

California Adult Education Program : Annual Plan : 2021-22 Produced: Aug 20, 2021, 04:57 PM UTC Patricia Romo

62 South Orange County Regional Consortium (SOCRC)

Plans & Goals - Consortium Approved

Executive Summary

The South Orange County Regional Consortium (SOCRC) continues to emphasize and uphold the goals of the three-year strategic plan while also including strategies to address new gaps in service or needs within the region brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic closures. Orange County unemployment tripled during the pandemic, going from less than 3% in 2019 to just under 10% in April 2020. The travel and leisure industry took the brunt of the layoffs, which include theme parks, hotels, restaurants and associated transportation (air and car rental). Financial, professional and business services remained steady, while education and healthcare employment dropped slightly before bouncing back in the first half of 2021. This is important to the planning process as the travel and leisure employees are more likely to seek training and education opportunities to change careers or upskill for more stability. The four goals from the three-year plan have been carried over as the foundation of this year's annual plan, and are identified as follows: 1) develop support amongst the consortium members to deliver adult education programs, 2) provide thoughtful and timely professional development activities to build instructor's capacity to engage learners, 3) meet individual student needs and interests through relevant career exploration and goal planning, and 4) align and articulate adult education programs throughout the consortium. SOCRC members provide a wide variety of programs to community members under the adult education umbrella. By far, the largest programs accounting for 74% of the student population, cover English language skill development in ESL classes. All service provider agencies offer some ESL courses with the exception of College and Career Advantage, which focuses solely on providing short-term career skill training. High school diploma and equivalency programs are offered by Tustin and Irvine Unified School District Adult Schools, while Saddleback College provides instruction in preparation for high school equivalency. Career Education, basic skills and preparation for citizenship are also offered by SOCRC members. Among the English language learner participants, 39% indicated that Spanish was their native language, 15% indicated Chinese, and 10% indicated Farsi. There are several other native languages identified through TOPSpro and highlighted in the CAEP Demographic Summary such as Korean, Vietnamese, Arabic, and Japanese that account for less than 5% of the student population for each language. The age range of participants is broad, but concentrated in the 30- to 54- year old age categories, which is 62% of the students. Through discussions at the planning and quarterly meetings of the Executive Committee for SOCRC, it was determined that the best course of action for fiscal governance for the consortium was to switch to direct funding. This allowed the consortium to utilize carry over from the fiscal agent balance to address regional needs such as a cohesive outreach and marketing program, as well as provide additional funding to individual agencies to address gaps in service provision identified in previous years and recognized as an ongoing need. During these discussions, a vision was developed to focus consortium efforts and funding in six specific areas. The areas include: 1) Develop a comprehensive and cohesive outreach campaign for the consortium to regain students lost during the Covid-19 closures, 2) Address digital skills deficiencies identified during the Covid-19 closures, 3) meet individual student needs and interests through career exploration and goal planning, 4) align and articulate programs between agencies of the SOCRC, 5) expand instruction and student services to address both in-person and online learning needs, and 6) locate and secure facilities to replace south county LEA classrooms and offices that were repurposed during Covid-19 closures. The last item applies to Saddleback College specifically, as they were the agency providing courses in the south county facilities. Another area of importance to maintain and increase focus is professional development for faculty, staff and administrators in all aspects of adult education teaching and learning, including the use of technology to provide and receive instruction.

Regional Planning Overview

As the SOCRC team began the development of their three-year plan for 2019-2022, they asked each member agency to reflect on the quality of collaboration among the members and the impact of the collective work in the surrounding communities in the areas of capacity, connection, entry progress and completion/transition. As stated above, there were four clear initiatives or goals that were identified for the consortium: 1) develop support amongst the consortium members to deliver adult education programs, 2) provide thoughtful and timely professional development activities to build instructor's capacity to engage learners, 3) meet individual student needs and interests through relevant career exploration and goal planning, and 4) align and articulate adult education programs throughout the consortium. SOCRC members particularly focused on how they

