Strong Workforce Program Four-Year Plan

2024–2027

Transforming the way educators, industry,
and community partners equitably advance economic mobility

SAN DIEGO AND IMPERIAL REGIONAL CONSORTIUM

Contents

Introduction

San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium

MISSION

The San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium provides leadership and guidance on regional career education initiatives that serve its members and partners. Driven by an equity framework, the Consortium collaborates with educators, industry, community partners, and students to develop a skilled workforce that aligns with the future needs of the regional ecosystem.

With its equity-centered mission, the San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium (SDI RC) focuses on advancing the social and economic mobility of individuals and their families by supporting innovative, high-quality career education (CE) programs, strategies, and activities that lead adults to more and better career opportunities in the region. Within a regional workforce ecosystem, the SDI RC partners with educators, workforce development, industry, and community-based organizations to prepare, bolster, and sustain a highly skilled workforce as it builds capacity of the community colleges to meet the region's needs. These efforts are in collaboration with the region's six community college districts, including its 10 community colleges, as they implement the Strong Workforce Program (SWP) on behalf of the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO). The SDI RC and the community colleges' collective efforts reflect the CCCCO's Vision 2030 roadmap to advance equity via success, access, and support for every learner.

Reflecting the CCCCO's Vision 2030 roadmap, which prioritizes data-based approaches to advance equity in access, support, and success for every learner, the SDI RC's current and planned work is already underway. The *San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium: Strong Workforce Program Four-Year Plan 2024–2027* demonstrates how the SDI RC's goals, objectives, and regional priorities focus on supporting the community colleges in key areas in order to strengthen data-informed practices that increase access to and completion of academic and career paths leading students successfully to the workforce. The SDI RC and the community colleges continue to sharpen their equity-centered strategies to remove barriers for students and to provide supports that better align to students' needs and lived experiences with the goal of ensuring their social and economic mobility.

SAN DIEGO AND IMPERIAL REGIONAL CONSORTIUM

GOALS

- **Build college capacity to create equitable systemic change which closes equity gaps**

- **Unify the workforce ecosystem**

- **Advocate for changes to policy, processes, and practices**

VALUES

- **Adaptive**
- **Fearless**
- **Interdependent**
- **Justice (Equity)**

- **Reflective**
- **Sustainable**
- **Transparent**

SAN DIEGO AND IMPERIAL COUNTIES

DISTRICTS & COLLEGES

- **Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District**
  - » Cuyamaca College
  - » Grossmont College
- **Imperial Community College District**
  - » Imperial Valley College
- **MiraCosta Community College District**
  - » MiraCosta College
- **Palomar Community College District**
  - » Palomar College
- **San Diego Community College District**
  - » San Diego City College
  - » San Diego College of Continuing Education
  - » San Diego Mesa College
  - » San Diego Miramar College
- **Southwestern Community College District**
  - » Southwestern College

