FAQ for Strong Workforce Program Incentive Funding

Updated June 2023

Table of Contents

Focus of FAQ

This FAQ focuses primarily on the metrics and calculation of those outcome metrics for the 17% Strong Workforce Program (SWP) allocation funding with additional information provided on the changes to 17% SWP funding and its distribution to colleges and regions.

For more information on the Strong Workforce Program including California Community College Chancellor's Office guidance, planning, labor market research, and more, please visit the Chancellor's Office website at: https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Workforce-and-Economic-Development/Strong-Workforce-Program.

Updates to Strong Workforce Program Metrics

1. Did the Strong Workforce Program metrics change?

In 2022-23, the Strong Workforce Program (SWP) metrics did not change from the prior 2021-22 version. However, significantly more students were identified as enrolled in postsecondary for 2022-23 compared to the previous build. The increase in the number of students identified as enrolled in postsecondary has led to higher values for the transfer metric. However, the increase has also led to fewer students considered as exiting all postsecondary, which impacts the following employment and earnings metrics, since those metrics require students to have exited all postsecondary to be included: Job in Field of Study, Median Annual Earnings, Median Change in Earnings, and Attained the Living Wage. All changes are outlined in the Changes in Definitions_June 2023 document.

In 2021-22, the Strong Workforce Program (SWP) metrics did not change from the prior 2020-21 version. However, there was a change made to the underlying student definition for SWP and slight updates to calculations based on issues for alignment with other dashboards. All changes are outlined in the Changes in Definitions_Sept 2022 document.

In 2019-20, the original SWP metrics were aligned with the Student Success Metrics (SSM) and to the Student Centered Funding Formula (SCFF). In 2018, the Chancellor's Office worked with a group of practitioners to develop the Student Success Metrics, a set of system-level measures that represent a holistic assessment of the California community colleges' work on student success. SWP aligned with the Student Success Metrics by adopting the measures that are relevant to assess the outcomes of career education students.

In 2017-18 and in 2018-19, prior to the development of the Student Success Metrics and to the Student Centered Funding Formula, SWP included different metrics that were established by practitioners from across the community college system based on research conducted on incentive funding practices in other states. For more information and to access data for those original SWP metrics for 2011-12 through 2016-17, please refer to the archived classic version of the SWP dashboard.

2. What are the Strong Workforce Program metrics?

The Strong Workforce Program metrics have been updated to align with the Student Success Metrics. The table below compares the SWP, SSM and SCFF metrics for 2021-22.

California Community Colleges

Metric Type	Strong Workforce Program	Student Success Metrics	Student Centered Funding Formula
Momentum: Noncredit Workforce Milestone	Same definition as Student Success Metrics for all CTE students meeting minimal enrollment requirement	Students with a noncredit workforce milestone	N/A
Momentum: 9+ CTE Units	Same definition as Student Success Metrics for all CTE students meeting minimal enrollment requirement	Students who completed 9+ career education units	Same definition as Student Success Metrics
Success: Awards	Unduplicated number of students who earned an award counted only in the highest level of attainment for students who earned an award on a TOP code assigned to a vocational sector: 1. CA Community College bachelor's degree or Attained Apprenticeship Journey Level Status 2. Associate degree or certificate of 30+ Units 3. CO approved certificate of 16 to 30 units or noncredit certificate of 288+ contact hours 4. CO approved certificate of 8 to 16 units or noncredit certificate of 48 to 288 contact hours	Unduplicated number of students in each of the award types	Unduplicated number of students who earned an award counted only in the highest level of attainment: 1. Associate degree for transfer 2. Associate degree 3. CA Community College bachelor's degree 4. Chancellor's Office approved credit certificate over 16 units
Success: Transfer to a Four-Year Institution	Same as Student Success Metrics for all CTE students meeting minimal enrollment requirement	Unduplicated count of students who transferred to CSU/UC, private in-state or out-of-state college, who earned 12+ units at any time and at any college	Unduplicated count of students who transferred to CSU/UC, private in- state or out-of-state college, who earned 12+ units in the district in the selected year prior to transfer
Employment: Job in Field of Study	Same definition as Student Success Metrics for all CTE students meeting minimal enrollment requirement	Students who reported that their job is closely or very closely related to their field of study for CTE students who did not transfer and who exited the community college system	N/A
Earnings: Median Annual Earnings	Same definition as Student Success Metrics for all CTE students meeting minimal enrollment requirement	Median annual earnings for exiting students who did not transfer	N/A
Earnings: Median % Change in Earnings	Same definition as Student Success Metrics for all CTE students meeting minimal enrollment requirement Note: For 17% SWP Incentive, the number of students who had a wage gain is used for determination of points and dollars.	Median change in earnings for exiting students who did not transfer	N/A

