

Newsletter Issue #18, Dec. 5, 2016



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PIAAC PRISON STUDY HIGHLIGHTS

The long-awaited PIAAC prison assessment findings were released by the American Institutes for Research (of NCES) on November 15. Results are available in detailed analyses and data files at the [PIAAC website](#), and in a special highlights report titled [Highlights from the U.S. PIAAC Survey of Incarcerated Adults: Their Skills, Work Experience, Education, and Training](#).

The highlight report, featured here, provides a summary of the findings for incarcerated adults in literacy and numeracy in terms of scores on a 0–500 scale and as percentages reaching the proficiency levels set for the

domains. Results are given in terms of employment status prior to incarceration, experience in prison jobs, skills certification, education attainment before prison, and participation during incarceration in academic programs and training classes. The report contains some two dozen tables, and various "exhibits" including definitions, an explanation of methodology, and what proficiencies adults possess who score at or below levels 1 and 2.

Note that although inmates were assessed for problem solving in technology rich environments, only 61% were able to take the test by computer (compared to 81 percent of adults in the household survey). Thus, results are available in the statistical analyses reports but not given in the highlights report. Caution is urged in comparing findings in that area with those in the household assessment.

The prison assessment surveyed people aged 16–74 in 98 federal and state prisons, or in private prisons housing state and federal inmates. Of the 98, 80 were male-only or co-ed, while 18 were female-only. An introductory chapter compares profiles and skills of the incarcerated adults who participated in the study with those of non-incarcerated adults from the main PIAAC household assessment.

General overall findings

Table 1.1 of the report shows the percentage distribution of U.S. adults in selected population groups by various characteristics. By gender, 93% of the test takers in the prison population were male, compared to 49% in the Household assessment. By race/ethnicity, the prison test takers were 34% White, 37% Black, and 22% Hispanic. Corresponding numbers for the Household assessment were 66% White, 12% Black, and 14% Hispanic. By age, in the prison cohort 35% were aged 25–34 and 24% were 34–44; in the Household population both age groups were 18%. By education attainment, 64% of the prison group reported having a high school credential as their highest level of attainment; 50% did so in the Household survey. 30% of the prison group reported below high school level, more than twice the level of the Household group at 14%. In recidivism, 73% of the inmate test takers were previously incarcerated. By country of origin, 93% of inmate test takers were born in the U.S.; in the Household population, 86% were

household population, 66% were.

Tables 1.2 and 1.3 of the highlights report show that the average literacy score of the U.S. prison test takers was 249, contrasted to 270 for Household scores. Percentages for those below Level 2 in literacy was 29% and 19% respectively. The average numeracy score of the U.S. prison group was 220, contrasted to 255 for those in the Household survey. The percentage below level 2 was 52% and 29% respectively. The differences are considered statistically significant.

Drawing on the numerous report tables, AIR presents a selection of fifteen key findings in a Summary section of the report, as shown below:

Comparison of U.S. incarcerated adults to the U.S. household population

- The U.S. incarcerated population had lower average literacy and numeracy scores than the U.S. household population.
- Compared to their peers in the general U.S. household population, Black and Hispanic incarcerated adults scored lower on average in numeracy, but not measurably different in literacy.
- Average literacy scores were not measurably different between incarcerated adults and their household peers with the same level of educational attainment.
- In numeracy, incarcerated adults whose highest level of educational attainment was a high school credential scored lower on average than adults living in households with the same level of educational attainment. The same was true when comparing the average numeracy scores of those with less than a high school credential.

Prison jobs and skills use

- Around two-thirds (66%) of the survey's respondents reported that they were employed prior to their incarceration and 61% reported currently having a prison job.

-- 48% of younger prisoners (18-to-24-year-olds) were employed prior to their incarceration and 50% reported currently having a prison job. Among 55- to 65-year-olds, 70% were employed prior to their incarceration and the same percentage reported currently having a prison job.

-- Incarcerated adults with higher levels of education were more likely to have a prison job: 48% of those having less than a high school credential had prison jobs compared with 73% of those holding Associate's degrees.

-- Incarcerated adults with a prison jobs scored higher on average literacy than their peers without a prison job; however, average numeracy scores were not measurably different.

-- Many incarcerated adults reported never having to use their literacy or numeracy skills in their current prison job.

