ABC Adult School
12254 Cuesta Drive, Cerritos, CA 90703
(562) 229-7960

IT Technician Advisory Meeting
February 28, 2025
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Cuesta Drive, Room H7

Committee Members Present:
Alvin Bowens - East Face Broadcast Prod - square shirt
Ross Gile - DigiCal - blue shirt
Brian Hollabaugh - Trust E Tech - white shirt/glasses
Joe Machado - ABCUSD
Irene Orozco - ABCUSD
Aninie - Prajak - ABCUSD
Chi Tran - ABCUSD
Carlos Ramirez - ABCUSD

Committee Members Absent:

In Attendance:
Nancy Amara, **Principal;** Jeff Heilig **Assistant Principal; Sergio G, Assistant Principal, Melissa Baumak, Assistant Principal;** Ty Holloway, **Job Developer;** Georgia Grissom, **TOSA**; Jessica Arias, **Secretary II**

Teachers: Bob Takhar

Minute Items

Welcome
By Jeff Heilig:
Jeff thanked everyone for attending today's IT Technician Advisory. Jeff asked the panel to fill out the paperwork. Extremely important for accreditation purposes. We get our accreditation from the Council on Occupational Education, and we have to submit paperwork and other qualifying documents that we met. Jeff asks the panel to introduce themselves. Based on the last advisory we have implemented new input that will be in our next module.

Nancy Amara: Welcome's the panel. Introduces CTEC programs and community programs along with bus ads we have.

Introduction and Meeting Overview
Review of Mission Statement
Outcomes
WASC and COE Accreditation Update
By Jeff Heilig
The purpose of the advisory is to ensure that our programs are adequately preparing students to enter the industry. We need the input of the professional community to verify that our students are prepared and to make changes to curriculum if necessary to meet the industry needs.

- Panel introduces themselves to the room.
- Jeff Heilig goes through the documents in the folders to the panel.

Jeff Heilig:
The Mission of ABC Adult School is to provide quality education to our diverse community with meaningful opportunities for success in career, academic, and personal goals.
Jeff Heilig: Does the Mission Statement look acceptable?
Ross Gile: Yes

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We participated in a combined WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges) and COE (Council on Occupational Education) visit in 2021. WASC looked at all other programs outside of career technical education;
COE evaluated all CTE programs and all processes that are involved in those. There were some findings from the COE visit, which will be addressed, most of which involve paperwork and not program structure, instruction or content. We cleared the findings in December of 2022.We were in a warning status as bench marks had not been met due to the pandemic, but those have been cleared. Bench marks are 60% complete, 70% placement, 70% licensure.

The Student Learning Outcomes for the ABC Adult School are: "Self-directed lifelong learners who: acquire Knowledge and skills appropriate to their stage of life, set and achieve career, educational and/or personal goals, and seek continuing career training and/or educational opportunities. Effective communicators who: demonstrate appropriate listening, speaking, reading, writing, creative, and/or computational skills, apply communication skills to professional, technical and other real-life situations, and enhance and improve their ability to understand and be understood by others. Critical thinkers and problem-solvers who: exercise their powers of judgment, perception, and inference, assess and fulfill their own needs by finding appropriate resources, and apply knowledge to professional, technical and other real-life situations."

Motion to accept minutes from last meeting.
Jeff Heilig: Motion to approve?
Joe Machado: second the motion.

Completion, Placement, and Licensure Rate

Accreditation:

- Council on Occupational Education (COE) - accreditation.
- 60% of students must complete the program
- 70% placement rate.
- We are writing our COE Accreditation Report this Year - COE Visitation Next Year
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) - accreditation.
- Report Year for COE and WASC - visitation date: Aug 25 - 28, 2025

Completion, Placement, and Licensure Data

- 19 Students
- 75% - Completion Rate
- 40% - Placement Rate
- No Licensure Required (NA)

Bob Takhar: If you are not licensed you can't work. We can't hire.
Jeff Heilig: You have to have a state license.
Jeff Heilig: Reads accreditation and data

Feedback & Input Session

- Requirement for Admission
- Program Objectives
- Program Length and Class Content
- Instructional Materials and Equipment Used by Instructors and Students
- Instructional Delivery Methods
- Student Evaluation and Competency Exams
- Inter/Intra Personal Skills Wanted and Needed

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- Role of A.I.
- Ideas/Thoughts: Building the Program

Requirements for Admissions:
Our admission requirements require that a student have a high school diploma or equivalent (GED- General Equivalency Diploma or HISET-High School Equivalency Test) and be at least 18 years old to be eligible for the vocational diploma.
The only requirement for those who do not wish to pursue the vocational diploma is being 18 years old.
Jeff Heilig: Are the admission requirements appropriate for this program?:
Bob: A parent asked if their 16 year old can come.
Nancy: Our funding reads 18 and older. Unfortunately they have to be 17 ½. If they have graduated then that's fine but if they are still in high school then we can't.
Jeff Heilig: Do you have any suggestions for adjustments, modifications, or changes to our admission requirements?
No comments.

