

# Education to Career Network Adult Education Consortium's Annual Plan 2023-24

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## Section 1: Plans & Goals

### Executive Summary

The Education to Career Network of North San Diego County (ETCN) is one of five adult education consortia in San Diego County and one of 71 throughout the state. Six member districts make up the ETCN, Escondido Union High School District, Palomar Community College District, Poway Unified School District, Ramona Unified School District, San Marcos Unified School District, and Vista Unified School District. The more than 2555 square mile region includes rural, suburban, and urban areas with an extremely diverse population in terms of education and income levels, employment levels, race/ethnicity, and spoken languages. The member districts work with our community and business partners to identify and plan to address the gaps and needs for adult education services. This enables us to plan and offer high-quality and relevant courses, programs, and services to our adult students.

In the past year, ETCN has been able to assist adult students in reaching their individual educational goals, including career advancement, college preparation, workforce re-entry, and life enrichment. Together, we continue to leverage resources and increase collaboration and partnerships with adult education providers and support services within the region.

Building on our strong track record, the member districts of the ETCN, along with our business and community partners, are committed to aligning systems and serving students in focused ways that will continue to generate successful transitions to post-secondary education and the workplace for years to come.

For 2023-2024, ETCN will concentrate on the following strategies and activities to achieve CAEP's Three Primary Objectives.

#### Address Educational Needs

- Continue to assess the educational needs of the region.
- Host annual Business and Community Summit.
- Continue to work with districts in rural areas to identify and address educational needs by offering ASE programs and expanding ESL offerings in Fallbrook.
- Promote online and distance learning options, especially in small and remote communities within the region.
- Continue to align short-term career education offerings with regional plans and identify high-demand occupations.
- Conduct a Pathway Spotlight at each quarterly Leadership Council meeting to expose members to emerging occupations and consider areas of growth.
- Continue to build overall awareness of Adult Education in the region by updating the ETCN website, publishing the annual report for 22-23, and working with N and R Publications to develop adult education stories for targeted public information needs
- Finalize needs analysis, review recommendations, and develop an implementation plan/timeline for an Adults with Disabilities program

## Improve Integration of Services & Transitions

- Continue to evaluate and implement structures and strategies that promote successful student transitions to post-secondary education and the workplace, such as hosting the Path to Palomar event, and expanding Palomar's counseling presence, including holding regular transition workshops at each adult school.
- Continue curriculum alignment efforts by hosting consortium-wide advisory committees.
- Continue and expand cross-consortium Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- Continue to assess and improve support services provided to students by convening a Community of Practice (COP) with member district counselors, career advisors, and transitions specialists, and the disabilities support counselor to evaluate student needs and share resources and best practices and by hosting a Career and Education Showcase.
- Continue to expand business and community partnerships that support student success and transitions
- Continue to expand the Digital Badging project
- Issue student email addresses to create opportunities for single sign-on to support access and resolve technical issues with consortium-wide software

## Improve Effectiveness of Services

- Continue implementing a quarterly goal and data review practice by engaging in regular data dialogues at the district and consortium levels, convening an annual planning meeting to reflect on progress toward goals and identify work to be undertaken in the next year, conducting an annual survey regarding the effectiveness of shared positions, and by continuing to collect and review data about the student experience through surveys and other means.
- Provide targeted professional development opportunities that are aligned with overall consortium goals by conducting an annual survey to identify professional development and technical assistance needs, creating a professional development plan, continuing technology coaching with instructors across the consortium, and continuing to develop the Ed Tech website and archive professional development/technical assistance offerings.

ETCN will continue to work together as a consortium and with our community partners to ensure our students succeed at all levels, now and in the future.

## Regional Planning Overview

ETCN members will implement our 2022-2025 Three-Year Plan by focusing on achieving specific strategies throughout 2023-2024. These strategies will allow ETCN to meet the educational needs of the region, successfully support student transitions to post-secondary education and the workplace, and continuously improve.

ETCN fully believes in the importance of data-driven decision-making and so will continue to formalize the process of data analysis by convening once every three months to review data pertaining to student persistence, measurable skills gains, labor market information in comparison to training programs offered, student satisfaction surveys, and teacher surveys on instructional competencies and technology integration. These protocols will assist the Leadership Committee in decision-making that will support student success and alignment with industry needs and inform the creation of professional development opportunities and professional learning communities using Community of Practice principles.

