated path complete college English at TWICE the rate of students who choose the two-semester developmental English path. The main reason: we lose fewer of them in the path. (More info available in the article "[Exponential Attrition and the Promise of Acceleration in Developmental English and Math](#)," posted on the 3CSN acceleration page.)

Resources on the main webpage for the California Acceleration Project: <http://3CSN.org/developmental-sequences>

"Boot Camp" approach (courtesy of Kim Harris): <http://www.breakingthroughcc.org/>

Tennessee Common General Educational rubrics can be found (courtesy of Treva Berryman) at: <http://www.tbr.edu/offices/academicaffairs.aspx?id=2930>

Two websites to start reviewing the redesign of developmental education in Tennessee:

- The FIPSE website (website for The National Center for Academic Transformation) ([www.thencat.org](http://www.thencat.org)), and
- The ECS website (<http://tnredesign.org/>)

Useful recommendations by WCET (courtesy of Dana Reinert): <http://wcet.wiche.edu/advance/state-approval>

Tennessee Board of Regents new Learning Support/Developmental Education policy (courtesy of Bruce Vandal):

<http://www.tbr.edu/policies/default.aspx?id=6746>

Jackson State (Jackson, TN) took what had formerly been 3 developmental math courses and divided them into 12 modules. SMART Math can be found (courtesy of Mary Jane Bassett) at [www.jscc.edu/smart-math](http://www.jscc.edu/smart-math).

Higbee, J. L., Lundell, D. B., & Arendale, D. R. (Eds.). (2005). The General College vision: Integrating intellectual growth, multicultural perspectives, and student development. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, General College, Center for Research on Developmental Education and Urban Literacy. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED492539). Retrieved from <http://purl.umn.edu/5357>

All of the following plus more resources at (courtesy of David Arendale): <http://cehd.umn.edu/passit/>

Higbee J. L., & Goff, E. (Eds.) (2008). Pedagogy and student services for institutional transformation: Implementing Universal Design in higher education. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, College of Education and Human Development. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED503835). Retrieved from <http://www.cehd.umn.edu/passit/docs/PASS-IT-Book.pdf>

Goff, E. & Higbee J. L. (Eds.), Pedagogy and student services for institutional transformation: Implementation guidebook for student development programs and services (pp. 48-50). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, College of Education and Human

Development. Retrieved from <http://www.cehd.umn.edu/passit/docs/guidebook%201.pdf>

Goff, E. & Higbee J. L. (Eds.), Pedagogy and student services for institutional transformation: Implementation guidebook for faculty. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, College of Education and Human Development. Retrieved from <http://www.cehd.umn.edu/passit/docs/guidebook%202.pdf>

The Carnegie Foundation is working with the Dana Center at the University of Texas and others to create a new math sequence that leads from high school/developmental education to, and through, introductory statistics, based on the notion that it is more important for students in many disciplines (and more important to being an informed citizen and consumer of information) to have a mastery of statistics than of college-level mathematics (courtesy of Jacqueline King).

Statway project: <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/statway>

[Knowles theory of Androgogy](#), [Accelerated Learning](#), and the web site for the [Accelerated Learning Project](#) (courtesy of Sara Salyers).

### ***Adult Basic Education:***

A new initiative from Jobs for the Future: Accelerating Opportunity initiative just publicly launched (courtesy of Barbara Endel). This is a new initiative with eleven states engaged to develop accelerated learning strategies for underserved adult basic skills populations. To find out more, go to: [www.acceleratingopportunity.org](http://www.acceleratingopportunity.org).

A recent provocative article on certificates for adults with low skills (courtesy of Heidi Silver Pacuilla): [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mitch-rosin/bridging-the-skills-gap-in-todays-economy\\_b\\_906300.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/mitch-rosin/bridging-the-skills-gap-in-todays-economy_b_906300.html)

Adult learner persistence (courtesy of Ellen Hewett): <http://www.nelrc.org/persist/drivers.html>

Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom: Curriculum Guide (CD), that may be of help to educators. To download it please go to: <http://www.collegetransition.org/publications.icacurriculum.html>

### ***Assessment:***

Outcomes Assessment at LaGuardia Community College: <http://www.lagcc.cuny.edu/assessment/>

[readiness/barriers assessment](#) (courtesy of Kim Harris)

Case Studies of Three Community Colleges: The Policy and Practice of Assessing and Placing Students in Developmental Education Courses (courtesy of Mary Fulton): (MDRC, March 2010)

