



SOUTH CENTRAL COAST REGIONAL CONSORTIUM STRONG WORKFORCE PROGRAM 4-YEAR PLAN

UPDATE: JANUARY 2022



POWERED BY
California Community Colleges

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Executive Summary Update	03
II.	Regional Collaboration and Coordination Grant Update	04
III.	Work-Based Learning and Job Placement Update	05
IV.	Employer Engagement and Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment Update	06
V.	Short-Term Training and Contract Education to Support Responsiveness to Employers Update	07
VI.	Labor-Market Information and New Reports Update	09

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY UPDATE

Much of this first update of the Region's January 2021 Strong Workforce Program 4-year Plan is focused on the new Regional Collaboration and Coordination (RCC) Grant. [The RCC RFA](#) specifically called out three main outcomes:

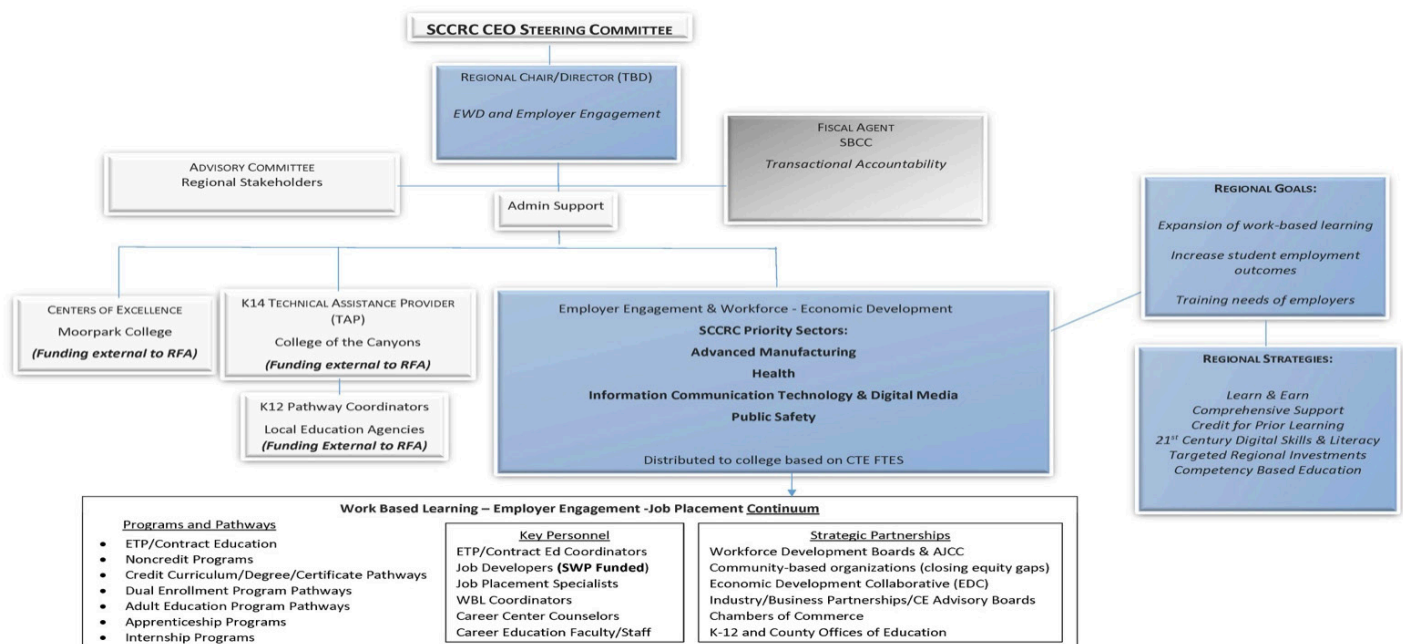
- 1) Expand work-based learning**
- 2) Increase job placement**
- 3) Responsiveness to employer needs**

The Region's CEOs were the primary drivers of the response to the RFA and application. They determined early on that, rather than hiring any regional employer engagement specialists, they would allocate the Economic and Workforce Development (EWD) funds to each college in the Region based on that college's CTE FTES. Each college would, in turn, hire or disburse the funds internally in order to meet the three main goals of the grant.

