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# New Jersey Workforce Provider Data Snapshot

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## Project Background

Adults seeking further education have long shown keen interest in noncredit education. An estimated 4 million people enroll in noncredit programs annually, and surveys have found that at least half of adults interested in further postsecondary learning seek an alternative to college degree programs<sup>1</sup>. Policymakers also recognize the potential value of noncredit and related programs. A 50-state scan identified state-led initiatives in 28 states, totaling at least \$3.8 billion, in support for attainment of short-term credentials.<sup>2</sup>

Given the growing interest and public investment in short-term alternatives to college degree programs, policymakers and practitioners generally agree on the importance of a strong evidence base to inform decision-making. Yet state collection and analysis of noncredit data remains inconsistent and difficult to use for policymaking purposes, making direct comparisons across states dauntingly hard. Researchers, practitioners, and policymakers regularly encounter varying definitions, an absence of educational or labor market outcomes data, and overall data quality issues.<sup>3</sup> At the most basic level, very little is known about the characteristics of noncredit programs, such as their instructional time, instructional format, requirements for entry, linkages to further education, awarding agencies, cost, and credential types awarded. Better data on noncredit offerings within

<sup>1</sup> Jacoby, T. (September 2021). *The indispensable institution: Taking the measure of community college workforce education*. Opportunity America. <https://opportunityamericaonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/FINAL-survey-report.pdf>; Strada. (2020, September 16). *Public viewpoint: Interested but not enrolled: Understanding and serving aspiring adult learners*. <https://cci.stradaeducation.org/pv-release-september-16-2020/>

<sup>2</sup> Murphy, S. (2023). *A typology and policy landscape analysis of state investments in short-term credential pathways*. HCM Strategists. <https://hcmstrategists.com/resources/a-typology-and-policy-landscape-analysis-of-state-investments-in-short-term-credential-pathways>

<sup>3</sup> D'Amico, M. M. (2017). Noncredit education: Specialized programs to meet local needs. In K. B. Wilson & R. L. Garza-Mitchell (Eds.), *Forces shaping community college missions* (No. 180, pp. 57–66). New directions for community colleges. Jossey-Bass. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.20281>; Erwin, M. (2019). Noncredit enrollment and related activities (NPEC 2019). National Postsecondary Education Cooperative, with US Department of Education funding; Romano, R. M., & D'Amico, M. M. (2021, July/August). How federal data shortchange the community college. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 53(4), 22–28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00091383.2021.1930978>

states will help inform ongoing measurement efforts and ensure those efforts are more grounded in the realities of noncredit delivery, financing, and learner outcomes.

With support from the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES)/National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Rutgers Education and Employment Research Center (EERC) and key partners at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, University of Michigan, and University of California–Irvine are working with state leaders from across the country as part of the State Noncredit Data Project (SNDP). The SNDP examines noncredit data to achieve three key goals:

- Develop an inventory of and consistent operational definitions for state-level noncredit data elements to better understand the noncredit data infrastructure.
- Collect and examine noncredit course/program-level data to explore noncredit offerings and their associations with enrollment rates, outcomes, instructional characteristics, and financial arrangements.
- Uncover the drivers of noncredit offerings and produce relevant policy implications.

In addition to this analysis, the SNDP convenes a Learning Community of states on data for noncredit education and non-degree credentials. The Learning Community is designed to bring together state leaders to share current practices related to state noncredit data. Through our research and convening, SNDP seeks to lay the groundwork for common definitional language for future data collection and analysis efforts to improve understanding of the value and quality of noncredit programs and non-degree credentials.

## Methods

This report is one in a series that explores the noncredit data infrastructure of US states and presents descriptive analyses of those data at the course/program and provider level. The findings presented in these reports were reached using a multi-phased collaborative approach with leaders in partner states. The first step was to engage with state partners about the context for noncredit and related data collection. This ongoing engagement included regular conversations, off-line questions, and the collection of relevant policy and process information on noncredit categories, determinants of noncredit success, instructional characteristics, finance, and related topics. The engagement process has been critical to understanding the state noncredit landscape and data collection.

The next step was to develop a robust inventory of each of the data elements potentially available from state agencies and organizations. Through engagement with state partners, cross-state meetings, a review of prior literature and resources,<sup>4,5,6</sup> and program-level data analyses with our first three research states (Iowa,

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<sup>4</sup> D'Amico, M. M., Morgan, G. B., Robertson, S., & Houchins, C. (2014). An exploration of noncredit community college enrollment. *Journal of Continuing Higher Education*, 62(3), 152–162. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07377363.2014.953438>; D'Amico, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> IPEDS. (2021–22). Glossary. <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/glossary>

<sup>6</sup> Jacoby, T. (2021). *The indispensable institution: Taking the measure of community college workforce education*. Opportunity America. <https://opportunityamericaonline.org/wpcontent/uploads/2021/10/FINAL-survey-report.pdf>

Louisiana, and Virginia), the project team created a noncredit data taxonomy<sup>7</sup> for the organization of relevant data elements. The key elements in the taxonomy—(1) purpose and design, (2) outcomes, (3) demographics and enrollment, and (4) finance—guide the organization of available data elements in the present report (see Table 1) and the subsequent analyses on providers and programs that follow. In this next phase of the project, the project team is working with an additional group of states (including South Carolina, Maryland, New Jersey, Oregon, and Tennessee) to understand the nature of their noncredit data.

