Sonoma County Adult Education Consortium Oversight Committee Minutes

DATE: April 13, 2022

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Lisa Saxon called the meeting to order at 1:31 pm

ROLL CALL

Secretary Joan Barrie did a verbal roll call via Zoom. Members who were present at the meeting were: Lisa Saxon, Nancy Emanuele, Robert Holcomb and Matt Dunkle. Sitting in as a proxy for Georgia Ioakimedes was Robin Barthalow. Liz Liscum and Georgia Ioakimedes were absent. Also in attendance were: Director of the SCAEC Marlyn Garcia, Secretary for the SCAEC Joan Barrie, and Wendy Garcia, Outreach Specialist, SRJC Adult Education program.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETINGS HELD ON December 8, 2021, and January 12, 2022

Of the members present, there was not a quorum of those who were present at the meeting held on December 8, 2021. Therefore, this set of minutes could not be approved and will be brought back for approval at the next regularly scheduled meeting. A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on January 12th was made by Nancy Emanuele, seconded by Robert Holcomb. The motion passed by the following vote: AYES: 4; NOES: 0; ABSENT: 2; ABSTAIN: 0

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

No members of the public were present and therefore, there were no public comments.

ACTION: APPROVAL OF CONSORTIUM FISCAL ADMINISTRATIVE DECLARATION (CFAD) FOR THE 2022/2023 FISCAL YEAR

Director Garcia shared a screenshot of the Consortium Allocations by Fiscal Year, starting with the first allocation year of 2015/2016 through the coming fiscal year of 2022/2023. It showed the dollar amount and the percentage that each of the three service provider agencies receives from the allocation for the entire SCAE consortium. The allocation percentage for the three agencies has remained consistent over the past 7 years, with approximately 38-39% going to SRJC, a little over 53% going to PAS, and close to 8% going to SCOE. In the new fiscal year, the allocation is a little higher than last year, but the percentage of the split remains the same.

Chair Saxon asked for clarification regarding if any of the service providers were interested in going back to a fiscal agent model as opposed to the current direct funded model? All three service providers agreed that the current direct funded model works well and they are not interested in reverting back to the fiscal agent model. Chair Saxon then asked that since the total allocation is higher, are all the funds accounted for in the new fiscal year? Director Garcia explained that a budget has to be submitted that will show how the funds will be spent. Robert Holcomb asked if the increase was due to a COLA increase? Director Garcia said no, that generally the COLA comes later. Chair Saxon then clarified that she was asking about the funding being fully accounted for because she is interested in seeing the AVANCE parent education program offered in the Windsor Unified School District (WUSD), which is not a funded entity. Nancy Emanuele acknowledged the interest that Windsor has shared in wanting to expand programming for parent education and stated that Petaluma Adult School (PAS) has a very successful ten-year history of running the AVANCE program, which is an expensive program to run. She added that in terms of funding the AVANCE program, PAS used to receive a grant from the First Five State funds, but that is no longer the case and the entire cost is now coming out of their allocation of CAEP funds. She suggested that perhaps PAS could potentially do a sort of pilot program running AVANCE in Windsor for WUSD for a year by using PAS's increase of their allocation rather than WUSD immediately becoming an additional service provider. Chair Saxon said she likes that idea very much and would like to pursue it. She also mentioned that WUSD had also spoken with representatives from the national AVANCE program and they will be coming out to meet with them in the next couple of weeks. She added that Windsor will be launching a UTK program this year and will be starting PreK the following year and would like to see the AVANCE program be a standard part of those programs.

Matt Dunkle then asked for an explanation of what the AVANCE program is. Nancy explained that it is a research-based parent education program that is run from the national program and came to Sonoma County about twelve years ago. It has three different components that include toy making, parent education, and then the toddler and infant rooms run separately, so the toddlers and the infants are in their own age-appropriate learning environments, with a very, very structured curriculum. The parents meet with a parent educator and receive all kinds of information about milestones and development and brain development and how to help children be successful. One of the main goals is for children to be reading by 3rd grade. The program run by PAS has been recognized by the national program through success data to be the most successful program in the country!

Matt then asked that if Santa Rosa City Schools (SRCS) was interested in also bringing AVANCE to their schools, what is the process to ask for funding from the consortium's

total annual funding allocation? The Oversight Committee Bylaws were referenced and an excerpt is included here for the committee members' reference.

