

California Adult Education Program : Annual Plan : 2020-21 Produced: Aug 13, 2020, 10:14 PM UTC Matthew Morin

08 West End Corridor/Chaffey Regional AE Consortium

Plans & Goals - Consortium Approved

Executive Summary

West End Corridor Consortium (WECC) member reps reviewed the 2019-20 Annual Plan and rated which strategies were most successful and which should be de-emphasized. They have given input on policies and procedures in place to deal with the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the resulting budget crisis, and systemic racial injustice. The 2020-21 Annual Plan is based on this input as well as insights based on data examined throughout the year with the help of WestEd. The West End Corridor Consortium continues to make progress toward meeting the goals described in its Three-Year Plan and fulfilling its mission of serving the educational and career training needs of adults in the region. In the past year, two new member reps were integrated into the group (BVR0P and Upland) and it is expected that continuity will be maintained in the coming year. The position of Assistant Director of Adult Education Pathways was added at Chaffey College, and this individual is instrumental in maintaining a strong and productive collaboration between the college and K-12 member institutions. The Program Coordinator continues to steer the consortium toward its goals by ensuring that information and assistance are readily available to members and deliverables are submitted in a timely manner. Also, in 2019-20, contact was initiated by the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, which now sends a representative to most meetings. This individual has been helpful in providing ideas, information, and resources to the group. Finally, the continued relationship with WestEd has focused on one of the major goals of the Consortium, to use data in a more targeted and analytical manner. Greg Hill Jr. from WestEd works closely with the WECC Data Group as the coordinator of regular meetings and data projects, as well as serving as a consultant to member institutions. The Consortium participates in regional conferences, trainings and meetings, and the San Bernardino County CAEP directors meet at least once per quarter. The Executive Committee adopted bylaws in April of the past program year. The group examined the current allocation structure and made a significant change. The fiscal agent will remain in place, as it provides an added level of flexibility when making allocation decisions and maintains a consortium-wide account for approved expenses. The decision was made to remove the yearly allocation from BVR0P and replace it with a project-based funding model. This will result in a better alignment with CAEP requirements and WECC objectives, and will allow the Consortium to focus CTE efforts in the areas they feel are most important as well as devote resources to those programs that prove to be most successful. Allocation decisions are always considered with Plan goals in mind, local/regional needs, member capacity, and anticipated outcomes. Inequities in funding that resulted from the original MOU formula in 2015 are being balanced as feasible and necessary from year to year. Pandemic: WECC member institutions must follow their district policies when planning for the fall semester. Registration is being conducted via online forms and by telephone. All schools are offering distance learning models in most programs where feasible, including some CTE courses. When DL is not feasible, interest lists are being made and students will be contacted when it is safe to return to school. Teachers are receiving the necessary support to function on the LMS platform that is being used at their school. Overall, the emphasis is on serving all students who show interest, providing them with meaningful instruction, and designing programs that can easily transition to hybrid or in-person models when conditions improve. Budget Cuts: Budget cuts are being addressed in most cases by making modest across-the-board cuts, not replacing staff who leave, or not implementing new programs at this time. Creative leveraging of staff and facilities is also an option being considered. Staff are being "repurposed" or asked to take on extra duties such as outreach, registration, and technical assistance for students. WECC maintains a consortium-wide fund for expenses that benefit all members, and the carryover from this account is available to back fill funding gaps for institutions that demonstrate need. Systemic Racial Injustice: Institutions that provide adult education have always been designed to welcome and serve students of any background, race, nationality, legal status, or ability. Even so, all could benefit from taking a closer look to identify any equity issues that may exist under the surface. Member institutions follow the policies and plans in place by their parent districts and may take advantage of equity training for staff. WECC, with the help of WestEd, is examining its data to determine if there are any areas for improvement.