In this report, we describe noncredit data from the New Jersey Department of Labor (NJDOLE) as of February 2024, which covers all noncredit program providers listed on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) in New Jersey at the time of data collection. Data are available for 1,476 noncredit programs across 192 providers (e.g., community colleges, vocational/technical schools, private training schools, and providers of apprenticeship programs). Below, we describe the nature of these data based on our taxonomy. Selected descriptive data are presented later in the report. While this report focuses on NJDOLE's noncredit data collection and their application, we also discuss some pertinent characteristics of the full dataset maintained by NJDOLE on their ETPL, which includes both noncredit and credit-bearing programs and data.<sup>8</sup>

As part of data inventory development, we aim to provide a better understanding of the available data on the identified and defined data elements. Because the goal is to broaden our knowledge of what noncredit systems entail across states, the primary unit of analysis for this project is the noncredit offering (courses/programs). However, given our focus in this report is on the NJDOLE, who also organize data at the provider level, we will expand our analyses here to include both noncredit offering and provider as units of analysis.

Independent of NJDOLE's efforts, New Jersey's Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (NJOSHE) collects noncredit data from New Jersey's 18 community colleges. In a separate companion report, we provide detailed analyses of NJOSHE's role in the noncredit data infrastructure in New Jersey. NJDOLE and NJOSHE have some overlap in their interest and jurisdiction over noncredit data collection, and the two agencies meet to discuss these areas of mutual concern and how they might work together. Because NJDOLE includes a wider range of providers in its data, this examination broadens our perspective on noncredit data beyond the community college, which has been the focus of prior reports in this series. As the project continues, we seek to include a diverse set of organizational perspectives within and across states involved in collecting noncredit data.

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<sup>7</sup>D'Amico, M., Van Noy, M., Srivastava, A., Bahr, P., & Xu, D. (2023). *Collecting and understanding noncredit community college data: A taxonomy and how-to guide for states*. Rutgers Education and Employment Research Center. [https://sites.rutgers.edu/state-noncredit-data/wp-content/uploads/sites/794/2023/11/State-Noncredit-Taxonomy\\_EERC\\_11.17.23.pdf](https://sites.rutgers.edu/state-noncredit-data/wp-content/uploads/sites/794/2023/11/State-Noncredit-Taxonomy_EERC_11.17.23.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> US Department of Labor. (2015). Employment and training administration training and employment guidance letter WIOA 41-14: Operating guidance for the workforce innovation and opportunity act. Employment and Training Administration Advisory System. [https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/advisories/TEGL/2015/TEGL\\_41-14\\_Acc.pdf](https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/advisories/TEGL/2015/TEGL_41-14_Acc.pdf)

## New Jersey DOL's Policy Context for Noncredit

NJDOL oversees Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding, the primary federal funding source for workforce development activities, thereby providing most public workforce training subsidies through vouchers issued to qualified individuals enrolled in workforce-focused training programs.<sup>9</sup> In this role, NJDOL collects data on workforce training providers, programs, and students primarily for the purpose of administering the ETPL, a federally mandated list of training providers approved to receive federal and state workforce funding streams. WIOA's minimum standards for inclusion on the ETPL require that training providers report data to governing state agencies (e.g., NJDOL) in order to receive federal or state funding for students to attend their noncredit or credit programs. WIOA has other workforce-focused standards for provider programs to qualify for the ETPL, including a focus on job training (defined as occupational training, remedial instruction, or occupational safety and health training) and preparation to obtain a credential upon program completion (e.g., certificate, certification, license, degree, or measurable skill). Under New Jersey statute, all providers seeking state or federal job training dollars are required to be on the Eligible Training Provider List, which is a likely reason for the state's comparatively broad non-credit program coverage.<sup>10</sup>

NJDOL oversees a wide variety of ETPL-eligible providers and their corresponding data. Providers are not limited to community colleges; the list also includes programs offered by private career schools and training providers, vocational and technical schools, baccalaureate-granting institutions, apprenticeship program providers, and other WIOA-funded schools.<sup>11</sup> NJDOL is unique among other US state agencies we studied in its collection and/or aggregation of data from ETPL-eligible providers in that they collect data across three different levels of analysis: individual/student, program, and provider. NJDOL's multilevel data structure allows for more detailed and accurate analyses to better understand program delivery and student outcomes.

