Understanding Skills-Builders

Skills-builders are workers who are maintaining and adding to skills-sets required for ongoing employment and career advancement.

How Can Skills-Builders be Identified?
Skills-builder data found in the LaunchBoard is based on students who...
- took one or more non-introductory career and technical education courses (CTE)
- passed all CTE courses
- did not enroll in any community college or four-year institution the following year
- did not receive a locally-issued certificate, Chancellor’s Office approved certificate, or degree

What Do We Know About Skills-Builder Students?
- One out of every four exiting CTE students is a skills-builder
- Statewide, skills-builders increase their earnings by 18%
- Skills-builders are more common in fields like public and protective services, advanced manufacturing, and information technology
- Skills-builders tend to be older students
- Many skills-builders have already earned a community college award or four-year degree

Why is it Important to Review Skills-Builder Outcomes?
Not all students come to a community college with completion in mind.

Incumbent worker training, which helps people fill skills gaps, is a key service that community colleges provide.

Some students are in programs that lead to third-party credentials, which may be more valuable in the workplace than a community college award.

If colleges have a large number of skills-builders with significant earnings gains, they should review college communications and policies to ensure that students can easily find and enroll in targeted courses.