

Introduction

The Santa Cruz County Workforce Development Board (SCCWDB) consists of 25 members appointed by the County Board of Supervisors. The SCCWDB is dedicated to helping Santa Cruz County jobseekers access the tools they need to manage their careers and to help local employers find the skilled workers they need to compete and succeed. The SCCWDB's vision is a fully integrated workforce development system that maximizes human and business capital by promoting a well-trained workforce for Santa Cruz County employers, insuring individual economic security and community vitality.

SCCWDB is currently contracted with Goodwill of the Central Coast to provide Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker services. Goodwill of the Central Coast serves the counties of Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Luis Obispo and maintains one America's Job Center of California (AJCC) within Santa Cruz County - in Watsonville. The Santa Cruz County Office of Education is contracted to provide WIOA youth services. Eckerd Connects holds the contract for One Stop Operator and business services activities.

The SCCWDB developed the two-year local plan modification to meet the guidelines outlined in the Employment Development Department's (EDD) Workforce Services Directive (WSD) 18-01. This local plan modification highlights current data on required populations, economic trends affecting the Santa Cruz County community, and current and planned collaborative efforts to assist the populations designated in the WSD.

To fulfill the requirements of the directive and to ensure robust community input, the SCCWDB hosted stakeholder discussion sessions for each of the required populations as well as a listening session outside of traditional business hours. Invitees included organizations listed in the State's Directory of Planning Partners as well as additional local organizations and contacts. These sessions were open to all members of the community as well as partner organizations. In addition to personalized email outreach and invitations, session announcements were submitted to the California Workforce Development Board and posted in the America's Job Center of California (AJCC). The local plan modification was also discussed during SCCWDB meetings. The draft of the local plan modification will be open for a 30-day public comment period from February 1, 2019, to March 6, 2019 and, as a part of the public comment period, will be available on the website.

Please see the Appendix for additional documentation of stakeholder and community outreach efforts.

CalFresh

The SCCWDB invited WSD-required stakeholders and members of the community to participate in the CalFresh stakeholder session. Representatives of the SCCWDB, Eckerd Connects and the Watsonville/Aptos/Santa Cruz Adult Education (WASCAE) participated in the stakeholder session. WASCAE is a member of the SCCWDB and provides adult education services throughout the county. A follow up meeting was also held with County CalFresh program staff.

The County of Santa Cruz's Human Services Department (HSD) administers the CalFresh and WIOA programs and in fiscal year 2017-18 moved the WIOA program under the same division as CalFresh, the Employment and Benefits Services Division. Additionally, these programs now share the same Division Director. The new organizational structure provides opportunities for streamlined collaboration and a means to better connect CalFresh clients with workforce services.

In 2017-18, a monthly average of 25,500 individuals received CalFresh food assistance. Approximately 37,400 County residents are eligible for CalFresh assistance. As of November 2018, Santa Cruz County has 23,235 CalFresh recipients. English is the primary language for 69.1% and Spanish is the primary language for 30.5%. Recipients are almost evenly split between north (50.2%) and south county (47.6%). In 2017-18, Santa Cruz had 87 individuals participating in its CalFresh Employment and Training (CFET) program. According to the HSD annual report for fiscal year 2017-18, the CalFresh program experienced a 14% increase in participation due to the use of geo-mapping data to inform outreach and other systems improvements. Please see the Appendix for a more detailed demographic summary of the CalFresh population.

The CalFresh program contracts with the Santa Cruz Homeless Services Center (HSC) and the Downtown Streets Team to provide CalFresh Employment and Training services, and Second Harvest Food Bank to conduct outreach. The HSC has one full-time case manager that provides one-on-one services and also operates a small job search center that provides services similar to that of the AJCC. Second Harvest Food Bank conducts outreach throughout the county, connecting with the migrant farmworker population in the agricultural areas and the large immigrant community in south county.

Stakeholders shared that this population is faced with steep barriers to self-sufficiency, including limited education, vocational skills, and work experience, as well as the high cost of living and lack of affordable housing which make economic self-sufficiency very difficult.