<http://www.mdrc.org/publications/548/full.pdf>

Press release of new GED revamp: [http://www.acenet.edu/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Press\\_Releases2&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=40286](http://www.acenet.edu/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Press_Releases2&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=40286)

GED passers take a middle position economically between high school dropouts and traditional high school graduates. However, after five years or more, adults with GED credentials earn about the same average wage as traditional grads. These findings come from a new study out using 1997 National Longitudinal Study of Youth data (courtesy of Margaret Patterson): Go to [www.gedtest.org](http://www.gedtest.org) (then click on Publications and Research)

Assessing Developmental Assessment in Community Colleges (courtesy of Mary Fulton):

- Community College Research Center, Working Paper No. 19: <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/Publication.asp?UID=856>

Saxon, D. P., Levine-Brown, P., & Boylan, H. R. (2008). Affective assessment for developmental students, part 1. *Research in Developmental Education*, 22(1), 1–4.

Levine-Brown, P., Bonham, B. S., Saxon, D. P., & Boylan, H. R. (2008). Affective assessment for developmental students, part 2. *Research in Developmental Education*, 22(2).

***Other Resource Sites:***

Maine College Transitions site: <http://www.maine.gov/education/aded/dev/transitions.htm>

SHEEO: [www.sheeo.org](http://www.sheeo.org)

TED talks: [this one is on gaming](#)

## Appendix E: Jam Moderators

**Rosemary Arca** has been an English Developmental Education faculty for over 30 years. She is the Department Coordinator at Foothill College, Los Altos Hills, CA. A lifelong learner, she is also a faculty design team member of Global Skills for College Completion.

**David Arendale** is the co-director of the Jandris Center for Innovative Higher Education at the Univ. of MN.

**Mary Jane Bassett** is the Dean of Academic Support at Jackson State Community College.

**Treva Berryman** is the Associate Vice Chancellor of the Tennessee Board of Regents.

**Sharmila Conger** is a Senior Policy Analyst with the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) national association, and the coordinator for the national collaborative of ESEA Title II SAHE grant administrators.

**Lara Couturier** is the program director for Achieving the Dream, Developmental Education Initiative and Completion by Design at Jobs for the Future.

**Barbara Endel** co-leads *Accelerating Opportunity: A Breaking Through Initiative*, which seeks to fundamentally change the way Adult Basic Education is delivered in 11 states, and to ensure that those states' policies encourage dramatically improved student outcomes in terms of completing credentials of value in the labor market.

**Cynthia Ferrell** is working with the Texas Association of Community Colleges and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board as the Director of the Texas Developmental Education State Policy Initiative.

**Mary Fulton** is a policy analyst with the Education Commission of the States and a member of the Getting Past Go team.

**Rebecca Goosen** is the President-elect of the National Association of Developmental Education and the Associate Vice Chancellor for College Preparatory at San Jacinto College, Pasadena, TX.

**Katie Hern** leads the California Acceleration Project, supporting California's 112 community colleges to shorten and redesign their developmental English, Reading, and Math sequences.

**Ellen Hewett** is the Director of the National College Transitions Network housed at World Education, Boston, MA.

**Jacqueline King** is Assistant Vice President and Policy Research Advisor at the American Council on Education.

**Marisa Klages** is the Director of Outcomes Assessment at LaGuardia Community College, Long Island City, NY and the Director of the national initiative, Global Skills for College Completion.

**Gail O. Mellow** is the President of LaGuardia Community College, Long Island City, NY, one of the most ethnically diverse colleges in the country. Her passion is developmental education, and is a principal investigator in Global Skills for College Completion. She is the co-author of *Minding the Dream: The Process and Practice of the American Community College*.

**Jane Neuburger** is the current President of the National Association of Developmental Education, and a faculty member at Syracuse University where she oversees student support services.

**Margaret Patterson** is the Research Director at the American Council of Education in Washington, DC. She has been researching college success rates of students who obtained a GED credential.

**Dana Reinert** is the Coordinator of the Big 12 Engineering Consortium at Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS

**Gretchen Schmidt** is Program Director for Achieving the Dream, Developmental Education Initiative and Completion by Design at Jobs for the Future.

**Matt Smith** is an Associate Policy Analyst at the Education Commission of the States and a member of the Getting Past Go team.

**JoAnne Thomasson** was the Program Director of Developmental Studies Program at Mississippi State Technical Community College.