Importantly, the CEOs approved a major change in bifurcating SCCRCs administration:

- a. SBCCD will remain the region's Fiscal Agent
- b. Luann Swanberg will continue at SBCCD as the Regional Grant and Fiscal Agent Director
- c. A new Regional Executive Director will be hired and hosted at the Ventura County Community College District (VCCCD).

Thus, the programmatic and strategic work of the Region will be performed by the new Executive Director (expected to be in place by the end of February), and the transactional fiscal and contracting work will continue under the direction of Ms. Swanberg. Note the new organizational chart below.

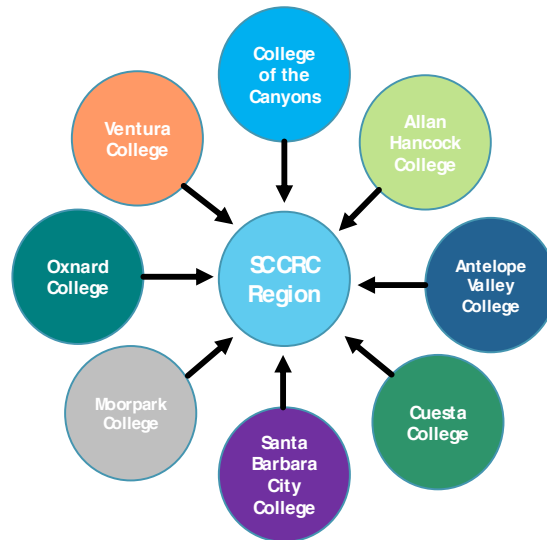


In May of 2021, two important work groups were begun and continue to meet regularly: 1) Short-Term Training/Contract Education to support responsiveness to employers; and 2) Employer Engagement/Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA). Please note that the Regional Directors were quite active in the work groups until the end of their contracts in December 2021. Updates from each of these work groups are presented in Sections IV and V of this report. The first six months of the new RCC grant is a period of transition, and this Plan Update may be amended mid-year upon completion of the colleges' and Region's Employer Engagement Plans.

II. REGIONAL COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION GRANT UPDATE

As mentioned earlier, the region's Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) want a decentralized (Spoke & Wheel) structure under the new grant.

Given the diversity of the SCCRC region, we have found it most effective to work from a “spoke and wheel” model between the region and colleges to allow for localization coupled with regional impact and outcomes



The CEO of each district appointed a representative to serve on the initial planning team charged with developing the RCC application. Chief Instructional Officers (CIOs), Deans, a district Vice Chancellor, and a Regional Director served on this team. Several organizational structures were proposed by the group prior to the final CEO decision to use the structure in the Executive Summary Update section.

From the original group, a writing team emerged. The writing team was responsible for writing, editing, and submitting the RCC application. The group is currently working with Chancellor's Office written feedback and has monthly meetings with the Chancellor's Office to update the RCC application in order to resubmit by the April 15, 2022, deadline.

The most important element in the spoke and wheel structure is that each college will have until June 2022 to develop their Employer Engagement (EE) Plan that will be supported by regional activities and best practices. In preparation for this, the Region will conduct two strategic planning sessions in February 2022.

The goal of these meetings is twofold: 1) create norms and processes for group meetings and decision making; and 2) create an employer engagement template for consistency throughout the Region. At the strategic planning sessions, the group will determine strategies and tactics to follow in driving for improved outcomes on the three outcomes presented in the RCC RFA.

III. WORK-BASED LEARNING AND JOB PLACEMENT UPDATE

Beginning with the first year of Strong Workforce Program (SWP) funding in 2016, the Region chose to allocate \$112,500 of regional SWP funds annually to each college for the purpose of hiring and maintaining Job Developers whose primary responsibilities include work-based learning and job placement for community college CTE students. A common job description was developed and distributed to each college to use as a template for their positions and the Region has convened this group in order to share best practices.

