

California Adult Education Program : Annual Plan : 2020-21 Produced: Aug 14, 2020, 05:40 PM UTC Vittoria Abbate

12 Contra Costa Adult Education Consortium

Plans & Goals - Consortium Approved

Executive Summary

During the 2019-20 implementation period, the Contra Costa County Adult Education Consortium (CCCAEC) made progress across nearly all strategies identified in the 2019-20 CCCAEC Annual Plan that were derived from the Three-year Adult Education Plan. The CCCAEC continued to advance its priorities of establishing shared processes, aligning career and academic standards, bolstering student support strategies, and increasing accelerated learning and career readiness opportunities. The CCCAEC strengthened its internal sub regional planning processes while simultaneously expanding outside partnerships to improve adult learner access to supportive services and reduce barriers to participation in CAEP services. The Consortium also completed an extensive evaluation of its internal leadership and workgroup structures and identified structural improvements that will ensure time and resources are more effectively directed to CAEP implementation. /Moving forward into the 2020-21 CAEP implementation period, the CCCAEC will continue to build on this progress while adapting services to effectively respond to adult learners' needs in light of the significant events of the last six months, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the ongoing CAEP budget uncertainty resulting from the economic impacts of COVID-19, and the nationwide mobilization toward addressing systemic racial injustice. Responding to the COVID-19 Shelter-In-Place directive, CCCAEC member agencies quickly shifted to remote delivery of courses and support services. Member agencies have been leveraging partnerships with local CBOs to aid students in accessing essential services, at times even co-locating food and material distributions at CCCAEC education sites. Jail education faculty and staff have developed paper and video-based modules to support ongoing reentry and employment services and linkages. /The recent restoration of 2020-21 Consortia funding will allow the CCCAEC to maintain its current level of services during the 2020-21 annual plan period. However, without additional federal support the economic impacts of COVID-19 will likely contribute to ongoing CAEP budget uncertainty, potentially leading to budget cuts in the subsequent 2021-22 annual plan period. In response, the CCCAEC will continue to implement and refine internal processes and governance structures to promote nimble and strategic planning, rapid communication, and collaborative decision-making. / The CCCAEC will also apply efforts to toward improving understanding of the impact of systemic racial injustice (including aggressive immigration enforcement) on its adult learners and how its services and supports may serve to address related inequities. Through planned efforts to establish standardized practices across member agencies for the use of CommunityPro, the CCCAEC will improve its data and reporting capacity and be better able to track and analyze the student journey through the local adult education continuum based on demographic characteristics. The Consortium will also continue to build and invest in community partnerships to improve access to CAEP services for historically underserved communities, strengthen referral pathways for existing adult learners to support services, and increase colocation of services. / The CCCAEC will use California Adult Education Program (CAEP) funds in 2020-21 to increase access to academic and career learning opportunities; improve the understanding and removal of barriers commonly faced by adult learners subject to systemic racial injustice; expand awareness of and connections to support services and resources; and to implement evidence-based instructional strategies for the online learning environment. Over the next year, the CCCAEC will focus on the following goals: □Build upon and leverage partnerships with CBOs to address student needs, services gaps, and existing inequity □Increase opportunities for coordination of course scheduling including fully online and hybrid/blended-learning modalities for adult learners □Maximize consistency of member agency data entry and use of data and reporting tools □Enhance effective processes to support students through their learning continuum □Increase adult learner career readiness □Enhance CCCAEC staff and faculty capacity to deliver and track CAEP services □Improve Consortium efficiency, impact, and leveraging of resources/This annual plan will serve as a work plan informing how the consortium will move forward in 2020-21 to address priorities, implement strategies, and meet objectives set forth in the CCCAEC's Three-Year Plan. The CCCAEC will continually monitor progress and make adjustments to approach and strategy based on changing public health requirements and emerging student needs.