### *Noncredit Policy Priorities*

Like all state workforce agencies, NJDOL established its ETPL in compliance with WIOA standards set forth by the US Department of Labor (USDOL), which require states to mandate that ETPL providers share information on high-quality training aligned with in-demand industries and occupations.<sup>12</sup> Because the US DOL allows states to determine the extent to which WIOA-eligible providers can participate on the ETPL, NJDOL draws on these outcomes and quality data to establish a set of quality criteria for inclusion on its list—standards that extend above and beyond USDOL's minimum requirements.

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<sup>9</sup> An act to amend the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, H.R. 803, 113th Cong. (2014). <https://www.congress.gov/113/bills/hr803/BILLS-113hr803enr.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> State Eligible Training Provider List, NJ Stat. § 34:15C-10.2 (2011). <https://www.nj.gov/njsetc/about/documents/2.0%20NJA%2034-15C.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> NJDOL. (n.d.). ETPL programs frequently asked questions. Center for Occupational Employment Information. [https://www.nj.gov/labor/labormarketinformation/assets/PDFs/coei/ETPL/Eligible%20Training%20Provider%20List%20\(ETPL\)%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions%20\(FAQs\).pdf](https://www.nj.gov/labor/labormarketinformation/assets/PDFs/coei/ETPL/Eligible%20Training%20Provider%20List%20(ETPL)%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions%20(FAQs).pdf)

<sup>12</sup> USDOL, 2015.

In addition, NJDOL has established its own outcome measures to provide training seekers with a “Consumer Report Card,” also required under state law. Finally, NJDOL has established a unique quality assurance framework to generate report cards for providers measuring quality in five dimensions: alignment with demand, employment and wage outcomes, educational outcomes, financial impact, and equity. Providers whose performance falls within the bottom 10th percentile of all providers are required to create a corrective action plan. After two years, if program performance has not improved, it is removed from the list. Thus, in New Jersey, being on the ETPL indicates the quality of providers’ noncredit and credit programs, helping prospective students, employers, and the training community make more informed choices. It should be noted that reporting and data requirements also apply to providers of credit-bearing programs included in the ETPL. With its focus on quality standards, NJDOL is strongly committed to the ETPL, including its ongoing maintenance and coordination with providers to determine eligibility.

### *Funding*

Funding for noncredit programs offered by providers listed on the ETPL comes from a mix of federal and state funding sources. The main funding mechanisms are individual training accounts (ITAs) administered by local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs). ITAs are used for programs with classroom instruction, where a training provider receives funding from a local WDB to pay for a given student. Given that ITAs may not cover all costs, WIOA allows WDBs to draw from multiple funding sources, including other federal, state, local, or private support, to best meet student needs.<sup>13</sup> In New Jersey, state noncredit funding may also be provided by the Workforce Development Partnership Fund, by an employee state payroll tax set-aside, through matching grants to employers, and from other grants that can be combined with WIOA funding.<sup>14</sup> There are eight main types of noncredit providers that receive WIOA funding.

### *Drivers of Noncredit Data Collection*

Given the importance of data in constructing and maintaining the ETPL, data collection is a core goal for NJDOL. With that goal in mind, NJDOL has focused efforts to standardize noncredit (and credit) data infrastructure through quality assurance and accountability. Access to uniform and structured data from all ETPL training providers and their program offerings across the state can provide critical information to all stakeholders involved in the noncredit landscape. These developments in quality directly benefit the most important stakeholders: students seeking alternatives to traditional higher education and incumbent workers seeking to improve their skills in their current or anticipated occupation. However, improving data infrastructure can also help hold other key stakeholders accountable, such as providers themselves, curriculum developers, and the NJDOL and other coordinating local and national agencies.

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<sup>13</sup> Individual Training Accounts, 20 C.F.R. Part 680 Subpart C (2017). Employment and Training Administration, US Department of Labor. <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-20/chapter-V/part-680/subpart-C>; US Department of Labor. (2023). *Training and employment guidance letter No. 21-22*. Employment and Training Administration Advisory System. <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/advisories/TEGL/2022/TEGL%2021-22/TEGL%2021-22.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Office of Management and Budget. (n.d.) Department of labor and workforce development overview. NJ Treasury. <https://www.nj.gov/treasury/omb/publications/12budget/pdf/62.pdf>

NJDOL focuses its data collection and management efforts on standardization and quality in several ways. Obtaining quality data on noncredit (and credit) providers, programs, and students is important for compliance, transparency, and other programmatic improvements. A key aspect of NJDOL's data development is to improve standards in linking provider, program, and student data to completion and labor market outcomes (i.e., matching inputs to outputs). In addition, NJDOL seeks to ensure eligibility and compliance for WIOA and state funding sources. To this end, they oversee providers' compliance efforts with regard to meeting ETPL eligibility requirements and data standards. NJDOL also utilizes quality noncredit (and credit) data to improve programs, helping to ensure that offerings and delivery formats are flexible for students and aligned with employer needs and recognized credentials. For example, linked input and output data can help determine whether given training programs lead to their intended occupation or job opportunities for students, and if not, why that might be the case and how to address the issue.