Regional Consortium: Governance
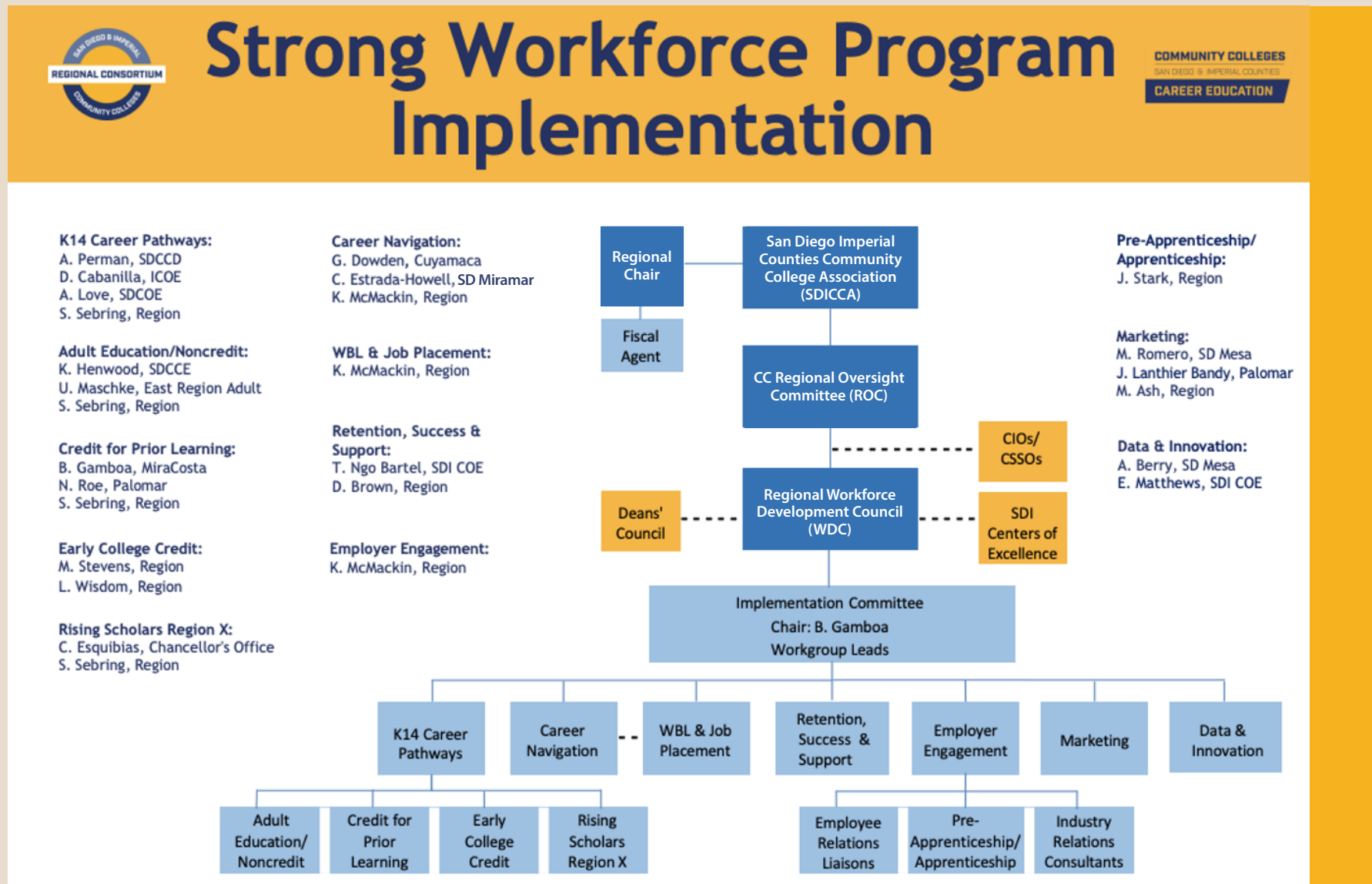
SWP Decision-Making

The SDI RC takes pride in its unique governance structure, which reflects collaboration, representation, interdependency, and transparency among partners. In addition, the SDI RC fosters an upward implementation workflow from the cross-college workgroups to the college presidents and chancellors (see Figure 1: SDI RC Strong Workforce Program Implementation). What follows are descriptions of each segment of the SDI RC governance structure and how each serves a distinct role in supporting the implementation of SWP in the region.

- **San Diego & Imperial Counties Community Colleges Association** (SDICCCA)—the college presidents and chancellors, also known as chief executive officers (CEOs)—sets policy for SWP in the region and is the final authority for all decisions.

- The **regional chair** takes direction from and reports to SDICCCA and facilitates collaboration, feedback, and communications among the community colleges' CE deans and CE associate deans, chief instructional officers, and chief student services officers.

- The **fiscal agent** monitors and oversees distribution of SWP and K–12 SWP funds and reports to the state. Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District serves as the region's fiscal agent.

