

Strong Workforce Program Incentive Funding FAQ

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Data Sources

1. What outcomes are colleges required to report?

Colleges do not need to report outcomes data—information will be automatically populated in the LaunchBoard Strong Workforce Program tab. To ensure data is available in the LaunchBoard, colleges should:

- Submit MIS data to the Chancellor’s Office in a timely manner
- Include locally-issued certificates in the MIS upload if your college does not already do so
- Participate in the CTE Outcomes Survey

2. Where do data for the Strong Workforce Program metrics come from?

The metrics come from the following sources:

CTE FTES, Course Enrollment, Credential Attainment, Progress & Transfer metrics	Chancellor’s Office MIS (CO MIS), Department of Apprenticeship Standards (matched with data from CO MIS), National Student Clearinghouse match (matched with data from CO MIS)
Most Employment and all Earnings metrics	CA Employment Development Division’s (EDD) Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records (matched with data from CO MIS)
Employment Related to Field of Study metric	Career & Technical Education Outcomes Survey (CTEOS)

3. If I collect information on third-party credential attainment at my college, can I submit that data to the Chancellor’s Office to be included in the Strong Workforce Program metrics and the incentive funding formula?

Third party credential data (other than apprenticeship data captured through a data match with the Department of Apprenticeship Standards) is not currently part of the Strong Workforce Program metric calculations because student-level information is not available for all California community colleges. Including metrics that rely on college data uploads in the Strong Workforce Program formula would be unfair--some colleges that serve as testing centers and who have access to student-level data could report outcomes, but most colleges and programs could not. Furthermore, national efforts to capture third-party credential data have found that the value of specific credentials varies considerably by both credential provider and by region, making it difficult to determine which should be counted in outcome measures. The Chancellor's Office is pursuing ways to capture comprehensive third-party data that has proven labor market data value so that this information can be incorporated down the line, but right now, it is not included.

Metrics

Cohort

4. Is there a minimum number of CTE units or contact hours that a student must attain to be counted in the Strong Workforce Program outcome measures?

The answer depends on the metric in question.

- For credential attainment, there is no unit or contact hour threshold, students must simply obtain a CTE degree or certificate to be included. *NOTE: after a data analysis that revealed earnings increases of more than 12% for students with very low unit awards, in pathways that were similar to skills-builder pathways, it was determined that all awards should be included.*
- For progress, a student must obtain 12 CTE credit units or 48 noncredit CTE contact hours at that college within a single academic year.
- For transfer, to be counted a student must have taken a CTE course in the selected year prior to transferring to a four-year institution.
- For most employment and earnings metrics, students must have taken at least 0.5 non-introductory units in a CTE credit course or at least 12 contact hours in a CTE noncredit course in the year prior to exiting the California Community College system (and not transferred to another institution of higher education).
- The exceptions to this definition are the “Employment Related to Field of Study,” which is a calculation based on responses to the Career and Technical Education Outcomes Survey, and both “Improved Earnings” and “Attained Living Wage,” which only include exiting students that either completed a degree or certificate (of at least 6 credit units or 48 noncredit contact hours) or were an exiting skills builder (student that took 0.5 or more non-introductory credit units in CTE, passed all vocational courses in the selected year, did not receive a degree or certificate in the selected year).
- The course enrollment metric is a count of CTE registrations and is not a student headcount.

For a full list of metrics and their calculations, please visit the Strong Workforce Program Incentive Funding page on the Doing What Matters website:

<http://doingwhatmatters.cccco.edu/StrongWorkforce/StrongWorkforceProgramIncentiveFunding.aspx>

5. What kinds of noncredit CTE programs are included in the Strong Workforce Program metrics and incentive funding formula? Is this limited to CDCP programs only?

All noncredit CTE courses and awards of over 48 contact hours are included, whether or not they are CDCP approved.