work together as a team and a consortium to support and strengthen instructional programs, student services and transition to college/career upon completion of adult education pathways. Because enrollment has decreased from twenty to fifty percent across the consortium from April 2020, the Executive Committee brainstormed ways to inform the community of services and supports offered through adult education programs. This led to the consortium advocating for a consulting firm to work with members on developing a regional identity and creating a comprehensive outreach and marketing program to gain back students lost in the past twelve months. The other five areas in which budget will be spent in the coming year are: professional development, the creation of courses and workshops to address career development and goal setting, increase the provision of courses and workshops to address digital skill acquisition, align and articulate programs within and across the consortium, support both in-person and online learning, and provide learning and office space to address the needs of students in the south county area. Consortium members will report out on programmatic progress and expenses at the quarterly Executive Committee meetings.

Meeting Regional Needs

Regional Need #1

Gaps in Service / Regional Needs

Outreach to regain students lost during COVID-19 closures: Currently, the SOCRC does not have a consortium level marketing program in the region. Each service provider is responsible for their own marketing through their respective districts. The SOCRC plans to engage in a consortium branding and marketing program that will launch in fall 2021. The purpose of the new identity and campaign is to bring regional recognition to all of the programs and opportunities offered through the six Adult Education service provider agencies. Agencies lost between 20 and 50 percent of their student population during the closures. The regional campaign will be designed to address outreach to current and former students, as well as potential new students who can benefit from the supportive environment provided in Adult Education programs. The marketing campaign will include a new consortium website that links to each agency website to provide more information to potential students and ease of registration for classes. The campaign will also include success stories of students who have participated in the various Adult Education courses to show potential students how they will benefit from participating in AE programs. The campaign will be presented in multiple languages including English, Farsi, Mandarin and Spanish, as determined by local student primary language needs. Not only is this focused on regaining students lost during Covid-19, but it will also provide outreach to new students who must change employment, update skills, or complete levels of education as a result of the changing work environment produced during the nation-wide shut downs. Outreach will also include a new consortium liaison that will work with all of the service provider agencies, as well as partner school districts to contact students who were not successful in an online only education environment and inform them of the Adult Education opportunities to complete HSD/HSE, English language development, and career education skills to transition to community college credit programs and employment.

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

The need for a consortium identity was recognized in previous program years due to the lack of website and social media presence. However, the importance of having a consortium brand and cohesive marketing plan became more apparent as consortium members lost student enrollment and program completers during the shutdown. The decline in student enrollment at the various agencies and across program types ranged from twenty percent to fifty-five percent. Prior to the school closures, enrollment was increasing or stabilized across all programs and locations within the consortium. One of the resources used to identify how the consortium would benefit from a cohesive and coordinated marketing and outreach plan was a CAEP sponsored webinar on marketing to adult education students presented by Full Capacity Marketing that linked to a broader national message on the importance of Adult Education programs to economic recovery in a post-Covid 19 market.

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

Effectiveness of progress towards this goal will be the approval and launch of a new consortium brand/identity, marketing and social media materials created specifically for the needs of the SOCRC and utilized as early as fall 2021 to inform the community about adult education programs and locations, as well as recruit students for the spring 2022 semester. The SOCRC will also compare enrollment, persistence and completion of programs pre-Covid 19, during Covid 19 closures, and after the start of the marketing campaign. It may take up to three semesters to determine the full impact of marketing on new students and returning students in adult education programs across the consortium. To this end the SOCRC may decide to poll students

during registration or on the first day of class regarding how they heard about school locations, programs, and course offerings.

Regional Need #2

Gaps in Service / Regional Needs

Address digital skills deficiencies identified during the Covid-19 closures:When the education community, as well as government and business, had to transition operations to an online environment virtually overnight, many students were taken by surprise and unable to adjust to the online learning environment for various reasons. Causes included lack of computer equipment and/or internet broadband service at home, and lack of training in how to use a computer. Students also indicated that they were not versed in many of the software programs used to access online instruction whether synchronous or asynchronous. Regional needs include the provision of loaner computer equipment so that students can avail themselves of the more flexible timelines provided through online learning, as well as the lack of need for transportation to a specific site. In addition, students need to learn basic to intermediate computer, software, and applications skills not only to participate in online classes, but also to adapt to a more online-based employment environment adopted by local employers during the Covid-19 closures. This will provide students with skills that can be used to further their education, as well as become more employable in the current job seekers' market.Finally, instructors still need guidance and support in creating robust Canvas, or other classroom experience-type curriculum such as Google Classroom or Zoom for online classes. This includes developing knowledge of other software to support the interactive online learning experience for students.