Participating in education and skills training in prison

-- 42% of incarcerated adults completed some level of formal education during their current period of incarceration.

-- Over two-thirds (70%) of incarcerated adults wanted to enroll in an academic class or program.

-- Among incarcerated adults who wanted to enroll in an academic class or program, 80% wanted to do so either to learn more or to improve their job prospects after they get released.

-- Incarcerated adults who wanted to enroll in academic classes or programs of study scored higher on average in literacy and numeracy than their peers who did not want to enroll.

-- 23% of incarcerated adults participated in job training programs during their current prison term.

-- Incarcerated adults who had participated in job training programs scored higher on average in literacy and numeracy than those who had

not participated.

The Highlights report is difficult to interpret when it comes to drawing out policy and workforce development actions. But consistent with findings in the household survey, those at lower education levels, certain minority groups, and young people and those tending to middle age should probably be a strong focus of state and federal policy and program development, in both adult education generally and in workforce skills development. Moreover, it would be worthwhile to identify and evaluate the make-up and effectiveness of education and training programs/services offered in prison settings, including efforts to make more inmates eligible for available education and job training programs.

The full report is available [HERE](#).



NEWS IN BRIEF



Skills for Good Jobs: An Agenda for the Next President –

Adult education and workforce skills development are interconnected and they have been strongly bipartisan causes since the Reagan years. As PIAAC data alone shows they need continued, even increased, funding in the Trump administration. Numerous adult education and workforce skills groups, including Business Leaders United and the National Skills Coalition (NSC), are starting to meet with Trump leadership to urge such investments. With input from many of its members, NCS has developed a special agenda to support this process. For a copy of the publication and to enhance your own efforts in this area, go [HERE](#).



On November 15, six federal departments issued a 11-page **joint**

letter giving guidance on how to align financial aid resources to support low-income students in their college-going and college completion efforts. The departments were Agriculture, Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Labor, and Treasury. The letter provides links to more than 30 resources related to programs and services of the various departments. The U.S. Department of Education items have to do with the Ability to Benefit provision of HEA, a foster care transition tool kit, a homeless youth fact sheet, and non-regulatory guidance on the Education for Homeless Children and Youths program. Resources from the other departments have to do with SNAP, TANF, the Child Care and Development Fund, the Rental Assistance and Housing Choice Voucher Programs, Pell and Unemployment Insurance, and numerous other programs. The guidance document notes that "accessing and completing postsecondary education is one of the surest ways low-income individuals and their families can break the cycle of poverty, become financially self-sufficient, and achieve a better quality of life." To obtain the guidance letter, go [HERE](#).



[Jobs for the Future](#) has appointed Maria K. Flynn its new President and CEO, effective December 15. As President she joins the JFF board of directors. Ms. Flynn was formerly Sr. Vice President in charge of JFF's *Building Economic Opportunity Group*, a program she directed for over a decade. She came to JFF from the U.S. Department of Labor where she was in charge of the Office of Policy Development and Research in DOL's Employment and Training Administration (overseeing a budget of \$12 billion and some 1200 employees). She is deeply experienced in workforce development and related adult education, and widely published. In accepting the appointment, Ms. Flynn said: "In this time of national divisiveness, JFF's work to help communities create strong education and economic systems is more urgent and compelling than we've seen in a long time. I look forward to continuing our collaboration work with funders and partners across the country."



A new **Integrated Education and Training (IET)** project has been jointly launched by the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium (NAEPDC), the Center for Law & Social Policy

(CLASP), and the Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE). The group is conducting a survey among local teachers, administrators, and program partners to provide information about the kinds of IET models they have in their adult education programs. The effort aims to share practices and to support the fuller and more effective use of IET for professional and policy development purposes. To complete the survey, go [HERE](#).



Preserving Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) is a high priority for many groups in the adult education field. The California Community Colleges (CCC), the University of California, and the California State University recently joined forces to ask President-elect Trump to continue DACA so that children of undocumented immigrants can pursue higher education in the U.S. In announcing the action, CCC Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley noted that the three college systems "are committed to supporting all students, including those pursuing their higher educational goals through this important program." "It is vital," he said, "that these students, who were brought to this country as children, have the ability to learn without fear of being deported." The three college systems have thousands of DACA students at their campuses. Their letter is available [HERE](#).