Transparent access to quality-related information can help ensure stakeholders are meeting expectations in designing and improving programs intended to benefit students. This has been a primary focus of NJDOL, which is developing a user-friendly virtual Training Explorer for New Jerseyans seeking training programs and career services. Currently available to users during beta testing, the NJ Training Explorer is linked with the state requirement to produce a Consumer Report Card for Quality Assurance, which is continually improving provider and programmatic information and incorporating labor market outcomes so all stakeholders can make better decisions.<sup>15</sup> This includes information for students, such as program offerings from different providers, general time to completion, associated credentials and occupations, and average wages. Transparent access is particularly important for students from underrepresented and low-income populations who have historically not had access to important information. These improvements can provide greater access to transparent and accurate information for a wider range of students, helping them navigate the complex training landscape, including the multitude of noncredit options. Data on providers and programs must be reliable and linked to outcomes on credentials and occupations/jobs based on previous student experiences in order to provide prospective students with the tools they need to make informed decisions about their training and careers.

NJDOL's implementation of the NJ Training Explorer is key to achieving its goal of transparent access to noncredit data. Part of this effort involves incorporating into the NJ Training Explorer the Credential Engine's common language to describe all ETPL data, which has been published on the national open-source Credential Registry.<sup>16</sup> This allows prospective students from all backgrounds to use the Training Explorer to easily search for ETPL-approved training programs in the state by occupation, CIP/SOP code, provider, program, credential, and other keywords. It also allows users to compare programs and access training providers' websites to enroll in programs. To uphold quality assurance and transparency, information accessible through the NJ Training Explorer is integrated with ETPL data, including program cost and

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<sup>15</sup> My Career NJ. (2024). NJ Training Explorer. My New Jersey. <https://mycareer.nj.gov/training>; WIOA State Plan. (n.d.) New Jersey PYS 2024-2027: Adult, dislocated worker, and youth activities. <https://wioaplans.ed.gov/node/476561>.

<sup>16</sup> My Career NJ; Credential Engine. (2024). New Jersey. <https://credentialengine.org/partners/new-jersey/>

potential tuition assistance, provider details and services, total clock hours, credentials awarded, and associated outcomes like average wage and employment rate.

An additional goal of the NJ Training Explorer is to help meet a state mandate for the ETPL that requires the collection and display of provider and program performance data. Since 2022, the NJDOL has been incorporating information on performance outcomes (e.g., exits and early- to long-term earnings of program participants) into the NJ Training Explorer, building on the state’s Consumer Report Card for Quality Assurance.<sup>17</sup>

## Noncredit Data Collection Process

The main mechanism for NJDOL’s noncredit data collection is through training providers’ fulfillment of state ETPL requirements. Although this process used to be paper-based,<sup>18</sup> it has shifted to an online data management system adopted by NJDOL called IGX. All providers seeking or maintaining ETPL status are required to enter information on their services, programs, and students on an ongoing basis. These data are then compiled into a database and entered into the NJ Training Explorer. This data compilation system aims to comprehensively incorporate various types of student, program, and provider data while also enabling users to match student characteristics (e.g., Social Security number) and completion records with labor market outcomes. The system also helps fulfill the state mandate for the Consumer Report Card for Quality Assurance by supplying accurate information not only to students but also to NJDOL and providers so they can effectively assess performance and make subsequent improvements to program offerings and delivery.

NJDOL seeks to continuously improve its data collection and presentation formats. For example, NJDOL staff may contact providers to collect and clarify data, and they are developing ways to connect data from providers with student and labor market outcomes. NJDOL’s proactive approach to managing the New Jersey ETPL makes the state a leader in standardizing noncredit education data. The National Skills Coalition highlighted the state in a 2019 report that sought to develop a consensus definition of non-degree-credential quality for use across the United States through a survey of non-degree-credential quality-assurance measures being implemented in various US states.<sup>19</sup>

## Classifying Noncredit Offerings

NJDOL uses both National Center for Education Statistics’ Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes and the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes.<sup>20</sup> NJDOL is also

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<sup>17</sup> WIOA State Plan, n.d.