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

Most students self-identified as needing assistance with technology acquisition and internet access. In addition, students struggled with using both hardware and software programs with in-person and online instruction and assessment.

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

Consortium members addressing digital literacy gaps will measure effectiveness through the number of students enrolled in digital literacy courses and workshops, number of students who complete the courses and workshops, number of students who show gains in digital literacy skills from pre to post-tests, number of students who enroll in other adult education programs (ESL, HSD/HSE, and CTE) after completing digital literacy classes and workshops who are able to persist and complete courses with newly gained technology skills.

Regional Need #3

Gaps in Service / Regional Needs

Expand instruction and student services to address both in-person and online learning needs:When Covid-19 eliminated in-person instruction, Adult Education agencies across California had to change the way that they were providing services to clients. Adult Schools and Community Colleges had to move to a digital platform for instructional delivery and complete that transition in a very short period of time. For some students, online instruction was not feasible as evidenced by the reduction in student enrollment. On the other hand, students were drawn to the flexibility that online courses provide. As the State moves back to in-person or site-based instruction, it is important to retain some sections of online instruction to accommodate new learning modalities. Additional sections may be added to agency schedules to offer instruction in both approaches. Agencies will also need to be able to provide both in-person and online student support, which may require adding new positions, or increasing hours for current part-time classified support positions.

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

Interaction between students and teachers provided insight on the need to have both in-person instruction and retain some online courses. At some sites, online classes are full, while in-person sections are struggling to regain student enrollment.

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

education. Increase in the number of students who access support services, including orientation and registration events, as well as counseling and transition services. Increase in the number of sections offered in the various program areas, number of courses that are offered in both site-based and online format.

Regional Need #4

Gaps in Service / Regional Needs

Meet individual student needs and interests through career exploration and goal planning:This strategy is outlined in the three-year plan, and was one of the strategies highlighted in the 2020-21 annual plan. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 closures

and the instructional shift to online learning, this strategy was not addressed last year, but is a focus for the consortium in this fiscal year. In order to meet the objective of this strategy, consortium members will develop a series of career exploration and academic/career planning workshops that will be delivered both in-person and online. Agencies that already have career exploration and goal planning curriculum in place will implement their programs as designed. The consortium position focusing on college and career transitions will help to support this work with each Adult Education service provider.

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

Two years ago, consortium members conducted a community survey of students to identify gaps in service. The need to assist students with exploring career options and local availability of employment became an important precursor to transitioning to non-credit CC/AE career certificate options, or entering into credit CC career education training with more certainty. As a partner to career exploration, students also needed to learn how to independently research and establish academic, career and personal goals.

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

Success in progress toward meeting this regional need will be the implementation of curriculum for career exploration and goal setting (courses and workshops), student enrollment, persistence and completion of career exploration courses, participation in career exploration and goal setting workshops, number of referrals to and meetings with Consortium Transition Specialist (or similar position at individual agencies), number of referrals to academic counseling, number of students who transition from AE programs to NC or credit career education certificate programs or transfer coursework for an associate's degree.

Regional Need #5

Gaps in Service / Regional Needs

Align and articulate programs between agencies of the SOCRC: This need was identified in the original work for the consortium's three-year plan in 2019. Consortium members had started work on mapping programs and pathways at their individual agencies and were to begin work on pathway mapping between agencies when Covid 19 closures began. The expectation is to have print and digital media for students and community members that shows a distinct pattern for completion of a program within each adult education discipline. The transition to the next step will be multi-faceted to show both academic and career options available to students. Maps will also show the distinct connection between each agency and the consortium so that the community will understand the interconnectedness of the curriculum and the agencies. Students should be able to utilize the maps when meeting with the Transition Specialist or Counselor to illustrate the work that has already been done and to determine the best next course of action. Consortium members think that this will assist with student persistence and completion of AE programs, as well as communicate the student's transition point for future data follow up.