The Adult Schools Growth Forum – [NCES data provided in mid-2016](#) indicates that young adults who are neither enrolled in school nor working (those defined by NCES as ages 18–25) very likely have limited future prospects. In 2015, 13 percent of young adults aged 18–19 and 17% of those aged 20–24 were not in school or jobs, with persons from poor families making up a disproportionate share of these totals. On December 1st, partly in response to this reality, the U.S. Department of Education teamed up with the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy to host an invitation-only event, called the *Adult Schools Growth Forum*, in Washington, D.C. Its purpose was to explore the feasibility of increasing to 100 or more nationally the number of high-quality and adequately financed adult and family charter schools, pilot schools, or other schools for adults over the next three years. Among the event's moderators and panelists were Johan Uvin, Ted Mitchell, and Cheryl Keenan (U.S. Department of Education), Roberto

Rodriguez (Deputy Assistant to the President for Education), Allison Kokkoros and Karen Rivas (Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School) and a number of other charter school officials, Shaun Terry (Goodwill Excel Center), Nelson Smith (National Association of Charter School Authorizers), and Liza McFadden (Barbara Bush Foundation). The forum will result in a published paper in which key recommendations will be given for future action. *[Note: As part of the adult charter school movement in Washington, D.C., Councilwoman Elissa Silverman is encouraging expansion of the Kids Ride Free bus program (supplemented with a cash stipend for metrorail use) to provide transportation help to financially needy adult charter school students.]*



The [Center for Law & Social Policy](#) has launched a campaign titled ***Our Youth, Our Economy, Our Future: A Road Map for Investing in the Nation's Talent Pipeline***. Noting that some 5.25 million young people (aged 16–24) are not attached to school or work, it urges an investment strategy among national, state, and local groups to identify and invest in solutions to "connect youth and young adults to education, work, and opportunity." Specific recommendations are given on how to do this (see [HERE](#)), and organizations that embrace the recommendations are urged to [sign on](#) and support the Road Map.



The **Center for Disease Control** is one of the pre-eminent centers of activity and information on health literacy. The CDC's health literacy program has been headed up by Cynthia Baur for many years; the CDC's go-to person for this issue. Ms. Baur will leave the CDC on December 9th to become director of the University of Maryland's School of Public Health Horowitz Center for Health Literacy. A new CDC program director will be named. The CDC will remain committed to health literacy and plain language work, and is planning to revamp its health literacy website in the near future. For the present, the CDC health literacy group can be reached from emails listed in the [health literacy section of the CDC website](#). After January 8, Ms. Baur can be reached at the University of Maryland.



How Will Adult Education Fare in the Administration of

President-elect Trump? – Nobody currently knows what the incoming Administration will do to support Adult Education (or the Department of Education for that matter). This puts state and local planning for adult education, family literacy, and related workforce skills in a quandry. In the short term, the Republican-controlled Congress is likely to extend the Continuing Resolution (in effect until Dec. 9) until the end of March or April. This means that Congress and the Administration will be in the opposition of simultaneously closing the books on FY17 and developing a budget for FY18. The new Congress will undoubtedly be emboldened to cut aggregate levels of discretionary spending. But it may also focus more attention on job skills development, consistent with the pledge to bring jobs back to America. Among the positives that may bode well for adult education are these: As governor of Indiana, Vice President-elect Michael Pence ([see Work INdiana!](#)) provided major funding to adult education. Rep. John Yarmuth (D-KY) will be the ranking member of the House Budget Committee next year. Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA) will be the top Democrat on the House Education Committee. Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN), who understands and has supported adult education over the years, will likely continue as chair of the Senate HELP Committee, with Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) as the top Democrat on that Committee. Incoming Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) will replace her Republican opponent (Mark Kirk) on the House Education Committee. Among other adult education allies in Congress will be Senators Jack Reed and Tammy Baldwin. Sen. Tim Kaine is a vocal supporter of CTE, which has enjoyed significant bipartisan support. Senators Catherine Cortez Masto and Maggie Hassan have not yet been given committee assignments, but they are probable allies. Adult education and workforce skills leaders across the country should stay or get in touch with these Congressional leaders to keep pressing the case for Adult Education. Funding for the Title II Adult Education State Grant program will be frozen through March or April at the FY16 level ((\$588,700 million). Also frozen will be the \$13.7 million for National Leadership activities. *[Ed. Note: The situation may not be as optimistic as suggested here. We should prepare ourselves for the worst but be diligent, hopeful, and as proactive as possible. It may help to remind some of our colleagues that both Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush were strong supporters of adult education and literacy. Also, we should keep in mind that Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-NC) will chair the*

House Education and Workforce Committee. She favors dismantling the Education Department and has been more vocal about Higher Education than Adult Education while serving in Congress. But as a former community college president, she probably understands the population needing adult education services. Under any circumstance, and given the huge service need, strong state support for Adult Education is of vital and growing importance, as is leadership from the business community.]