Strong Workforce Program funding has enabled the Region's colleges to support job development and placement, which will now be supplemented by the Economic and Workforce Development (EWD) funding in the new RCC grant. These activities are usually offered through the Career Center and include monitoring work-based learning as well as placing students in internships/apprenticeships and actual jobs.

Importantly, since the Round 4 (2019/20) SWP funding cycle, the SCCRC has also been funding the Jobspeaker platform, which has greatly enhanced providing these services for both Job Developers and career education students. The regional strategy in leveraging software application solutions will continue as a regional objective. Through the deployment of the Career Connect platform (powered by Jobspeaker and LinkedIn Learning software applications), the Region is able to support students' objectives by focusing relentlessly on their students' end goals; provide resources for faculty in curriculum development and instruction; create a unified effort to engage businesses and industry; and increase functionality and streamlining work-based learning through campuses career services endeavors. Several of the Region's colleges employ similar platforms such as Handshake.

With Round 6 (2021/22) regional SWP funding, CEOs approved funds to support a project consultant to focus solely on the Career Connect platform that will enable the Region to collect, synthesize, and analyze data and student outcomes for work-based learning and job placement. This position will function as an asset to each college and to the new Executive Director in reporting on student outcomes.

As mentioned in the [SCCRC 4-year SWP Plan - January 2021](#), the Region's community colleges have partnered with their respective Workforce Development Boards to enhance and track both work-based learning and student job placement. For example, the Ventura County Workforce Development Board has created the Work-based Learning Consortium that meets monthly and engages more than 75 participants including representatives from colleges, businesses, industry leaders, community-based organizations, and economic development entities.

Work-based learning and job placement, as noted here, has been a priority for the South Central Coast Regional Consortium since 2016 and will be front and center with the new RCC grant.

IV. EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT AND PERKINS COMPREHENSIVE LOCAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT UPDATE

At the writing of the Region's new SWP 4-year Plan in January 2021, the planning group chose not to identify specific sectors, and the Plan includes detailed analyses of all ten sectors. During Spring 2021 the group synthesized Center of Excellence sector analysis data and arrived at four agreed-upon sectors: Health; Information and Communication Technologies/Digital Media; Public Safety; and Advanced Manufacturing. Eventually, the Region hopes to create a crosswalk with the Five Economies described in the Burning Glass report "After the Storm", published in February 2021.

As mentioned in the Executive Summary Update, in May 2021, an Employer Engagement/CLNA work group (led by Harriet Happel, Dean of Career Education, Integrative Learning, and Employment Center) was created with representation from Deans, Regional Directors, the Center of Excellence, and regional leadership. The Region has also chosen to retain Perkins expert Ms. Robin Harrington, to help with the required regional efforts leading to each college's Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) required in NOVA by April 20, 2022. Ms. Harrington advised that employer meetings could be held (SCCRC held an in-person CLNA meeting in March 2020 just prior to the Pandemic), or an employer survey could be created.

The group chose to create a survey and utilize the more than 3,000 employers engaged on Career Connect. Once other employer lists were added, more than 8,000 unduplicated employers in the region were identified to be surveyed. With input from the work group, the Center of Excellence Director, Dr. Adele Hermann, developed the survey and the Region has contracted with California State University, Chico to administer the survey with initial results expected by mid-February 2022. The survey consultant plans follow-up phone calls and each college will receive a report of survey results for their service area. There will be training for Job Developers, career services personnel, CTE faculty liaisons, and others. The Perkins consultant advised that employers must be incorporated in every part of the CLNA process—initial input to identify gaps (the survey) and the feedback loop as to what is being done locally to address the gaps. The Region and local colleges must demonstrate ongoing consultation with employers.