Program Objectives:
The IT program is designed to equip students with the foundational knowledge and practical skills required to obtain industry-recognized certifications, such as CompTIA A+ and Security+. The key objectives include:
Understanding computer hardware and software components.
Troubleshooting and repairing computers through hands-on practice.
Understand networking, security, and virtualization fundamentals.
Gaining proficiency in IT support and system administration tasks.
Preparing students for industry certification exams through structured learning and practice tests.
Jeff Heilig: Any thoughts is this a good direction?
No comments

Are the objectives relevant and sufficient for students to be successful in the professional setting?

Should any objectives, additions, revisions, or upgrades be adjusted? Should any objectives be removed, revised, or modified?
Irene: I know right now that the industries are looking at prompt engineering, is that something that is kind of embedded within the proficiency for it, support and so forth?
Bob Takhar: Yes, AI is included in everything in our class. It's actually one of the first things we talk about. We transitioned from physical books to online. The test App program is very interactive..The students had to go through all learning virtualization before they actually could get to the labs. But now with this test app program, it's all streamlined.
Carlos Ramirez: You can watch the video and if you don't understand you can go back and redo.review practice those skills with the lab.
Jeff Heilig: Is there anything that people are really wanting or needing? Can this app be used elsewhere?
Bob Takhar: CompTIA only for IT.
Jeff Heilig: How important are portfolios when they come for a job?
Ross Gile: They usually bring it already or they provide us with a link. They don't really have job experience so they give me their school projects.
Bob Takhar: A creativity portfolio would work.
Irene Orozco: I think it's critical for the paper screening process. Whatever position they are applying for there's a scenario.

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Joe Machado: We do some sort of performance task for our entry level support positions, ex: support documentation, set up Gmail filters. When you are new you do not have experience so those certifications are standing because at least you reached that level. Not everyone can pass the CompTIA test.
Jeff Heilig: Is there anything specific to the hiring process?
Ross Gile: Soft skills are important. I look at soft skills first then technical, second. If the firm handshake, look in the eye, the simple things, I look at that first , even before the technical piece. Second is the trainable spirit.

Program Length, & Class Content:

- Total Hours: 924
- Keyboarding: 84 Hours
- Comp TIA A+ Computer Hardware: 168 Hours
- Comp TIA Software: 168 Hours
- Python Programming: 84 Hours
- Cloud Computing: 84 Hours
- Network +: 84 Hours
- Security +: 84 Hours
- Internship/Tech 1: 84 Hours
- Internship/Tech 2: 84 hours

Is the program amount of time sufficient for an entry-level IT position?
Are the topics/classes and depth of topics covered appropriate for this program? Do you have any suggestions for improvements or upgrades?
Should we consider replacing Keyboarding and Computer Essentials with more relevant and needed classes?
Do you have any suggestions for improvements or upgrades?
Joe Machado: Question for Bob - with Network & Security + getting less hours than the +, are the students still able to get to that level where they're ready to take the test? Are they having to put in extra hours of prep or is that spit sufficient?
Bob Takhar: 18 weeks is a must, once they get through the program, if they want to be sufficient with Security + they also should Networking. They still have to do lots of home study. It depends on the individual. Some people can do it right away , some tske 2 years.
Georgia Grissom: To Joe - Do you think it's too short?
Joe Machado: Yes, having been through both of those in a full semester in a community college setting & here we are putting it in a quarter.
Bob: train them well enough, if they stay focused, the hours are enough. Depends on the individual. They all learn differently.
Irene Orozco: Students are focusing on E Sports skills. Is it possible to build that in?
Bob Takhar: The problem with that is that it's high level. students may have the intelligence, but not the time to take them to that type of level. We would have very few retainers. We would have a higher drop rate.
Nancy Amara: We teach basics, then they can build in from the basics.
Carlos Ramirez: I don't think it's not enough time for networking.
Jeff Heilig: How important is keyboarding?
Joe Machado: Can it be a prerequisite vs having it to be part of the program?
Bob Takhar: It does discourage some of our techies. We could use the time for Networking.
Nancy Amara: We are in a 6 month moratorium meaning we cannot change any of our programs. We can't change anything until 25-26 SY.

