

**ADULT EDUCATION UPDATE REPORT (February – August 2020)  
TO THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING**

Thursday, August 13, 2020

**Please summarize the overall impact that the COVID pandemic has had on the overall operations of the statewide adult education program at McKinley Community School for Adults and Waipahu Community School for Adults.**

The COVID pandemic has impacted the Waipahu Community School for Adults (WCSA) in several ways. It has affected the quality of our student's education, overhauled our teaching platform and methods, and caused higher levels of uncertainty for all.

The quality of education has been compromised in that students are experiencing a drastically different learning style, including studying from home. Majority of our students benefit the most from direct instruction, in a face-to-face setting. Working independently at home can be challenging to them as they have many personal and employment responsibilities that may affect their study time. Those of lower economic status are also not able to afford the equipment needed to access our virtual and online classes. It has been a paradigm shift for the adult education employees too.

Teachers have had to put in a lot of time to learn how to conduct virtual lessons and adapt their curriculum to this new style. They have had to recreate their learning materials, find alternate means to teach the content, and deal with the technical challenges that come with using distance learning technology.

With federal and state direction changing as the pandemic evolved, our leadership team has had to create plans to best meet the needs of our students and our employees in providing the best education possible while incorporating safety measures. Running operations status quo has not been the norm, the ability to adapt and innovate has been.

On a positive note, despite these circumstances, our staff has certainly risen to the challenge and gone above and beyond to provide the best education opportunity we can for our students. Kudos to our students have also been doing their best to adapt to the "new norm" and adjust to their new modes of learning and environments.

**Please explain how services are being delivered at the Community School for Adults. What is the staffing level, hours of operation, accommodations made for COVID?**

WCSA did not stop delivering services throughout the entirety of the pandemic. As soon as the "Stay at Home" proclamation was made and put into effect, WCSA converted all subjects/classes to distance learning formats. We also converted our registration process to include an on-line registration option. As of today, we are still offering our classes through in-person, as well as distance learning options at our various campuses and sites. In an effort to help with the financial burden of our students, we have waived our registration fee beginning with Spring Term II and have continued through summer and also Fall Term I. Waiving of fees for Fall Term II are to be determined. WCSA continues to be fully staffed for the 2020-2021 school year. We are currently back to regular office hours where students can walk in to make

an appointment to schedule testing, register or purchase books and supplies. We also schedule appointments for registration and pickup of books and supplies.

**How many students did each Community School for Adults serve in the last fiscal year (July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020)?**

Campus/Site	NRS Count	Non-NRS Count	Total
Waipahu	771	472	1243
Wahiawa	452	170	622
Windward	423	830	1253
Hilo	250	232	482
Kona	74	147	221
<b>WCSA Total</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>1851</b>	<b>3821</b>

“NRS Count” encumbers students who were enrolled in an NRS Program. These would be High School Equivalency (GED or HiSET), Workforce Development Diploma Program, Adult Basic Education, Workplace Literacy, iCAN and English Language Acquisition.

“NON-NRS Count” accounts for students who were enrolled in a non-NRS classes such as GED or HiSET (testing only), ParaPro Assessment testing, Substitute and Recertification classes, and Special Interest classes.

A student can be included in both an NRS and NON-NRS count. This is because an NRS student can take a NRS class like HSE Prep and then be enrolled in a Non-NRS class such as a GED test within the same program year.

**What other data does the Community School for Adults collect and what are the performance goals/measures?**

WCSA collects a variety of data on its clients. These include demographic, enrollment, assessment, education, and employment data. The two main performance goals/measures we are held accountable for are Measurable Skills Gains and a Follow-up Survey.