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

Members were surveyed using the Consortium Program Quality Self-Assessment while developing the three-year plan. Members identified in the assessment the need to have clear completion and/or transitions between programs, as well as coordinated student support for student completion and transition. Consortium agencies also conducted cohort surveys in which students indicated the need to have clear pathways to achieving employment or entering degree programs at the local community colleges. This topic was also studied and discussed at monthly meetings, during professional development activities, and through partnerships with external consortium leads.

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

Success will be measured in the number of maps that are developed and produced for the consortium and its members. Long-term success will be measured by how many students use the roadmap documents to enter and complete adult education programs, and then transition into steady employment or post-secondary certificate and degree programs.

Regional Need #6

Gaps in Service / Regional Needs

Secure new site in south county to replace LEA facility that was repurposed during Covid-19 closures: Saddleback College will need to find a new location for classrooms and office in space in the southernmost part of Orange County to provide student testing, services and support for HSD/HSE and ESL programs. This need came about in the last year when Capistrano Unified School District determined that they needed the space at Serra High School to meet regulations and requirements for district K-12 programs that came about during Covid 19 restrictions. Adult Education programs had been offered in this location for many years and have developed a large enrollment base which serves the San Juan Capistrano community.

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

Saddleback College was notified at the end of the spring 2021 semester that the Serra High School classrooms and office space would not be available moving forward due to needs of the school district in implementing Covid 19 social distance requirements in the fall 2021 semester. TopsPro Enterprise data was used to determine the number of students served in the past three years to establish a need to keep a south county adult education location for the school district community.

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

Effectiveness in meeting this goal will be the identification of facilities that meet State requirements for education buildings and are located in an area that is easily accessible to AE students and community members. A lease agreement should be in place in order for in-person classes to take place by the spring 2022 semester at the latest.

Regional Need #7**Gaps in Service / Regional Needs**

Improve data collection processes: Most agencies in the consortium use TopsPro Enterprise to collect and submit required data to the State. Over the past year, as Launchboard has come to the forefront as the keeper of adult education data and progress, it has become clear that there is a disconnect in how data is collected and used to determine agency and consortium performance. To this end, the SOCRC would like to hire a consultant to work with each agency to set up a consistent data collection process for which the data can ultimately be used to inform program planning and curriculum development.

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

The SOCRC had a training with West Ed in May 2021 on the Launchboard application and the data presented/used on the website. SOCRC members noticed inconsistencies in the information Launchboard presented versus the data that they had collected from students. In addition, there was data that would be helpful for the consortium to know for planning purposes, but was not collected by the individual agencies or the State. At this time members asked for additional training and support in establishing data collection systems.

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

Effectiveness in meeting this need will be measured by the consortium hiring a consultant to work with individual agencies and the consortium as a whole to establish consistent data collection processes, train staff in the data collection methodology, create graphic user interface templates to use when presenting adult education data to the public (including faculty, staff, board members, etc.) and have a follow up meeting with the Executive Committee to present summative information on the training and implementation process, as well as demonstrate how the data templates work.

Gaps In Service**New Strategies****Strategy #1**

To increase coordinated, proactive engagement to students on educational and career training options at both adult schools and community colleges, a consortium-wide roadmap will be developed, along with AE program maps for each service provider where they do not currently exist. The roadmap will delineate individual program requirements, align employment and career pathway opportunities, signify transition points to postsecondary career certificate and associate degree programs, and indicate the skill gains students can expect in each program area and school site. As roadmaps are approved by the sites and the Executive Committee members, they will become part of the print and digital media available through the new SOCRC branded website and marketing campaign. A draft for at least one roadmap per service provider agency and the consortium-wide roadmap will be developed by the end of the spring 2022 semester.