Regional Planning Overview

The Consortium has adapted strategies and related activities from its Three-year Plan into intermediary tasks for the purpose of developing the 2020-21 annual plan. Tasks and strategies described within this annual plan are based on service gaps and needs of adult learners identified through the CCCAEC Gaps Analysis Report and the Three-year Plan planning process. They

have been further nuanced and updated to address emerging needs and challenges related to the impacts of COVID-19 with renewed focus on increasing equity and removing barriers for adult learners who are subject to systemic racism. The Consortium's three sub regional workgroups, consisting of representation from adult schools and community colleges, will each develop a sub regional implementation plan guided by the Three-year plan that directly reflects the strategies and activities discussed in this report. The sub regional implementation plans will operationalize these strategies and tailor related activities to more effectively respond to the unique needs of local communities. The development of sub regional implementation plans ensures that tactical considerations are fully accounted for and that all activities and tasks may be effectively monitored.

Meeting Regional Needs

Regional Need #1

Gaps in Service / Regional Needs

Due to the economic impacts of COVID 19, the region faces an economic downturn and diminished employment/career opportunities. This is associated with a rapidly increased demand for support programs and services that address areas of essential need (i.e. cash aid, nutrition programs/food pantries, and unemployment benefits) and increased barriers to participation in CAEP services.

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

Regional economic and labor market trends and its impacts have been observed through multiple sources including news publications and economic and workforce development boards. The CCCAEC has observed increased needs for safety-net supports through reporting from community based organizations such as employment and training organizations and food banks, as well as anecdotal reports by adult education faculty, support staff, and students. The CCCAEC also tracks publicly available data regarding regional unemployment and layoffs.

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

The CCCAEC will measure progress toward meeting adult learner's essential needs by the number of formalized partnerships and referrals between support services providers and CCCAEC members and the Consortium as a whole. The CCCAEC will also document specific efforts and events that provide material and nutritional support and/or service referral opportunities for its adult learners.

Regional Need #2

Gaps in Service / Regional Needs

Barriers to the technologies and tools required for distance learning may disproportionately affect demographic groups that are already subject to systemic racial and economic injustices.

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

This gap has emerged through anecdotal report-outs from CCCAEC Steering Committee participants and attendees during Steering Committee and ad hoc meetings. CCCAEC leadership is considering the need to conduct a more in depth survey effort to improve understanding of the variation and nuance around technology needs and gaps across students with a particular focus on students of color and those from other vulnerable and/or historically underserved communities.

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

The CCCAEC will measure progress towards addressing this gap through analysis of pre and post adult learner survey results that will initially assess need and then evaluate the extent to which new strategies successfully address those needs.

Gaps In Service

New Strategies

Strategy #1

Build upon and leverage partnerships with CBOs to address student needs, services gaps, and existing inequity./1.1.1: Engage in partnership building with local and regional CBOs1.1.2: Formalize existing and new partnerships with regional CCCAEC members/The CCCAEC has made strides in building new relationships and expanding its network of community partners during the previous year. One example is the expansion of a partnership with SparkPoint to regularly bring financial education and coaching services to several member agency sites. To address the growing need among adult learners for essential support services due to COVID-19, known to be impacting communities of color and other vulnerable groups disproportionately, the CCCAEC must continue to build upon and leverage partnerships with CBOs and industry partners to improve both the accessibility and levels of support services. This strategy is augmented from the previous year with a focus on leveraging and formalizing existing partnerships to enhance and expand appropriate linkages to psychosocial supports and to explore opportunities to co-locate services. The CCCAEC believes that deepening collaboration with local partners who are embedded in local communities and have experience working with historically underserved individuals and groups is a key strategy for removing barriers for those that are disproportionately subject to systemic racial and economic injustice. To implement this strategy, a sub regional approach will be utilized to ensure that efforts are as responsive as possible to the specific needs of the various communities that the CCCAEC serves across the County. Sub-regions will operationalize this strategy through the development of their annual work plans and may elect to form taskforces dedicated to assessing current partnerships and building new and/or strengthening existing relationships with service providers to respond to emerging needs. New partnership opportunities and strategies for increasing access will be shared at the Consortium level and leveraged by other sub regions as possible.