Section 1.4: Funding

iii) The SCAEC will approve member allocations and the budget at the May meeting of the Oversight Committee each year. The Oversight Committee may request information and/or discussion items regarding the budget prior to the May meeting.

iv) The SCAEC members receiving funding as service providers recognize that all allocations must be spent in accordance with the laws set forth in AB 104, Article 9, and the Consortium's Annual Plan.

v) Funding is allocated only to the service provider agencies. Proposals to reduce or redistribute funding may be made by any Oversight Committee member.

vi) Any agency who is a member of the Consortium may submit to become a service provider by sending a formal request for funding to the Director. The Director will distribute the request to all Oversight Committee members and shall place it as an Agenda item on the next scheduled Oversight Committee meeting after the request is received. The agency requesting new funding must provide a plan for the redistribution of Consortium funds. The Oversight Committee will discuss and vote on the request.

vii) All votes to redistribute funding shall be unanimous, after considering the input of the Service Providers.

Lisa also shared another example of a partnership between Consortium members in terms of "sharing" funds, which was that in order to provide diploma completion classes in Windsor, PAS paid for and provided the teacher and chrome books for the class, and Windsor provided the classroom space at no charge. This has helped to increase the number of people who completed their high school diploma and elevated the level of education in Windsor.

It was agreed that all of the questions that were raised by Matt are important and can be further discussed at future meetings along with reviewing the Bylaws to perhaps revise them to make the funding section more well defined and add hard deadlines for when a funding request needs to be received, which might change the number of service providers and split of the allocation. Director Garcia also mentioned that additional language has to be added to the Bylaws that address carryover funds. She said that she would try to get some samples from other consortia regarding this item and will share them with the committee to help with adding in the additional language. Therefore, revision of the Bylaws will definitely need to be placed on a future meeting agenda in the new fiscal year.

Chair Saxon then asked for a motion to be made to approve the FY 22/23 CFAD document Robin Barthalow made the motion to approve the 22/23 CFAD document, followed by a second from Robert Holcomb. The motion was carried by the following vote: AYES:5; NOES:0; ABSENT: 1

DISCUSSION OF THE THREE-YEAR PLAN 2022-2025

Director Garcia reviewed that work had already begun on the three-year plan by holding the Stakeholders' meeting, student forums, and sending out the student and community partner surveys to receive feedback about current services. Some of the information had been shared at the previous Oversight Committee meeting, but more responses and information had been received so Outreach Specialist Wendy Garcia provided a summary of the information via a PowerPoint presentation. The documents that were shared are attached to this set of minutes for reference.

Director Garcia went on to say that input from the entire Consortium was essential in completing the three-year plan. The plan is due in the NOVA portal by June 20th. Therefore, an additional Oversight Committee meeting has to be scheduled in order to vote to approve the three-year plan. The members agreed to schedule the meeting for Wednesday, June 8th at 1:30 pm.

INFORMATION ITEMS

a. **Director's Report**

   Director Garcia did not have any news or announcements to report.

b. **Member Reports and Announcements**

   No member had any news or announcements to report

c. **Data and Accountability Update**

   2nd Quarterly report data will be shared. This item was tabled to the next meeting due to lack of time.

d. **Requests for Information**

   There were no requests for information

ADJOURN

Chair Saxon adjourned the meeting at 2:31 pm

From Stakeholders' Meeting

Breakout Group Notes

1) Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE) Participation

- **Why do fewer people participate in the SCOE program(s)?**
  - Hard to take construction classes online
  - Offering classes when instructors are available, not when students are available
  - Didn't know about the offerings; that they existed
  - A smaller pool of students; they don't know about options available in the other member agencies
  - The specific way the word is getting out; what does the outreach look like?
  - Not knowing about specific requirements for the courses; whether pre-requisites or once you are taking the classes? Are they free? (Clearly indicate if classes are free or are there any fees)
- **How could SCAEC increase participation in the SCOE program(s)?**
  - Better communication amongst Consortium member agencies; sharing of program information to distribute to clients/students
  - Better distribution of information (ie. brochures/flyers)

