

45 Rio Hondo Region Adult Education Consortium

CONSORTIUM APPROVED

2024-25

Plans & Goals

Executive Summary

The Rio Hondo Region Adult Education Consortium (RHRAEC) is a five-member consortium comprising 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 20,000 multicultural and diverse adult students. The member agencies remain dedicated and committed to serving adult students in achieving their career and educational goals through a variety of delivery methods.

Most agencies are back to pre-pandemic enrollment numbers: EMRAS, RHCC, and WUAS are near or at capacity with some waitlists in some subject areas. Neither ERAS nor TCROP have recovered from the impact of school closures during COVID. ERAS will be moving to a new school site in 2024-25.

The consortium holds monthly public meetings where member agencies participate in addressing consortium needs, timely reporting, upcoming events, information sharing, 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 three-year plan. Member agencies have actively been involved in sharing, assisting each other with marketing unique courses, providing job shadowing opportunities for certificated and classified staff across agencies, and gathering input from partners to be inclusive of community and employer needs.

Regional Planning Overview

RHRAEC was successful in meeting the three-year plan's short-term goals during the 2023-24 school year. Member agencies intend to continue implementing the three-year plan in 2024-25.

As part of the three-year planning process, RHRAEC members established annual goals and metrics which are analyzed each year during regularly scheduled consortium meetings. Each member agency brings data to share, supporting positive student outcomes. This includes dialogue to facilitate the success of all members and ultimately the success of the adult students in the region.

The three-year plan outlines strategies to address gaps and needs identified through comprehensive data analysis and stakeholder input. Key focus areas include improving literacy levels, increasing career technical education offerings aligned with regional workforce demands, removing barriers to student transitions, and strengthening supportive services. Job shadowing across agencies supports best practices for all adult students.

Annual evaluation of quantitative and qualitative data drive adjustments to instructional programs and student support services. Data sources include state metrics, partner agency reports, labor market information, and feedback from adult students, staff, and employers. Findings guide professional development, curriculum updates, and resource allocation.

Member agencies collaborate to align services, create bridge programs, and coordinate referral systems to facilitate seamless transitions for adult students. Cross-training and job shadowing opportunities are provided for faculty and staff to ensure consistent, high-quality support across the consortium.

Continued outreach to community partners in workforce development, social services, basic skills, and immigrant integration allow RHRAEC to leverage resources and comprehensively serve the region's diverse adult learner population. Regular partnership meetings identify emerging needs to inform ongoing planning.

Meeting Regional Needs

Regional Need #1

Gaps in Service / Regional Needs

RHRAEC is committed to addressing the identified regional needs of adult students to improve the overall socioeconomic and educational levels of the communities served. Based on data reviewed by member agencies, the state data provided, and stakeholder input, classes are offered in academic areas designed to improve adult students' employability and post-secondary options, including Adult Secondary Education classes at all adult schools and English as a Second Language classes at all adult schools and the community college. Some lower-level academic programs like Adults with Disabilities and Adult Basic Education have been reduced or eliminated due to limited CAEP funding requiring difficult prioritization decisions. Fortunately, other community programs support the disabled adult population in the region.

Member agencies have worked diligently to rebuild career technical education (CTE) programs impacted during the pandemic and align offerings to changing community needs. While the need to increase medical field course offerings is recognized based on job market data, staffing these positions is challenging as education salaries do not match healthcare industry wages.

The primary barrier identified by RHRAEC is low literacy levels. All adult schools aim to increase the percentage of matched pre/post-test pairs to 80% of pre-pandemic levels in the upcoming year, demonstrating literacy gains. As pre/post-testing is not mandated for the community college or ROP, those agencies have not met this goal.

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 work 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.

Member agencies collect data and meet by program area (ABE/ASE, CTE, ESL, Counseling Services, data/assessment techs) to examine student outcomes and evaluate the impact of programs of study, and identify gaps in services, barriers to student success, to develop strategies and activities to strengthen curriculum, and provide seamless transitions to higher education. These job-like meetings include the teaching staff, some classified staff, and counselors. 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

- by RHCC as any students with one or more hours of instruction or received services
- by Tri-Cities ROP as total enrollment
- by the K12 adult schools using two metrics: both total enrolled students (all enrolled students) and participants (those with twelve or more hours of instruction).