Metric Type	Strong Workforce Program	Student Success Metrics	Student Centered Funding Formula
Earnings: Attained the Living Wage	Same definition as Student Success Metrics for <u>all CTE students meeting minimal enrollment requirement</u>	Exiting Students who did not transfer and who attained the 2020 living wage for a single adult in the district county	Exiting Students who did not transfer and who attained the 2018 living wage for a single adult in the district county

Data Sources

1. Are colleges required to report student outcomes to populate the Strong Workforce Program metrics?

Colleges do not need to report outcomes data through a separate reporting process. Information from the colleges' annual Chancellor's Office Management Information System (MIS) and results from the CTE Outcomes Survey will be automatically populated in the LaunchBoard Strong Workforce Program dashboard. To ensure data is available in the LaunchBoard, colleges should:

- Submit MIS data to the Chancellor's Office in a timely manner
- Participate in the CTE Outcomes Survey

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

The metrics come from the following sources:

Unit and Contact Hour Attainment and Credential Attainment Metrics	Chancellor's Office Management Information System (MIS) and Department of Apprenticeship Standards (matched with data from MIS)
Transfer Metric	National Student Clearinghouse match and CSU/UC match (four-year data are matched with data from MIS)
Most Employment and all Earnings Metrics	California Employment Development Division's (EDD) Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage records (matched with data from MIS)
Employment Closely 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 SWP metric calculations because student-level information is not available for all California community colleges. Including metrics that rely on college data uploads in the SWP 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.

Metrics

Strong Workforce Program Students

1. Who is considered a CTE student?
To be considered a CTE student for Strong Workforce Program, a student must meet the following three criteria:

- Has a record in the Student Enrollment Data Elements (SX) file in the selected year on any Taxonomy of Program (TOP) code that is assigned to a vocational industry sector (NOTE: a course or award is considered to be CTE if it is on a TOP code flagged with an "*" in the TOP Code Manual. In addition, SWP considers students to be in a CTE Education and Human Development program if they take a course with TOP code 083600: Recreation, even though it is not flagged as vocational in the TOP Code Manual but is mapped to a sector.)

- Is enrolled as a non-Special Admit student in at least one term of the selected year (meaning that in the selected year, the student was not only taking a dual enrollment or other early college credit course)

- Took at least 0.5 units in any single credit course or had at least 12 positive attendance hours in any noncredit courses at any college on any Taxonomy of Program (TOP) code or enrolled in noncredit courses in Spring 2021 or in any term in academic year 2021-22.
  - Positive attendance hours in two TOP06 codes, Tutoring (493009) or Supervised Study Skills (493014), are not included to align with the Adult Education Pipeline since exploration has found that those hours are typically recorded for credit students as noncredit support courses

Note: This definition has been updated as part of the 2021-22 builds to refresh with the latest data submitted to MIS by colleges.

2. What kinds of noncredit CTE programs are included in the Strong Workforce Program metrics and incentive funding formula? Is this limited to Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP) programs only?
All noncredit CTE courses and awards of over 48 contact hours are included, whether or not they are CDCP approved.

3. 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 Governor's Waiver
- Awarded a Cal Grant C

- Awarded a Pell Grant
- Awarded an SEOG (Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant)
- Identified as a CalWORKS participant
- Identified as a participant in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program
- Reported as economically disadvantaged

For more information, see the metric SW 106 Perkins Economically Disadvantaged in the Metric Definition Dictionary linked on the SWP dashboard.

Weighting of Students Who Have Ever Been Flagged as Economically Disadvantaged in the 17% SWP Incentive Funding (in use beginning with 2017-18 data):

Most Metrics	EDS willreceive points worth twice what non-economically disadvantaged students receive
Job Closely Related to Field of Study Metric	No weighting will be used because data is based on a sample of former students, which may not represent the proportion of economically disadvantaged students who met this goal
Median Earnings Metric	No weighting will be used because the measure is based on a range of earnings by former students

4. 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.