This year we will continue to participate and align our work with other regional planning initiatives. For example, members of the ETCN participate in the San Diego County Regional Career Pathways Consortium, the Strong Workforce Regional Task Force for the Southern Border Region, and the San Diego Workforce Partnership (our local workforce development board) regional planning processes. Also, through regular participation in our monthly “Super Region” meetings, in which we meet with representatives from the other six regional adult education consortia in San Diego and Imperial counties, we will continue to share promising practices and alignment with our regional partners.

ETCN will continue to host a Business and Community Forum annually to allow us to hold conversations with industry leaders, economic workforce development representatives, and community representatives to gather important feedback on their needs and goals and regional gaps and needs. Likewise, we will again organize a Career and Education Showcase to permit business partners to speak directly to our students, giving them and us important real-time knowledge on employment needs and hiring practices in our region.

Meeting the educational needs of adults in our region revolves around the challenge of providing equitable learning opportunities for all adult students, regardless of in what part of the region they reside. With this in mind, our consortium members work hard to leverage structures and resources so that expanded programs and services can be provided in the most cost-efficient ways.

Additionally, in order to be responsive to community needs, we continually strive to create more tailored courses that lead to specific career pathways - especially pathways that are linked to identified local, high-demand occupations and industry certifications. Our Data Coordinator and Partnership Coordinator will continue to create Pathways Insights reports at quarterly meetings to highlight emerging occupations. These Pathway Insights reports will support us in being responsive to labor market demand, which is a key to our ability to successfully transition students to the workforce.

We feel confident in our positioning as premier adult education providers in our region; this confidence depends on our ability to adapt to changing student and community needs, including increasing in-person, blended, and online learning options and providing meaningful student support services to overcome obstacles and barriers.

## Meeting Regional Needs

### Regional Need #1

#### **Description of Gaps in Service or Regional Needs**

Being responsive to student and community needs is a key ingredient of any successful adult education program. In an ever-evolving socio-economic landscape, the necessity to continually assess and address the educational needs of adults and businesses in our community is crucial and requires an adaptable and quick-to-respond education system that is able to create and/or adapt courses and curriculum and formats to meet the varied learning needs of students and workforce needs of local employers in this region.

Creating a system with a constant cycle of assessment, action, and reassessment will aid identifying gaps in knowledge, technical skills, and competencies. The findings will help design and refine educational programs that are timely, pertinent, and inclusive, thus ensuring that all adults in our community have access to opportunities for lifelong learning. In a broad sense, by filling this regional need, ETCN can help drive our region toward a future of innovation, inclusivity, and prosperity.

The primary tool we've used to identify regional needs and plan how to address those needs is through the convening of an annual Business and Community Forum. At this forum, we review ETCN goals and progress toward goals with business and community members and solicit feedback on how we might better support the education to workforce pipeline.

We will continue to align short-term career education offerings with regional plans and identified high-demand occupations. We ensure that as many of our career training programs as possible are included on the region's eligible training providers listing. As noted above, we also review and discuss a Pathway Insights report at our quarterly meetings in order to identify emerging industry sectors in which new career training programs might be needed.

Through analysis of data (including labor market data), participation in planning meetings with the Super Region, and regular engagement with our community members, we have identified several gaps in services or regional needs.

Through Palomar College, we have conducted a study of the needs of Adults with Disabilities in the region and found this to be a regional need. In the upcoming year, we will finalize the analysis and will work to develop a plan to begin implementation of additional services for this population.

Additionally, we will continue to work with schools in small and remote areas to identify and address educational needs of the community. For example, ETCN members are working with Fallbrook to address community needs for both ASE and ESL programs. We will also continue to promote online and distance learning options for students to access existing services provided throughout the consortium.

#### **Description of How the Gaps Were Identified**

The primary tool we've used to identify regional needs and plan how to address those needs is through the convening of an annual Business and Community Forum. At this forum, we review ETCN goals and progress toward goals with business and community members and solicit feedback on how we might better support the education-to-workforce pipeline.

Through analysis of data (including labor market data), participation in planning meetings with the Super Region, and regular engagement with our community members, we have identified several gaps in services or regional needs.