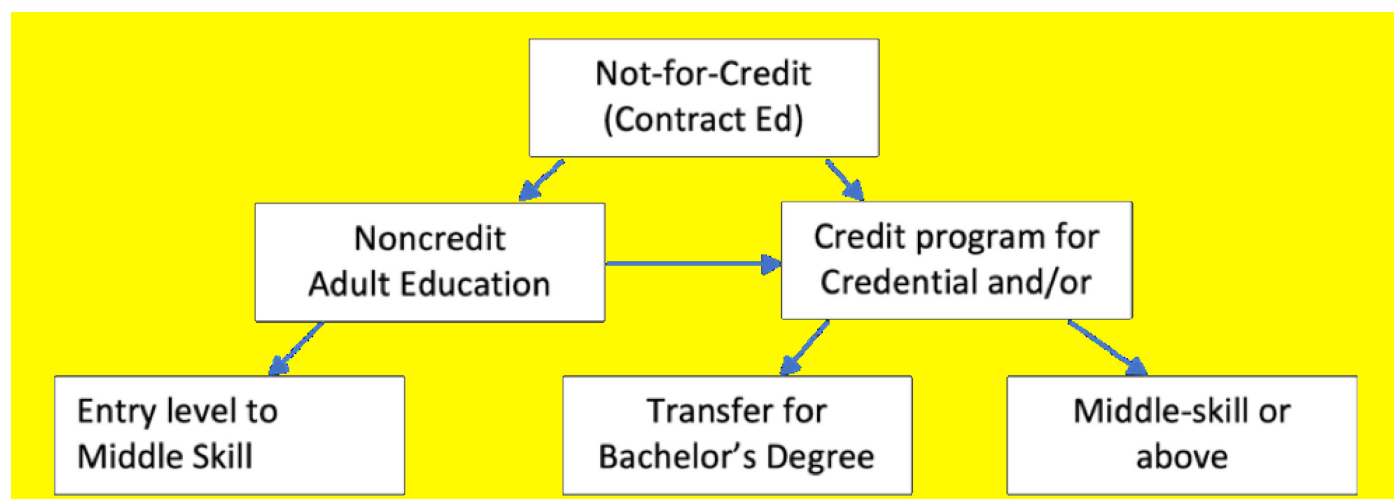
Once colleges complete their individual Employer Engagement Plans by June 2022, the Region will come together to collaborate on how to best utilize regional assets to complement what each college will be doing. The CLNA employer data on skills needs and gaps will become an important element for the college Employer Engagement Plans and local and regional SWP planning going forward.

It is important to note that the two regional work groups – Employer Engagement/CLNA and the Short-Term Training/Contract Education – are working in tandem to develop regional assets and best practices that will be vital to the success of individual college Employer Engagement teams in increasing student outcomes on the three key measures in the new Regional Collaboration and Coordination Grant.

V. SHORT-TERM TRAINING AND CONTRACT EDUCATION TO SUPPORT RESPONSIVENESS TO EMPLOYERS UPDATE

The Region has embraced the fact that Short-Term Training/Contract Education is very important in being responsive to employers' training needs. For many years the Contract Education unit at College of the Canyons, led by Mr. John Milburn, has been a leader in the state for training and utilizing the resources of the Employer Training Panel (ETP). Coupled with the expertise that the college brings, the Region has been fortunate to also have access to both contract education and ETP knowledge brought by Mr. Dave Teasdale, who has served as the Region's representative for the Energy, Utilities and Construction industry sector. These two leaders head the Short-term Training/Contract Education work group.

In addition to engaging SCCRC members from around the region in the work group, a presentation was given at a monthly regional meeting that provided an overview of the following graphic:



The work group helped develop survey interview questions given to each college's CTE Deans. Those interviews have been completed and input will be included in Short-term Training/Contract Education Toolkit and Directory for the Region. The Toolkit and Directory development is in process and expected to be completed by March 31, 2022.

The Toolkit and Directory will be available via the SCCRC website. The Directory will list the primary college contacts for contract education and which colleges may have funding available to it. The Toolkit will include sample contracts, customizable marketing pieces, funding strategies (Employment Training Panel and others), lessons learned, industry-specific strategies, industry-recognized credentials in demand, and trainer and curriculum resources. A training on the Toolkit and strategies for employer and community engagement will also be developed. A draft of the Toolkit's look and components has been shared with the Short-Term Training/Contract Education work group, which has guided the finalization of this work.

