

Skills-Builders

Understanding Skills-Builder Students

Skills-builder students are experienced workers who take a limited number of community college courses to maintain and add to skill sets required for ongoing employment and career advancement. Although numerous research studies have shown that skills-builder students secure significant earnings gains, they are not currently included in state accountability metrics. Many practitioners are now calling for skills-builder outcomes to be factored into statewide measures and goals. For example, recognizing skills-builder outcomes was a recurring theme in regional meetings held in early 2015 to inform the Board of Governor's Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation, and a Strong Economy.

There are several ways to learn more about skills-builder students and weigh in on the best way to capture skills-builder outcomes.

[Student Success Scorecard Metric](#): Read about a proposed skills-builder metric for the Student Success Scorecard, examine skills-builder outcomes by region and by sector using this definition, and participate in regional meetings about local outcomes.

[Skills-Builder Videos](#): View videos explaining the need for an expanded definition of success and the diversity of workforce training pathways, plus download discussion guides that are tailored to various constituencies.

[Skills-Builder Research](#): Access several studies on skills-builder students.

Student Success Scorecard Skills-BUILDER Metric

The Chancellor's Office, working with the Vocational Education Research and Technical Advisory Committee (VERATAC), has spent more than a year examining various approaches and developed a proposed skills-builder metric for the Student Success Scorecard.

This proposed metric and its implications for career and technical education programs are summarized in [a statewide guide](#) as well as regional guides. The guides answer the following questions:

How was the proposed skills-builder metric created?

What types of students are skills-builders?

How many skills-builders are there?

Are skills-builders securing higher earnings?

Are skills-builders earning a living wage?

What would it mean to have a skills-builder metric on the Student Success Scorecard?

In spring and summer 2015, the Centers of Excellence will be scheduling meetings with regional consortia across the state to engage practitioners with their regional skills-builder data, which has also been broken out by sector. By looking at the figures together, community college deans, directors, and faculty can make meaning of the numbers and discuss their local programs and student populations. In addition, these meetings will provide an opportunity to better understand the proposed skills-builder metric and give feedback on its appropriateness for inclusion on the CTE Scorecard.

Click on the links below to download the guides and to [find contact information for the Centers of Excellence directors](#).

Statewide Guide

- [What Gets to Count: Constructing a Skills-BUILDER Success Metric](#)

Regional Guides

- [Central Valley-North](#)
- [Central Valley-South](#)
- [East Bay](#)
- [Greater Sacramento](#)
- [Inland Empire](#)
- [Los Angeles](#)
- [Mid-Peninsula](#)

- [Mother Lode](#)
- [North Bay](#)
- [Northern Coastal](#)
- [Northern Inland](#)
- [Orange County](#)
- [San Diego-Imperial](#)
- [Santa Cruz-Monterey](#)
- [Silicon Valley](#)
- [South Central Coast](#)

Skills-Builder Videos

[Building More Comprehensive Measures of Workforce Training Success](#)

This four-minute video explains why including factors such as wage gain, employment retention, and third-party certification would better capture the full range of career and technical education outcomes.

[How Workforce Pathways Shape College Outcomes and Earnings Gains](#)

This eight-minute video examines the multiple types of workforce training offered by community colleges and their associated earnings gains, as a means of documenting the value of both short-term and long-term educational pathways.

Discussion Guides

Download these four-page resources, tailored to various constituencies, for ideas on how to structure conversations around the videos and possible actions to take.

- [Policy makers](#)
- [College leadership](#)
- [Career and technical education directors](#)
- [CTE faculty](#)

Skills-Builder Research Studies

[The Ones That Got Away: Why Completing a College Degree Is Not the Only Way to Succeed](#) draws on numerous studies to explore alternative approaches to measuring how well community colleges serve career and technical education students.

[The Missing Piece: Quantifying Non-Completion Pathways to Success](#) describes the types of courses skills-builders take, their earnings gains, and implications for measuring student success, as well as providing questions that could be used to discuss the research.

[What's Completion Got to Do with It?](#) is a discussion guide that looks at broad student course-taking patterns and examines how these relate to the issue of improving completion outcomes.

[The Labor Market Return in Earnings to Community College Credits and Credentials in California](#) is a technical report providing detailed documentation of the earnings outcomes of various pathways of study.