

39 Palo Verde River Consortium

Plans & Goals - Consortium Approved

Executive Summary

Three strategies/visions drive the current three-year plan: (1) continue to improve and expand existing programs; (2) develop and implement prioritized pilots; (3) participate in expanding regional economic opportunities. Given the constraints of the current COVID 19-driven recession, expanding economic opportunities becomes uniquely challenging. As the plan develops, the following guiding principles set the standards for developing strategies and tactics: Above all, we will “first do no harm” – safety and welfare of students and staff are paramount; regarding potential budget reductions, student success and outcomes will inform decision-making; addressing systemic racial injustices, we will improve outreach, access, services and outcomes for under-served groups, particularly Black, Latino and Native Americans; regarding data focus and given the spirit and language of the budget, all programs will lead to employment, better employment and/or post-secondary education and training; given the liability exposures associated with COVID-19, we will limit and/or eliminate all associated liabilities. Accomplishments during the prior program year include further development of English/Spanish GED Preparation classes and GED Testing Centers; continuing and expanding ESL/citizenship classes; measuring learning gains through CASAS; introducing classes for pre-K and K-12 parents; improving counseling and pathways through expansion of Career Cruising/Xello, an electronic career portfolio; standardized development process for scalable pilots; strategic planning with diverse stakeholders. With school district shutdowns, both home-schooling and schooling at home have become key delivery challenges for parents. We want to call particular attention to our parent programs and the role that they played in helping kids perform better in school and the role they will play in helping parents with “schooling-at-home.” In planning for the forthcoming year, a number of improvements are worth noting; they include the following: introduction of solar panel installment class; overall program capacity will be improved through satellite (branch) programs and scalable pilot projects; Career Cruising and data coordinators will be assigned; professional development will be expanded and will include COVID-related safety issues; counseling will be enhanced and leveraged with a newly appointed college Assistant Dean of Counseling. Allocations, going forward, are in line with the state’s current budget. Allocation decisions, as before, are discussed and ultimately approved through the formal consortium voting process. Consortium planning efforts remain on schedule, albeit through virtual meetings, one held in June focusing on the state of the consortium and another scheduled for the end of July, focusing on the annual action plan, including proposed pilots. Given the ever-changing pandemic controls, the consortium, like most districts, is not yet clear about delivery models other than we are preparing for virtual, direct and hybrid models. Understanding that many of our students have limited resources, we are sensitive and prepared to address inequities such as materials, hardware, nutrition and WiFi access. Regardless of the delivery model, the consortium will focus on yielding outcomes that prioritize employment, salary increases and transitioning to post-secondary education.

Regional Planning Overview

The River Consortium is a small consortium consisting of three member districts: Palo Verde College, Palo Verde Unified and Needles Unified. Adult education programs are provided exclusively through the Palo Verde College District, a model similar to Pasadena, San Francisco and Glendale. Many of our CAEP projects are held on the Palo Verde campus, and many of our projects are housed on the campuses of our members or other locations in the community. Taking programs to community-based sites, closer to home or jobs, helps overcome geographic barriers. Projects are developed and approved by all consortium members, and project managers are assigned to each project to oversee development, implementation and evaluation. Workplans are outlined in trackable project planning templates that address leadership, budget, approvals, staffing, funding, timelines and measurements/analytics. Our primary goal is to develop plans and implement programs that focus on employment, salary increases and post-secondary programs. Implicit in our efforts at expansion through satellites is the leveraging of resources, sometimes in-kind and sometimes in funds. And as emphasized in the Executive Summary, keep all parties safe.

Meeting Regional Needs

Regional Need #1

Gaps in Service / Regional Needs

Given the risks associated with COVID-19, and given limited guidance, the primary gap in service is how to manage career goals while protecting students and staff from COVID-19 infection. This challenge continues to increase as infections are increasing instead of minimizing. Related to COVID-19 is the associated economic downturn, thus limiting economic development and reducing workforce opportunities within a geographic isolation region. Further gaps involve challenges for parents “schooling-at-home,” expanding enrollments, access to programs, bi-lingual inequities, pending budget constraints, improving career counseling, developing delivery models and providing child care (pre-school programs).