2) Class Registration Process

- **Why do students struggle with the class registration process?**
  - Multiple emails that may be confusing regarding the status of your registration - am I registered or not?
  - SRJC communication is confusing because they think they have completed process when they haven't because they need to put it into Check out. Hard to do registration on their phone
  - Not having computer technical skills
  - Not getting phone support
  - Students are reluctant to give personal information because of being undocumented
  - Language barrier
  - Dual enrollment process is hard
  - Needs to be more streamlined
  - GED classes are split which makes registration more complicated; CCC Apply makes it more difficult

- **How could SCAEC better support you in facilitating the class registration process? Do you have specific suggestions on how to improve it?**
  - "How to" video posted on website
  - Staff from Adult Ed. program to be available to help students with registration in other classes and departments other than Adult Ed.
  - Arrange Group registration meetings for students
  - Linking courses to do registration for 2 classes at the same time.

3) ESL classes

- **Why do more students not register for ESL classes?**
  - There is a very limited amount of ESL classes; there are not enough classes for students (even if online)
  - Finding instructors to teach the classes (La Luz & PAS)
  - Students would like take these in person, but teachers/instructors not ready/willing to teach in person
  - Individuals losing their jobs as a result of COVID; makes it difficult to enroll
  - The bilingual focus is affecting other students (non-English speakers) not feeling welcome to take the classes; they feel excluded
  - The current faculty/staff at the institution doesn't reflect the people that we are trying to reach (reach out to them specifically to find out exactly why they don't register); more data needed
  - Having to care for family with COVID
  - Child care
  - Not being able to offer the classes out in the community
  - Being afraid of technology
  - Possible that the registration process is too difficult (too many steps); logistics

- **How could SCAEC increase the number of students who register for ESL classes?**
  - Facilitate registration process / streamlining the process for students; available in other languages
  - Increase the diversity in the school (SRJC)
  - Increase our social media presence; not just Facebook
  - For students to be able to have classes staggered so they are able to take more classes; more classes!
  - Increase word of mouth (ex. A small business card with info about programs/classes and distribute to potential students)

○ Start negotiations now to prepare for the fall; offering more classes where students are instead of them coming to our few locations

○ Having a flyer with the different options

4) Equity and Access

- **Why do some students not have adequate access to computers and wifi?**
  - Lack of education with technology; students and instructors
  - Learning management systems not user/mobile friendly

- **What could SCAEC do to increase the number of students who have devices and wifi access?**
  - We could offer in-person training on how to use the computers.
    - For example, students come to a site and learn how to get on the computer so that they can do their work or attend class.

5) GED/HiSET prep/High School Diploma

- **Why are more students not registering for GED/HiSET prep or High School Diploma classes? / *¿Por qué no más estudiantes se registran para las clases del diploma de preparatoria o su equivalente (GED/HiSET)?***
  - Radio is not helping us promote our classes- KBBF
  - People work a lot of hours to be able to pay rent & bills. They don't have time to take classes
  - People are under a lot of stress because of pandemic
  - People don't know about the classes
  - Transportation is an issue. We should continue with online classes
  - Class Schedule don't fit students' schedule
  - We need child care
  - Not being familiar with the program requirements
  - Students can't handle homework. They have a lot of responsibilities, and don't have enough time to do homework
  - Some students don't know the benefits of taking GED classes
  - Lack of support services, a place to study
  - Places to take the GED or HiSET test are too far away
  - Students don't have a computer or don't know how to use technology
  - Students have a lot going on, and don't know how to organize themselves

- **What could SCAEC do to increase the number of students who register for GED/HiSET prep or High School Diploma classes? / *¿Que puede hacer el Consorcio de Educación para Adultos del Condado de Sonoma para aumentar el número de estudiantes que se registran para esas clases?***
    ○ Students giving testimonies on the radio to help promote the classes

6) Financial aid and Childcare barriers

- **When students are ready to transition into credit classes, why are they not able to access financial aid opportunities? Why are students not able to access low cost/no cost child care resources? / *¿Cuando los estudiantes estén listos para ingresar a las clases de crédito, por que no pueden acceder a oportunidades de ayuda financiera?***

- **How can SCAE and related organizations better collaborate to educate and inform students about available financial aid and childcare resources? / *¿Cómo puede el Consorcio de Educación para Adultos del Condado de Sonoma y otras organizaciones colaborar de mejor manera para educar e informar a los estudiantes acerca de los recursos de ayuda financiera y cuidado de niños?***

7) Community Partners

- **How can we support each other in providing the classes and services for students/clients?**
    ○ * Increasing awareness of each other location, program.
    ○ Where can everyone share what we offer.
    ○ Be prepared with outreach material from other's programs.