6. Who are economically disadvantaged students and how are they used in the funding calculation?

To incentivize colleges to close equity gaps, more points are awarded in the incentive model for those who are designated as economically disadvantaged students (EDS), per the definition used for the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006:

- Awarded a Board of Governors Waiver
- Awarded a Pell Grant
- Identified as a CalWORKS participant
- Identified as a participant in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program
- Reported as economically disadvantaged

Most metrics	EDS will receive points worth 1.5 times what non-EDS receive
Progress metrics	EDS receive .75 points for attaining 12 credit units, compared to .50 points for non-EDS
Course Enrollment, Second Quarter Earnings, and Employment Closely Related to Field of Study metrics	No Weighting: These measures are based on calculations that are not easily aligned to the status of students

7. Perkins establishes a threshold for the number of units that students must earn before they enter the Perkins cohort. Because Strong Workforce Program is using the Perkins definition of Economically Disadvantaged Students, would students need to meet a similar unit threshold before they are included in the Strong Workforce Program incentive funding calculation?

Students do not need to meet the threshold number of units required under Perkins to be included in the Strong Workforce Program metrics or the economically disadvantaged student weight. Students must simply meet the economically disadvantaged definition under Perkins (regardless of other Perkins requirements) to get extra weight in the Strong Workforce Program incentive funding model, when applicable. Data on Perkins eligibility is based solely on the flags available in MIS.

8. Are economically disadvantaged students in LaunchBoard? How are they shown in relationship to the Strong Workforce Program metrics?

The LaunchBoard Strong Workforce Program tab is being rebuilt over summer 2017 to include a view that shows point totals for the incentive funding formula and another view that shows disaggregated data (including economically disadvantaged students). In fall 2017, colleges and regions will be able to view information for years prior to 2016-17. In January 2018, they will be able to see 2016-17 outcomes and points.

[Progress Outcomes](#)

9. When does a student get credit for reaching the progress metric thresholds? Does a student have to complete 12 credits in the same TOP code or CTE program?

A college gets credit for a student reaching the progress milestone if the student completes 12 CTE credit units or 48 noncredit CTE contact hours at that college within a single academic year. These credits/contact hours must be in CTE, but do not need to be within the same CTE program or TOP code.

10. If a student obtains 12 CTE units through credit by exam earned in high school, will he or she be included in the progress metric?

Credit by exam units are treated in the same way as other units, so a student who obtained 12 or more CTE units through credit by exam will be counted in the progress metric if those units are awarded at the college in a single academic year.

11. What types of units count—for example, are electives included?

Course enrollment calculations include any enrollment that is in a course with a vocational TOP code. So if the elective is in a CTE TOP code, it would be included (such as a digital skills course) but if it is in a non-CTE TOP code (like a biology course), it would not be.

Credential Attainment Outcomes

12. What counts in the completion metric?

To be counted in the completion metric, a student must earn one of the awards listed below. Recognizing that longer-term awards yield stronger economic outcomes over time, the Strong Workforce Program incentive funding formula awards points as follows:

Chancellor’s Office-approved certificate of 12 to < 18 units	1 point
Locally-issued certificate <18 units	
Noncredit award < 288 hours	2 points
Chancellor’s Office-approved certificate of 18 to < 30 units	
Noncredit award of 288+ hours	3 points
Chancellor’s Office-approved certificate of 30+ units	
Associate’s degree	
California Community College bachelor’s degree	
Apprenticeship journey status	

13. If a student receives multiple awards, does the college get credit for each award?

For the credential attainment metric, each student will get credit for only one award per college per academic year. If a student gets multiple awards from a single college in the same academic year, the college will get credit for the award with the highest point value. If a student gets awards from multiple colleges (within a district or in different districts) in the same academic year, then each college will get credit for the highest point award it conferred on the student in that academic year. If a college gives a student one award in an academic year and another award in a subsequent academic year, the college will get credit for the highest point award conferred on that student in each of the academic years.

14. Do certificates of under 12 units need to be Chancellor’s Office approved in order to be counted?

All students who earn awards will be included in the funding formula, whether or not those awards are Chancellor's Office approved. Colleges can upload data on awards that are not Chancellor's Office approved to MIS. If your college is not doing so, you will need to include these awards in order for students to be counted for the funding formula. In some cases, this will require changes in practice, so that low-unit awards are recorded in local data systems. Uploading data on locally-approved certificates to MIS does not mean that they are Chancellor's Office approved.

