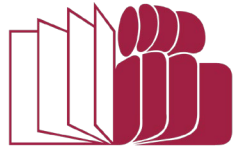


A2B4Equity

July 10, 2024



WORLD EDUCATION
— A DIVISION OF JSI —



University of
Pittsburgh
School of Education

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Welcome!

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2. *Please be sure to use the Q&A feature during the presentation.*
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Agenda

- What is Ability to Benefit (ATB)?
- *A2B4Equity*: Pilot & Results
- Lessons Learned
- Federal Policy Changes to ATB



Who's In the Room?

- Adult education providers
- Community colleges
- Workforce development providers
- Other workforce partners
- State agencies



Familiar with ATB?

1. Not familiar at all; first time hearing about it
2. A little familiar
3. Somewhat familiar
4. Familiar
5. Very familiar – I'm an expert!

What is Ability to Benefit?

What is ATB?

What is ATB?

The Ability to Benefit (ATB) provision in the Higher Education Act **gives adults without a high school diploma or equivalent access to federal student aid.**

Who is eligible?

To be eligible, a student has to:

- Be enrolled in an eligible career pathway program (ECPP);
- Complete one of three options:
 - Pass a U.S. Department of Education-approved test,
 - Complete six credit hours towards a postsecondary credential, or
 - Be admitted through a “state defined process”; and
- Be eligible for federal student aid.

Students must be **concurrently enrolled in all three** of the following:

1. Adult education and literacy programming that assists adults in attaining a high school diploma or equivalent;
2. A Title IV eligible postsecondary program; and
3. Workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

Eligible Career Pathway Programs (ECPPs)

ECPPs must also:

- Align with the skill needs of the state or regional economy
- Include academic and career counseling
- Accelerate students' educational and career advancement

(I.e., align with the “career pathway” definition in WIOA, HEA, and Perkins V)

Eligible Career Pathway Programs (ECPPs)

The Three ATB “Options”

To be eligible for ATB, a student has to complete one of three options:

1. Pass a U.S. Department of Education-approved test
2. Complete six credit hours towards a postsecondary credential
3. Be admitted through a “state defined process”

The Credit Hour Option

The student completes at least six credit hours, or 225 clock hours, that:

- Must be applicable toward a Title IV-eligible degree or certificate offered by the postsecondary institution (remedial and developmental coursework don't count)
- Don't need to be applicable to the specific degree or program in which the student is enrolled (or intends to enroll)

In other words: the coursework must show that the student has the ability to benefit from the postsecondary program in which the student is enrolled (or intends to enroll).

A2B4Equity

- In the Spring of 2022, CSW with funding generously provided by the ECMC Foundation, sought to test how institutions can leverage Ability To Benefit to support diverse students.
- The pilot initiative aimed to simulate how institutions can use *College Promise* funding to include ATB students.
- In partnership with World Education Inc. and the University of Pittsburgh our team provided four institutions funding to support 100 individuals without a HSD/equivalent to engage the Credit Hour ATB Option.

A2B4Equity

How Did It Work?

Pilot Goals



Broaden postsecondary participation and completion to a new population of currently unserved adult students.



Address historic systemic racial and income disparities in high school completion and postsecondary access and success.



Add to the growing body of evidence that ATB is a successful student aid strategy.



Provide convincing evidence to expand College Promise programs throughout the country to ATB students.

Measures of Success



Four colleges, two in MI and two in IL leverage the six-credit option in the Ability to Benefit provision of the federal student financial aid program.



80% of the enrolled students successfully complete six credit hours, qualifying them for federal student financial aid.



Each college will enroll 25 students in an eligible ATB program.



100% of the ATB students successfully completing six credit hours will receive federal SFA for which they are eligible for the semester following the completion of their participation in the ATB college promise pilot program.



75% of the enrolled students will be Black and/or Hispanic or from another underserved student racial and/or ethnic group.



Participating institutional partners will sustain ATB programming and support efforts to expand programming college promise eligibility.

Results

Pilot Measure	Result
Enroll 100 students in the ATB College Promise Pilot (approximately 25 students per college)	<i>105 students across the four colleges enrolled in ATB-eligible career pathway programs</i>
75% of the 100 students enrolled in the ATB College Promise Pilot will be Black and/or Hispanic or from another underserved student racial and/or ethnic group	<i>87% of the enrollees were from communities of color (91 of 105)</i>
80% of the 100 enrolled ATB students will successfully complete six credit hours, qualifying them to apply for federal SFA.	<i>79% of the enrolled students successfully completed six credit hours (83 out of 105)</i>
100% of the ATB students successfully completing six credit hours will receive federal SFA for which they are eligible for the semester following the completion of their participation in the ATB college promise pilot program.	<i>17% of the students who completed six credit hours filled out the FAFSA (14 out of 83)</i>

Key Lessons Learned



Build a launch team equipped and committed to provide wraparound services, *especially around financial aid*



Consider the college's culture toward adult education



Create a long-term plan for covering ATB students' tuition, fees, and other expenses as an investment in the future

Key Takeaways

#1

ATB Students ***can and will*** succeed in postsecondary education.

#2

Institutions can ***tailor*** ATB programs to fit their vision and their students needs.

#3

Student support and navigation are ***critical***.

Learn More about the A2B4Equity Pilot

In-Depth How-To Guide



<https://bit.ly/ATBHowToGuide>

Evaluation Report



<https://bit.ly/A2B4EquityEval>

Lessons From Partners

Recent Changes to ATB

as of July 1, 2024

Eligible Career Pathway Programs (ECPPs)

New federal approval process

Institutions must apply to the U.S. Department of Education to have one of its career pathway programs **certified as an ECPP via the Electronic Eligibility Application (E-App)** and **provide supporting documentation, starting on January 1, 2025.** [Read the full list of documentation requirements.](#)

Partnerships between postsecondary and adult education providers

Requires “an agreement, memorandum of understanding, or some other **evidence of alignment of postsecondary and adult education providers** that ensures the education is aligned with the students' career objectives”

Learn More About the Recent Changes



[\(GEN-24-08\) Ability to Benefit State Process and Eligible Career Pathway Programs](#)



[\(GEN-24-07\) Implementation of Regulations Related to Ability to Benefit \(ATB\)](#)



[World Education's informal annotations of the recent changes](#)



[World Education/National College Transition Network's ATB resource page](#)

Further Resources on ATB

**World Education's ATB
resource page**



bit.ly/ATBresources

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Questions?

