



Central/Mother Lode Regional Consortium Strong
Workforce Programs Regional Plan
Update 2021

*Economic Growth through Workforce Talent
Mission ♦ Goals ♦ Strategies ♦ Investments*



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For more information about the
Central/Mother Lode Regional Consortium,
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Central/ Mother Lode Regional Consortium Regional Plan (Updated 2021)

Mission

The CRC, operating as a consortium of colleges, uses its collective resources, in collaboration with business, industry, workforce development agencies, and K-16 partners, to create sustainable, career education programs. CRC goals, objectives and activities are designed to decrease economic disparities and generational poverty among its diverse populations. CRC is committed to work closely with industry to prepare a highly skilled workforce in support of equitable economic advancement throughout the region.

“Simplifying paths to educational goals and helping students stay on the path until completion”

Regional Introduction and Demographics

The Central/Mother Lode Regional Consortium (CRC) is the regional entity working with the eight community college districts and fifteen community colleges to promote workforce and economic development (WED) and implement the Strong Workforce Program (SWP and K12 SWP) on behalf of the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO). At over 46,000 square miles, the Central/Mother Lode Region is one of the largest geographic regions in California. The fifteen counties that make up the Central/Mother Lode Region (Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Fresno, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Mono, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tulare and Tuolumne Counties) have a combined population of almost 4.5 million residents. Over the last five years, the CRC region grew by 4%, somewhat slower than the state’s growth of 4.7%. The projected growth rate of 3% is also slower than in the previous five years and nearly matches the state’s projected growth rate of 3.1%. Population is expected to grow through 2024 to 4.6 million residents. In addition to the region’s fifteen community colleges, there are 15 county offices of education, over 230 public school districts, 11 regional occupational centers/programs, and more than 150 charter schools. For the purposes of K-12 Strong Workforce, local educational agencies (LEAs) generate more than 386,000 average daily attendance of students in grades 7-12. ¹

The CRC serves to facilitate and promote effective regional educational initiatives for its member colleges and key stakeholders in support of local, regional, and statewide workforce development efforts. We leverage employer, community, and educational resources to create and maintain a highly skilled workforce that meets our regional needs and is responsive to equity concerns.

The CRC supports the CCCCCO’s 7 core commitments in its Vision for Change:

1. Focus relentlessly on students’ end goals
2. Always design and decide with the student in mind.
3. Pair high expectations with high support.
4. Foster the use of data, inquiry, and evidence
5. Take ownership of goals and performance

¹ CVML Labor Market Overview (COE) September 2020

6. Enable action and thoughtful innovation.
7. Lead the work of partnering across systems

These commitments are built into the CRC's Overarching Goals and Regional Priorities

- A. Regional Leadership & Communication-** Cultivate and develop regional leadership and support structures and facilitate resource management that improves outcomes in the region's priority sectors and reduces equity gaps.
 - A.1 Develop leadership structures that are responsive to the needs of the Central Region.
 - A.2 Maintain existing and build new meaningful partnerships with workforce, K-12 education, economic development, and industry.
 - A.3 Promote leadership development within the region.
 - A.4 Ensure effective project management of SWP and other initiatives.
 - A.5 Develop the regional consortium model to be used in 2022 and beyond
 - A.6 Align projects and associated budgets for maximum impact and outcomes.
 - A.7 Actively support and participate in local and regional educational, industry-specific, and employer-driven initiatives that align with the Strong Workforce Program objectives.

- B. Regional Planning** -Intentionally plan and collaborate to prepare students to enter the workforce educated for tomorrow's jobs in pathways supported by labor market data in the CRC's industry sectors that offer living wages and higher paying, middle-skill jobs.
 - B.1 Increase opportunities for meaningful industry engagement.
 - B.2 Champion innovative design and decisions that ensure equity and grow career programs for all students.
 - B.3 Develop training programs for in-demand skills that are not already being covered by existing "for-credit" offerings.
 - B.4 Ensure students have needed skill certifications.
 - B.5 Ensure classrooms and labs have up-to-date technology, equipment and supplies.

- C. Curriculum, Programs and Pathways** - Research, plan, design, and present clear pathways for students created through meaningful collaboration with business and industry. Build and Clarify the Path
 - C.1 Align programs and curriculum across the region to be responsive to the needs of business & industry.
 - C.2 Provide for flexibility in access and delivery of services to meet student needs.
 - C.3 Provide ongoing professional development.
 - C.4 Promote opportunities for students to engage with employers and other professionals in their field of study.
 - C.5 Increase access to certificate, transfer, and degree required courses.
 - C.6 Explore and implement effective virtual delivery strategies in response to environmental factors (i.e. COVID).