Strategy #2

Increase opportunities for coordination of course scheduling including fully online and hybrid/blended-learning modalities for adult learners./1.2.1: Pilot coordinated remote and in-person course schedules across sub-regions1.2.2: Assess current technological barriers experienced by adult learners1.2.3: Develop minimum technological proficiency standards in remote learning platforms/tools for faculty and provide professional development/trainings as needed/The CCCAEC will strive to meet the unprecedented challenges of COVID-19 through enhanced coordination across member agencies to increase access to a variety of course schedules and modalities. Before the onset of COVID-19, the CCCAEC was working to increase opportunities for alternative class times and distance learning that accommodate adult learners balancing the responsibility of employment, parenting, and/or caregiving. Now, with the current and likely continued shift to distance learning to uphold social distancing, the CCCAEC member agencies will continue and enhance its work to coordinate remote (and in-person) schedules across sub-regions to ensure access to CAEP opportunities for its communities.The CCCAEC identifies an opportunity to reach a new pool of adult learners through increased online-learning offerings whom previously may have faced barriers to participating in onsite services and/or were unaware of CAEP service opportunities in the County. However, the Consortium also understands that the shift to distance learning may also increase barriers for some individuals and communities who have less technological and digital access than required to support optimal student outcomes. The CCCAEC intends to engage with its adult learners and faculty through discussions and surveys to better understand and address technological barriers and preferences. This strategy also entails efforts to provide hybrid/blended-learning modalities to ensure that offerings and services effectively accommodate a variety of learning styles and needs.Key to this effort is also ensuring that faculty are proficient in remote learning platforms and tools, and are receiving appropriate professional development and trainings in this area. The CCCAEC will continue to identify and seek out training opportunities and emerging best practices related to instructional strategies in the remote learning environment. Presently the Consortium is exploring using OTAN to provide remote learning resources for faculty and students. To implement this strategy, sub regional taskforces consisting of membership of both community colleges and proximal adult schools may convene to assess current course, schedule, and need for CAEP courses in each sub region. The respective taskforces will develop strategic priorities for providing CAEP services in a manner that maximizes accessibility and moves toward greater course alignment. The taskforces will then work to develop a shared sub regional schedule that increases coordination of course offerings and schedules across member agencies.

Seamless Transitions

New Strategies

Strategy #1

Maximize consistency of member agency data entry and use of data and reporting tools./2.1: Convene Taskforce to provide assessments, research, and make recommendations to the Steering Committee regarding implementation of Community Pro and best practices for intake processes 2.2 Develop and enter into MOU establishing minimum standards and practices related to the use of Community Pro by Consortium member agencies 2.3 Formalize user groups (TE/ASAP/Community Pro) and develop process documentation/ The CCCAEC has continuously been engaged in developing transition pathways and aligning intake, registration, and orientation processes across the Consortium to establish a more seamless and integrated adult education system. Yet it has become clear that despite significant progress in this area there are additional opportunities to deepen the breadth, alignment, and consistency of data entry and use across member agencies. In doing so, the CCCAEC members can increase capacity to track individual students along the continuum of services, identify larger trends in the adult learner population, and increase inter and intra-segmental system communication to address student needs. Increased consistency and standardization of data collection and reporting practices will also permit the CCCAEC to better understand how different demographic groups are utilizing and passing through the continuum of services, and potentially identify where challenges and/or barriers are arising for those groups that experience systemic racial and economic injustice. Having already expanded its data capacity through investment in CommunityPro in previous years, the CCCAEC seeks to leverage the tool to a greater extent in the monitoring and analysis of student transitions and outcome data across agencies. The CCCAEC Steering Committee will convene a small taskforce consisting of representatives from several member agencies to provide assessments, research, and recommendations on how to enhance implementation of CommunityPro. The work of the taskforce will directly contribute to the development of a Consortium MOU that establishes minimum standards and practices for CommunityPro by Consortium member agencies. To further strengthen and build consistent data entry and use practices, the Consortium will also formalize each of its existing user groups (TE, ASAP, and Community Pro) that emerged organically out of the Data and Accountability workgroup to align practices and troubleshoot challenges of specific data systems. The user groups will develop and present formalized processes for the use of TE, ASAP, and Community Pro to the Steering Committee.