Manhattan Strategy Group (working with World Education) has been awarded the contract to operate the national **LINCS Professional Development Center** (replacing 4 regional centers). A detailed OCTAE fact sheet on the new Center is in preparation. It will give a newly-stated vision for the PD Center including its specific goals and the grant procurement process. A temporary fact sheet is available [HERE](#).



XPRIZE Update – The Barbara Bush Foundation Adult Literacy XPRIZE competition is currently in its "Solution Development" phase, with 109 teams expected to finalize their entries by Spring 2017. In April or May, 15 semi-finalist teams will be announced and the Solutions testing phase will begin. For more info about the XPRIZE program, go [HERE](#).



Wiggio became the base for subscribers to the general adult education discussion list when the AAACE listserv ceased to operate a few month ago. It has just announced that it will close down its own operations on January 5th. Moderator David Rosen is in the process of establishing a new venue and will soon be in touch with subscribers about conversion.



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EVENTS & OTHER RESOURCES



Webinars, Conferences, Other Events

- * **The American Youth Policy Forum** – On December 7, AYPF will hold a webinar called *Leveraging Voice and Advocacy to Support Pathways to Success*. For more information and to register, go [HERE](#).
- * **The Center for Law & Social Policy** – CLASP is taking registrations now for its December 9th national audio conference. It will provide *data on poverty and involuntary part-time work*, with reports from four states that have laws in place to address the problems of part-time employees. Click [HERE](#) for more information and to register.
- * **Jobs for the Future** – JFF will offer four webinars between December 12 and January 30: *Early Alert Systems: Seamless Integration of RTI and College Success Monitoring Practices* (Dec. 12), *STEM Pathway Development* (Jan. 12), *STEMatic Strategies for Implementation of Early College STEM Programs* (Jan. 26), and *Organizational Structures and Strategies that Promote Problem-Based Learning Environments* (Jan. 30). For information and to join the webinars, Click [HERE](#).
- * **World Education** – On January 26, World Ed will hold the final in its series of webinars to build integrated education and training (IET) programs. The webinar will focus on *Contextualized Variations of I-BEST*. To register, go [HERE](#).
- * **The National Skills Coalition** – NSC's *2017 Skills Summit* will take place February 5–7, 2017 in Washington, D.C. For the agenda and to

register, go [HERE](#).

* **Apprenticeship Forward** – AF will convene a *national conference of practitioners from the apprenticeship field* on May 4–5, 2017 in Washington, D.C. The event will focus on key challenges facing the expansion of apprenticeships. It will include industry associations and employers, unions and labor–management partnerships, CBOs, community colleges, high schools, workforce boards, and federal and state policymakers. The event has multiple sponsoring partners and is supported by several foundations. For more information click [HERE](#).

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From America's Promise Alliance – APA (aka GradNation) has issued an open letter to children and young people across America. It is their way of encouraging adults to show the young people in their lives that we stand with them as they face the future. The letter is available as a resource in both English and Spanish. It can be accessed [HERE](#).



From the Annie E. Casey Foundation – On October 25, the Foundation hosted a webinar to highlight tools and solutions for integrating trauma–responsive practices into youth programs and help move traumatized young people along pathways to success. The long–term goal of Casey's work is to advance strategies to help young people succeed in school and on the job. The webinar (1 hour and 12 minutes) was recorded as a public service, and is available [HERE](#) for viewing.



From the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) – (1) [Better Data, Better College Workforce Programs](#) (by Laura Walizer, Nov. 2016). (2) [From Incarceration to Reentry: A Look at Trends, Gaps, and Opportunities in Correctional Education and Training](#) (Wayne Taliaferro, Duy Pham, and Anna Cielinski, Oct 2016). (3) An issue brief titled [Employment Pathways for Boys and Young Men of Color: Solutions and Strategies That Can Make a Difference](#) (Kisha Bird and Clarence Okoh, Sept. 2016). (4) An [eloquent statement from CLASP on the 2016 Election](#) (Nov. 17).