We also review and discuss a Pathway Insights report at our quarterly meetings in order to identify emerging industry sectors in which new career training programs might be needed.

Finally, last year, through Palomar College, we hired a consultant to conduct a study of the regional need for programs and services for Adults with Disabilities.

#### **Description of How Effectiveness Will Be Measured**

Effectiveness will be measured toward meeting these needs in the following ways:

- Business and Community Forum - meeting will be held, and minutes will contain suggestions and recommendations to be included in the following year's plan.
- Pathway Insights - quarterly meeting agendas will include Pathway Insights reports, and minutes will contain any actions needed to move forward in developing new short-term career training programs.

- Adults with Disabilities - the regional analysis will be completed, and the development of an implementation and timeline will be included in next year's annual plan.
- Services to Small and Remote Areas - additional courses will be offered in Fallbrook for ESL and ASE. Continued advertising of online and distance learning courses to support students in remote areas.

## Regional Need #2

### **Description of Gaps in Service or Regional Needs**

There is a need to improve the integration of services and supports for students to successfully transition to postsecondary education and the workforce.

Adult learners often face unique barriers and challenges that can hinder their educational journey and career progression. The goal is to build a comprehensive support system that not only imparts knowledge and skills but also provides necessary resources and guidance to ease these transitions. By developing an integrated system that offers academic guidance, career counseling, financial aid assistance, and socio-emotional support to adult learners, adult students will be better adept at navigating through the complexities of transitioning from an adult education setting to a postsecondary institution or directly into the workforce, with a focus on ensuring long-term success and stability. To this end, the Palomar Transitions counselor will have a greater and more regular presence at each adult school and will coordinate regularly with adult school Transitions Specialists.

By continuing our curriculum alignment efforts, we will ensure that students are ready for success at the next level of postsecondary without remediation. We will continue our cross-agency PLC and will hold consortium-wide advisory committee meetings with business partners in high-demand industry sectors.

We will again host both the Path to Palomar and Career and Education Showcase events annually so that students have the opportunity to set goals and create a vision of themselves in the future.

Improving the integration of services and supports will enhance the overall educational experience of adult learners and improve their chances of successfully transitioning to postsecondary education and the workforce. This, in turn, will contribute to individual personal growth, increased employability, and economic development in our region. By focusing on these needs, ETCN can help to ensure that adult education serves as a true stepping stone to greater opportunities rather than a stand-alone solution.

### **Description of How the Gaps Were Identified**

This gap was identified by a review of transition data during Quarterly Data Dialogues, through member self-assessments, and our annual planning retreat.

### **Description of How Effectiveness Will Be Measured**

We will track student transitions to both postsecondary education and the workforce. We expect to see an increase in student outcomes and the number of successful transitions to postsecondary education and the workforce.

## Regional Need #3

### **Description of Gaps in Service or Regional Needs**

There is a need to improve the overall effectiveness of the programs and services offered to ensure that the resources and efforts invested in adult education yield meaningful returns for everyone involved. By refining

and enhancing ETCN's programs and services so they are more aligned with learners' needs, ETCN will be more responsive to the changing job market and more impactful in terms of outcomes. This includes improving content and curriculum, delivery methods to meet adult learners' requirements and preferences, increasing availability of support services, aligning course offerings with labor market needs, and raising performance outcomes.

Improving the overall effectiveness of adult education programs and services will not only lead to better outcomes for the learners but also contribute to the wider socio-economic development of the region. It will enhance the quality of the workforce, reduce skills gaps, and promote social inclusion and personal development. Furthermore, it can also help to build public trust and support for adult education, which can result in increased resources for the consortium.

#### **Description of How the Gaps Were Identified**

This gap was identified through our annual community forum, advisory meetings, Chamber of Commerce meetings, SD County meetings, student surveys, and member self-assessments. Also, through data collected by EMSI, Centers of Excellence, and San Diego Workforce Partnership, we regularly note demographic make-ups of our region's residents (including level of education, unemployment, primary language spoken, adults with disabilities, income levels); these demographic data indicate the need for adult education, proving the need for more awareness of Adult Education. Additionally, we continue to gather information about student needs through student surveys, student focus groups, and through social media interactions.

#### **Description of How Effectiveness Will Be Measured**

The effectiveness of the efforts we undertake to address this regional need will be measured by increased student enrollment, persistence, and completion numbers, including transition data. Anecdotal data on program effectiveness will continue to be gathered through student exit surveys and business partner discussions.