Transfer Outcomes

15. Does the transfer metric include both CTE and non-CTE programs?

No, all of the Strong Workforce Program metrics, including transfer, capture outcomes of CTE students only.

16. Where does the transfer data come from? What kinds of programs does it capture? For example, are online programs included?

There is a metric on transfer to a four-year institution, which is calculated for students who enrolled in non-introductory CTE courses or earned a CTE award while in community college. The information is derived from a match with the National Student Clearinghouse. The National Student Clearinghouse data sets includes all four-year institutions that are eligible for federal financial aid.

Employment and Earnings Outcomes

17. Where do employment and earnings data come from?

Most employment and all earnings metrics come from the California Employment Development Division's (EDD) Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records, which are matched with data from the Chancellor's Office MIS system, using students' social security numbers. The only exception is the "Employment Related to Field of Study" metric, which comes from the Career & Technical Education Outcomes Survey (CTEOS).

18. To obtain employment and earnings data on our students, do we need to contract with California Employment Development Department?

No. This match is conducted by the Chancellor's Office, and the data will appear automatically in the LaunchBoard Strong Workforce Program tab.

19. Who and what is included in the EDD UI wage records file?

The UI wage records are based on information reported by California-based employers about the individuals who worked for them and how much money they were paid in each fiscal quarter. This information does not capture elements such as how many hours the individual worked or whether the job related to the student's field of study.

Several categories of workers are excluded from the UI wage file, including individuals employed by the military or federal government, and those who are self-employed, in the cash economy, employed out of state, unemployed, or not in the workforce after completion of an award.

While there are many caveats to the data, it is currently the most comprehensive source of employment and earnings data, with 70-80% of former community college students successfully matched to the UI wage file each year.

20. Are there other ways to capture employment data on the students who are missing from the state wage file?

The CTE Outcomes Survey captures information on students who may be excluded from the state wage file, which would be reflected in the “Employment in Field of Study” metric. The Strong Workforce Program incentive funding calculation does not currently include alternative data sources for the other employment and earnings metrics.

21. What is the lag-time on the employment and earnings data? How does that affect the incentive funding calculations?

There is an 18-month lag on displaying employment and earnings data. Data is only reported on students who have exited the community college system, which is determined by ensuring that students do not enroll at any California community college for one year. Colleges do not have to report final information on the prior academic year until October, which means that the data match with EDD, and the subsequent rebuilding of the LaunchBoard tab with the results, occurs between November and December. Because of the lag, employment and earnings data can only be included in the first two of the three years of data used to calculate the incentive funding.

22. Are those the dollar values in the earnings metrics adjusted for inflation?

Yes.

23. How is the “Employment Related to Field of Study” metric generated?

Former CTE students are sent the CTE Outcomes survey, which includes the question: *If you are working, how closely related to your field of study is your current job?* Students who answer either “Very close – my current job is the same field as my coursework and training” or “Close – I used what I learned in my coursework and training even though I am not working in the exact same field” are counted in this metric.

Funding

Funding Rounds and Calculations

24. What are the timelines for each funding round?

The following timeline is proposed, subject to legislative approval:

Funding Round	Funding Round Years	83% Funding Calculated	17% Incentive Funding Calculated	Outcome Years included in Incentive Funding Model
Round 1	2016/17	July 2016	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Round 2	2017/18 to 2020/21	July 2016	January 2018	2016-17
Round 3	2021/22 to 2024/25	End of FY 2020-21		2017-18 to 2019-20

In order to give colleges time to report 2016-17 enrollments and completions, the 83% share of the Round 2 funding will be calculated at the beginning of the fiscal year (July 2017) and the 17% incentive funding will be calculated midway through the fiscal year (January 2018). For subsequent funding rounds, both the 83% and 17% will be calculated in January of the fourth year of the cycle, to provide regions and colleges with time to plan before the funding is distributed for the next round.

25. Who does the funding calculations?

For the 83% share, regional unemployment rate and the projected job openings are calculated by the Chancellor’s Office, using data from ESRI. CTE FTES is calculated based on data in the LaunchBoard. For the 17%, points are generated using the LaunchBoard and translated into dollar allocations based on available funding by the Chancellor’s Office.