Regional Planning Overview

The WECC Three-Year Plan was written to be realistic, concise, and user-friendly. All consortium decisions are considered with the goals and provisions of the Plan in mind. WECC Bylaws were developed, approved, and distributed in the past year. The Executive Committee has examined allocations and made fiscal decisions based on the ability of the member institution or

proposed project to meet the CAEP and Consortium goals of directly benefiting the maximum number of students at the lowest cost to the student. Program design is analyzed with respect to removing barriers and maximizing positive, tangible outcomes. In addition to completions, certificates, and transitions, there is a focus on improving student learning within programs by ensuring complete and accurate testing, recognizing level completions and other intermediate indicators of progress, offering “mini” or stackable certificates, and regularly soliciting feedback from students and staff. A great asset to implementation of the Three-Year Plan has been the collaboration between WECC and WestEd in the past year. WestEd has worked with Consortium leadership, the Program Coordinator, and the Data Group, to examine and develop better methods to gather student data along with more meaningful interpretation of the data. WestEd also brings the expertise to provide WECC with local and regional demographic and labor market databases with which to compare its data. Planning areas/topics that merit ongoing resources and effort include: A better understanding of the student population and regional need to focus outreach efforts: WestEd is helping to facilitate this. Better use of data to improve student recruitment and retention via improved program design and support services: WestEd is helping with understanding student persistence, mobility, and transitions. New legislation (SB554) will remove financial barriers and enable more students to remain in school. Leveraging of resources to fill gaps in regional CTE needs: Co-located Chaffey College classes and a new funding model for BVROP. The Assistant Director of Adult Education Pathways at Chaffey College has greatly improved the ability of adult schools and the college to collaborate. Analysis of needs to determine where program expansion is warranted: WECC will continue to allocate available funds so that member institutions are able to serve their communities and the region in general per Plan goals. Increased resources devoted to transition counseling: Chaffey College has set up a virtual counseling platform through Cranium Café that will be available to all adult school students. Acceleration of student progress through integrated programs, articulation agreements and pathways: Integrated programs are in place at two large adult schools, with college components, and ASE students have access to college programs that offer “stackable” credit. Intermediate to advanced-level college ESL classes are planned for 2 or 3 of the adult schools in the fall semester. Areas of focus that are important but may have to be put on hold for the time being include: Enhanced partnerships with workforce agencies and employers: The pandemic and personnel shifts at the county have negatively affected the progress in this area. Increased professional development opportunities: State agencies, publishers, professional associations, and even other consortia have offered excellent resources to assist staff in getting comfortable with distance education. HSE teacher training planned for last spring has been postponed, and WECC will also revisit plans to offer PD for CTE teachers and continue with the ESL Curriculum Institute. Additional focus/work groups: The creation of other groups should be carefully analyzed for effort vs. expected outcomes. The Data Group is an asset and will continue in online mode as necessary for the coming year. As of this writing, WestEd is preparing a report for the Consortium on progress toward its Plan goals. The adult schools have found that overall enrollment decreased slightly in 2019-20, but this has been a trend for several years. Despite attempts to contact students, many were unable to continue with their studies due to hardship, family responsibilities, or lack of technology. Schools provided technology and technical assistance to students when available. It is generally felt that good progress was being made in the above areas until the pandemic hit. Instability in the state budget has made schools hesitant to expand programs and hire or even replace staff. Schools are now in a better position to handle online registration, counseling, assessment, and instruction, but it is unclear if students will return this fall in the same numbers as previous years. Recruitment efforts will be adjusted as needed, and there will be increased emphasis on retention and support of those students who do enroll.

Meeting Regional Needs

Regional Need #1

Gaps in Service / Regional Needs

Expand and improve offerings in the areas of ABE, ASE and ESL while providing appropriate services and support to reduce students' barriers to success.

How do you know? What resources did you use to identify these gaps?

Regional demographic data indicate a need for English language development, basic skills education, and secondary credentials. Adult schools provide a much-needed safety net for district non-grads and programs for families of K-12 students. There are gaps in programs offered at some schools due to personnel issues and programming or facilities limitations. WECC goal is to offer all basic programs to any adult in the region who wishes to enroll. Students report that barriers to success are mostly financial, linguistic, family issues/childcare, and motivational.

How will you measure effectiveness / progress towards meeting this need?

