

45 Rio Hondo Region Adult Education Consortium

Plans & Goals

Executive Summary

The Rio Hondo Region Adult Education Consortium (RHRAEC), is a five-member consortium. The member agencies are: El Monte Rosemead Adult School (EMRAS); El Rancho Adult School (ERAS); Rio Hondo community College (RHCC); Tri-Cities Regional Occupational Programs (TCROP); and Whittier Union Adult School (WUAS). The consortium member agencies currently serve over 11,425 multicultural and diverse population of adult students. The member agencies continue to be dedicated and committed to serving the adult students in achieving their career and educational goals.

As the pandemic has changed the world we live in it also changed the daily part of the member agencies of the consortium. The member agencies have all gone above and beyond to ensure adult students continue to be served but have restructured education in a very non-traditional way. The member agencies have gone from completely online, to hybrid model, to in-person and hybrid. CTE (Career & Technical Education) proved to be an enormous challenge, hands-on face-to-face being one of the most challenging. Virtual classrooms and meetings are now part of how business is conducted. Vaccinating, non-vaccinated, mask, no masks, has created an organized chaos to meet all government and district guidelines. All while losing teachers, staff, administration and adult students. RHRAEC continues to meet each challenge to provide the best possible venue for education, transitioning to higher education and career training in high demand employment.

Each member agency requires a voting member, and an alternate, to represent the consortium. The consortium holds monthly public meetings. During those meetings member agencies participate in the needs of the consortium, timely reporting, upcoming events, shared information, strategies, and addressing issues. Over the past year, the consortium has attended webinars, gathered and held meetings to analyze data, and developed the 3-year plan. Member agencies have actively been involved sharing and gathering input from partners to be inclusive of community and employer needs.

The Consortium analyzed data and research identified adult student with barriers: English Language Learner (ELL), Low Literacy, Low income, and long term unemployment. It also identified the need for tracking CTE adult students transitioning to postsecondary. A system to capture transitioning adult students will be developed looping through all member agencies. Adult students who earn a Postsecondary Credential will be captured through CASAS TE. First-time adult students participating in ESL, ABE, and/or ASE will be counted through the Adult Education Dashboard. The Adult Education Dashboard and TopsPro Enterprise will be used to capture adult students who became employed in the 2nd Quarter after their exit. The data only provides information of those with Social Security numbers. It does not capture self-employed or those enlisted in the military. A system to track the self-employed and those enlisted in the military, will also be developed. Workshops, bi-lingual classes, supportive services, life-skills workshops, and counselors are all part of the member agencies plan for the next three years. Each member agency has agreed to increase participants percentages each year of adult students served. The goal is to achieve pre-pandemic numbers.

Through research, meetings, and needs assessment the member agencies have identified Low-Literacy as the over-reaching goal for the next three years. The member agencies are committed to providing career training, education, and support to the community and identified the underserved. Most member agencies are continuing and/or adopting services to immigrants and the homeless. The member agencies are masters at thinking outside the box to help adult students reach their goals. The member agencies have agreed to use the 2019-2020 data. The target for 2022-2023 was established using 2019-2020 actuals. Our goal is to reach 40% of the 2019-2020 enrollment.

Supporting activities will include annual job alike meetings, hiring and training highly qualified staff and teachers, in-depth data meetings to assist effectiveness and best practices in reaching goals. Member agencies will also share best practices and collaborate with other member agencies to reach the projected target goals. Tri-Cities ROP will explore pre-and post-testing options as they do not have one in place.

As always, member agencies will use all resources to leverage funds to secure positive outcomes. Member agencies are frugal and prudent in use of their allocation. Through all of the challenges faced by this consortium, student success is paramount.

Regional Planning Overview

RHRAEC began working on the three-year plan in Spring 2020 during regularly scheduled consortium meetings. The Program Director, and current consortium chairperson committed to attending all trainings associated with the three-year plan and other members attended some of the webinars as well. A timeline for completion of the plan was backwards planned. A Google Drive folder was created to share documents, webinar information, and data. Each of the agencies in the consortium began by dropping their own data and supporting documentation into the folder. This included all agencies' most recent WASC self-studies which included demographic information. In reviewing the data at a consortium meeting, it was apparent that Rio Hondo College had the most current demographic data which incorporates the entire geographic region. This included the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation report on the San Gabriel Valley area. RHRAEC members took the lead on completing that part of the three-year plan document. Our ROP member had the most updated regional employment information from the 2020 Census and the 2021-2024 Strong Workforce Program Los Angeles Regional Plan and took the lead on writing the regional alignment and priorities section.

RHRAEC intends to implement the 2022-25 three year plan annually using the same structure in annual segments. As part of the three year planning process, RHRAEC members established annual goals and metrics which will be analyzed each year in sections at regularly schedule consortium meetings. Each member will be asked to bring data to the table to support positive outcomes. This will also include dialogue to facilitate the success of all members and ultimately the success of the students in our region.