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Instructional Materials and Equipment Used by Instructors and Students:
Jeff Heilig Reads:
Virtual Labs:

- CompTIA Labs for interactive, scenario-based learning.
- Hands-On Labs: Physical computer repair stations with hardware components for troubleshooting exercises.
- Testing Platforms: Weekly tests conducted via Cengage (CANS) and TestOut to reinforce learning.

Textbooks
Software and Tools:

- TestOut LabSim for simulated IT environments.
- CompTIA Labs for hands-on virtual experience.
- Online resources and instructional videos.

Are the instructional materials and equipment aligned with current industry expectations and needs?

Are there any other materials or equipment recommended or needed to best prepare students for the workforce?
Jeff Heilig: If we are missing something please let us know.
Bob Tahkar: We use textbooks and they are current and change every 3 years. We use virtual labs, we use 2 platforms. We do hands-on projects, hour lectures in each class, there's a test every week, they get 2 chances, they work in groups to help with communication and shyness, we have a tech side where customers bring in their computers like Chromebooks. We fix district computers as well as outside laptops/computers. Giving the student one on one with customers, getting paperwork done, following up with customers, giving them responsibility for completing a job within a reasonable time, so they get those skills. We recently purchased virtual labs. We are going to move away from textbooks, strictly stick to lectures and labs.
Jeff Heilig: Any thoughts?
Irene Orozco: Language is very technical in IT, maybe English is not the students first language, is there accessibility built in?
Bob Takhar: They do have CompTIA in different languages, but students prefer to take the test in English.
Annie Prajak: IT It's its own language. It does not translate the same.
Bob Takhar: CompTIA has captioning. ComTIA can be recognized anywhere in the world. It's the most sought out certificate.
Joe Machado: it's the industry standard. This covers all. Vendor diagnostics are important.
Bob Takhar:Chat GPT stents some in with no knowledge. $20/month
Nancy Amara: We cannot pay for it. It doesn't get approved.
Joe Machado: We partner with Gemini. It has multi levels. We have the base level with google. All have protection, they are not using student data to train on.
Bob Takhar: Have students buy before taking class.
Jeff Heilig If you can understand a baseline program you can apply to all.

Instructional Delivery Modes:

- Lectures: Instructor-led sessions covering core IT concepts.
- Group Projects: Students collaborate to troubleshoot and fix hardware/software issues.
- Lab Work: Both virtual and hands-on labs for technical skill-building.

- Online Resources: Access to TestOut, Cengage, and other e-learning platforms.
- Demonstrations: Live troubleshooting and repair exercises.
- Student Engagement: Discussions, peer reviews, and Q&A sessions to reinforce learning.

Is there an instructional method you would like to see more of to better prepare students?

Do you have any suggestions for revising, adjusting, or modifying how the curriculum is provided to students?
Bob Takhar: I lecture Mon-Thur, Friday's hands-on learning. Most projects are individual, we do group work, lab work, 50-60 percent is lab work. Online resources we use Test Out & Cengage. They can go home and study now. It allows them to finish projects faster and more efficiently. We have plenty of discussions. We use CHAT GPT for our prime resource of facts to answer any questions we may not have, lots of engaging with students.
Jeff Heilig: Any thoughts?
Carlos Ramirez: I like Bob's class because all lectures are recorded, they are all via zoom.
Bob Takhar: I upload lectures to canvas, everything is there for 30 days. After 30 days it disappears.

Student Evaluation and Competency Exams:

- Weekly Online Tests: Administered through Cengage (CANS) and TestOut to assess theoretical knowledge.
- Practical Exams: Hands-on troubleshooting assessments to test real-world problem-solving skills.
- Lab Assignments: Students complete tasks in both virtual and physical labs.
- Projects: Group or individual assignments to repair and optimize systems.
- Final Assessment: A combination of theoretical and practical exams to gauge overall competency.

Are the measurements of evaluation and exams sufficient to show competency and ability?
What type of work, exam completion, etc., should students have available to show potential employers? Is industry certification needed or preferred?
Do you have any suggestions for revisions, modifications, or changes?
Are portfolios still relevant, wanted, or required by hiring professionals?
Jeff Heilig: Are students properly prepared when they are done with the program? It's entry level and a year long program.
Bob Takhar: CompTIA exams are $400-500. 90 mins to answer 90 tech questions. We have a test center onsite, We do weekly tests, projects, assigned daily, no final assessment, we do weekly to see where they are. They can see their own progress.