**Bruce Vandal** is the Director of the Postsecondary Education and Workforce Development Institute at the Education Commission of the States, which includes the Getting Past Go initiative.

**Diana Woolis** is one of the founders of Knowledge in the Public Interest, a partner in the Getting Past Go project, and a principal investigator in Global Skills for College Completion (GSCC).

## Appendix F: Jam Participants

<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>State</b>
Cheryl Reinhart	Bureau of Legislative Research	Legislative Attorney	AR
Arleen White	Cossatot Comm. College of Univ. of Arkansas	Advisor	AR
Linda Thompson	Harding University	Director, McNair Scholars	AR
Agnes Jose-Eguaras	Antelope Valley College	Director of Basic Skills	CA
Charlotte Forté-Parnell	Antelope Valley College	Dean, IR, Extended Services, L	CA
Barry Russell	CA Community Colleges	Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs	CA
Ellen Yu Costa	CACE	ESL Fam. Lit Instructor/ Curr. Dev.	CA
Krystyna Lett	CACE	Teacher	CA
Virginia Posey	CASAS	Sr. Research Associate	CA
Katie Hern	Chabot College	English Instructor	CA
Mark Lieu	Chancellor's Office, California Community	Basic Skills and ESL	CA
Kevin Kistler	College of the Canyons	Dean, Instructional Support	CA
Matthew Green	Cuesta College	Director, Workforce Economic D.	CA
Karen Chow	De Anza College	BSI Faculty Coordinator	CA
Mo Geraghty	De Anza College	Math Instructor	CA
Rosemary Arca	Foothill College	Department Coordinator	CA
Carol Hedgpeth	ISKME	Senior Research Associate	CA
Bailey Smith	Mt. San Antonio College	Director, Learning Assistance	CA
Meg Livingston Asensio	REL West at WestEd	Director of Education Research	CA
Linda Umbdenstock	RP Group	Research Consultant	CA
Tim Mcgrath	San Diego Mesa College	Vice President of Instruction	CA
Bob Bramucci	SOCCCD	Vice Chancellor	CA

Kelly Stuart	WestEd	Director of Dissemination, DWW	CA
Gully Stanford	College In Colorado	Director of Partnerships	CO
Kendra Rodriguez	Colorado Community College System	Project Manager	CO
Heidi Normandin	Education Commission of the States	Staff Associate	CO
Katie Zaback	SHEEO	Policy Analyst	CO
Sharmila Conger	State Higher Education Executive Officer	Senior Policy Analyst	CO
Qing Lin Mack	Asnuntuck Community College	Director of Institutional Research	CT
Paul Susen	Connecticut Community Colleges	Chief Academic and Student Affairs	CT
Chhaya Rao	American Council on Education	Associate Director	DC
Jacqueline King	American Council on Education	Assistant Vice President	DC
Margaret Patterson	American Council on Education	Research Director	DC
Wanda Fields	American Council on Education	Senior Instruction Specialist	DC
Lorelle Espinosa	IHEP	Director of Policy and Strategy	DC
Lauren Eyster	The Urban Institute	Research Associate	DC
Heidi Silver-Pacuilla	USDOE, OVAE	Supervisor	DC
Carrie Henderson	Division of Florida Colleges	Coordinator	FL
Hope Lynn	Florida Literacy Coalition	Project Coordinator	FL
Robin Matusow	Miami Dade Schools	Teacher-trainer	FL
Amy Denney	Chattahoochee Technical College	Instructor	GA
Alayne Livingston	Cobb County Adult Education	Adult Basic Ed. & ESL Instructor	GA
Cathy Daniels	Okefenokee Technical College	Instructor	GA
Sheryl Trammell	Okefenokee technical college	Instructor	GA
James (Pete) Mills	Okefenokee Technical College	Executive Director of Adult Ed	GA
Sara Mercer	Southeastern Technical College	Adult Education Instructor	GA