Meeting Regional Needs

Regional Need #1

Gaps in Service / Regional Needs

RHRAEC is committed to addressing the identified regional needs of our students to improve the overall socioeconomic and educational levels of the communities we serve. Based on the data reviewed by RHRAEC, and the data provided by the state, as a consortium, we recognize that we are offering sufficient classes in academic areas designed to improve students' employability and post-secondary options including Adult Secondary Education classes at all the adult schools and English as a Second Language at all the adult schools and the community college. We recognize that some of our lower level academic programs including Adults with Disabilities and Adult Basic Education classes have been reduced or cut altogether as CAEP funding only goes so far and difficult decisions must be made. Fortunately, our communities have a variety of programs to support our disabled adult population.

The first barrier to employment and full engagement in the community that RHRAEC identified was low literacy. Each member will be accountable for reaching 40% of the number of pre-post pairs completed annually of the 2019-2020 school year.

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

During the process of writing the 2022-25 three-year plan, each member agency brought supporting data to the team.

El Monte-Rosemead Adult School, El Rancho Adult School, Rio Hondo College, Tri-Cities ROP, and Whittier Union Adult School worked collaboratively to develop the RHRAEC Three-Year Plan. The consortium held monthly meetings for the agencies to review the needs of the communities they serve, the impact of the services currently being provided, and planned for future adult education and workforce services in order to provide a rigorous educational program while guiding students to pursue their career and educational goals. Partner agencies such as EDD, East San Gabriel Valley Comprehensive AJCC, Rio Hondo AJCC, Catholic Charities of Los Angeles, Dept. of Rehabilitation, and the Los Angeles Dept. of Mental Health along with other community businesses were invited to Coordinating Council meetings to serve as an advisory board to provide input regarding regional needs and workforce economic development.

Member agencies collected data and met by program area (ABE/ASE, CTE, ESL, Counseling Services, Classified Staff) to examine student outcomes to evaluate the impact of programs of study, identify gaps in services and barriers to student success, and develop strategies and activities to strengthen curriculum and provide seamless transitions to higher education. These subject-alike meetings included the teaching staff, the classified staff, and all of the counselors for all five consortium member agencies. Our staff members consistently report this as the most valuable consortium activity for them and it continues to yield important information for our consortium to institute, modify, and discontinue classes and programs with stakeholders input.

Although the Los Angeles County service area high school diploma completion rate is 79%, there are still barriers students face achieving this milestone. Based on the Census data (2020) roughly 79% attained a high school diploma, However, only 39% of the population earns a Bachelor's degree or higher. Although the data and analyses pre-date the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, governmental agencies, as well as a regional university, have conducted economic analyses for the San Gabriel Valley. In 2020, the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) published a report indicating that the health services industry, professional and business services, leisure and hospitality, education, and retail trade are the largest job sectors in the RHRAEC service area. With this information, RHRAEC poised itself to create educational opportunities facilitating pathways for employment in some of the sectors mentioned above. These data driven alternatives have addressed the needs of adult students in relation to education and employment. In addition, the consortium will continue offering programs undertaking other adult student needs in areas of language acquisition, technology skills, secondary education, and adult basic education. Overall, members will collaborate in designing equity-minded programs and services to empower adult students addressing their educational needs.

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

RHRAEC will use the metric "Number of Adults Served" which is defined differently for RHCC (any student with one or more hours of instruction or received services) and the K12 adult schools and ROP that define participants as those with twelve or more hours of instruction. Therefore, both numbers will be brought to data meetings by all agencies to the best of their ability in order to share equivalent data.

At the local level, all consortium members have each selected the metric "Adults who Became Participants" (AE 202-Overall). The goal for 2022-23 is 40% of the adults that are enrolled will reach the 2019-20 school year count. The goal over the next three year will be to reach pre-pandemic levels of service to the community, starting 2022-2023 reaching a benchmark of 40% of 1920-2020 school year enrollment.

Regional Need #2

Gaps in Service / Regional Needs

When RHRAEC was in the process of writing the three-year plan, one of the striking overall findings was the negative impact pandemic has had on multiple agencies' abilities to fill health care teacher and director vacancies as nurses are at a premium across the country and can earn much more money in the private sector right now. Hiring career technical teachers continues to be problematic for the same reason in other industry sectors such as information technology and construction trades. Education salaries do not match what these individuals can make in the private sector and the credentialing requirements for adult school and ROP teachers are both time consuming and expensive particularly when the job offer is for part-time work.

By the end of the 2021-22 school year, heading into the 2022-23 school year, multiple member agencies had a significant amount of staff vacancies both classified and certificated going into the new school year. Retirements and resignations have negatively impacted our annual plan for 2022-23 of our member agencies have been unable to fill open teaching positions, substitute teaching positions, and classified support positions both in the classroom and in our offices which support the assessment and data collection efforts required for reporting.