The stakeholders have good communication and meet on a regular basis through the One Stop Operator meetings and SCCWDB meetings. Additionally, there is an established "warm hand-off" referral process through a Universal Referral form used by partner staff, and shared labor market information tools - the SantaCruz.careerconcourse.com and the Monterey Bay Economic Partnership, which were developed by the SCCWDB. Moreover, the collaboration and communication between the CalFresh and WIOA programs now occurs more efficiently with HSD's decision to move WIOA under the Employment and Benefit Services Division alongside CalFresh.

Over the course of 2019, the SCCWDB plans to continue to build on its efforts and strengthen service delivery coordination for CalFresh recipients. HSC and the Second Harvest Food Bank will be added to the One Stop Operator committee standing meeting and partner roundtables. The SCCWDB is currently exploring ways in which Goodwill of the Central Coast, its WIOA Adult and Youth services provider, can utilize the 50% federal reimbursement through employment and training for their retail staff. The SCCWDB also plans to discuss with Digital

Nest and Food What?!, two other local nonprofits, to determine whether these programs qualify for participation.

The SCCWDB and HSD have an MOU which was submitted as part of the SCCWDB Local Plan in 2016, which is inclusive of providing services to CalFresh recipients.

Child Support

Representatives from the SCCWDB, Eckerd Connects, and the regional and local Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) attended the Local Child Support Agency (LCSA) session.

The regional DCSS office oversees services in Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties with the Santa Cruz County office located in the city of Santa Cruz. Santa Cruz County DCSS services include establishing court orders for paternity, child support and medical coverage; locating non-custodial parents and their assets in order to enforce court orders; maintaining accounts of payments paid and past due; modifying court orders when appropriate; enforcing court orders for child, family and medical support; and spousal support in conjunction with child support.

To serve both non-custodial and custodial parents, DCSS works with many organizations and public agencies in the community. DCSS works closely with the county jail to provide information on child support obligations; PAPÁS, a community-based organization that provides supportive services to fathers and encourages their involvement with their children and communities; and the county courts.

At present, DCSS is serving an estimated 5,500 cases with the majority of its customer base living in south county. Of their current caseload, the majority of non-custodial parents are male and a significant number are homeless. Santa Cruz County, like many areas throughout California, is seeing an increase in its homeless population. Based on the biennial 2017 Point-in-Time Count (PITC), the homeless population in Santa Cruz County is at 2,249, a 15% increase since the last PITC in 2015. The DCSS stated that homelessness, limited job opportunities, low-wage jobs, lack of transportation, and the high cost of living are barriers keeping their clients from fulfilling their obligations.

The SCCWDB and DCSS senior management participate on the Dynamic Economy subcommittee of Vision Santa Cruz, whose goal is to implement the County's Strategic Plan. (<http://www.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/VisionSantaCruz.aspx>) This group began meeting regularly in November 2018. This committee provides opportunities to discuss program services, client needs, and ways to braid services for better client outcomes. The discussion outcomes from the committee meetings and the LCSA session, resulted in the following goals listed below.

- The DCSS will research the possibility of mandating AJCC job search assistance services.
- The SCCWDB and Eckerd Connects will add DCSS to the One Stop Operator meeting distribution list. DCSS was formally invited to the next meeting scheduled in December 2018.

- The SCCWDB and Eckerd will include DCSS in the WIOA referral process and universal referral form.
- Both agencies will schedule an in-service for staff in order for staff to receive facility tours and program information for better cross referrals. SCCWDB, specifically, will connect DCSS to Goodwill of the Central Coast, its WIOA Title I services provider; inform DCSS staff of the AJCC email notification system; and inform DCSS staff of the Career Concourse Labor market information tool.
- Both agencies will further discuss the possibility of initiating the use of a Release of Information form to ensure a timely and smooth relay of client information between agencies. This could assist staff at both agencies with obtaining information on client progress and employment and training verification.

DCSS provided a partnership letter which outlines their expectations of the collaboration with the SCCWDB. Please see the Appendix.