Strategy #2

While the SOCRC agencies provide a wide variety of programs and instructional levels within those programs, specific areas have been identified as needing additional sections and/or new curriculum in a focused topic. For example; Irvine Valley College (IVC) offers five levels of ESL, targeted English language skill building courses and vocational courses in digital literacy, and will add this year a course in professional communications and a certificate for digital worker skills. In addition, College

and Career Advantage (CCA) will expand their career training programs by adding medical assisting to their program rotation. Tustin Adult School, as well as IVC, have identified the need to maintain online instruction for students while slowly and carefully returning to in person instruction. Students have indicated that the online courses are more convenient because they eliminate the need to transport to a site, and to have convenient and free child care provided so that they can attend classes.

Strategy #3

There is overlap in the basic offerings of adult education courses across agencies of the SOCRC. All of the sites offer ESL programs, so it is important that the agencies align the curriculum at the various levels (low beginning, high beginning, low intermediate, high intermediate and advanced) so that students receive an equitable education regardless of the service provider. This strategy was identified in the 2020-21 program year, but due to the Covid-19 closures, the SOCRC was unable to address this need. Therefore, instructors will engage in a series of professional development sessions to align and articulate curriculum across agencies throughout the 2021-22 program year.

Strategy #4

The Executive Committee of the SOCRC has approved securing an outside consultant to lead consortium members through the process of creating a branded image for the consortium, which will then be used in coordinated marketing campaigns for programs and school sites within the consortium. The branding is to identify and link the members agencies of the SOCRC as an entity that coordinates and provides academic opportunity to south Orange County. The new branded identity will not replace individual agency logos, but will enhance and identify the service providers within the adult education world. Full Capacity Marketing will be walking the Executive Committee through the process of developing an image for the consortium. This process should be completed by the end of the fall 2021 semester.

Strategy #5

After the branding process for the SOCRC is complete, Full Capacity Marketing will assist the consortium in developing personalized student stories as a component of the marketing campaign. The stories describe different scenarios that are common among adult education students and will resonate with community members who are seeking courses in ESL, HSD/HSE, digital skills, citizenship preparation, career skill training, etc. The marketing campaign will include the development of a consortium website that will link to all of the consortium agencies own web pages and will serve as a common platform for information and communication about adult education program in south Orange County. Social media campaigns will also be designed and launched by the end of the spring 2022 semester.

Strategy #6

The relatively new legislation that allows special admit status for adult school students who are enrolled in high school diploma and high school equivalency programs to take up to eleven units of credit courses at community colleges has the potential to boost enrollment and completion of HSD/HSE programs at the adult schools and community colleges. Therefore, it is important to inform HSD/HSE instructors about the value of this legislation, as well as present this opportunity to current and potential students. This may be of particular benefit to students who did not complete their regular high school diploma during the Covid-19 switch to online learning, and want to pursue a career certificate or associate degree through the community college system without having to wait until they complete their HSD/HSE. Service providers who have HSD/HSE programs will work with the Transition Specialist position and representatives from the community colleges to conduct presentations, new student orientations and enrollment events prior to the start of each semester. Presentations can be in-person, online, or both. In addition, each student interested in Adult Education Dual Enrollment will schedule an appointment to discuss their educational and professional goals, interests and map out their courses.

Seamless Transitions

New Strategies

Strategy #1

To increase coordinated, proactive engagement to students on educational and career training options at both adult schools and community colleges, a consortium-wide roadmap will be developed, along with AE program maps for each service

provider where they do not currently exist. The roadmap will delineate individual program requirements, align employment and career pathway opportunities, signify transition points to postsecondary career certificate and associate degree programs, and indicate the skill gains students can expect in each program area and school site. As roadmaps are approved by the sites and the Executive Committee members, they will become part of the print and digital media available through the new SOCRC branded website and marketing campaign. A draft for at least one roadmap per service provider agency and the consortium-wide roadmap will be developed by the end of the spring 2022 semester.

Strategy #2

The SOCRC Transition Specialist will work with all of the consortium service providers to present the program roadmaps and educational/career transition options for AE students. Informational sessions will occur online and in-person throughout the semester as arranged by the Transition Specialist and site administrator. Information will cover Adult School progression plans, as represented on the site-based roadmaps, community college non-credit course progressions and/or CDCP non-credit certificate requirements, career planning/goal setting workshops and course options, transition points for employment, and entry points for CC non-credit and credit career certificates and degree programs. Students will also be informed about support services offered through the Adult Schools and Community College campuses to assist with registration, persistent, and completion of programs, academic and social support, counseling services and location of key offices/programs that provide student assistance, such as financial aid.