- D. CTE Student Support Services** - Coordinate with student services and workforce

development partners to reduce barriers, ensure equity, and provide supportive services for students entering and proceeding through career education pathways.

- C.1 Enter the Path- Promote ongoing career exploration, communication, outreach and guidance.
- D.2 Develop outreach strategies for underserved populations.
- D.3 Stay on the Path and Ensure Learning- Integrate services to assist with student progression and completion of career education pathways.
- D.4 Utilize Prior Learning to assist in student completion.
- D.5 Reduce student cost through OER resources
- D.6 Employment Preparation and Transition to Work- Provide diverse opportunities that prepare students for a seamless transition into careers or career advancement.

E. Research and Data - Foster the use of labor market and student success data (i.e. Launchboard, LMI), inquiry, and evidence to take ownership of and achieve targeted metrics. Monitor persistence and completion of students throughout their educational journey and facilitate workplace learning strategies and/or job placement for students.

- E.1 Promote data-driven decision making.
- E.2 Initiate further data collection for just in time use in response to COVID-19.
- E.3 Project Alignment with metrics and monitoring.

Governance

The CRC's Governance Structure has four layers.

Regional Community College CEOs: Community college presidents, also referred to as CEOs, approve the distribution formula for Strong Workforce regional funds and regional plans; have the final approval of regional plans; resolve disputes; and appoint a CTE Dean as a college representative to the CRC Steering Committee and Program Review Committee. The CEOs are convened in partnership with the Central Valley Higher Education Consortium (CVHEC) on an annual basis, and as needed at other times.

CRC Steering Committee (SC): Decision-making and day-to-day responsibility is delegated to the Steering Committee. The voting members of the Steering Committee (SC) are the 15 CEO-appointed CTE Deans. The ex-officio members include the CRC Regional Chair, Center of Excellence Director, and Key Talent (i.e. Regional Directors/RDs and Technical Assistance Providers/TAPs). The SC reviews and approves regional project proposals; annual SWP plans and project budgets; makes funding and region-wide projects recommendations to the CEOs; develops and champions regional projects; evaluates SWP project performance; and approves the region's priority and emerging clusters. Appointed SC members are also committed to act in the best interest of the region; provide leadership and support for regional efforts; promote regional collaboration; seek input from constituents and experts in order to make informed decisions; promote open communication and transparency between the committee, colleges and stakeholders; attend SC meetings; and act as a liaison to their college leadership, faculty and staff. In addition, the SC, along with other Programmatic Partners, establishes the CRC's Strategic Priorities for the investment of regional SWP funds. Programmatic Partners are

composed of all stakeholders including college and district administration, K12, faculty and staff; Key Talent; Industry; WDB/WIBs; Adult Ed; EDCs; and other interested parties. The Steering Committee meets virtually six times per year; as well as electronically as needed. Face-to-face meetings will be resumed when possible.

2020-2021 STEERING COMMITTEE	
CRC Steering Committee CTE Deans	
Bakersfield College	Anthony Cordova
Cerro Coso College	Nicole Griffin (Interim)
Clovis Community College	Pamm Zierfuss-Hubbard
College of the Sequoias	Jonna Schengle
Columbia College	Steve Amador
Fresno City College	Becky Barabe
Madera College	Ganesan Srinivasan
Merced College	Bryan Tassej
Modesto Junior College	Pedro Mendez
Porterville College	Joseph Cascio
Reedley College	David Clark
San Joaquin Delta College	Salvador Vargas
Taft College	Jessica Grimes
West Hills College Coalinga	Justin Garcia
West Hills College Lemoore	Kris Costa

Workgroups and Committees:

Currently, there are four standing committees and various SWP regional workgroups. The standing committees are:

1. *Program Review*: Primary responsibility is to review and recommend new CTE program proposals to the Chancellor’s Office. There is one voting member from each of the region’s 15 colleges. Programs are reviewed on a rolling basis as they are submitted, and endorsements are approved at SC convenings.
2. *Ad-Hoc Marketing Committee*: Meets with the region’s marketing consultant to provide direction and input on the internal and external marketing campaign.
3. *Key Talent*: Comprised of individuals holding full-time positions, funded by either state grants or regional SWP projects, to provide services, coordination or project management on a regional

basis. Currently these include Regional Directors, Technical Assistance Providers and K12 Pathway Coordinators. Key Talent meet twice a month; attend the SC meetings; meet annually for work plan collaboration; and formally and informally for additional regional projects.

