**Executive Summary of Progress Indicator Pilot Study**

In order to determine the pros and cons of documenting and officially reporting success in noncredit coursework, a two year pilot study was conducted to examine the use of progress indicators and grades in noncredit. Three semesters of data from over 11 diverse institutions, provided a great foundation of experience and knowledge that has led the noncredit taskforce to support a Title 5 change in order to report noncredit success. This change was further supported in a survey of over 200 California noncredit practitioners.

Currently the Chancellor’s Office converts all noncredit grading as UG (ungraded) even though 80% of the surveyed noncredit institutions have traditionally assessed and recorded student progress. UG is considered an unacceptable indicator by the majority of noncredit practitioners. Title 5 neither requires nor prohibits grading or use of progress indicators for noncredit.

Among taskforce members –

1. **There was 100% agreement that progress indicators should be used, and**

**Title 5 should be changed to indicate specific noncredit progress indicators.**

1. **Survey results show clear and strong support for these progress indicators:**

**P, SP, and NP and their definitions**.

Among over 200 noncredit faculty surveyed –

1. 72.5% said they would support an ASCCC resolution to implement the use of progress indicators

2. 18.8% they would support it if certain caveats were included as stated below

3. This represents 91.3% of those surveyed favoring the resolution.

A variety of progress indicators were explored but ultimately the taskforce in collaboration with the Chancellor’s Office settled on the use of grades (A, B, C, D, F, P and NP) as currently defined in Title 5 with the addition of **SP = Satisfactory Progress towards completion of course**

The recommendations after three semesters of collecting data include:

1. Fast track changes to Title 5 to allow MIS submission of the noncredit progress indicators of A, B, C, D, F, P and NP with the addition of SP as a new indicator. Where SP is Satisfactory Progress towards the completion of a course and A, B, C, D, F, P, and NP are as currently defined by Title 5. (These indicators have always been used for High School programs and some CTE courses for federal reporting.)
2. Include noncredit representation in all committees responsible for development of accountability metrics. Future accountability measures should include:
   1. Correct reporting for noncredit CDCP certificate completion in MIS
   2. Appropriate definitions of cohorts
   3. Appropriate demographics
   4. Appropriate definitions of success
   5. Inclusion of noncredit students, who previously took or are concurrently enrolled in credit coursework, in noncredit cohort
   6. Appropriate definitions of persistence for noncredit
   7. Noncredit course success rate as a measure success is defined as students earning P, SP, A, B, C.
3. Train IT personnel, faculty, administrators and researchers in assigning, submitting and analyzing data relative to their responsibilities
4. Implement progress indicator or grade submission in all noncredit areas: ESL, Citizenship, High School Diploma, Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education, CTE, DSPS, OAP, Parenting, Health and Safety, and Home Economics. (See Title 5 §58160 and CEC §84757 for these specific defined areas at the end of this appendix)
5. Direct local institutional MIS and SIS systems to accommodate noncredit data
6. Develop mechanisms to provide local faculty access to submit progress indicators or grades for noncredit coursework

There are some pros and cons to this implementation as seen in the table below.

| **Pros** | **Cons** |
| --- | --- |
| Progress indicators (grades) present an accurate picture of noncredit success. | Impact to MIS programming and Institutional Research departments is a significant impact on resources, both locally and at the state level. |
| Increased accountability measures require us to assess and document evidence of student success. | Noncredit education is funded at a lower rate and accountability reporting will require additional resources. |
| Reporting student success in noncredit creates accountability that is accurate and based on noncredit practitioner input. Accountability focused on student learning is a more accurate and meaningful assessment as opposed to accountability based on attendance. | Most programs are staffed by adjunct faculty and it will be a challenge to train noncredit adjunct faculty. |
| Of the programs who have participated in the study, union issues have not materialized. Thus far they have posed no problems since faculty have contractually always had to assess student progress in order to teach. | For institutions who did not participate, some fear that union issues may arise. This is a local issue. |
| Assessment of progress indicators ensures evaluation consistency and allows faculty to reach consensus and reflect on assessment criteria. | Professional development and time for faculty discussions (almost all of whom are adjunct in noncredit programs) is essential. |
| Performance indictor reporting will result in accurate data for the ARCC reporting and improve current issues with CDCP and other noncredit reporting that has problems. | Data is open to misinterpretation by a variety of external organizations. |
| Student success and progress data can be used to improve curriculum and evaluate program success. | Data analysis results may reveal program weaknesses. |
| P and SP encourage noncredit students to matriculate into a variety of higher education programs. | NP may discourage some students from pursuing their goals. NP students may lack additional academic and student support (counseling) to overcome |
| Assessment allows another means for documenting student pathways to credit programs or other avenues of measuring success. | Again, money and time: requires analysis and interpretation. |
| CB 21 coding has already aligned many noncredit and credit outcomes. | This will require training of faculty which is difficult based upon the high percentage of adjunct faculty. |
| Progress indicators define success on agreed indicators/outcomes and multiple measures (including CASAS or other outcomes measures). Norming assessment criteria encourages programs to standardize criteria for promotion tying assessment criteria to outcomes. | Not all institutions have access to CASAS and other funding mechanisms to support implementation. Implementation of defined measure puts noncredit characteristics of open entry and progress toward outcomes (as opposed to seat-time). Inconsistent interpretation of the data can lead to negative repercussions. |
| Provides comparable data among noncredit institutions & evidence of success in noncredit format as compared to credit. | There is difficulty in understanding the consequences and implementation in some noncredit classes like Older adults, DSPS, and parenting. Further study is necessary. |
| Exemplifies current educational research which indicates that students need to tangibly understand and monitor their progress | Without a statewide mandate, some institutions may not fund the implementation of reporting. |