- **What are the key components to a successful partnership [e.g. referrals, outreach, facility use, frequent communication]? Give specific examples.**
    ○ Knowing someone from the program
    ○ Having an specific place where staff can find the services and be able to refer.
    ○ Spreadsheet clear and accessible.
    ○ Create partnerships with businesses
    ○ Have access to Google Drive with latest information, classes, services, community partners. Each person can be responsible for updating.
    ○ Meet more often of how to close some gaps, having a centered location to find information.

STUDENT FORUM NOTES

1. [Class Registration Process (Group #1)](#)

- **Why do students struggle with the class registration process?**
  - No problems with registration, it is a simple process
  - Confusing when people sign up through facebook - they assume they are registered, but that is not the case
    - SRJC status will dictate which forms you need. For some students that will be one form (enrollment sheet), for others that may need 2 forms (SRJC application & enrollment sheet)
  - No access to computers/phone at home
- **How could SCAEC better support you in facilitating the class registration process? Do you have specific suggestions on how to improve it?**
  - Forms are simple to fill out if you know how to use technology
  - Confusing when you only fill out entry record form
    - Confirmation email.. Let them know they will need to complete additional forms so they know it is coming, so it is clear it is not the only form they need to fill out
  - Easy when someone from the department helped them fill it out over the phone

1. [Financial aid and Childcare barriers (Group #2)](#)

- **When students are ready to transition into credit classes, why are they not able to access financial aid opportunities? Why are students not able to access low cost/no cost child care resources? /**
  - Child care does not have a flexible schedule; they need more availability
  - Child care is expensive
  - Lack of information; not exploring the opportunities that are available in more detail
  - The class schedule is not flexible; it is every day (4 days a week)
  - Lack of information on financial aid that is available

- **How can SCAE and related organizations better collaborate to educate and inform students about available financial aid and childcare resources?**
  - Include information for financial aid and child care in Adult Education orientations
  - Share information via text message
  - Instructors can also share any information regarding any of these opportunities
  - More participation in events in the community

2. Marketing and Outreach (Group #3)

- **Why are more students not registering for ESL, GED/HiSET Prep & Career Education classes?**
  - ○ Work schedules evenings shifts
  - ○ Students might think they don't need it at their job
  - ○ Social stigma for students and people who didn't graduate from HS (people don't openly talk about not completing HS)
  - ○ People are afraid to ask, send Community Colleges representatives to recruit students)
  - ○ It's difficult to find the time to study and balance school, work and family.
  - ○ The classes are useful and are important to learn new skills.
  - ○ Changing our daily routine is difficult for students, we need to set time to go to school and finish my classes.
  - ○ Adapt and tell our family this is important to learn.
  - ○ The lack of motivation, at the beginning we have big numbers of students, lack of support. You have to set and define your goals.
  - ○ In general we all have goals, but it is hard to really focus and complete our goals because of the lack of information.

- **What could SCAEC do to increase the number of students who register for these classes? Are there specific tools for marketing and outreach that you have found successful?**
  - ○ A friend referred me to sign up for classes.
  - ○ Family's support was really important to complete all of my courses.
  - ○ New job opportunities by learning a new skill.
  - ○ It's never late to finish school and to learn.
  - ○ Keep trying to learn, never stop learning.
  - ○ Friend's references, sharing flyers with friends, seeing the same flier over and over again.
  - ○ Receiving text messages by CaliCalmecac (Windsor School District)
  - ○ Parents who keep seeing our fliers felt they didn't need to take the classes until they had the need to apply for a new job, and get asked about their computer's skills.
  - ○ Social Media, Facebook, Tik-Tok.
  - ○ Reaching out to schools, elementary, middle and high schools, reaching out to parents to talk to them about the importance of learning how to use the technology to support their children's education.
  - ○ Connect to Community College and High Schools to offer ESL and GED classes to their community.

New programs / *Nuevos programas*

- **Social Media for Business / *Redes sociales para negocios***
- **Tax Preparation / *Preparación para impuestos***
- **Landscape III: Fire Resilient Landscaping / *Jardinería para proteger hacia los incendios***