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

The LaunchBoard Strong Workforce Program dashboard includes a drill down option that shows all metrics disaggregated by economically disadvantaged status.

Progress Outcomes

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

A college gets credit for a student reaching the progress milestone if the student completes at least 9 CTE credit units with a grade of A, B, C, or P, completed a noncredit CTE or workforce preparation course, or had 48 or more contact hours in a noncredit career education or workforce preparation course.

In the SWP metrics, these credits/contact hours must be in CTE, but do not need to be within the same CTE program or TOP code. Workforce preparation courses on any TOP code also count toward the noncredit workforce milestone metric.

2. If students obtain the CTE units needed to meet the progress metric thresholds through credit by exam earned in high school, will they be included in the progress metric?
Credit by exam units is treated in the same way as other units; so, a student who obtained the minimum number of 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.

3. What types of units count? For example, are electives included?
The 9+ CTE units metric includes any enrollment that is in a course with a vocational TOP code or is SAM coded A, B, or C on any TOP code. So, if the course is on a CTE TOP code, it would be included (such as a digital skills course). In addition, if the course was in a non-CTE TOP code, but coded as SAM A, B or C (like an English course in technical writing), it would also be included. If the course had neither a CTE TOP code nor a SAM A, B, or C code (like a biology course), it would not be included.

Please note that for the purposes of all other SWP metrics other than the 9+ CTE units metric, an enrollment must be in a CTE TOP code to be considered CTE. Courses that are only SAM coded A-C, but not in a CTE TOP code would not count as CTE. The inclusion of non-CTE coded courses for 9+ CTE units is a function of aligning with SCFF.

Credential Attainment Outcomes

1. 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:

SWP metrics and 17% funding calculations (in use beginning with 2017-18 data):

Chancellor's Office-approved certificate of 8 to < 18 units	1 point
Noncredit award of 48 to < 288 hours	
Chancellor's Office-approved certificate of 16 to < 30 units	2 points
Noncredit award of 288+ hours	
Chancellor's Office-approved certificate of 30+ units	3 points
Associate degree	
California Community College bachelor's degree	4 points
Apprenticeship journey level status	

2. If a student receives multiple awards, does the college get credit for each award?
In the case of SWP incentive funding, 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.

For the SWP dashboard, an unduplicated count of students earning awards is displayed, meaning that if a student earned more than one award in a single year, they will only be counted once.

3. Are all students who complete counted as part of the Strong Workforce Program?

For the SWP incentive funding formula beginning in 2019-20, only students with Chancellor's Office approved certificates, who were enrolled in the district in the year in which they earned the award, will be included to align to the Student Success Metrics and the Student Centered Funding Formula.

Transfer Outcomes

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

For the SWP metrics and 17% funding calculations (in use beginning with 2017-18 data):
Students who earned at least 12 units in any California community college on any TOP code at any time and who enrolled in any CTE course in the year prior to transfer are included.

The information is derived from matches using students' social security numbers with the National Student Clearinghouse, CSU, and UC. The National Student Clearinghouse data sets includes all four-year institutions that are eligible for federal financial aid.

Employment and Earnings Outcomes

1. 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 closely related to field of study metric, which comes from the CTE Outcomes Survey.

2. 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 dashboard and the incentive funding calculations.

3. 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 is 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, self-employed, in the cash economy, employed out of state, unemployed, or not in the workforce. A valid Social Security Number is needed in order to match.

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.

4. 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 is reflected in the job related to 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.

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

There is a lag on displaying employment and earnings data. Data is only reported on students who have exited the community college and who are not enrolled in any postsecondary institution, which is determined by ensuring that students do not enroll at any California community college and that students are not found in the transfer match file in the academic year immediately following the year of exit. Colleges do not have to report final information on the prior academic year until end of November, which means that the data match with EDD and the subsequent rebuilding of the LaunchBoard dashboard with the results occurs between January and March. Because of the lag, employment and earnings data are delayed one year relative to the progress and completion metrics. In addition, because of the time necessary to identify students that have exited the system and then to administer and analyze the CTE Outcomes Survey, the employment closely related to field of study metric is lagged by two years.

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

Yes. Earnings are adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) values from the California Department of Finance.

7. How is the employment closely 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. For more information on the CTE Outcomes Survey, please visit the Santa Rosa Junior College CTEOS website.