<sup>18</sup> Credential Engine, 2024

<sup>19</sup> Duke-Benfield, A. E., Wilson, B., Kaleba, K., & Leventoff, J. (2019). *Expanding opportunities: Defining quality non-degree credentials for states*. National Skills Coalition. <https://nationalskillscoalition.org/resource/publications/expanding-opportunities-defining-quality-non-degree-credentials-for-states/>

<sup>20</sup> CIP codes comprise the federal taxonomy that categorizes different education/training program content areas and the degrees or credentials with which they are associated. SOC codes are part of a standardized set of occupational categories under which workers are classified and can be used to link programs with their associated or intended occupations.

incorporating the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) system into its own classification system. O\*NET is sponsored by USDOL's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and is essentially a more detailed set of SOC codes, resulting in a taxonomy of around 1,000 occupational categories.<sup>21</sup> In addition to program classifications, NJDOL further categorizes programs by the type of non-degree credential with which they are associated. Each program also has a unique ID. The data include information on the different types of training providers in the state, such as county colleges, private training schools, and vocational/technical schools. In addition to a variable for provider type, each provider has its own unique ID. It should be noted that because of the presence of both program and provider classifications, Program IDs are unique to one another and to each provider, so for example, the same program offered by different providers will have distinct Program IDs.

While some state data systems classify noncredit programs as occupational, sponsored, pre-college, or personal interest, as noted above, NJDOL instead classifies them according to the credentials they are associated with: apprenticeship certificate, certificate of completion, certification, general education development (e.g., GED/GED preparation), and license in alignment with the Credential Registry's definition. NJDOL data also include a brief description of each program and what it entails. This classification method can therefore not only help determine the noncredit program type but also provide greater detail and a clearer understanding of which student and labor market outcomes, as well as occupational/career categories, they may be associated with.

## Data Inventory

We document the data elements on noncredit offerings from NJDOL that are being captured and to what degree. When embarking on the project with partner states in our first round with Iowa, Louisiana, and Virginia, the project team worked with state representatives to explore the data elements within state data systems.<sup>22</sup> When concluding the first-round work and engaging additional states such as New Jersey, we developed a Noncredit Data Taxonomy and How-To Guide<sup>23</sup> to serve as a primer for states just beginning data collection or refining their approach. The NJDOL in New Jersey is the first state workforce agency in the state data snapshot series. We are therefore expanding our taxonomy to account for the additional types of data the agency collects. Table 1 shows a complete inventory of potential noncredit data elements; these elements have been re-organized from our original work based on the new taxonomy and applied to NJDOL's noncredit data.

NJDOL pursues a data infrastructure that is comprehensive in both noncredit and credit data, with a strong focus on the ETPL. The data reported in Table 1 are reported at three distinct levels: provider, program, and

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<sup>21</sup> Institute of Education Statistics. (2024). CIP: The classification of instructional programs. National Center for Education Statistics. <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/FAQ.aspx?y=55>; <https://www.bls.gov/soc/>

<sup>22</sup> D'Amico, M., Van Noy, M., Srivastava, A., Bahr, P., & Xu, D. (2023). The state community college noncredit data infrastructure: Lessons from Iowa, Louisiana, and Virginia. Rutgers Education and Employment Research Center. <https://sites.rutgers.edu/state-noncredit-data/wp-content/uploads/sites/794/2023/08/The-State-Community-College-EERC-8.2023.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> D'Amico, Van Noy, Srivastava, Bahr, & Xu, 2023.



individual/student. The table documents various data elements and the degree to which each is captured by NJDOL. For each variable, the analysis categorizes data availability at a given level of analysis (provider, program, or individual student) as: all, most (more than 2/3), many (more than 1/3 but fewer than 2/3), some (fewer than 1/3), or none. Details regarding the available data, including those which may be unique to NJDOL, or which may be missing in the tables and figures, are discussed in the Findings. In the table, we indicate the variables for which data collection or categorization is still in development. The data discussed below are from February 2024 and are drawn from 1,476 programs across 192 providers in New Jersey.

The findings in Table 1 are categorized into the following main areas based on our noncredit data taxonomy: (1) Purpose and design of the noncredit offerings, (2) Noncredit course demographics and enrollment, (3) Financing of noncredit courses, and (4) Outcomes on both noncredit programs and employment. Before describing our selected findings, there are a few important points to make about NJDOL’s noncredit data structure. The table’s subcategory titles are based on our taxonomy to facilitate comparison across states and other noncredit data systems. As noted above, in our examination of NJDOL data, we identified many data elements that were not present in other state data systems; we have highlighted these in gray in Table 1. In addition, particular variable names in NJDOL’s database may not exactly match what is presented here under the subcategories. For example, the subcategory of Online in Table 1, indicating online program/learning, can be determined with a variable named Distance Learning in NJDOL’s actual database. A program’s work-based learning requirement as seen in the table is classified as an apprenticeship in NJDOL’s database.