4. *K-12 Selection Committee*: As legislatively outlined, the Selection Committee membership is comprised of: Current or former K–12 career technical education teachers and administrators; Charter school representatives; Career guidance counselors; Representatives of industries that are prioritized by the consortium; at least one community college faculty or administrator; and, other K–12 education stakeholders, or other stakeholders, as determined by the consortium. The CRC K-12 Strong Workforce Selection Committee has 18 members from the entire region. They are responsible for reviewing and scoring all K12 grant proposals; and making all the decisions relating to the distribution of fiscal resources for the K-12 component of SWP. The term of office is three years.

CRC Office:

Day-to-day operation of the organization is managed by the CRC Regional Chair, CRC Project Specialist, and various support staff. Starting in 2021, Regional Directors will receive direction, guidance and leadership from their respective Regional Consortia chairs, who are also responsible for coordinating objectives and outcomes, and grant performance in place of the Regional Director’s host college Responsible Administrator. Regional Directors are expected to continue to coordinate and collaborate with the Statewide Directors for their industry, the Center of Excellence Director for their region, as well as with the Statewide COE HUB.

Communication Strategies

Communication occurs through a variety of mechanisms. Due to COVID-19, it is anticipated that most communication will continue to occur through virtual strategies (i.e. phone calls, email, newsletters, electronic meetings) rather than face-to-face meetings through at least 2021. The CRC Regional Director has overall responsibility ensure the flow of information and to convene regular as well as specialized meetings in order to:

- Maintain regular communication and handle CRC tasks

- Ensure communication with college CEOs

- Bring together Steering Committee members for decisions regarding regional priorities, identified needs, regional projects, program endorsements, and funding

- Coordinate the functions of Key Talent including Regional Directors, TAPs and Pathway coordinators

- Engage stakeholders including K-12 partners, college representatives, industry, WIOA and other community partners to carry out the goals of the Strong Workforce programs and create sustainable, career education programs

Each Regional Project shall have a Lead College with a person designated as a Project Manager. Roles include:

1. Serve as the regional point of contact for the project.
2. Convene project team frequently (monthly is desired, but not less than quarterly) to ensure all partner colleges are engaged and collaborating as appropriate.
3. Coordinate/lead annual project proposal/budget development.
4. Day-to-day oversight of the project management funds and execution of the project management workplan.

5. Facilitate and coordinate efforts among partner colleges to achieve the mission, goals and objectives of the project.
6. Provide oversight of the project(s) to which they are assigned. A project manager may have oversight over multiple projects and will allocate their time and effort appropriately.
7. Research, collect, compile, analyze data and metrics pertinent to the project to ensure the project is moving forward and that partners are meeting project timelines and achieving key milestones; and disseminate to the project partners and other stakeholders through agreed upon channels.
8. Provide routine updates to the consortium regarding performance of the project. This includes consolidating and editing quarterly narrative reports from information provided by partner colleges to the fiscal agent, preparing an annual summary report, and sharing best practices and lessons learned.
9. Ensure that evaluation systems are in place related to the goals and objectives of the project and report progress and potential roadblocks to the regional chair, project partners, and CRC governing bodies.
10. Identify and coordinate professional development opportunities.
11. Identify opportunities to sustain and scale the project through additional funding, grants, etc.
12. Initiate and maintain solid internal and external partner relationships, to include:
 - a. Ongoing and regular communication with the regional chair and fiscal agent.
 - b. Collaboration with the regional directors in order to leverage their sector expertise and networks, and to identify where natural intersections between the project and the DSN work exist and to identify opportunities for cross-sector collaboration.
 - c. Maintain a close liaison with the regional chair, alerting them to stories of interest, and assist in the development and dissemination of press releases and outreach materials related to the project.
 - d. Manage and interact with consultants working on key activities.

Engagement

CRC Engagement occurs with various stakeholders in a variety of venues.

K-12- A K-12 TAP provides support for K-12 with the assistance of up to eight K-12 Pathway Coordinators assigned to the Community College District offices. A total investment of over \$6 million dollars in the CRC region through K12 SWP grants have resulted in 87 awards to districts since 2018. K-12 partners are involved in meetings and email communication but there are additional opportunities to increase engagement in the region's work as partners focus on student success in middle and high school and transition students to the region's colleges.