Enrollment trends, waiting lists, and student interest surveys. Data on student persistence, learning gains, certificates earned, transitions, and other indicators of progress. Student and staff surveys regarding program effectiveness. Analysis of student barriers vs. services offered. Counselor, teacher and staff feedback. Distance learning platforms are now provided in most program areas. This may provide an alternative to students who have difficulty incorporating in-person classes into their schedule.

Regional Need #2**Gaps in Service / Regional Needs**

Expand and vary CTE offerings. Enhance employability of all students by infusing workforce/soft skills across the curriculum. Increase program integration and dual enrollment opportunities.

How do you know? What resources did you use to identify these gaps?

LMI data indicate that demand for skilled workers, especially in certain sectors, remains high in the region. Stackable credentials or credit in many careers, such as health care, business, and childcare, will accelerate student progress toward higher-level degrees and certifications. WECC maps program offerings each year in order to spot redundancies and gaps. WIOA II adult schools attend county WDB MOU meetings and events to remain current on training and services for job seekers in the region. SB554 will increase the number of adult school students in ASE programs who can also enroll in a college course. Counselors report that student barriers will be significantly reduced.

How will you measure effectiveness / progress towards meeting this need?

Demand, local employer need, persistence, and outcomes are considered when planning for CTE programming. Career assessment software such as Career Cruising is used to determine student interest and aptitude early on and throughout the educational journey. Educational software such as Burlington English contains career components that expose students to a variety of careers while still in the ESL program. Leveraging of resources with Chaffey College has resulted in more students taking advantage of dual enrollment opportunities at adult schools. WECC works with the college to keep track of adult school students who enroll in college classes and/or transition to the college.

Regional Need #3**Gaps in Service / Regional Needs**

Increase the number of students completing programs, earning diplomas, certificates, and industry licenses. Focus on student persistence considering the difficulties presented by the need for distance learning instead of in-person instruction.

How do you know? What resources did you use to identify these gaps?

Analysis indicates that students often leave programs prior to completion. Personal contact by teachers and counselors is often effective to get them back. Student and staff surveys indicate that there is a need for program flexibility and support services. More focused placement practices are getting students into the proper programs according to their abilities and goals. Orientation programs are serving to get students on the right path sooner. Student cohorts have yielded information on the effectiveness of the model and support needed. Co-located Chaffey College classes have proved successful in past pilot projects. These will be offered online this fall to students at the adult schools, including CTE offerings.

How will you measure effectiveness / progress towards meeting this need?

Counseling resources have been focused, if not increased, due to budget uncertainty. Teachers will be expected to contact students who do not maintain contact or meet class expectations. Some students may prefer online learning, although traditionally most prefer the camaraderie and personal attention provided by the classroom environment. It is hoped that a hybrid model may be implemented sometime during the first semester, and this will provide the best of both worlds to many students. This past year, Chaffey College created the position of Assistant Director of Adult Education Pathways. This individual has her finger on the pulse of adult school needs and directly manages the counselors who work with these students. She is instrumental in making programmatic decisions that directly benefit consortium students. WECC has an ongoing collaboration with Chaffey College to track adult school students who successfully transition to the college. This provides valuable information on the success of counseling and dual-enrollment efforts. The ESL Curriculum Institute last year resulted in an increased understanding of how Consortium ESL programs coordinate with one another. The restructuring of college ESL and co-location of ESL classes on adult school campuses are a direct result of this collaboration. Events were planned for HSE and CTE before the pandemic hit and have been postponed to a later date.

Gaps In Service

New Strategies

Strategy #1

(3-Year Plan, Themes A and H) Identify and serve all students who wish to enroll if not actually increase enrollment due to conditions imposed by the pandemic. Focus on student retention and outcomes to ensure that progress is being made in the distance learning environment. Examine and adjust programs and staffing to meet the needs of students while operating within district, county, and state guidelines; allocate funds and leverage resources to serve students as close to normal levels as possible.

Strategy #2

(3-Year Plan, Themes B and I) Expand CTE programs by leveraging member resources and allocating funds based on labor market data, regional employer need and student demand. Incorporate workforce training and skills into programs across the curriculum as appropriate and offer integrated programs such as the WIOA II IELCE program in ESL and WSCS at BVR0P.