Strategy #3

The Executive Committee will work with member agencies to assign a liaison to the local WIB to collaborate on employment initiatives of the south Orange County region. The liaison will report quarterly to the Executive Committee about the initiatives of the WIB and how members of the SOCRC can get involved.

Strategy #4

Saddleback College will utilize the adult education director to oversee their dual enrollment program. Staff from the college and representatives from each adult school that offer HSD/HSE programs will meet to discuss program requirements and determine the best course of action to inform both current and potential students about the benefits of the dual enrollment special admit program. The Transition Specialist will be part of the team that develops and delivers informational sessions on a monthly basis (in-person and online) in conjunction with each adult school. Dual enrollment forms will be made available in both hard copy and electronically to facilitate completion and submission of the application for Adult School and community college signatures.

Strategy #5

Consortium service providers will work with faculty, staff and the Transition Specialist to develop a series of career exploration and academic/career planning workshops that will be delivered both in-person and online. Agencies that already have career exploration and goal planning curriculum in place will implement their programs as designed. The consortium position focusing on college and career transitions will help to support this work with each Adult School service provider.

Student Acceleration

New Strategies

Strategy #1

To increase coordinated, proactive engagement to students on educational and career training options at both adult schools and community colleges, a consortium-wide roadmap will be developed, along with AE program maps for each service provider where they do not currently exist. The roadmap will delineate individual program requirements, align employment and career pathway opportunities, signify transition points to postsecondary career certificate and associate degree programs, and indicate the skill gains students can expect in each program area and school site. As roadmaps are approved by the sites and the Executive Committee members, they will become part of the print and digital media available through the new SOCRC branded website and marketing campaign. A draft for at least one roadmap per service provider agency and the consortium-wide roadmap will be developed by the end of the spring 2022 semester.

Strategy #2

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Strategy #3

College and Career Advantage is the largest provider of adult school career training programs within the South Orange County Consortium. During the 2021-22 program year, the agency will engage in professional development with staff and faculty to discuss the feasibility of compressing course and certificate completion timelines to increase retention and completion, as well as produce needed workforce in a shorter time frame. New progression sequences or timelines developed and adopted during this program year may be implemented in the 2022-23 program year.

Strategy #4

Saddleback College identified the need to develop contextualized basic skills courses in workplace English and math to support students in the SB554 special admit program and non-credit career skill training programs. Irvine Valley College also identified the need to develop non-credit ESL courses for workplace communication and human development English. Courses will be designed during the 2021-22 program year for possible implementation in the 2022-23 program year.

Professional Development

New Strategies

Strategy #1

For the past three years the SOCRC has conducted one consortium-wide professional development event each semester for faculty, staff and administration. The Executive Committee selects the topic or focus area for the presentation and subsequent workshops. The PD sessions are designed to address areas of need identified in the three-year and annual plan, as well as support faculty and staff in best practices for adult education instruction and student support. Having a consortium-wide training also brings together faculty and staff from across the region that may not have the opportunity to collaborate during regular business hours. This form of professional development has become very popular, particularly during the last year when it was delivered through zoom as a mini-conference.

Strategy #2

SOCRC members will continue the practice of promoting free professional development resources to faculty and staff. In the past year, the online trainings have become an important part of instructional support during the transition to online learning. Since the sessions are offered free to adult education service providers and are offered online in both synchronous and asynchronous fashion, they are easy to attend and particularly relevant to current adult education provider needs.

Strategy #3

Administrators, faculty and staff have benefitted from attending both State and National conferences that are focused on the needs of adult education students and service providers. The large conference format allows participants to learn from experts outside of the region and state. In particular, the CAEP Summit has brought together agency leads from across California, which promotes peer learning and leadership development amongst and within consortiums and agencies. The CASAS Summer Institute provides updates on CASAS testing methods, software, and data interpretation and use. It is vital that schools who are receiving WIOA funding, as well as CAEP funding continue to attend this conference.

