

BERKELEY ADULT SCHOOL

English as a Second Language (ESL), Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Secondary Education (ASE) Skills Benchmarks, 2014-15

The California Department of Education makes grants of federal literacy funds formerly known as the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), as of the current fiscal year known as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Grants go to adult education providers, primarily K-12 adult schools such as Berkeley Adult School. Two factors control the size of these grants: (1) the amount of federal literacy funds available to California, and (2) past performance of each participating education provider. Provider performance is measured in terms of indicators of student learning gains. Most commonly, the indicators correspond to score improvements on widely accepted standardized tests of adult literacy, known as CASAS (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System). When a student demonstrates one of these indicators, the student has “earned a benchmark” for the school. The table below summarizes the benchmarks considered in the WIA program and the corresponding dollar value.

Summary of Benchmark Types and Dollar Value of Benchmarks

Program Area	Value per Benchmark (2015-16)
Adult Basic Education (ABE) and English as a Second Language (ESL): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advancing to the next level (e.g., from Beginning Low ESL to Beginning High ESL, as measured by CASAS test)• Progressing within a level (as measured by CASAS test)	\$216.89
Adult Secondary Education (ASE) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advancing to the next level (e.g., from ASE Low to ASE High, as measured by CASAS test)• Progressing within a level (as measured by CASAS test)• Passing the California High School Exit Exam• Passing a test to earn High School Equivalency (GED or HISET)	\$444.35
English Literacy and Civics Education (EL Civics) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Passing performance assessments on specific community engagement skills (e.g., specific skills for participating in health care)	\$95.06

The next table shows the number of benchmarks earned each year since 2008-09.

Historic Data – Benchmarks Earned by BAS

Program Area	Benchmarks Earned Each Year							
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16*
ABE/ESL	1,663	1,534	1,398	1,540	1,544	1,816	1,728	1,925
ASE	147	217	204	269	252	502	516	574
EL Civics	1,587	1,785	2,211	2,292	2,611	2,011	1,963	1,793
Totals	3,397	3,536	3,813	4,101	4,407	4,329	4,207	4,292

*pending certification

The data for the years displayed show, generally, an upward trend in the number of benchmarks earned per year. The most dramatic change in the data is the increase in ASE benchmarks from 2012-13 to 2013-14. ASE benchmarks are those earning the highest dollar value in the grant. 2015-16 set a new high for BAS by awarding 180 high school diplomas. EL Civics benchmarks show a significant decline in the same period; this corresponds to CDE action in 2013-14 which reduced the number of EL Civics benchmarks each student could earn. EL Civics benchmarks are also the lowest in dollar value and considered the easiest to earn.

CDE is to send the official WIOA Grant Award Notification for 2016-17 in early October. CDE staff have unofficially communicated to us that we should expect an award of \$808,095. These funds must be used exclusively for adult literacy. Funds are to supplement an adult education program by, for example, increasing student access, enriching the bank of instructional materials, and providing professional development for staff. The amount of WIOA funds stated in the Grant Award Notification for 2016-17 will be available to Berkeley Adult School regardless of our performance on benchmarks in 2015-16. The number of benchmarks we earn in 2015-16 will, however, influence the size of our award in 2017-18.