Strategy #3

(3-Year Plan, Theme E) Continue to address the need for effective career planning and advisement services. Member institutions rate this as an area that has undergone significant growth through investment in software, counseling staff, and leveraging of resources. There is still room for improvement around strengthening ties with county workforce agencies to create a more efficient referral system resulting in better services for the client.

Seamless Transitions

New Strategies

Strategy #1

(3-Year Plan, Theme E) Increase the number of students who complete programs, get jobs or enroll in post-secondary career training programs. Analyze outcome data to determine where improvement efforts should be concentrated. Provide comprehensive student services, including career assessment, transition assistance, and referrals to social service and community agencies. Reduce barriers to success by providing support such as better communication, counseling, tutoring, and referral to outside agencies.

Strategy #2

(3-Year Plan, Theme D) Increase the number of students enrolling in Chaffey College from the adult schools and ROP by supporting the regular presence of Chaffey College counselors on the campuses (including facilitation of virtual counseling, as necessary.) Create clear and accessible pathways from one level, program, or institution to another. Provide opportunities for teachers to work on curriculum alignment and best practices.

Strategy #3

(3-Year Plan, Theme F) Improve the ease and accuracy of student data collection. WestEd and the Data Group have been instrumental in making improvements in this area. This collaboration has resulted in regular data reviews and a consortium-wide data dictionary. Data has been used to improve program design, student retention, and tracking of student progress. This is an ongoing priority for the Consortium.

Student Acceleration

New Strategies

Strategy #1

(3-Year Plan, Themes D and G) Allow students to move through programs more efficiently by providing varied schedules and modalities. Distance Learning platforms have been implemented in all programs where feasible, and hybrid DL/classroom instruction will be implemented when allowable. Enhanced/modified orientation programs and cohort models serve to pinpoint student placement and improve retention and outcomes.

Strategy #2

(3-Year Plan, Themes E, I and J) Implement integrated programs so that students can start earlier on their career path. Programs such as VESL and EL Civics IELCE under WIOA II enable students to identify career interests early on. Bridge programs such as ESL transitional classes (to ABE, ASE, CTE, community college or workforce) and CTE “stackable” credentials create logical pathways and transitions for students. Consortium members feel that significant progress has been made in these areas and this should continue to be an area of focus.

Professional Development

New Strategies

Strategy #1

(3-Year Plan, Themes C and F) Collaborate and leverage resources to offer better professional development and networking opportunities to staff. Make better use of persistence and outcome data, with the help of WestEd, to pinpoint where training is most needed. Expertise should be shared in order to support schools operating under the restrictions of the pandemic. WECC will still facilitate professional development opportunities, although they may not be in-person initially. Also, additional focus groups have been discussed and will be considered in this area.

Strategy #2

(3-Year Plan, Theme C) Continue to seek out and support training and professional learning opportunities offered through members, local, regional, and state agencies, and professional associations. Consortium funds are set aside to finance approved activities for staff at all levels. Make an effort to participate more actively as presenters and facilitators as a consortium and as member institutions.

Leveraging Resources

New Strategies

Strategy #1

(3-Year Plan, Theme B) Continue to offer co-located Chaffey College classes and facilitate dual enrollment opportunities for adult school students. Leverage staffing, facilities, personnel, and expertise of member agencies when possible. SB554 will remove barriers to college enrollment for many students who are still in HSE programs. New college classes such as non-credit ESL have been offered to adult school students, as well as other areas such as CTE, EMT, business, psychology, and child development. Continued support in this area is necessary to benefit students in the region.

Strategy #2

(3-Year Plan, Theme E) Support regional efforts to create a qualified workforce and reduce unemployment and underemployment in the region. Work with regional WIOA partners such as the county WDB through participation in the county MOU, and with other WIOA I and II agencies. This has proved difficult and progress has been slow, even considering the effect of the pandemic. It remains an area of concern and is hoped that collaboration will become a more regular, two-way conversation.

Fiscal Management

A narrative justifying how the planned allocations are consistent with the annual adult education plan which is based on your CAEP 3-year plan.