Melissa Hodge-Penn	TCSG/Office of Adult Education	Health Literacy/Workplace Educ.	GA
Laurie Kuribayashi	Leeward Community College	Writing Spec./Asst. Prof.	HI
Linda Currivan	UH-Leeward Community College	Professor	HI
Sherry Massman	Northeast Iowa Community College	Adult Transitions Coordinator	IA
Becky Osborne	Parkland College	Director, Center for Academic	IL
Cheryl Orr Dixon	Complete College America	Sr. VP	IN
Judy Weaver	Goshen College	Academic Counselor	IN
Jeanna Keller Berdel	Lumina Foundation	Program Officer	IN
Susan Johnson	Lumina Foundation	Program Officer	IN
Ken Gamber	Hutchinson Community College	Mathematics Instructor	KS
Star Gipson	Hutchinson Community College	Exec. Dir., Academic Support	KS
Dana Reinert	Kansas State University	Project Coordinator	KS
Tim Weldon	The Council of State Governments	Education Policy Analyst	KY
Karen Denby	LA Board of Regents	Assoc. Commissioner, Academic Affairs	LA
Michael Dubson	Bunker Hill Community College	Associate Professor	MA
Barbara Endel	JFF	Program Director	MA
Gretchen Schmidt	Jobs for the Future	Program Director	MA
Lara Couturier	Jobs for the Future	Program Director	MA
Monnica Chan	New England Board of Higher Education	Director of Policy and Research	MA
Thelma Margulies	Northern Berkshire Adult Basic Ed Program	Coordinator	MA
Tara Parker	University of Massachusetts – Boston	Assoc Professor of Higher Ed.	MA
Ellen Hewett	World Education, Inc.	Director, NCTN	MA
Mary Cipollone	Achieving the Dream	Graduate Intern	MD
Nicole Mealander	Achieving the Dream	CTO	MD

Rigo Rincones	Achieving the Dream	National Director of Data Coach	MD
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Karen Kyger	Howard Community College	Instructor, Dev. English	MD
Donna McKusick	The Community College of Baltimore Count	Dean for Developmental Education	MD
Joy Adams	The Community College of Baltimore Count	Learning Assistance Coordinator	MD
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Nancy Dionne	Adult Education Maine Department of Educ.	Professional Development Spec.	ME
Larinda Meade	Maine College Transitions	Coordinator	ME
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Pauline Mcnaughton	Ontario Ministry of Education	Manager, Adult Education Policy	MI
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Sharon Morrissey	NC Community College System	Sr. VP for Academic and Student Affairs	NC
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A. Elena Bogardus	Camden County College	Dean	NJ
Laura Barrett	Rutgers University	Program Associate	NJ
Melissa Barragan	Community College Research Center	Senior Research Asst.	NY
Gail Mellow	LaGuardia Community College	President	NY
Marisa Klages	LaGuardia Community College	Director of Outcomes Assessment	NY
Robert Jaffe	LaGuardia Community College	Senior Administrator	NY

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Jane Neuburger	Syracuse University	President, NADE	NY
Rosemary Russell	Buckeye Career Center ABLE Program	Transitions Coordinator	OH
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Lili Roush	Gallia-Jackson-Vinton JVSD	ABLE Director	OH
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Judy Roberts	Tulsa Community College	Reading Lab Coordinator	OK
Lois Leveen	Consultant-Varies	Consultant	OR
Janet Nishihara	Educational Opportunities Program, Orego	Director	OR
Pamela Czapla	Lock Haven U	Director	PA
Chris Lint	Pennsylvania Highlands Community College	Associate Professor, Basic Com.	PA
Sharon Miles	Community College of RI	Director, Adult Education	RI
Mary H Cooney	The Genesis Center	Lead Learning Facilitator	RI
Duren Thompson	Center for Literacy Studies	Program Coordinator	TN
Mary Jane Bassett	Jackson State Community College	Dean of Academic Support	TN
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JoAnne Thomasson	Pellissippi State	Retired Director	TN

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Johnanna Grimes	Tennessee State University	Director, Writing Center	TN
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Peggy Tennyson	AAMA, Inc/Adelante	Instructional Coordinator/Tran.	TX
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Becky Baer	Diboll Family Learning Center	GED/ABE teacher	TX
Lisa Theriot	El Centro College	Executive Dean	TX
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Rebecca Goosen	San Jacinto College	Vice Chancellor for College Pr	TX
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Donna Jovanovich	VCCS	Director of Institutional Eff.	VA
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Cindy Holland	Neighborhood House, Inc.	Educational Navigator	WA
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Jon Kerr	Washington State Board for Community and	State ABE Director	WA
Phyllis Frank	Washington State Board of Education	Board member	WA
Elizabeth Marie Van Meter	Eastern WV Community & Technical College	Mathematics Instructor	WV
Sarah Tucker	WV Community and Technical College System	Research Analyst	WV