English Language Learners, the Foreign Born, and Refugees

The SCCWDB was joined by WASCAE and Eckerd Connects to discuss the English Language Learner, foreign born and refugee population.

As stated previously, Eckerd Connects is the contracted One Stop Operator and WASCAE provides adult education services throughout Santa Cruz County and is a member of the SCCWDB. WASCAE operates as part of the Pajaro Valley Unified School District. With 31 locations, WASCAE provides a wide array of classes with course offerings including citizenship, English as a Second Language (ESL), and vocational training. In an effort to reach more potential students, WASCAE is expanding and adding two new locations in the spring of 2019 to provide ESL classes – one north of Santa Cruz city and one south of the city.

2017 Census data shows the county’s population at 275,897 with 18% of its population consisting of foreign-born individuals. Furthermore, 31.9% of individuals over 5 years of age speak a language other than English in the home. Of individuals who speak a language other than English, 81.1% are Spanish speakers. Approximately 13.0% of individuals over 5 years of age speak English less than “very well.”

According to the WASCAE 2017-18 annual report card, it served a total of 4,336 students with 82 students enrolled in citizenship classes and 1,999 students enrolled in ESL classes. Of the 1,999 students enrolled in ESL classes, 531 benefited from WIOA funded services. The student population is mostly from Spanish-speaking countries, although students come from as many as 23 different countries including Korea, Japan, China, Russia, Ukraine, and Thailand. WASCAE staff stated students are motivated to learn and improve their English-speaking skills because the students are hopeful that stronger English skills will result in better paying jobs.

EDD contracts with the Center for Employment Training (CET) to provide 167 Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker services. CET provides the following set of services at the co-located comprehensive AJCC, as well as at their own office:

- Information and referral system; Unemployment Insurance (UI) application/access point
- WIOA/ migrant and seasonal farmworker (MSFW) Program eligibility determination
- WIOA basic and individualized career services
- Short-term training programs; CPR and Forklift Certifications, Medical Assistant
- In-house supportive services, e.g. stipends; Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) courses; financial aid/ Pell Grants; instructional programs for High School Equivalency (GED)
- Human Development Sessions: e.g. financial literacy; life skills workshops
- Testing site: *Ability to Benefit*
- Job Placement assistance services for participants
- Follow-up assistance – post training

As in other areas, stakeholders discussed transportation and the high cost of living as barriers to self-sufficiency. However, barriers specific to this population are Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids, fear of deportation, low literacy in their native languages, transportation and finding affordable child care. WASCAE staff noted a recent decrease in class enrollments and believe the decrease is due to ICE raids in the community. Efforts to learn English are often compounded by the reality that some students are not literate in their native language. WASCAE staff also believe there is a correlation between the high cost of living and a decrease in school enrollments across the County. Parents simply cannot afford to live in the county and are choosing to move to more affordable areas. Car ownership is not financially feasible and the availability of mass transit is limited. Child care is expensive and parents often have to attend ESL classes when their children are in school or where childcare is free. To support parents, WASCAE partners with programs that provide childcare such as the Migrant Education Program (MEP), which is also part of the Pajaro Valley Unified School District, and Mid-Pen Housing at its residential communities.

WASCAE currently offers pathways aligned with SCCWDB priority sectors, in healthcare, office skills, information technology, and hospitality and tourism. The healthcare pathway is the most robust with programs including Certified Medical Assistant, Certified Nursing Assistant, EKG, and Pharmacy Technician. WASCAE is scheduled to start a dental assistant program in 2019 and is currently reviewing the possibility of a Home Healthcare Assistant and Community Health Worker program. WASCAE has also adopted a healthcare bridge program that connects students to the local community college, Cabrillo College, which has a robust health/medical curriculum. To ensure a smooth transition for students who transfer to colleges to complete their vocational studies, WASCAE has added a “Transition Specialist” position to its team.

WASCAE outreaches to students through brochures offered in both English and Spanish; the local schools and the English Language Advisory Committee; and, community events such as farmer’s markets and the Santa Cruz County Fair.