Student Acceleration**New Strategies****Strategy #1**

Enhance effective processes to support students through their learning continuum./3.1.1: Plan, design, and revise curricula and supports to prepare CAEP students for careers and/or college 3.1.2: Identify and develop ancillary academic supports to accelerate progress across the continuum of CAEP services 3.1.3 Test, refine, assess alignment of guided self-placement tools 3.1.4 Integrate technology to support students in their learning continuum/With this strategy, the CCCAEC intends to continue to build upon the work of individual agencies and Consortium workgroups to align curricula and curricula standards, develop tools and resources to support student transitions, and increase connections between adult education and community college programs that improve student success as students move from basic to college-level courses. The CCCAEC will advance these efforts through a holistic and intersectional approach to identifying, assessing, and addressing students' needs through all points of the learning continuum. Key to advancing this work will be the convening of sub regional taskforces that drive the effort and have intersectional membership representative of different areas of expertise and positionality within the continuum of CAEP services. Taskforce membership will consist of faculty and experts from different curriculum areas and include student support staff, student transitions staff, and administrators. In representing a diversity of expertise and decision-making authority, the taskforces will avoid a silo-ed framework to identifying and addressing student need by program and/or curriculum level. The taskforces will develop and contextualize curricula, support and bolster existing services, and develop mechanisms to identify students who are struggling in an increasingly integrated manner. Efforts will continue to focus on promoting college readiness and also extend to supporting adult learners with the objective of completing shorter term certificates and professional training to increase employment outcomes. In light of COVID-19 and the growing need for web-based tools and technologies to support participation in academic and professional settings, the taskforce will also identify and recommend new opportunities to integrate technology to support student learning and skill-development.

Strategy #2

Increase Adult Learner Career Readiness./3.2.1: Identify ways to streamline certificate completion and gateways into employment3.2.2: Expand offerings of short-term curricula that focus on career readiness 3.2.3: Assess opportunities to increase contextualized course offerings3.2.4: Integrate technology to the extent possible to encourage skill development 3.2.5: Leverage industry partnerships3.2.6: Ensure that programming reflects labor market demand/COVID-19 is currently having significant economic impacts that are reshaping industry and employer needs and decreasing readily available employment opportunities. As such, CCCAEC views the need to increase career readiness and provide career readiness opportunities for its adult learners with urgency given the likelihood of widespread loss of income experienced by many households throughout the County. The CCCAEC will continue its ongoing work to streamline certificate completion, expand short-term curricula that focus on career readiness, and integrate technology into contextualized learning to rapidly and effectively prepare adult learners to attain their employment and career goals. CCCAEC will also continue to develop, enhance, and leverage its industry partnerships to maintain and bolster career readiness opportunities for its adult learners. Engaging with industry partners to also better understand dynamic changes in both their short-term and long-term labor needs will be combined with frequent monitoring and analysis of labor market data to ensure that CAEP programming accurately reflects market demand. The CCCAEC will also identify opportunities to integrate technology to assist adult learners to develop and strengthen the skills and competencies required for successful transition into their desired professional field. The CCCAEC will continue to tailor career exploration services appropriately to address gaps resulting from the impacts of COVID-19, (i.e., virtual job fairs).The Consortium-level CTE workgroup will continue to drive this work and explore solutions to streamline and condense CTE courses within a given pathway to reduce the timeline to complete both core and prerequisite CTE course requirements. The CTE workgroup will provide regular report-outs to the Consortium Steering Committee offering regional industry updates and current progress toward Strategy 3.2 sub-goals.

Professional Development

New Strategies

Strategy #1

Enhance CCCAEC staff and faculty capacity to deliver and track CAEP services./4.1: Continue to identify professional development that responds to changes to CAEP curricula, programs, and practices 4.2: Develop and maintain instructional pathways and student support referrals through trainings for K-12 and community college faculty, teachers, and staff 4.3: Identify and integrate emerging technological solutions and best practices/With the shift to distance learning due to COVID-19, the Consortium will accordingly prioritize equipping its staff and faculty with the necessary skills and tools to effectively deliver CAEP services in the remote learning environment. The CCCAEC will engage in an ongoing effort to identify and facilitate professional development opportunities and trainings for its faculty and staff that focus on the application of evidence-based instructional strategies within the remote learning environment. The CCCAEC will be engaged in an ongoing information and resource exchange effort between member agencies and adjacent Bay Area adult education Consortia to identify training opportunities, share emerging best practices and strategies, and explore leveraging training costs and opportunities where possible. CCCAEC member agency staff and faculty will also be engaged with training, technical assistance, and other support to optimize use of CCCAEC data systems, including Community Pro, ASAP, EMSI, and TOPSPro. In 2020-21 the CCCAEC will work to further establish minimum and standardized use of CommunityPro across member agencies and ensure that K-12 adult education and community college staff receive sufficient and continuous training. The Consortium is exploring OTAN and other training opportunities to support faculty and staff in distance learning instruction and tools.