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

Gaps have been identified through public media, research, economic outlook reports, demographic reports, interviews, and strategic planning. There is an apparent need to help parents with challenges of “schooling-at-home.”

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

The consortium will expand data coordination with friendlier and more effective measurement tools that include tailored qualitative/quantitative research, sampling, tracking, and exit interviews. Further attempt to universalize trackable electronic career portfolios that create achievable career roadmaps. As per the emphasis of the 2020-21 state budget language on CAEP, all measurements will be driven by improving employment, salary increases and post-secondary education and training.

Gaps In Service

New Strategies

Strategy #1

Develop safe and effective delivery options to address the COVID-19 challenge. Explore best practices and new technologies delivered through hybrid models. Participate in state-level and regional briefings on best practices to implement to address COVID-19.

Strategy #2

Expand enrollments through marketing strategies that identify referring agencies and staff. Additionally, expand awareness for existing students. Implement satellite branch programs throughout region.

Strategy #3

Improve bilingual support services including counseling, tutoring and financial aid. Leverage Consortium resources with K-12 and college counselors.

Seamless Transitions

New Strategies

Strategy #1

Create career pathways for all potential students (including EL) and all newly enrolled students. Pathways should all lead to employment, improved employment and/or post-secondary programs. Maximize use of Career Cruising/Xello to guide students through course work and employment training.

Strategy #2

By having high school seniors and consortium students dual and/or concurrently enrolled, thereby allowing for seamless transitioning to advanced programs.

Strategy #3

Create EL pathways that seamlessly creates pathway from high school EL to PVC ESL. Pathway will include an EL Orientation class that introduces counselor, services and career options.

Student Acceleration

New Strategies

Strategy #1

By expanding CTE advanced placement through "tech prep," courses and/or exams, students can demonstrate skills, avoid redundant pre-requisites and accelerate pathways.

Strategy #2

High school and consortium students, already concurrently and/or dual enrolled will ease acceleration and reduce barriers in transitioning.

Professional Development

New Strategies

Strategy #1

Create awareness events (possibly virtual) that will introduce consortium services, programs and potential programs to the community, referrers, students, staff, teachers and other stakeholders.

Strategy #2

Career Cruising/Xello ongoing professional development for students and staff. Create Career Cruising coordinator position to oversee training and operations.

Leveraging Resources

New Strategies

Strategy #1

As the consortium expands programs through satellite/branch classes and programs, we also expand leveraging consortium resources with resources developed through new partnerships. Some of these partnerships involve school sites, churches, county town centers, tribal nations and city halls. Partnerships also have potential for the use of technology, as internet service, at shared sites.

Strategy #2

Regional workforce boards have funds to assist our students with tools, uniforms and testing fees. We plan to explore those leveraging opportunities.

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.

Regional workforce boards have funds to assist our students with tools, uniforms and testing fees. We plan to explore those leveraging opportunities.

An approach to incorporating remaining carry-over funds from prior year(s) into strategies planned for 2020-21.

Carry-over funds have all been allocated to existing and/or evolving projects and pilots. As before, funding decisions are informed by visions, guiding principles and appropriate statutory provisions. This year, additional funding has been provided to develop data/analytic strategies/tactics that more succinctly focus on employment, improved employment and post-secondary pathways. Given the challenges and constraints associated with the pandemic and the related uncertainty associated with the 2020/21 budget, fiscal management requires an almost daily real-time evaluation of use of funds – as resources are adjusted. Nonetheless, all fiscal reporting is posted on the project management tool Board Docs, for review by members and stakeholders.

Certification

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08/12/2020 11:14 AM PDT

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08/05/2020 01:40 PM PDT



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