Strategy #4

Many of the strategies listed above require site-based and consortium-wide collaboration to develop curriculum, articulate curriculum units and assessments, map articulation and understand how to best provide instruction and support services for students. Coming together in small groups to address single topic needs for programs is vital to getting this work done.

Leveraging Resources

New Strategies

Strategy #1

SOCRC members have been making strides in their partnership with the local WIB and AJCC provider to understand the regional workforce needs and gaps in trained candidates for employment. While there is communication between agencies this is an area of focus for strengthening the partnerships in order to leverage categorical and grant funds to maximize student supports and services. This is particularly important for agencies that receive WIOA funding, as the various Title categories serve different populations, while overlapping in some service areas. Saddleback College is creating a referral system to link individual services provided to students at the college with services that are provided through the AJCC. Cross referencing and supporting students through both programs is important, as their progress and successes can be measured through the State's employment system. Also, with the launch of the new One Stop Center in Laguna Hills, there will be increased opportunity for collaboration between agencies including having Saddleback College offer courses at the One Stop site. The Workforce Investment Board also has a mobile unit that will be scheduled at each of the adult education sites to provide assistance with job search and placement activities.

Strategy #2

SOCRC members will maintain and strengthen partnerships with local community-based organizations, local employers, and government agencies. These partnerships are vital to support students in the learning environment with services that cannot be provided through CAEP or WIOA funds, such as housing and transportation assistance, health care, and non-academic related financial assistance that can prevent students from persisting in and completing programs. Consortium members will determine which agencies make natural partners to support students, and will embark on developing at least one partnership program during the 2021-22 program year for implementation in the 2022-23 program year.

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.

annual adult education plan which is based on your CAEP 3-year plan. The SOCRC has worked diligently in the past three years to develop a vision for regional service provision as a consortium. This includes adhering to the goals and outcomes of the three-year and annual plans that are discussed and agreed upon by the consortium governing body. Based on the mission and vision statements, the SOCRC members have created overarching goals, objectives and action steps that are directly linked to each agency's resource allocations. The consortium has established a system to report out expenditures and progress toward annual plan goals at the quarterly Executive Committee meetings to enhance accountability of each agency, as well as the consortium as a whole. Large capital expenditures are presented to the Executive Committee and approved before the purchase can take place to ensure that the expense is aligned with the goals and objectives outlined in the annual and three-year plans. CAEP technical assistance and staff members are consulted, when appropriate, to ensure that expenditures meet State and program guidelines.

An approach to incorporating remaining carry-over funds from prior year(s) into strategies planned for 2021-22.

Several initiatives will take place in the 2021-22 fiscal year to address carryover funding and to put more of the CAEP allocation into classrooms and student services that consortium members feel will have a more direct and positive impact on student learning and outcomes. To start, the SOCRC voted to switch fiscal administrative operations from Fiscal Agency to Direct Funding. This will expedite funding to each service provider agency and will distribute more of the consortium allocation to

programs rather than administration. The decision was made after more than twelve months of research and discussion by the Executive Committee about how to best utilize funding to meet student needs. By switching to a Direct Funding model, the amount of money allocated to the Fiscal Agency was reduced by fifty percent, with the understanding that there will still be consortium needs that must be addressed through pooled or consortium funding. The Executive Committee members agreed to spend a portion of the Fiscal Agency carryover on the regional branding and marketing efforts. A decision regarding the balance of carryover funding will occur at upcoming Executive Committee meetings in the fall 2021 semester. The majority of the Fiscal Agent carryover funds will be expended by the end of the spring 2022 semester as approved by the Executive Committee. Starting with the 2021-22 fiscal year, the allocation that previously went to the Fiscal Agent was redistributed to service provider agencies based on identified need and agreed upon by the Executive Committee. The balance of the funding was distributed to service provider agencies who did not receive a baseline increase, and to the agency who is responsible for consortium operations (Saddleback College). Each service provider agency will individually come up with plans to spend down their carryover balance and will present the plans at a future Executive Committee meeting during the fall 2021 semester.

Certification

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