While WASCAE is proud of its current career pathway offerings, the concept of career pathways is fairly new and staff want to work more closely with the SCCWDB to ensure efforts are coordinated. WASCAE would like to ensure support for the citizenship classes, explore a

transitional teaching model for training programs, explore pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programming, and provide more cross-training to staff.

The SCCWDB and WASCAE leadership maintain regular communication through the SCCWDB meetings and the One Stop Operator meetings and agreed some communication is occurring between staff as referrals are being completed. The partners discussed the need to keep staff abreast of information and to ensure new staff are introduced effectively to information. The partners will continue this conversation at upcoming One Stop Operator meetings, where additional organizations can also be brought into collaborative efforts to serve English language learners, the foreign born, and refugees.

Competitive Integrated Employment

SCCWDB staff scheduled multiple sessions to discuss competitive integrated employment (CIE) for individuals with developmental disabilities (DD) and intellectual disabilities (ID). One of the sessions was attended by the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) staff services manager for Santa Cruz County, who is the single point of contact for the Local Partnership Agreement (LPA). Santa Cruz County is part of the San Jose District for DOR, which also includes parts of Santa Clara County and Monterey County. The regional center serving Santa Cruz County is the San Andreas Regional Center.

Currently, DOR is heavily focused on CIE. This is challenging for some clients, who may have significant disabilities, including those with ID/DD. Santa Cruz also faces the challenge of limited service providers and limited vocational trainings well suited for those with significant disabilities. The high cost of living in Santa Cruz County creates a challenging environment for service providers to do business. Community for Life and Services for the Brain Injury (SBI) are two local providers who serve small numbers. Community for Life operates a day program for those with ID/DD and works closely with San Andreas Regional Center.

The DOR staff services manager is available to provide training on CIE services to AJCC staff. She and the WDB Director have explored providing staff with deeper training on accessibility. They agreed to continue their exploration, particularly since the AJCC recently hired a new manager. Another potential area of support from DOR is to assist with identifying low cost/low tech options to make the AJCC and its programs more accessible to individuals with disabilities.

With regards to employer engagement, DOR does not currently have a Business Specialist for Santa Cruz County. The high cost of living has been a barrier to finding staff. DOR and the SCCWDB plan to partner in promoting DOR's annual employer recognition event in October, as part of Disability Awareness Month. Historically attendance has been low by employers who are not receiving awards. DOR and the SCCWDB will plan for a WDB meeting with the theme of accessibility in 2019, and DOR will arrange for presentations for the board members.

The CIE Local Partnership Agreement for Santa Cruz County has already been completed and approved.

Changes in local labor market conditions

Since the original local strategic plan was developed in 2016, the SCCWDB has added a number of priority sectors. Please also see the Appendix for the full list of sectors. Some highlights include the following:

- Business Support Services – According to a recent analysis Professional and Business Services has been identified as a middle-wage industry cluster providing 7,199 jobs with an average wage of \$77,754.
- Energy and Environment – Energy was identified as a high-wage industry cluster, with 406 jobs with an average wage of \$126,836. It is also experiencing rapid job growth, increasing 67.8% between 2012-2017.
- Tourism added to Hospitality – While Tourism, Hospitality and Recreation were identified as a low-wage industry cluster, it has experience significant job growth (20.3%) between 2012-2017. The SCCWDB also recognizes that Tourism brings a significant number of visitors that support multiple industries.
- Manufacturing – Other Manufacturing was identified as a middle-wage industry cluster, with 1,406 jobs with an average wage of \$70,405.
- Technology/Innovation – Information and Communication Technologies was identified as Santa Cruz County’s highest wage industry cluster, with an average wage of \$147,596. The cluster has 2,130 jobs and has experienced growth of 19.5% between 2012-2017.
- Finance and Banking, Insurance, and Real Estate – This was identified as a middle-wage industry cluster, with 3,417 jobs with an average wage of \$75,175 and has experienced growth of 10.9% between 2012-2017.

Appendix

Stakeholder engagement documentation

CalFresh population data

Child support partnership letter

Priority sectors report

Public Comment received

After 30 day public comment period –include any comments that disagree with the local plan modification.