Colleges are engaged through their work through the Steering Committee and CRC Regional Projects. Additionally, local college projects and efforts provide an additional focus on student success and related metrics.

Industry engagement occurs through regular outreach by colleges through advisory panels and participation in regional projects. Regional Directors are tasked with increasing employer engagement throughout the region.

Community organizations (WIOA, CVHEC, Guided Pathways Regional Coordinators) provide specialized services that are in alignment with CRC goals and priorities. Participation occurs in a variety of meetings and presentations are provided to ensure all partners are aware of services that support student success.

Labor Market Overview

Labor market data is provided by the Centers of Excellence and utilized by CRC partners in making programmatic decisions on local and regional projects. Each meeting of the CRC utilizes data and associated analysis. Labor market data is located on the CRC website <http://crconsortium.com/resources/#lmd> and additional LMI and sector report links are at <http://crconsortium.com/resources/>.

Prior Investments and Current Priorities

The region is involved in a variety of state and federal community college grants and initiatives that support the workforce mission of the Central/Mother Lode Regional Consortium, including the following:

- AB 705 (Student Success Act)
- Basic Skills Initiative (BSI)
- CTE Transitions
- EOPS / CARE / NextUp
- Perkins
- Guided Pathways
- Student Success and Support Program (SSSP)
- Strong Workforce Program
- Vision for Success (VSP)

Additionally, members of the consortium regularly engage a variety of external stakeholders and initiatives whose work aligns with or complements the broad strategic priorities of the CRC and the Strong Workforce Program. The region will continue to engage with these initiatives and others to leverage resources and expand regional capacity to do “more” and “better” CTE and to achieve the VFS.

Prior projects focused primarily on advanced manufacturing, agriculture, health, dual enrollment, various technician programs, teacher pipeline, energy and utilities pipeline enhancement, cybersecurity, NetLab implementation, counselor professional development, adult education, marketing and outreach, specialized software support (i.e. Linked in Learning), prior learning assessment, data tools, pre-apprenticeship, internship development, and open educational resources for CTE courses. Some projects have now closed, some projects will be continued, and additional projects will be developed and realigned to meet current priorities.

The Central/Mother Lode Region invested its regional share of over \$36M Strong Workforce funds from Round 1 through Round 4 across 51 regional projects. Regional Round 4 yielded \$1,747,536 in Incentive Funding amount for the region and additional incentive funding for each of the 8 college districts and all 14 of the 2019-2020 colleges.

In 2021 the CRC reorganized its **Region-Wide** projects into 5 main focus areas:

- Marketing Support
- CTE Labor Market Research
- College and Career Connection
- K-12 and Pathway Support
- Employer Engagement and Industry alignment

Regional Opt-in projects were realigned in 2021 to priority sectors as well as emerging sectors supported by LMI data and local need. Regional project sectors include:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Agriculture, Water & Environment
- Business & Entrepreneurship
- Global Trade & Logistics
- Health and Public Safety
- Retail, Hospitality & Tourism
- Education
- Energy, Construction, Utilities
- Strengthening Career Pathways and Regional Sectors (across all sectors).

Each college also has additional funding that they designate towards local projects.

Regional Priority Sectors

Currently CRC focuses on the following priority sectors:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Agriculture, Water & Environment
- Business & Entrepreneurship
- Global Trade & Logistics
- Health and Public Safety
- Retail, Hospitality & Tourism
- Education
- Energy, Construction, Utilities

Metrics

1. COMPLETION- Over five years, increase by at least 20 percent the number of California Community College students annually who acquire associate degrees, credentials, certificates, or specific skill sets that prepare them for an in-demand job.
2. TRANSFER- Over five years, increase by 35 percent the number of California Community College students transferring annually to a UC or CSU.
3. UNIT ACCUMULATION- Over five years, decrease the average number of units accumulated by California Community College students earning associate degrees.
4. WORKFORCE EMPLOYMENT- Over five years, increase the percent of exiting CTE students who report being employed in their field of study.
5. EQUITY- Reduce equity gaps across all of the above measures through faster improvements among traditionally underrepresented student groups.
6. REGIONAL EQUITY- Over five years, reduce regional achievement gaps across all of the above measures through faster improvements among colleges located in regions with the lowest educational attainment of adults.