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## **Section 2: Address Educational Needs**

### **2023-24 Strategies**

#### **Strategy #1 - Continue to assess the educational needs of the region**

**Activity that Applies to this Strategy** - Quarterly Goal Review

#### **Metrics that Apply to this Activity/Strategy**

- All: Adults who Became Participants (AE 202 - Overall)
- All: Number of Adults Served (AE 200 - Overall)
- Progress: Participants Who Complete an EL Civics COAPP or Course (AE 411 - Overall)
- Progress: Participants with Educational Functioning Levels Gains ABE (AE 400 - ABE)

### **Strategy Description**

ETCN will continue to assess the educational needs of the region through hosting an annual Business and Community Summit, continuing to work with districts in rural areas to identify and address educational needs by offering ASE programs and expanding ESL offerings in Fallbrook, promoting online and distance learning options, continuing to align short-term career education offerings with regional plans and identifying high-demand occupations, and conducting a Pathway Spotlight at each quarterly Leadership Council meeting to expose members to emerging occupations and consider areas of growth. ETCN will be able to collectively assess the above strategies through quarterly goal reviews.

## **Strategy #2 - Build overall awareness of Adult Education in the region**

**Activity that Applies to this Strategy** - Quarterly Goal Review

### **Metrics that Apply to this Activity/Strategy**

- All: Adults who Became Participants (AE 202 - Overall)
- All: Number of Adults Served (AE 200 - Overall)

### **Strategy Description**

ETCN will continue to build overall awareness of Adult Education in the region by updating the ETCN website, publishing the annual report for 22-23, and by working with N and R Publications to develop adult education stories for targeted public information needs. ETCN will be able to collectively assess the above strategies through quarterly goal reviews.

## **Strategy #3 - Develop an implementation plan to offer Adults with Disabilities programs**

**Activity that Applies to this Strategy** - Quarterly Goal Review

### **Metrics that Apply to this Activity/Strategy**

- All: Adults who Became Participants (AE 202 - Overall)
- All: Number of Adults Served (AE 200 - Overall)

### **Strategy Description**

ETCN will explore and develop an implementation plan to offer Adults with Disabilities programs throughout the region, finalizing a needs analysis, reviewing recommendations, and developing an implementation plan/timeline. ETCN will be able to collectively assess the above strategies through quarterly goal reviews.

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## Section 3: Improve Integration of Services & Transitions

### 2023-24 Strategies

#### Strategy #1 - Continue to assess and improve support services provided to students

**Activity that Applies to this Strategy** - Assess and Improve Professional Development

##### **Metrics that Apply to this Activity/Strategy**

- All: Number of Adults Served (AE 200 - Overall)
- Progress: Participants Who Complete an EL Civics COAPP or Course (AE 411 - Overall)
- Progress: Participants with Educational Functioning Levels Gains ABE (AE 400 - ABE)

##### **Strategy Description**

Through assessing and improving professional development opportunities, ETCN has decided to expand a Community of Practice (COP) with member district counselors, career advisors, transitions specialists, and the disabilities support counselor to evaluate student needs and share resources and best practices. Through this practice, ETCN will be able to assess and improve support services provided to students.

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## Section 4: Improve Effectiveness of Services

### 2023-24 Strategies

#### Strategy #1 - Continue implementing a quarterly goal and data review practice.

**Activity that Applies to this Strategy** - Implement Data Dialogue Protocol

##### **Metrics that Apply to this Activity/Strategy**

- All: Adults who Became Participants (AE 202 - Overall)
- All: Number of Adults Served (AE 200 - Overall)
- Progress: Participants Who Complete an EL Civics COAPP or Course (AE 411 - Overall)
- Progress: Participants with Educational Functioning Levels Gains ABE (AE 400 - ABE)

##### **Strategy Description**

Continue implementing a quarterly goal and data review practice by engaging in regular data dialogues at the district and consortium levels, convening an annual planning meeting to reflect on progress toward goals and identify work to be undertaken in the next year, conducting an annual survey regarding the effectiveness of shared positions, and by continuing to collect and review data about the student experience through surveys and other means.