NJDOL tries to ensure providers provide accurate information through the recently implemented IGX software. But data entry mistakes can weaken the quality of noncredit student and program data, particularly regarding student characteristics and program enrollments; it may also have implications for labor market outcome data. For example, since Social Security numbers are used to connect students to employment after program completion, if they are missing or incorrectly entered by ETPL providers, there is risk of compromising employment data and subsequent assessment of the effectiveness of noncredit programs for student success.

*Table 1: NJ DOL State-Level Noncredit Inventory for February 2024*

Subcategory	Category	Data Availability	Program/Provider Level
Purpose and Design			
	Course/program name and ID	All	Program
	Program Description	All	Program
	CIP code	All	Program
Field of Study		All (and will be merged with ONET)	Program
	SOC code		
	Career Cluster	None	NA

Noncredit Type	Occupational, sponsored, pre-college, personal interest	All	Program
Non-Degree Credentials*	Industry certification	All	Program
	Occupational licensure	All	Program
	College-issued certificate	All	Program
	General education development	All	Program
	Certificate of completion	All	Program
	Micro credentials	None	NA
	Apprenticeship certificate	All	Program
	Name and ID of credential(s) associated with program	Most	Program
Program Length and Admission	Number of courses if multi-course program	None	Program
	Calendar length	All	Program
	Admission requirements/Prerequisites	Most	Program
	Total contact/Clock hours	All	Program
	<i>Face-to-face location</i>	All	Provider
	<i>Evening courses</i>	All	Provider
	<i>Bus route</i>	Most	Provider
	<i>Train route</i>	Many	Provider
	<i>Access for disabled</i>	All	Provider
	<i>Offered in other languages</i>	All	Provider
	<i>Online</i>	All	Program
	<i>Blended</i>	None	NA
	<i>Competency-based</i>	None	NA
	<i>Faculty data</i>	None	NA
	<i>Work-based learning required (i.e., apprenticeship)</i>	Most	Program
	Student service availability (see Support Services below)	All	Provider
	Provider name and ID	All	Provider
	Provider type (e.g., community college, private career school, WIOA-sponsored)	All (In Development)	Provider
	Provider description	In Development	Provider
	Provider address	All	Provider
Provider website	Most	Provider	
Provider contact person/Title	All	Provider	
Support Services	Career assistance	All	Provider
	One-Stop career	All	Provider
	Personal assistance	All	Provider
	AJB/ATB	All	Provider
	Childcare	All	Provider
	Assistance in obtaining childcare	All	Provider
Demographics and Enrollment			
Enrollments	Headcount	All	Individual/Student
	Enrollment date	All	Individual/Student
Demographics	Race/Ethnicity	All	Individual/Student

	Age	All	Individual/Student
	Sex/Gender	All	Individual/Student
	Disability status	All	Individual/Student
	WIOA participant	All	Individual/Student
	ESL	All	Individual/Student
	Formerly incarcerated	All	Individual/Student
	Exhausted TANF	All	Individual/Student
	Foster care youth	All	Individual/Student
	Housing status	All	Individual/Student
Identifiers	Name	All	Individual/Student
	Birthdate	All	Individual/Student
	Home address	All	Individual/Student
	Social Security number	All	Individual/Student
	Driver's license/State ID	All	Individual/Student
Finance			
Tuition and Costs	Course/Program tuition	All	Program
	Books and supplies	All	Program
	Fees	All	Program
	Other costs	All	Program
	Total costs	All	Program
	Financial aid	All	Program
State and Federal Funding	State reimbursement	None	NA
	WIOA-eligible	All	Program
	Economic development incentive	None	NA
	Other federal grants	None	NA
	Other state grants	None	NA
	Approval agency for ETPL	All	Provider
	Date submitted for ETPL	All	Provider
	ETPL approval	All	Provider
ETPL expiration date	Most	Provider	
Outcomes			
Program Outcomes	Students continue to credit	None	NA
	Completion dates	All	Individual/Student
	Exit date (if did not complete)	All	Individual/Student
Labor Market Outcomes	Pre-enrollment employment	In Development	Individual/Student
	Post-enrollment employment	In Development	Individual/Student
	Pre-enrollment salary/wage	In Development	Individual/Student
	Post-employment salary/wage	In Development	Individual/Student

Note: Because ETPL training providers enter their own information on students into NJDOL's database, there may be missing or incomplete individual student data, which may not represent the entire population of noncredit students in New Jersey.

\*While a given program may be associated with one main type of credential, there may be more than one credential that students can receive.

## Description of Data

The findings below from NJDOL's data represent the following key areas: (1) Purpose and design of the noncredit offerings, (2) Noncredit course demographics and enrollment, (3) Financing of noncredit courses, and (4) Outcomes related to completions, credentials, and labor markets.