All RHRAEC members agreed upon the following goal for the 2024-25 school year: To meet or exceed 70% of 2019-20 baseline enrollment levels in all programs.

Regional Need #2

Gaps in Service / Regional Needs

Hiring and retaining qualified career technical education (CTE) instructors across multiple industry sectors, including healthcare, information technology, and construction trades, continues to be a significant challenge. Educational salaries and part-time schedules do not match private sector earnings, making recruitment difficult. Credentialing processes also create barriers, as they are often time-consuming and expensive for part-time adult education positions. Staff turnover and shortages in human resources and credentialing offices have further slowed hiring.

As the 2024-25 school year begins, multiple RHRAEC member agencies face staffing shortages across departments due to retirements and resignations, including key positions like health care program directors and nursing instructors. The inability to fill these vacancies has led to the closure of in-demand courses vital for workforce training. Union negotiated salary and benefits packages have placed further constraints on CAEP budgets. The timing of negotiations which are longer make budgeting difficult and may result in carryover by member agencies to accurately project budgets. Retro active pay increases that do not post in a timely manner, or even in the same fiscal year, without a reserve make it challenging to fiscally plan and meet the needs of students at the same time.

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 standing items "round table" and "program areas" when 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, 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 2024-25 school year begins, multiple member agencies are experiencing many vacancies.

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

RHRAEC will measure member agencies' ability to fully staff programs necessary to meet regional student demand and workforce needs. This includes:

- Hiring and retaining highly qualified teachers, directors, and support staff
- Monitoring student waiting lists across programs at each agency
- Tracking student enrollment in the seven CAEP-funded program areas quarterly. Programs that last one semester (two quarters) will be reported at the end of Q2 and Q4.
- NOVA reported CAEP spending by agency will be shared at consortium meetings quarterly prior to certification.

Member agencies will share progress updates through the standing agenda items "roundtable" and "program areas" during consortium meetings.

Address Educational Needs

2024-25 Strategies

Strategy Name

2024-25 Strategies: 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 will be moved to fall 2024 instead of spring 2025. This is based on teacher feedback that they use the best practices to modify instruction. This timing move also allows for identifying desired job shadowing which can be scheduled throughout the year. Department chairs and leads prefer fall to better share pacing guides and strengthening connections across agencies, creating bonds that allow staff to contact each other directly beyond the Job Alike day.

As member agencies face unprecedented staffing turnover, this conference is critically important for:

- Subject-area teachers, many of whom are the sole instructor for their courses at their agency, to collaborate with peers teaching the same content elsewhere in the region.
- Counselors to directly meet their counterparts at other agencies, strengthening transitions and handoffs when adult students move between programs.
- Data/assessment staff to discuss effective practices for data matching, monitoring student outcomes, and demonstrating accountability metrics.
- All staff to explore innovative strategies for student engagement, technology integration, outreach/marketing, attendance maximization, and other key topics.

The cross-agency networking and professional development enhances service integration and effectiveness consortium-wide. Evaluations from annual conferences consistently indicate this is the most beneficial activity for staff development.

For the upcoming year, RHRAEC will explore options for scheduling this Job Alike Conference at a day and time most staff are available to attend. Once the 2024-25 school year begins, all staff will be surveyed about when they would prefer to meet. RHRAEC will also explore disconnecting the classified staff meeting day from the certificated staff meeting day

Improve Integration of Services & Transitions

2024-25 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 have been in place for several years with various metrics reviewed each year. It has become evident that more frequent monitoring is needed and more uniform metrics are needed. K12 adult schools have CAEP and WIOA metrics, community colleges and ROPs use different metrics making it challenging to compare and analyze effectiveness of all agencies. The lack of timely and transparent data on adult school dashboard is an ongoing problem; ROP data is not available on the dashboard. Different student information systems with varying degrees of access to reports from these SIS further compound the challenge

For the 2024-25 school year, all RHRAEC members agree to bring the following data to the meetings prior to certification of NOVA expenditure reports:

