

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 23,214 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.

A year and a half after the COVID pandemic, member agencies have gone above and beyond to ensure adult students continue to be served having adjusted to a new delivery model. The member agencies have gone from completely online, to hybrid model, to in-person and hybrid. Virtual classrooms and meetings are now part of how business is conducted. Los Angeles County Health Department re-opening guidance which changed multiple times impacted member agencies differently based on bargaining agreements, county mandates, and district mandates/school board resolutions. With the mandates surrounding COVID return to work guidelines, multiple teachers, staff, and administrators chose to leave for a variety of reasons. RHRAEC continued 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, member agencies have attended webinars, gathered and held meetings to analyze data, and referred back to the 3-year plan. Member agencies have actively been involved sharing, assisting each other with marketing unique courses, and gathering input from partners to be inclusive of community and employer needs.

During our annual data meeting and breakout session at the Consortium's job alike conference, the Consortium analyzed data and research and identified adult student needs with an emphasis on barriers. Counselors from all member agencies are tracking CTE adult students transitioning to postsecondary education and careers. The Adult Education Dashboard and TopsPro Enterprise will be used to capture adult student data. However, the data only provides information of those with Social Security numbers. It does not capture self-employed or those enlisted in the military. Manual tracking must be completed by clerical staff at all agencies to capture data on all students without Social Security numbers, the self-employed, military, and others. Workshops, bi-lingual classes, supportive services, life-skills workshops, and counselors' collaboration is regularly happening daily and these efforts are part of the Consortium's annual best practice conference. Each member agency continues to work to increase the percentage of adult students served according to the three-year plan's goals. The goal is to achieve pre-pandemic numbers.

Addressing the annual plan, member agencies are all monitoring students with Low Literacy skills. 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 agreed to use the 2019-2020 data as baseline. The goal is to reach 55% of the 2019-2020 enrollment during the 2023-24 school year and 70% of 2019-2020 enrollment by the end of the 2024-25 school year.

Supporting activities include the Consortium annual best practices job alike conference, 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.

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

paramount.

Regional Planning Overview

Given that RHRAEC saw success during the 2022-23 school year in meeting three year plan short term goals, RHRAEC member agencies intends to continue 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 scheduled consortium meetings. Each member agency 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 the 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 member agencies and data staff, and the data provided by the state. It is recognized 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 recognized 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, the communities we serve have a variety of programs to support our disabled adult population.

RHRAEC members have aggressively worked to bring back career technical education programs hardest hit during the pandemic. Member agencies have worked diligently to align course offerings to the changing needs of our communities post-pandemic. While the Consortium recognizes the need to increase medical field courses, based on job market data, we have found it is difficult to staff positions when our education salaries do not match what health care professionals can make in the free market.

The first barrier to employment and full engagement in the community that RHRAEC identified was low literacy. Most member agencies have reached 40% of matched pre-post test pairs relative to the 2019-20 numbers and will work to increase to 55% of matched pre-post test pairs in 2023-24. Because neither the community college nor the ROP are mandated to meet the adult school requirement of pre- and post-testing students, these agencies have not met this goal as they do no pre-post tests.

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

El Monte-Rosemead Adult School, El Rancho Adult School, Rio Hondo College, Tri-Cities ROP, and Whittier Union Adult School worked collaboratively to monitor the RHRAEC's three-year plan. The consortium holds monthly meetings for the member agencies to review the needs of the communities being served, the impact of the services currently being provided, and plan 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. Member agencies actively partner with local agencies such as EDD, East San Gabriel Valley Comprehensive AJCC and Rio Hondo AJCC. RHRAEC member agencies attend these partner meetings monthly virtually.

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

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.

At the local level, all adult school members have selected the metric "Adults who Became Participants" (AE 202-Overall). The goal for 2022-23 of 40% of the adults that were enrolled reaching participant status (12+ hours) was met by all three adult schools; the community college count students who are enrolled not students served and ROP do not track this specific metric (12+ hours). The goal for 2023-24 will be to reach 55% of pre-pandemic levels of service to the community.

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 the pandemic had on multiple agencies' abilities to fill health care teachers and director vacancies. Hiring career technical teachers continues to be problematic in other industry sectors such as information technology and construction trades. Educational salaries do not match what individuals can earn 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. Turnover in local HR offices and the County Office of Education credentialing staff slowed the process for new hires. As the the 2022-23 school year ends multiple member agencies were facing staffing shortages due to retirement across departments.