### *Purpose and Design*

Data shown in Tables 2 and 3 indicate the following key findings on noncredit offerings and delivery through NJDOL:

- As shown in Table 2, out of 1,467 program offerings, the overwhelming majority are associated with certifications and certificates of completion—combined, they accounted for 89 percent of offerings, whereas only eight offerings (1%) were associated with general education development completions (e.g., GED or GED preparation).<sup>24</sup>
- As shown in Table 3, program offerings associated with general education development completions have the highest median contact hours (260), while programs associated with certificates of completion and licenses have the highest mean contact hours (443 and 426, respectively). The fact that the median contact hours of program offerings associated with these two latter credential types is below 200 suggests these offerings have a higher variance of contact hours compared to others, and that there are some offerings within these categories with a relatively large number of contact hours.
- Compared to states in our previous reports that focused on noncredit data collection from community colleges, NJDOL collects data on all training providers listed on the ETPL, including community colleges and other training providers (e.g., private career schools and vocational/technical schools). These data include the names, IDs, and locations of each provider offering a noncredit program, as well as more detailed ETPL information like the ID of the approval agency for ETPL status, the date a provider submitted for ETPL status, whether a provider is approved for ETPL status, and the date a provider's ETPL status will expire.
- In terms of support services offered across all providers, 9 percent had career assistance, and 10 percent had One-Stop career services. However, 83 percent of providers had childcare services, and 72 percent offered assistance in obtaining childcare. This latter finding is noteworthy given childcare is a significant barrier to students, particularly adults and students from underrepresented groups, seeking to enroll in training or educational programs. It shows that most providers of noncredit programs in New Jersey are considering, and trying to address, these challenges in their physical design and through the services they offer.
- As shown in Figure 1, NJDOL has constructed a unique variable among states included in our previous report that categorizes the types of ETPL training providers offering both noncredit and credit programs. The main types of noncredit providers in New Jersey are private career schools

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<sup>24</sup> All tables include rounded numbers for easier interpretation.

(41%) and community colleges (26%), followed by customized training providers (10%) and WIOA Title 2 providers (5%). Despite their growing popularity and attention in the United States, providers of apprenticeships only comprise 3 percent of noncredit providers in New Jersey. The majority of noncredit programs in the state are thus offered by private career schools (41%) and community colleges (26%).<sup>25</sup> Combined, private career schools and community colleges host just over 67 percent of the 1,476 programs active during February 2024.

- While NJDOL data already contains descriptions providing details about program offerings—what they may require and the industry or occupation they might lead to—the department is also developing descriptions containing additional information on the types and attributes of providers.

*Table 2: Main Credential Type Associated with Noncredit Program Offerings*

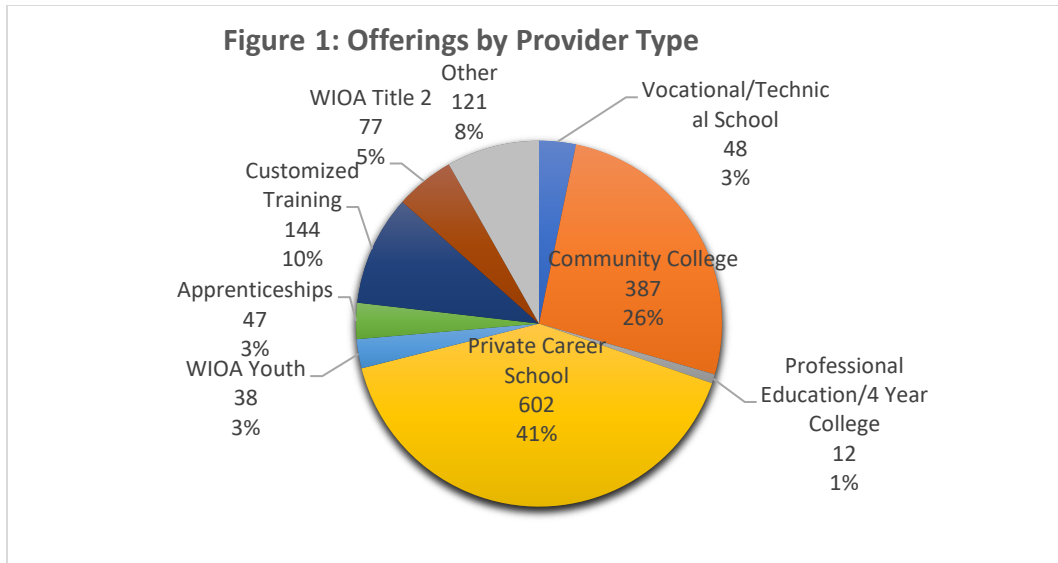
Credential Type	Courses	Proportion
	n*	%
Apprenticeship certificate	16	1.0
Certificate of completion	600	41.0
Certification	709	48.0
General education development	8	1.0
License	143	10.0
Total	1,476	100.0

\*The unit of analysis is the number of noncredit program offerings at each training provider. While a given program may be associated with one main type of credential, there may be more than one credential that students can receive in a program.