Moving forward, the hope of the work group is that a community-of-practice can be established with quarterly Zoom meetings and an annual in-person gathering of those utilizing contract education, short-term training, and customized corporate training tactics. Ideally, these meetings would include Job Developers and other college staff implementing employer engagement strategies. The community-of-practice would create a network for sharing resources and ideas, and disseminating success stories and best practices.

The Toolkit and Directory will function best if it is maintained and updated regularly, showcasing success stories and best practices for connecting contract education, short-term training, and customized corporate training to employer engagement with each college's overall mission.

Currently, there are several federal and state grant opportunities to upskill today's workforce and move people into higher-wage jobs. The information and community-of-practice described here places the South Central Coast Region in an opportune position.

VI. LABOR MARKET INFORMATION AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY UPDATE

South Central Coast Center of Excellence (COE)

The economic shock resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic was unprecedented in its size and scope. To address the impact the pandemic was having on the labor market in the South Central Coast Region, the Center of Excellence (COE) shifted focus to support the region in not only using traditional labor market information but also to consider the occupations that were resilient during the pandemic, as well as the economies that would guide the recovery from the pandemic.

Resilient Jobs Report

In response to the current COVID-19 crisis, the South Central Coast Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (SCCR COE) analyzed online job postings between March and August 2020 to determine which occupations can be considered pandemic-resilient. This list of occupations was then compared to the top middle-skill jobs in the region from the full year prior to the pandemic (2019).

The South Central Coast COE prepared this report as a resource to support regional community colleges with program development and strategic planning as they assess priorities during this difficult time.

Findings

- **Pandemic-Resilient Jobs:** The South Central Coast COE reviewed more than 86,000 online job postings between March and August 2020 to identify the top 50 jobs in the region each month. During this period, 77 occupations from the SOC system made the monthly top 50 jobs list at least once.
- **Top Middle-Skill Jobs:** Over the full year prior to the pandemic (2019) the South Central Coast COE identified 143 top middle-skill jobs in the region.
- **Pandemic-Resilient Top Middle-Skill Jobs:** Of the 77 pandemic-resilient jobs, 40% (30) were identified as middle-skill. All 30 of these middle-skill jobs were also top middle-skill jobs in the region the year prior to the pandemic (2019). Of the 143 top middle-skill jobs identified the year prior to the pandemic, 21% were identified as pandemic-resilient.

The Five Recovery Economies in the South Central Coast Region

Although specific industry sectors (such as Accommodation and Food Services and Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation) bore the brunt of job losses, other industry sectors were transformed by relying more heavily on emerging technologies and adapting to a virtual environment using video conferencing and increasing online business. Due to the evolving nature of the pandemic, and because industry and occupational projections are based on historical data that does not yet fully capture the effects of the pandemic, real-time online job postings can be used as a measure of employer activity and current labor market trends.

The SCCR COE completed an analysis of the five Recovery Economies defined by Burning Glass Technologies in “After the Storm: The Jobs and Skills that will Drive the Post-Pandemic Recovery”.¹

¹ <https://www.burning-glass.com/research-project/after-storm-recovery-jobs/>

In “After the Storm”, Burning Glass used their database of more than one billion job postings “to anticipate what jobs will be most important in the post-pandemic labor market”. In the regional report, the SCCR COE applied the same industry, occupation, and skill filters to Burning Glass’s online job posting database to measure labor market trends in the five Recovery Economies in the South Central Coast Region. The results show the number of job postings for each Recovery Economy, as well as which jobs, skills, and certifications employers are seeking in the Readiness, Logistics, Green, Remote, and Automated economies as defined by Burning Glass Technologies.

Though the number of online job postings are not equivalent to labor market demand, they are a rich resource that can be used to identify in-demand skills and serve as a measure of individual employer activity. Community colleges in the region can use this report to see how current programs align with the skills that employers request in online job postings. Community colleges throughout the region can also use the information included in this report to identify employers that should be included in engagement strategies. Partnerships between education and industry could create better alignment between the skills that employers seek and those that are embedded in community college career education programs.