From Education Week – (1) [Special Report: The Changing Face of Literacy](#), including an article titled *Common Core Gives Only a Nod to Digital Skills*. (2) [International Tests Show Rising, But Mixed, Math and Science Performance](#) for school students in the U.S. and abroad (Nov. 29). (3) [Teachers' Moral Imperative to Challenge Political Hatred: Politicians Must Be Held to Standards of Human Decency](#) is a compelling commentary by teacher Lucas Jacob of the La Jolla Country Day School in the U.S. (Nov. 29). [NOTE: To view *Education Week* articles in full, you may be asked to register. Short-term registration is free.]



From the National Center for Families Learning – The December 2 issue of the NCFL newsletter features a *KQED News Mind/Shift* article titled [What's Going on Inside the Brain of a Bilingual Child?](#) The article is part of an NPR series about how the U.S. can educate the nearly 5 million children currently learning English. It results from ongoing research in bilingual education and comes at a time when bilingual education is on the increase.



From the National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy of the Migration Policy Institute – A new NCIIIP study (Maki Park, Margie McHugh, and Caitlin Katsiaficas) discusses the role of parent-focused adult education programs in promoting two-generation success for immigrant parents and their young children. [Serving Immigrant Families Through Two-Generation Programs: Identifying Family Needs and Responsible Program Approaches](#) provides socio-demographic analyses that point to the specific services needed by immigrant and refugee parents, highlight successful programs, and emphasize the challenges facing planners and service providers in Adult Education as they seek to meet immigrant parents' needs within the context of WIOA's new mandatory performance measures.



From the National Skills Coalition -- (1) NSC's [Letter to House and Senate appropriators](#) about *protecting investments to prepare America's workers for in-demand middle-skill jobs*. The letter may be inspiring to others who want to speak out about the importance of such

funding. Note that numerous organizations signed onto the effort, including NCAL. (2) NSC is in the midst of a project called the State Workforce and Education Alignment Project (SWEAP). In the effort, focus is on seven states (CA, MS, OH, RI, IN, MD, and OR) and the NSC–developed "data tools" these states have implemented to inform and align their state workforce development policies. A variety of resources are available at the NSC website including articles, infographics, reports, and data tool fact sheets (including four specific to CA, MI, OH, and RI). To obtain the material, go [HERE](#). (3) [**Skill–Based SNAP Employment and Training Policy**](#) is a 12–page toolkit for those whose skills and credentialing programs aim to help SNAP participants move to self–sufficiency. The toolkit provides policy guidelines, examples of state action, and models of both programs and legislation. The publication grows out of a federal study, [**The SNAP Employment and Training \(E&T\) Best Practices Study**](#), which was informed by some 160 studies of SNAP E&T workforce development programs.



From the U.S. Department of Education – (1) [**English Language Proficiency Standards for Adult Education**](#); (2) [**Career Pathways Toolkit: An Enhanced Guide and Workbook for System Development**](#); (3) [**U.S. Department of Education Awards \\$104 Million to Support Minority Serving Institutions**](#). This November 16 press release lists the institutions, states, amounts, and grant purposes. CA accounts for the greatest number of awards. (4) [**New Federal Guidance and Resources to Support Completion and Success in Higher Education**](#). This fact sheet includes state–by–state data on four–year–graduation and cohort default rates from 2012–14. (5) [**New Graduate Earnings Data for Career College Programs**](#), to help students make more informed college enrollment choices. (6) [**Citing Prison Inmate Literacy Study, King Calls for More High–Quality Education Programs in Correctional Facilities**](#). (7) [**FACT SHEET: Reducing Recidivism for Justice–Involved Youth**](#) (Dec. 2). The news release provides a link to "You Got This", a guide for transitioning youth. A link is also given for a practitioner transition toolkit.



From World Education – [**Professional Development Offerings 2016–17**](#). a 15–page catalog of adult education professional

development services offered by World Ed, including workshops, study circles, webinars, technical assistance, and coaching. For more information on particular catalog listings, contact [Leah Peterson](#).

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