## Strategy #2 - Provide targeted professional development opportunities that are aligned with overall consortium goals.

**Activity that Applies to this Strategy** - Assess and Improve Professional Development

### **Metrics that Apply to this Activity/Strategy**

- All: Adults who Became Participants (AE 202 - Overall)
- All: Number of Adults Served (AE 200 - Overall)
- Progress: Participants with Educational Functioning Levels Gains ABE (AE 400 - ABE)

### **Strategy Description**

Provide targeted professional development opportunities that are aligned with overall consortium goals by conducting an annual survey to identify professional development and technical assistance needs, creating a professional development plan, continuing technology coaching with instructors across the consortium, and continuing to develop the Ed Tech website and archive professional development/technical assistance offerings.

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## Section 5: Fiscal Management

### **Overview**

To ensure fiscal accountability and continued transparency, ETCN employs an outside auditor to review our finances annually. This includes the expenditures at both the fiscal agent level AND each member district level. Funds were allocated and spent according to our goals identified in the ETCN three-year plan. These goals included an increased emphasis on stakeholder/partner engagement to support student education and career success; implementation of common student data tools to gather, measure, and analyze student and/or program successes and outcomes and share best practices; platforms to assist students with work-readiness, career exploration, and job search; and continued alignment and integration of curriculum to accelerate student learning and meet regional needs. To accomplish the goals above, members interacted on a more frequent basis, with shared positions spending time addressing the needs of each individual member district. In addition, the ETCN has continued to apply jointly for federal WIOA and Perkins grant funding. This has created additional opportunities for us to leverage resources and align services and data collection across all of our member districts. We have jointly utilized 231/243 funding to benefit ETCN students and our ESL/IELCE programs. Our members are committed to continued progress towards the realization of the vision and goals of the ETCN Three-Year Plan and will continue to implement identified strategies that fill the regional gaps in service, support the seamless transition of students, increasing professional development opportunities for staff, better leverage resources, and to accelerate transitions for learners across the consortium.

### **Approach to Incorporating Remaining Carry-over Funds**

A standing agenda item at every leadership council meeting is a fiscal agent report; this report includes examining planned vs. actual expenses. Our fiscal agent, Vista USD, will hold regular meetings regarding

specific fiscal practices, reports, and deadlines among the member district's fiscal representatives and leadership council members. The ETCN Leadership Council approved the budget for its CFAD submission and projected a budget for the following year. Based on expenditure projections, any carry-over identified is used to either carry incomplete activities into the next year, accelerate portions of the plan with later start dates, or support new budget requests. Members making additional budget requests are asked to identify whether the request is one-time, short-term, or ongoing so that the expense can be appropriately budgeted in future years. In addition to regular monthly meetings, the Leadership Council members participate in an annual planning retreat. The retreat is used to amend and update our regional plan, while the regular Leadership Council meetings are used to monitor the implementation of the plan and tend to the business aspects of our consortium's operation.

Further, on September 23, 2022, the Education to Career Network amended its Funding Philosophy and adopted the following approach to incorporate remaining carry-over funds from prior year's into the strategies planned for 2023-24. (Link to the Funding Philosophy.) The language pertaining to carry-over funds specifically is provided below:

Within the parameters established by the CAEP, in the event that a district does not fully expend the CAEP funds allocated, the district may carry-over funds; these funds may only be used as outlined in the ETCN's annual plan. The consortium carry-over may not exceed the state threshold for excessive carry-over. Member districts with carry-over in excess of 20% will be required to submit for approval to the Leadership Council an expenditure plan to reduce carry-over to 20% or below within a two-year timeframe. Carry-over amounts will be monitored annually until the carry-over amount falls below 20%, and the plans for carry-over expenditures may be modified with Leadership Council approval. If a member district is unable to reduce its carry-over to 20% or below within a two-year period, the Leadership Council may withhold additional CAEP allocations to reduce the carry-over to the established level (20%). Once the carry-over has been reduced to the acceptable level, then the member district allocation would be restored, unless the member district requests an ongoing reduction to its allocation. Any surplus funds held at the consortium level, including funds recaptured from a member district with excessive carry-over, will be allocated to member districts that opt in proportional to each districts' CAEP allocation (when member districts have carry-over less than the maximum amount established) unless the Leadership Council has approved a plan for use of the surplus funds in the following fiscal year(s).