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 member agency at the meeting shares best practices, monthly successes, and current issues that are impacting their agency. In prior years, member agencies 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 2022-23, it became apparent that member agencies had unfilled positions and an immediate need for nurses/directors of health care. The lack of qualified candidates had resulted in closing high demand classes. As the school year ends, multiple member agencies are experiencing many vacancies.

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 while monitoring waiting lists at each agency. Student enrollment in the seven CAEP funded programs will be monitored quarterly across most member agencies; the community college will provide data annually. The standing round table agenda item will allow all member agencies in attendance to share their progress in becoming fully staffed again and their ability to meet their own clients'/students' needs.

Address Educational Needs

2023-24 Strategies

Strategy Name

Annual Job Alike Conference

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

The annual Job Alike conference is increasingly valuable as all agencies strive to address the educational needs of students during a time of unprecedented staff turnover. It is extremely valuable to offer 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 the 2023 Job Alike conference 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 to for the next school. For 2023, a breakout session for data and assessment staff was added. They shared best practices in data matching and monitoring student outcomes. Teachers shared best practices with one another including student engagement, technology, marketing, and maximizing attendance. This annual conference amplifies the effectiveness of our services across the consortium and will be continued in 2023-24.

In 2022-23, we met the goal of 50% staff attendance across all member agencies at the annual job alike conference. For 2023-24, our goal is 60% staff attendance across all member agencies.

Improve Integration of Services & Transitions

2023-24 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 and classified staff to meet the educational needs of students. Consortium members agencies will support one another by sharing names of part-time teachers who are interested in additional hours with member agencies that have vacant positions. For 2023-24, the Consortium is exploring having two or more member agencies share a nursing director or teaching staff. 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 career technical education 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 member agency.

In 2022-23, job shadowing for new data/assessment clerks was very successful and will be continued in 2023-24. New career technical education teachers will be given an opportunity to shadow experienced career technical education teachers across the consortium.

Improve Effectiveness of Services

2023-24 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 the second semester of the school year. All five consortium member agencies will bring an administrator and 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 member agencies progress in each of the mandatory metric student enrollment and evidence of our services to students with low literacy, when available. 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 member agency and how many of those students were designated completers. For the low literacy measurement, member agencies will bring student data pertaining to the number of students enrolled and/or how many were referred to another agency in the consortium if the member agency does not offer these services or has a waiting list.

In 2022-23, one data meeting was held with all members of the consortium participating. Additionally, a best practices session was added to the annual job alike conference for clerical staff who monitor data to share best practices.

Short-Term Outcomes (12 Months) In 2023-24, one data meeting will be held to discuss mandatory metrics outcomes. All consortium member agencies 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.

The three-year plan includes a goal to formalize the process of referring students to other member agencies. Some progress has been made on this; a shared spreadsheet, emails to other agencies, and promotion of programs across the consortium. We will continue to work on this in 2023-24.

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.

1. RHRAEC is, as always, frugal with its allocation of funds. Data Meetings are held to provide up-to-date data shared with all member agencies. The information is analyzed against labor market, community needs and other sources to ensure the needs for career and higher education are met. All of the above activities are incorporated to aid in meeting adult students educational and career needs. RHRAEC has been and continues to be a cohesive consortium. The member agencies continually help and share information with each other. All member agencies work with AJCC and other workforce agencies to provide in-kind services to assist adult students. All members are dedicated and professionals serving their districts, communities and adult students to ensure the allocated funds result in positive outcomes for adult students.

Annual allocations to all member agencies are discussed and evaluated for member agencies needs and efficacy of spending the regularly scheduled consortium meeting following the release of allocation information for the next fiscal year. One topic budget meetings are held as needed.

An approach to incorporating remaining carry-over funds from prior year(s) into strategies planned for 2023-24.

As part of the three-year plan writing process, the RHRAEC MOU was rewritten to include agreed upon student outcomes, goals and the effective use of funds. This 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 agency and steps to be taken when a member agency demonstrates consistent failure to rectify ineffectiveness.

RHRAEC member agencies have, in the past, and will continue to, review and recommend shifts in allocation of funds between member agencies based on demonstrated needs and/or inability of a member agency to fully expend funds previously allocated to that member agency 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 member agencies of the consortium (one vote per member agency) which is reflected in the minutes of the RHRAEC meetings and subsequently on the budget in NOVA.

Certification

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05/19/2023 02:41 PM PDT

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05/19/2023 01:42 PM PDT



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