- Adult student enrollment by each of the 7 CAEP program areas
- Adult completers by each of the 7 CAEP program areas

- Evidence of services provided to adults with low literacy levels (Goal #1)
- Submitted NOVA expense report before the CAEP mandated deadline

During the meetings, agencies will share their data transparently with the full consortium. This allows for a deeper analysis of trends, successes, and areas needing further support across the region. By convening the collective data expertise, members can:

- Evaluate whether the consortium is on track to meet voted on performance targets
- Pinpoint achievement gaps, programs or institutions experiencing difficulties
- Develop strategies to boost outcomes for transitioning adult students, literacy gains, or other priorities
- Identify potential needs for staff training or adjustments to curriculum/programs

The data meetings promote adherence to data-driven decision making and accountability among all partners. Member agencies spend dedicated time understanding what the numbers reveal about the impact on adult learners. Collaborative problem-solving then occurs to enhance instructional quality and student services consortium-wide based on each individual agency's data and collective consortium wide data.

This focused review of quantitative outcomes, coupled with the richer qualitative insights from other meetings, ensures the consortium maintains a comprehensive understanding of its effectiveness.

Improve Effectiveness of Services

2024-25 Strategies

Strategy Name

Hiring and Training of 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

RHRAEC has focused on the need for hiring and training highly qualified staff. Support staff, teachers and administrators continues to be a goal for adult student success. All agencies will continue to recruit, hire, and train teaching and classified staff to meet the educational needs of adult 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 2024-25, the Consortium continues to share teaching staff. Member agencies continue to support 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 continue to 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. New career technical education teachers will be given an opportunity to shadow experienced career technical education teachers across the consortium. In 2024-2025 and beyond, the consortium is dedicated to support all member agencies to better serve, train and educate adult students.

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 planned allocations are consistent with the annual adult education plan and RHRAEC's 3-year plan in the following ways:

Prudent Fund Utilization: RHRAEC exercises prudence and fiscal responsibility in allocating funds across member agencies. More frequent data meetings will allow for a comprehensive review of regional needs, labor market trends, and each agency's effectiveness in serving adult students. This data-driven process guides the strategic distribution of resources. Part of the discussion of funding will include analyzing cost per adult students within the seven CAEP approved areas.

Collaborative Decision-Making: Allocation decisions involve all consortium members through discussions and voting during regularly scheduled public meetings. This transparent approach considers each agency's proposed budgets and justifications in the context of overall consortium goals and funding availability.

Monitoring Effectiveness: RHRAEC has established clear benchmarks within the 3-year plan to evaluate the impact of funded efforts. Comprehensive data will be collected and analyzed quarterly to ensure allocations are producing intended student outcomes. This systematic process allows for funding adjustments when higher priorities or more effective practices emerge, or during periods of reduced funding.

Resource Maximization: Where applicable, agencies leverage additional public and private resources to sustain plan objectives. RHRAEC encourages blending of fund sources and in-kind contributions from partners to maximize services without duplication.

The annual review and voting process by RHRAEC members ensures MOU defined percentage allocation amounts to each agency continue. When shifts are required based on effectiveness data or changing circumstances, funds can be redistributed across agencies through majority consortium approval. This proactive oversight of allocations drives continuous improvement, fiscal stewardship, and return on investment.

An approach to incorporating remaining carry-over funds from prior year(s) into strategies planned for 2024-25.

The timing of negotiations which are longer make budgeting difficult and may result in carryover by member agencies to accurately project budgets. Retroactive pay increases that do not post in a timely manner, or even in the same fiscal year, without a reserve make it challenging to fiscally plan and meet the needs of students at the same time. Projected COLAs for the next several years will not meet the statutory benefits increasing in health care costs and PERS/STRS contributions by employers. For those agencies that must cover these costs, it will be prudent to carryover 5%-10% per agency so long as this stays under the 20% consortium wide maximum allowed carryover.

Certification

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07/02/2024 01:17 AM PDT

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06/28/2024 02:03 PM PDT

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07/01/2024 11:06 AM PDT



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