26. Do the recalculations of funding for Round 2 and 3 only apply to the 17% incentive funding?

For Round 2 funding, the 83% share will remain the same as in Round 1, but the 17% will be recalculated based on course enrollments and credential attainment. For Round 3, both the 83% and the 17% funding will be recalculated.

27. Will the funding calculated for 2017-18 be locked in for four years or will it be recalculated annually? Is this true for both the 83% and the 17% shares? Is this the same for both local and regional funds?

If the legislature approves the Chancellor’s Office recommendations, both the 83% and the 17% funding will be calculated once per funding round for both local and regional funds. The allocation would then be locked for all four years of that funding round, with funds distributed to districts and regions annually. If the legislature allocates more or less funding for each year within a funding cycle, the college and regional allocations will be adjusted proportionally.

28. Which metrics are included in each round of funding?

Outcomes will be assessed for a college’s entire CTE portfolio. Below is a list of Strong Workforce Program metrics that are included in each round of incentive funding:

Course Enrollments	Round 2 only
Credential Attainment	Round 2+
Progress	Round 3+

Transfer	
Employment	
Earnings	

For a full list of metrics and their calculations, please see the Strong Workforce Program Incentive Funding Metrics At A Glance document on the Doing What Matters website.

<http://doingwhatmatters.cccco.edu/StrongWorkforce/SWPIncentiveFunding.aspx>

29. Do colleges accrue points annually for use in the incentive funding model?

Local and regional points accrue annually. Then annual point totals will be summed across years to determine the overall points obtained for each incentive funding cycle round.

30. Several colleges in our region are planning to share a program where some of the advanced courses are offered by one college or the other. In this scenario, who gets the points for a student who has credit from multiple colleges?

Which college gets credit for a student’s outcomes depends on the metric in question.

- For “Course Enrollments,” each college will get credit for the enrollments associated with the courses they provide.
- For “Credential Attainment,” the college(s) that award students CTE degrees or certificates will get credit for those awards. For example, if a student earns a certificate from College A and a degree from College B, each college will earn points that correspond to the award they conferred on the student.
- For “Progress,” colleges earn points for a student who completes 12 CTE credit units or 48 noncredit CTE instructional contact hours at their institution in an academic year. Any of the colleges who reach that threshold for a student in an academic year will earn points for progress. For example, if a student earns 12 units from College A and 12 units from College B in the same academic year, both colleges get points for that student’s progress. If a student earns 5 units from College A and 7 units from College B, then neither college gets credit for progress for this student.
- For “Transfer,” the college where the student last took a CTE course prior to exiting the California Community College system and transferring to a four-year institution would get points for this metric.
- For “Employment in the 2nd Fiscal Quarter after Exit,” “Employment in the 4th Fiscal Quarter after Exit,” and “Median Earnings in the 2nd Fiscal Quarter after Exit,” the college where the student last enrolled in a non-introductory CTE course of at least 0.5 units or last took at least 12 noncredit CTE contact hours before exiting the California Community College system would earn points for these employment metrics.

- For Employment Related to Field of Study, each college whose students met the threshold for inclusion in the CTE Outcomes Survey would earn points for positive outcomes for this metric.
- For “Increased Earnings” and “Attained a Regional Living Wage,” if the student was a skills-builder, the college where the student last enrolled in a non-introductory CTE course of at least 0.5 units or last took at least 12 noncredit CTE contact hours before exiting the California Community College system would earn points for these earnings metrics. If the student earned a degree or a certificate, and subsequently exited the California Community College system, the college that issued the award would receive the points. If both colleges issued separate awards in the same year, both would receive points.

31. We are still cleaning up our data through the Code Alignment Project. Can a previous year’s points be re-calculated once corrected data is submitted? Could these points be adjusted retroactively?

Because points are awarded for participation in any CTE programs, and because only course enrollments and credential attainment are being measured in Round 2, the data used for funding would only be impacted if the college had assigned a CTE course or award to a non-vocational TOP code.