*Table 3: Instructional Characteristics of Program Offerings by Main Credential Type*

Credential Types	Median Contact Hours	Mean Contact Hours	Delivery	
			% Face-to-Face	% Online
Apprenticeship certificate	156	174	94.0	6.0
Certificate of completion	120	443	57.0	43.0
Certification	192	260	66.0	34.0
General education development	260	325	25.0	75.0
License	160	426	34.0	66.0

<sup>25</sup> The preponderance of private career schools is likely due to the fact the NJDOL jointly governs these schools with NJDOE. All approved private career schools are also placed on the ETPL in New Jersey. There is no other requirement for community colleges or other providers to be on the ETPL unless they are recipients of WIOA or other state or federal job training dollars including state-funded apprenticeship programs.



Note: WIOA Title 2 and WIOA Youth Providers may include community colleges, vocational schools, and other types of providers.

### *Enrollment and Demographics*

NJDOL collects demographic and enrollment data at the individual student level. However, we were unable to access these data in an aggregated or de-identified format for this report. As noted above, ETPL training providers enter their own information on students into NJDOL’s database, and consequently, there may be missing or incomplete individual student data, which may not represent the entire population of noncredit students in New Jersey.

### *Finance*

NJDOL collects data on a number of cost variables for noncredit programs. The mean total cost for programs associated with each main credential type are shown in Table 4. While programs associated with certifications have the highest median total cost (\$4,000) and average total cost (\$4,599), as shown in Table 5, an overwhelming majority of program offerings provide financial aid to their students, regardless of main credential type.

*Table 4: Mean Total Cost of Noncredit Program Offerings in New Jersey by Main Credential Type*

Credential Type	Median Total Cost	Mean Total Cost
Apprenticeship Certificate	\$1,168	\$1,643
Certificate of Completion	\$1,955	\$3,434
Certification	\$4,000	\$4,599
General Education Development	\$1,500	\$1,702
License	\$3,999	\$3,719

*Table 5: Financing Noncredit Program Offerings in New Jersey by Main Credential Type*

Credential Type	% Programs Receiving/Offering Financial Aid
Apprenticeship Certificate	94.0
Certificate of Completion	93.0
Certification	98.0
General Education Development	88.0
License	83.0

## *Outcomes*

As was the case with the NJDOL data on demographics and enrollment, we were unable to access available outcomes data and therefore are not able to report them here. However, NJDOL has sought to improve their ability to link student and program data to outcome data through the implementation of IGX, which providers seeking or maintaining ETPL status use to provide information to NJDOL. These improvements will enable more effective tracking of student characteristics like Social Security numbers, which can be used to assess students’ progress as they start and complete programs and enter the labor market to find jobs. More granular outcome information will also be collected and added to the continually developing Training Explorer as part of the Consumer Report Card for quality assurance. These additional data elements include pre-employment status and wages, as well as program exits and longer-term earnings of program participants.<sup>26</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The main purpose of this report is to take stock of the extent of noncredit data collection in the state of New Jersey. As presented above, NJDOL’s collection of noncredit data is increasingly comprehensive and is growing in its application, with links to other important sources of information on labor market outcomes and national frameworks. Some of the key takeaways from NJDOL’s noncredit data collection and database are as follows:

- Data are collected on all types of noncredit and credit-bearing programs offered by providers on ETPL. This includes career private schools, which offer the most noncredit programs in the state. This allows for a broader understanding of the noncredit landscape than other state briefs may have offered because NJDOL’s data include offerings outside of community colleges, traditionally the training provider of focus for noncredit programs in terms of both policy and research. Collecting data on other types of providers can provide states, policymakers, and researchers with a more complete picture of the noncredit landscape, including better information on how to improve program offerings and delivery for a wider range of students.

<sup>26</sup>WIOA State Plan, n.d.

- Support services offered by providers and programs are a key aspect of data collection. Understanding what services are being offered in relation to those that are most needed, particularly in relation to members of the most underrepresented communities in noncredit education, can lead to improvements in program design and delivery that help students increase and maintain their enrollment.
- NJDOL leadership is continuously developing their noncredit data infrastructure in multiple areas in ways that can serve as a model for other states. These include improvements in ETPL-provider compliance for information and accountability, matching students and programs to important training and labor market outcomes, and offering prospective students a wider range of access to accurate information through the continued improvement of the online Training Explorer. Additionally, NJDOL has a particular focus on quality and accountability through the Consumer Report Card for Quality Assurance to ensure courses and programs offered by providers are associated with anticipated credentials, occupations/careers, and wages.



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STEM and Technician  
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Noncredit Education and  
Non-Degree Credentials



Education and Labor  
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