A Measurable Skills Gain, for students who receive 12 or more contact hours, a WIOA-required indicator, is used to measure a person’s progress toward achieving a credential or employment. An MSG can be achieved in the following ways as provided by the *National Reporting System for Adult Education*:

1. **Educational functioning level gain** can be demonstrated in one of three ways:
  - o Comparing a participant’s pretest with the participant’s posttest, using an NRS-approved test
  - o Awarding Carnegie Units or credits in an adult high school program (enough to move to 11th- or 12th-grade status according to state rule)
  - o Enrollment in postsecondary education and training after exit

2. *Receipt of a secondary credential, which can be demonstrated by obtaining passing scores on state-approved high school equivalency tests or obtaining a secondary diploma or state-recognized equivalent.*

*Participants in other WIOA partner programs can also demonstrate MSG by demonstrating progress from a secondary or postsecondary transcript, progress toward milestones, and passing a technical/occupational knowledge-based exam (shown in Figure 1).*

An employment and post-secondary education survey are required for all funded Adult Education (AE) programs. The Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) requires AE programs to follow-up twice on all funded students who exit their program: at 2 quarters (between 90 and 180 days) and 4 quarters (between 270 and 365 days) after exit. The survey asks for current employment status (full, part-time, unemployed); salary, if employed; and enrollment at any postsecondary institute or training program.

### **What actions have been and/or being planned to overcome the challenges/barriers because of COVID?**

WCSA will continue to try and offer, as close as possible, the services we have offered pre-pandemic. We have also implemented measures that will allow for students to complete their college and career goals, while factoring in safety precautions. These mainly included a new online registration process, financial support, distance learning with the inclusion of virtual instruction and providing technology to our students.

WCSA will continue to refine our registration procedures to allow for the least amount of physical contact as possible. We have found our online registration option to be very convenient and easy for our students to use.

Courses were offered free during the Spring 2020 Term 2, Summer and Fall 2020, Term 1. Students expressed a lot of appreciation for this as their employment status was often affected during this time.

Throughout the initial “Stay at Home” order, WCSA revamped our teaching models to include distance learning options for all subject areas previously offered.

We will also continue to improve our delivery of distance learning classes and support our teachers’ ability to deliver instruction through computer-based means. Finally, we have been lending out computers to those students who do not have a computer or other technology but would like to do learning remotely and have the means to connect to Wi-Fi.

### **Please share accomplishments/success stories from your organization.**

Waipahu Community School for Adults has experienced many accomplishments and success throughout this challenging time on student, faculty, and school levels.

On the student level, students adjusted to the virtual and online learning opportunities very well. They expressed a lot of appreciation for their committed and caring teachers and school staff. It

created a greater sense of independent learning on their part and they rose to the challenge. For many, even our English Language Acquisition Learners, they found a new sense of accomplishment in learning how to use distance learning to further their education. As our teachers and personnel build close relationships with their students, they feel supported and encouraged to complete the course.

On the faculty level, teachers were pushed beyond what they thought they could do in terms of technology and different modes of teaching on to becoming very adept at them. The new online registration procedures, minimizing physical contact, has been successful. It requires a different means of dealing with the students, but it foremost, ensures the safety and well-being of both students and WCSA personnel.

On the school level, WCSA was able to provide, as close as possible, all the services we once did before the initial "Stay at Home" decree. We were able to run classes, beginning with only online classes to a combination of virtual and online classes, to face-to-face ones. Many of our partners continued to work with us to enable their clients to finish their goals. Once we re-opened, we immediately resumed GED and HiSET testing at all our campuses. Many were finally able to graduate and move on to postsecondary education or careers. Even all our Hawaii Youth Challenge Academy students remained in residence at their respective Youth Challenge facility on the islands of Oahu and Hawaii. We were able to get permission to enter their facility and do HiSET and WDDP testing, to allow those students to complete their program.

This pandemic has not been without its challenges but it has also brought about a team effort that enabled our students to fulfill their dreams of earning their degree, improving their English Language skills, and/or moving on to college and pursuing their future career goals. It was one more step forward that instilled a great sense of pride, a sense of accomplishment that they never believed they could do and steering them back on the path to the life they hoped to have. WCSA continues to adapt with the CDC, federal, state and city and county guidelines while maintaining the "second chance" career and education opportunity that students entrust us to help them fulfill. WCSA has certainly evolved to maintain its vision of providing a place "Where Learning Never Ends".