Leveraging Resources

New Strategies

Strategy #1

Increase Consortium efficiency, impact, and leveraging of resources./5.1: Examine opportunities for the Consortium to enter into formal partnerships and partnership agreements. 5.2 Leverage Consortia partnerships to increase competitiveness in grant applications5.3 Conduct research and analysis to support decision-making regarding any changes to Steering Committee structure5.4 Conduct annual evaluation of Consortium effectiveness including workgroup structures, taskforces, ad hoc workgroups, and report out processes5.5 Continue to develop and implement mechanisms to enhance faculty engagement/

During 2019-20 the CCCAEC completed an evaluation of its operating structures and procedures that informed the identification and adoption of changes to the Consortium organizational model. The planned changes, to be rolled out in 2020-21, adhere to overarching objectives identified by Consortium members and stakeholders throughout the evaluation process. The objectives are as follows:

- Streamline and clarify decision-making at the Consortium leadership level.
- Reduce the number of Consortium-level meetings to alleviate time and travel burden on current Steering Committee and Workgroup members.
- Move toward a less centralized Consortium model through enhanced local and sub-regional autonomy.
- Develop and assign SMART objectives to taskforces and working groups that align with Consortium Three-Year and annual goals.
- Increase efficiency where possible across all Consortium structures and processes.
- Increase meaningful engagement of Consortium stakeholders and partners.

Following implementation of agreed upon changes to the Consortium structure in the upcoming year, the CCCAEC will conduct an annual evaluation of its effectiveness measured against these objectives. During 2019-20 the CCCAEC also made progress in leveraging resources and expanding access to services through collaboration with local workforce organizations, including DOR, Opportunity Junction, SparkPoint, and Project SEARCH. The CCCAEC adult schools have expanded implementation of WIOA services at various member locations and increased access to job seekers through their participation in the Contra Costa Workforce Collaborative (CCWC). The CCWC is a public-nonprofit partnership consisting of 12 community-based organizations and educational entities that provide comprehensive employment and supportive services at ten different access points throughout the County. The CCCAEC intends to explore other opportunities to develop and/or join similarly formalized collectives and partnerships that will integrate service delivery and increase access. The Consortium also views its existing internal and external relationships as significant assets that can more fully leveraged by when jointly applying for grants.

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.

All CCCAEC members must submit a budget each year to the budget and finance workgroup, which reviews budgets and budget requests to ensure members' proposed usage of CAEP funds aligns with the annual plan and the three-year plan. Once budget requests are approved by the budget and finance workgroup, a recommendation is made to the CCCAEC Steering Committee, which votes to approve or not approve the recommendation. This process is used for all fiscal planning and management, including annual budgets and work plans, changes to budgets, and requests for additional funds. The CCCAEC has established regular and structured budget monitoring processes that will continue to be utilized in the upcoming annual plan period. This oversight infrastructure will be important in supporting agile budget and program planning in the coming year given the possibility that ongoing CAEP budget uncertainty may result in budget cuts in the subsequent 2021-22 period.

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

All members are typically expected to use carryover funds for their original purpose as outlined in each member's budget and work plan (see prior answer for description of budget and work plan approval). If a member cannot use carryover funds for the original purpose or if they want to change carryover funds to a different expenditure, they will be permitted to do so by submitting a budget request form to the budget and finance workgroup with a budget and justification for a change in funds. The budget and finance workgroup reviews all requests and makes recommendations to the CCCAEC Steering Committee for final approval.

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08/10/2020 11:51 AM PDT



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