If the legislature approves the four-year funding cycle, colleges would have until fall 2020 to clean up their TOP and SAM codes to ensure that courses and awards are appropriately assigned to vocational TOP codes and that SAM codes reflect which courses are non-introductory.

Funding Distribution

32. How are funds distributed to the colleges? Is funding allocated separately for credit and noncredit CTE programs?

The local share funding is distributed to community college districts. It is up to the districts how the funds are distributed to colleges within the district, including allocations for credit or noncredit programs.

Similarly, the regional funding is distributed to the region, and it is up to the regional consortia how those funds are distributed to colleges.

33. When will the funding be distributed to the districts and regions for both the 83% and the 17%?

For 2017-18, 83% of the funds will be distributed in the fall, after allocations are approved at the September 2017 Board of Governor’s meeting. The remaining 17% will be distributed in the spring, after allocations are approved at the March 2018 Board of Governor’s meeting. In both cases, funding can be spent retroactively to July 1, 2017.

In future years, funding for both the 83% and the 17% will be distributed each fall, after allocations are approved at the September Board of Governor’s meeting, with expenses allowed retroactive to July 1.

Spending Guidelines

34. Can regions and colleges spend 2017-18 funds before the plans are submitted?

Yes. Regions and colleges can spend funds starting July 1, 2017.

35. Will the colleges need to track the 17% their spending funding separately from the 83%?

No. Expenditure reports should be for all portions of the funding.

36. Will each year's allocation under Round 2 and Round 3 have a 30-month expenditure timeline?

Yes. Each year's allocation has a 30-month expenditure timeline.

Grant Reporting Requirements

37. For Round 1, what type of reporting is required?

In October 2017, through the new NOVA reporting system, regions and colleges will enter expenditures for 2016-17 and the first quarter of 2017-18, and address any budget revisions for Round 1 funding.

Planning

38. When are the regional and local plans due for 2017-18?

Regional plans are due between January 31-March 1, 2018. College plans will be due between March 31-June 1, 2018.

39. Do the 2017-18 Strong Workforce Program plans have to be approved before funding is distributed?

No. In 2017-18, funding will be distributed in fall 2017 (83%) and early spring 2018 (17%). Plans are not due until after the funds have been received.

40. Are there separate plans needed for the 83% and the 17%?

No. Colleges can submit a single plan for the full funding amount.

41. How long are plans good for? Will the planning cycle be repeated each calendar year? What do we need to do on an annual basis?

Provided that the legislature approves the proposed four-year cycle, plans should address all four years. Each year, colleges and regions should update their plans to reflect any changes.

Resources

42. Where can I find more details on the Strong Workforce Program metrics and incentive funding model?

The Chancellor's Office has created a dedicated page on the Strong Workforce Program incentive funding formula, and the associated metrics, on the Doing What Matters website:

<http://doingwhatmatters.cccco.edu/StrongWorkforce/SWPIncentiveFunding.aspx>

This page includes:

- Resources on the outcomes metrics definitions, including a high-level summary and a detailed data element dictionary.
- Resources on the funding formula, including an infographic, a funding-formula-at-a-glance document, and a detailed description of the funding formula.
- Links to recorded webinars and PowerPoint presentations.

43. Where can we see our college's or region's point allocation and the Strong Workforce Program metric outcomes?

The Strong Workforce Program metric outcomes are posted on the LaunchBoard Strong Workforce Program tab, located here: <https://www.calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx>

Point totals for years prior to 2016-17 will be available in fall 2017. Point totals for 2016-17 will be available in January 2018.

44. While the points calculation will be by district, will there be reporting by college to see contribution by college?

Data in the LaunchBoard Strong Workforce tab shows results by college and by region.

45. Who can get a LaunchBoard log-in? How does one do that?

You must have a Cal-PASS Plus log-in in order to access the LaunchBoard. Log-ins are available to anyone who works for an educational institution that is a member of Cal-PASS Plus (which includes all California community colleges). Membership in Cal-PASS Plus is free, but requires that institutions sign an MOU regarding data usage.

If you do not have a user name or password, you can request one (using your community college title and email address) here: <https://www.calpassplus.org/User/Login.aspx>