Inter/Intra Personal Skills Wanted and Needed

- We are interested in your perspective on the most essential interpersonal and intrapersonal skills (soft skills) for a successful career as an IT Technician.
- What are the most important inter/intrapersonal skills (or "soft skills") that are needed when you are hiring (e.g., people skills, communication, responsibility, task management and completion, discipline, and organization, among others); please list a few that are priorities for you:

Annie Prajak: I would say customer service, you need to acknowledge, be friendly, hand shake, look in the eye, show that the customer is important.
Bob Takhar: The students we get are technically minded, logically minded, not sociable. My students are shy. If I tell them to smile they take things personal. Difficult to mold in 9 months.

Nancy Amara: If your goal is to get a job you should teach general. Some students are not aware of it.
Bob Takhar: They do great technical work but it's a challenge.
Annie Prajak - We used to have a soft skills class.
Georgia Grissom: Ty helps with that
Ross Gile: Need is not the right word. The suggestion is to be an example everyday, shake hands everyday, show eye contact, perhaps show them on a daily basis, just do it as your norm.
Bob Takhar: I do introduce students to use Chat GPT to have a conversation. It's not a real person but they start getting a flow of language going.
Brian Hollabaugh: Maybe a workshop?
Ty Holloway: I do workshops, we do resume workshops, interview workshops, I plan to so a soft skills workshop as well, any workshop are volunteer not mandatory, they are advised to attend, We hear about the soft skills all the time, we have a job day to speak with IT students and the communication was zero.
Ross Gile - Perhaps invite business owners to come into the workshop.
Jeff Heilig: We bring many in for Cosmo.
Joe Machado: Collaboration, group interaction is important, rely on your peers.
Jeff Heilig: How to handle a high stress environment.
Joe Machado: Learn to handle pressure.
Jeff Heilig: Any others ideas please let us know.

Role of A.I.

- What is the importance of knowing A.I in the IT industry?
- What essential A.I. knowledge, skills, or programs should our students learn for a successful career in the pharmacy industry?

Jeff Heilig: Is there a specific model program? Is there a certain certification?
Bob Takhar: Should it be present in the classroom?
Panel: yes
Jeff Heilig: how to be present in the classrooms?
Brian Hollabaugh: Like any other tool. It's going to be part of our lives.
Bob: Depends how to communicate, it retains info, the info can get pulled so there has to be barriers. Native chat is what we use.
Joe: It's becoming about how we use it, how we use it in our industry.
Irene Orozco: one of the key roles I see for AI, especially in education, is personalizing learning. For example, if my peers understand a concept but I struggle with it, I can ask AI to explain it to me in simpler terms. It can break things down into common language, provide examples, and turn learning into a personalized research experience. Beyond personalization, AI also helps develop real-world skills. It allows me to synthesize information, extract key points, and even prepare for tests and quizzes by generating potential questions. This makes AI a critical tool—not just in education, but in life overall.
Annie Prajak: We are able to expand in the adult school. This is a place to come and learn, we show them how to create a spreadsheet. You can ask AI and it will provide step by step. You can ask and ask for commands and it will help you.
Jeff: You have to use it as an IT assistant. It's no longer considered cheating.
Brian Hollabaugh: It's the same as using a calculator for long division.
Jeff Heilig: How to apply AI to all programs.
Irene Orozco: It would be good in every area.

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Ideas/Thoughts – Building the Program

- Please share any ideas or thoughts to help us improve and enhance the IT Technician Program.
- We are particularly interested in suggestions and input to increase enrollment in the program.

Jeff Heilig: We have an aggressive advertising program. We have ads on buses, shelters, billboards. We live by word of mouth.
Bob Takhar: Many students say we have a great IT program but people are not aware of it.
Ross Gile: You can add ads on websites. Tell them how many displays per hour per day.
Brian Hollabaugh: Shorts are good.
Ross Gile: TIKTOK is where it is.
Alvin Bowens: I agree people are not aware of the program. Need to target different areas.
Ross Gile: YouTube is a search engine.

Carlos Ramirez: You offer online courses but not for IT. Possibly add in the future.
Bob Takhar: Maybe they want to Zoom.
Nancy Amara: Hybrid/Distance Learning has to do with our accreditation.
Bob Takhar: We will work on it. Has to be limited to our locations.
Jeff Heilig: Please turn in the paperwork, thank you for your time and input. Take the packets and leave the feedback form.

Adjournment
Jeff Heilig thanked everyone for coming and contributing to today's Pharmacy Technician Advisory Meeting.

Transcribed by: Jessica Arias