Key Findings

- **Online job postings have increased in the region and are comparable to pre-pandemic levels.** Following the dramatic decline in job postings throughout 2020, job postings trends in 2021 have been positive and are comparable, and often exceeding, pre-pandemic levels from 2019.
- Of the 180,142 online job postings in the South Central Coast Region in 2020, **25% (44,700) were within one of the five Recovery Economies.**
- Of the 44,700 Recovery Economy postings in the South Central Coast Region in 2020, **77% were for the Remote Economy**, followed by the Logistics Economy (9%), Readiness Economy (8%), Automated Economy (3%), and Green Economy (3%).
- Of the 20 occupations in each Recovery Economy, **43% are considered middle-skill.** These middle-skill occupations **account for 48% of all Recovery Economy postings.**
- There were 28,058 Recovery Economy postings that requested a minimum education level. Of those **57% (16,018) requested a bachelor’s, master’s, or doctoral degree, and 43% (12,040) requested a high school diploma, vocational training, or an associate degree.**
- Two skills frequently requested in all five Recovery Economies: **project management and scheduling.**
- Other skills that were frequently requested in at least four Recovery Economies are **budgeting, customer service, repair, and quality assurance and control.**

Priority Sectors

In identifying priority sectors, the South Central Coast Region requested industry-specific data from the Center of Excellence to guide data-driven decision making in this area. The COE provided regional and micro-regional data on each industry sector covering student demographics, college-specific data on programs and enrollments, and labor market information including a supply gap analysis and wage data. The region convened leadership to identify priority sectors and used the industry sector tables provided by the COE to select **Advanced Manufacturing, Health, Information and Communication Technologies/Digital Media, and Public Safety.**

Initial regional work around the priority sectors has focused on the jobs and skills within each priority sector that will guide the recovery from the pandemic. Using “The Five Recovery Economies in the South Central Coast Region” report as a base, the Center of Excellence mapped the priority industry sectors across the occupational groupings within the Five Economies.

Middle-skill occupations identified in the regional report for **Information and Communication Technologies/Digital Media** came from three of the five economies - Readiness, Logistics, and Automated. The Readiness Economy includes sub-sectors involved in cybersecurity and job postings were heavily concentrated in positions related to information technology, cybersecurity, and other computer occupations. Job postings in the Automated Economy in the South Central Coast in 2020 were primarily related to information technology and advanced manufacturing occupations, and for information technology we identified top middle-skill jobs including computer network architects; network and computer systems administrators; and computer occupations, all other. The Logistics Economy mapped to this sector with the inclusion of the internet of things (IoT) specific to the supply chain and industrial big data analytics.

The report identified a number of middle-skill occupations for **Health** and these occupations were found in four of the five economies. The Readiness Economy includes sub-sectors in public health and relates to our level of preparedness for crises such as health pandemics like COVID-19. The Logistics Economy includes the manufacturing of PPE, medical equipment, and pharmaceuticals. Registered Nurses are part of the Automated Economy, and Medical and Health Services Managers are identified under the Readiness, Logistics, and Remote Economies.

Occupations under **Advanced Manufacturing** were identified within three of the recovery economies, most falling under the Automated Economy. Job postings in the Automated Economy in the South Central Coast in 2020 were primarily related to advanced manufacturing and information technology occupations. The Automated Economy is comprised of subsectors involved in robotics and process automation, artificial intelligence, natural language processing, machine learning, computer vision and autonomous driving, AI (diagnosis) and robotics in health care, and AI in finance and investments. This economy was already on the rise before the Pandemic began and has only accelerated since. Job postings in the Logistics Economy in the South Central Coast Region in 2020 were related to a wide variety of fields including manufacturing and engineering.

Public Safety was mapped to the Readiness Economy, which focuses on our level of preparedness for crises such as cybersecurity breaches, power grid failure, environmental disasters, or health pandemics that have the power to disrupt economies on an international scale.