All member agencies are committed to using CAEP funds to meet the needs of the students in the community. Across the consortium, we are in agreement that when funds are limited, the most important classes are those that have the most short-term, high impact on poverty measures and these continue to be Adult Secondary Education (high school diploma, high school equivalency), English as a Second Language and Citizenship, and short term Career Technical Education classes in high employment and living wage sectors.

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

RHRAEC identified this issue during the regularly scheduled meetings. Each monthly agenda has a standing item "round table" where each agency at the meeting shares best practices, monthly successes, and current issues that are impacting their agency. In prior years, members would routinely share staff openings at these meetings. Many of our staff are part-time and it was not uncommon to share teachers across multiple agencies. During discussions, in 2021-22, it became apparent that all agencies had unfilled positions and an immediate need for nurses/directors of health care. The lack of qualified candidates had resulted in closed high demand classes. The CA budget for training nurses was discussed at regular meetings. None of our agencies applied for these funds due to inability to staff medical office teaching positions and/or nursing director positions. This also came up during budget discussions as agencies had not fully expended their budgets in 2020-21 and 2021-22 due to the inability to find these teachers/directors as well as having programs suspended due to LA County COVID restrictions imposed by the LACDPH.

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

RHRAEC will measure the ability of member agencies to staff programs to meet regional student needs. This will include hiring highly qualified teachers, directors, and classified staff and monitoring waiting lists at each agency. Student enrollment in the seven CAEP funded programs will be monitored quarterly across all agencies. The standing round table agenda item will allow all agencies in attendance to share their progress in becoming fully staffed again and their ability to meet their own clients'/students' needs. A classification wage analysis would be helpful.

Address Educational Needs

2022-23 Strategies

Strategy Name

Job Alike Meetings

Activity that Applies to this Strategy

Job Alike Meetings

Metrics that Apply to this Activity/Strategy

- All: Adults who Became Participants (AE 202 - Overall)

Strategy Description

Annual Job Alike meetings will be held in person or online. All five member agencies will assist in planning and implementing these meetings. Meetings will be held on a day and time that most teachers and classified staff can attend without disrupting the school day. Typically, these meetings are held on Fridays. Job Alike groups have been defined as: ESL staff, ASE/ABE staff, CTE staff, counselors, data technicians, and classified office staff. During the planning meeting, each consortium member agency representative selects a group to facilitate. The member agency representatives are responsible for creating a flyer to advertise their session which is shared with all member agencies to disseminate to staff. Office managers provide sign-in sheets for each group and is responsible for notifying each member agency of their attendees. Logistical concerns are addressed in the planning meeting with responsibilities assigned to various agency representatives for securing a location, ordering food, creating the evaluation form, and so on. Key deliverables for these meetings are sign-in sheets to assess what degree of participation each agency, and the consortium as a whole, attended at the event. Post-event evaluations, are tabulated and discussed at the next regularly scheduled consortium meeting.

The Job Alike meetings are increasingly valuable as all agencies strive to address the educational needs of the students during a time of unprecedented staff turnover. It is extremely valuable to offer the staff a professional learning community where they can connect with others who teach their same subject. Many of our teachers are the only teacher of a specific class at their member agency. Evaluations from past Job Alike meetings indicated that this was the most beneficial consortium activity for

staff. Counselors reported feeling better about handing off students to another agency once they knew the person they were handing the student off to at the next school. Teachers share best practices with one another including supplemental texts, online resources, and practical classroom management procedures. Thus, these meetings also amplify the effectiveness of our services across the consortium.

In 2022-23, one job alike meeting will be held with 50% staff attendance across all member agencies. Administrators from each agency will facilitate job alike meetings for ASE/ABE, CTE, and ESL teachers, counselors, and classified staff.

Improve Integration of Services & Transitions

2022-23 Strategies

Strategy Name

Hiring and training highly qualified staff

Activity that Applies to this Strategy

Hiring and training of highly qualified staff

Metrics that Apply to this Activity/Strategy

- All: Number of Adults Served (AE 200 - Overall)

Strategy Description

All agencies will continue to recruit, hire, and train teaching staff to meet the educational needs of students. Consortium member ag will support one another by sharing names of part-time teachers who are interested in additional hours with members who have vacant positions. Consortium member agencies will support the training of new staff by offering job shadowing opportunities with more experienced staff in both classified and certificated positions. Consortium member agencies who are considering opening or closing new CTE programs will share this information at regularly scheduled consortium meetings so that other agencies looking for teachers or new programs might consider adopting the program that is closing at another agency.