The Consortium has made good progress toward reaching the goals identified in its most recent 3-Year Plan. Member representatives discuss, strategize, and allocate resources to meet identified community and regional needs. Virtually all decisions, including fiscal ones, are reached by consensus. The Consortium follows the fiscal agent model and maintains a central account destined for consortium-wide expenses. This system has served the Consortium well, as it provides the financial flexibility necessary for support of pilot projects and resources that benefit all members. It also provides the means to provide limited funds to members in times of budget cuts. Consortium leadership meets regularly to review and approve fiscal matters, including any necessary revisions or amendments. Allocation decisions have always taken the following considerations into account:

- Plan goals, gaps, and redundancies
- Regional demographic and labor market trends
- Community characteristics and needs
- Member strengths, limitations, and potential to leverage other resources
- Number of students to benefit
- Ability to offer highly flexible, low-cost programs

ESL; Basic and Secondary Skills: The majority of allocations to adult schools go to fund large, high-demand programs such as ESL, ABE, HSE and HSD. The Plan has identified a continuing need to expand these programs and recruit students from areas of the region where the need is high, but enrollment is low. Funds are also devoted to acceleration of student progress through integrated education (including WIOA II/IELCE,) supplemental software, orientation programs, dual enrollment opportunities, support classes, and tutoring centers.

CTE: Plan goals include expansion of CTE offerings in sectors that are in demand in the region. Significant amounts of funds allotted to adult schools are used to continue established CTE programs that have proven effective, such as computer skills, healthcare-related classes, and welding. Some of these programs are quite expensive, and the goal is to keep the cost of participation down. Chino Valley has created an HVAC lab that houses certification courses offered by Chaffey College. This model of leveraging member resources is being used more as pilot programs prove successful.

Transitions: The WECC members are aware of the need to devote more resources to facilitate transitions to college, workforce, and other training providers. In the past year, funds allocated to Chaffey College have provided more transition counselors and made possible the position of Assistant Director of Adult Education Pathways. The adult schools have added counselors and Career Center facilities. Career-Cruising continues to be financed by the consortium for all members.

Professional Development: The Consortium has always set aside funds in the consortium-wide account to support the professional development needs of members and their staffs under the umbrella of Plan goals. Last year's ESL Curriculum Institute resulted in a better understanding of the relationship between adult school and college ESL levels. The college revamped its ESL program to serve more students and coordinate more closely with the K-12 providers. Program progress and completion data is being examined to determine areas that could benefit from targeted PD. Events planned last spring for HSE and CTE teachers will be reconsidered in the coming year.

Data: WestEd was contracted last year to work on a "Data Systems Improvement Project." They have conducted Data Group meetings and offered advice on how to help the members gather, standardize, and interpret data more effectively. The WestEd consultant helps individual members with specific data questions or requests and informs the Executive Committee on progress toward Plan goals. The ASAP student data system is financed through the consortium-wide account, as well as a pilot electronic ID card system for tracking student services and attendance.

An approach to incorporating remaining carry-over funds from prior year(s) into strategies planned for 2020-21.

Consortium member agencies strive to meet the 30-month timeline for spending funds, and this has not normally proved to be a challenge. Carryover from year to year provides members the necessary flexibility to meet local and regional goals; this also applies to the consortium-wide fund. Carryover is usually the result of an agency having planned program expansion or capital projects, both of which often continue into the next year due to hiring policies, facilities needs, or approval processes. The consortium has added or adapted significant instructional space, including leveraged CTE facilities; added counseling resources, including more counselors and a career/transition center; and added or expanded programs with new instructional staff in the past year. Some of these projects have spanned more than a one-year period due to their cost and complexity. Under the present circumstances, program expansion will be examined closely under the lens of student demand, community need, available funds/resources, and sustainability. WECC members agree that uncertainty in adult education funding may continue past the present program year. Data use is an area of focus for the consortium, so carryover may be used to expand existing data tools and resources, provide related professional development, enhance communication with current, former, and prospective students, enable more effective outreach, and support transition/tracking efforts. There is

discussion this year of using the carryover in the consortium-wide fund to assist members affected by budget cuts or to fill special needs created by the pandemic, such as additional technology and increased communication efforts.

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