Short-Term Outcomes (12 Months):In 2022-23, newly hired classified staff who work in compiling and reporting data will shadow more experienced staff at another agency as needed. New CTE teachers will be able to shadow experienced CTE teachers across the consortium

Improve Effectiveness of Services

2022-23 Strategies

Strategy Name

Data Meetings

Activity that Applies to this Strategy

Data Meetings

Metrics that Apply to this Activity/Strategy

- All: Number of Adults Served (AE 200 - Overall)

Strategy Description

Annual data meetings will be held in person as Covid mandates allow. All five consortium member agencies will bring an administrator and student data/ assessment staff (if available) to these meetings. Each member agency will be responsible for bringing data to share with all members of the consortium. This student data will be formatted in a way that clearly demonstrates each agency's progress in each of the mandatory metrics: student enrollment and enrollment of our services to students with low literacy. These meetings will be held during the 3rd quarter of the year based on 2nd quarter data. It shall be the responsibility of the agency's voting members to ensure the data is ready to share at least one week prior to the meeting. Key deliverables will include how many students were enrolled by each agency during the first two quarters and how many of those students were designated completers at the end of the second quarter. For the low literacy measurement, member agencies will bring student data pertaining to the number of students enrolled, how many were referred to another agency in the consortium (ex. students without a high school diploma or equivalent are referred by Rio Hondo College and Tri-Cities ROP to the adult schools' ASE programs), and how many students attained a high school diploma/equivalent during the first two quarters of the fiscal year.

Short-Term Outcomes (12 Months) In 2022-23, one data meeting will be held to discuss mandatory metrics outcomes. All consortium members will provide data to one another in a format that clearly identifies enrollments and outcomes. Additionally, data will be discussion item on regular consortium meeting agendas.

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.

RHRAEC is, as always, frugal with their allocation of funds. Data meetings are held and provide up-to-date shared with all members. The information is analyzed against labor market, community needs and many other sources to ensure the needs for career and higher education are met. All of the above activities are incorporated to aide in meeting adult students educational and career need. RHRAEC has been and continues to be a cohesive consortium. The members continually help and share information with each other. All members work with AJCC and other workforce agencies to provide in-kind services to assist adult students. All members are dedicated and professional serving their districts, communities and adult students, to ensure the allocated funds serve adult students positive outcomes. Annual allocations to all member agencies are discussed and evaluated for member need and efficacy of spending at regularly scheduled consortium meetings. One topic budget meetings are held as needed.

An approach to incorporating remaining carry-over funds from prior year(s) into strategies planned for 2022-23.

As part of the three-year plan writing process, the RHRAEC MOU was rewritten to include agreed upon student outcomes and goals and the effective use of funds is part of the definition provided by the CAEP office of an effective member. RHRAEC identified, and voted on, through the new MOU the definition of an ineffective member and steps to be taken when a member demonstrates consistent failure to rectify ineffectiveness.

RHRAEC members have, in the past, and will continue to, review and recommend shifts in allocation of funds between members based on demonstrated need and/or inability of a member to fully expend funds previously allocated to that member for the overall consortium's ability to effectively meet the needs of adults in the region. When funds are redirected, this is the culmination of discussion and voting of all members of the consortium which is reflected in the minutes of the RHRAEC meetings and subsequently on the budget in NOVA.

Certification

El Monte Union High - Member Representative

Trina Cardona

Principal

trina.cardona@emuhsd.org

(626) 258-5800 ext: 8805

Carrie Frogue

Program Administrator

carrie.frogue@emuhsd.org

(626) 258-5800 ext: 8851

Approved by Trina Cardona

09/09/2022 04:26 PM PDT

El Rancho Unified - Member Representative

Cendy Tiscareno

Counselor

ctiscareno@erusd.org

(562) 801-7716

Jazmin Chavez

Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction

jchavez@erusd.org

(562) 801-7334

Approved by Cendy Tiscareno

09/09/2022 02:15 PM PDT

Rio Hondo CCD - Member Representative

Yolanda Emerson

Dean, Educational Centers

yemerson@riohondo.edu

(562) 463-4606 ext: 4606

Approved by Yolanda Emerson

09/13/2022 10:48 AM PDT

Tri-Cities ROP - Member Representative

John Smith

Superintendent
jsmith@tricitiesrop.org
(562) 698-9571 ext: 101

Daniel Barajas

Director of Technology and Operations
dbarajas@tricitiesrop.org
(562) 698-9571 ext: 103

Approved by Dr. John Smith Ed.D

09/13/2022 07:30 AM PDT

Whittier Union High - Member Representative

Margie Moriarty

Principal
margie.moriarty@wuhd.org
(562) 698-8121 ext: 1305

Juan Anzaldo

juan.anzaldo@wuhd.org

Kevin Jamero

kevin.jamero@wuhd.org

Approved by Dr. Margie Moriarty Ed.D.

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