- The **Regional Oversight Committee** (ROC) is the regionally representative governance committee for SWP implementation, providing oversight and ensuring that the work aligns with SWP goals and strategic priorities. The ROC provides approval of funding and guidance on other issues presented for their consideration.

- The **Workforce Development Council** (WDC) is the regional community college body that is open to all constituents who engage in workforce activities. The WDC is chaired by the regional chair and CE Deans' Council chair. It supports the colleges' program operations in order to strengthen the regional economy and reduce the job skills gap.

- The **CE Deans' Council**, comprising CE deans and CE associate deans, addresses curriculum recommendations for the region and workforce issues. The lead CE deans are designated by their respective CEOs. An elected CE dean chairs the council.

- The **SWP Implementation Committee** comprises all SWP workgroup leads, who meet to discuss and resolve implementation issues. A CE dean or designee chairs the committee.

- The **SWP workgroups** convene constituents from all 10 colleges to develop strategies for implementing the regional recommendations. Workgroup strategies are vetted by the CE Deans' Council, WDC, ROC, and SDICCCA. For 2023–2024, the SDI RC supports **six workgroups** and other related committees and communities of practice (CoPs):

  » **K–14 Career Pathways**

    – Adult Education/Noncredit (committee)

    – Credit for Prior Learning (committee)

    – Rising Scholars (committee)

    – Early College Credit (CoPs)

  » **Career Navigation**

  » **Retention, Success & Support**

    – Faculty Institute (ad hoc committee)

    – Counselor Institute (ad hoc committee)

  » **Employer Engagement**

    – Regional Apprenticeship Planning Team (committee)

    – Sector Investments (CoPs)

  » **Marketing**

  » **Data & Innovation**

Figure 1. SDI RC Strong Workforce Program Implementation

Strong Workforce Program Implementation

K14 Career Pathways:
A. Perman, SDCCD
D. Cabanilla, ICOE
A. Love, SDCOE
S. Sebring, Region

Career Navigation:
G. Dowden, Cuyamaca
C. Estrada-Howell, SD Miramar
K. McMackin, Region

Pre-Apprenticeship/
Apprenticeship:
J. Stark, Region

Adult Education/Noncredit:
K. Henwood, SDCCE
U. Maschke, East Region Adult
S. Sebring, Region

WBL & Job Placement:
K. McMackin, Region

Marketing:
M. Romero, SD Mesa
J. Lanthier Bandy, Palomar
M. Ash, Region

Credit for Prior Learning:
B. Gamboa, MiraCosta
N. Roe, Palomar
S. Sebring, Region

Retention, Success &
Support:
T. Ngo Bartel, SDI COE
D. Brown, Region

Data & Innovation:
A. Berry, SD Mesa
E. Matthews, SDI COE

Early College Credit:
M. Stevens, Region
L. Wisdom, Region

Employer Engagement:
K. McMackin, Region

Rising Scholars Region X:
C. Esquibias, Chancellor's Office
S. Sebring, Region

Regional Chair — Fiscal Agent

San Diego Imperial Counties Community College Association (SDICCA)

CC Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) — CIOs/ CSSOs

Deans' Council — Regional Workforce Development Council (WDC) — SDI Centers of Excellence

Implementation Committee
Chair: B. Gamboa
Workgroup Leads

K14 Career Pathways | Career Navigation | WBL & Job Placement | Retention, Success & Support | Employer Engagement | Marketing | Data & Innovation

Adult Education/ Noncredit | Credit for Prior Learning | Early College Credit | Rising Scholars Region X

Employee Relations Liaisons | Pre-Apprenticeship/ Apprenticeship | Industry Relations Consultants

Note. See the appendix for a list of the workgroup and committee leaders shown in Figure 1.
Source. San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium, 2023.

Regional Consortium: Strong Workforce Program Approach

Within the SDI RC, partners comprising leaders, CE deans, CE associate deans, educators, workforce development, and industry come together to work collaboratively on SWP efforts. The *how* of the work—its governance structure, collaborative decision-making, and support for the colleges to build capacity—serves as a model for large-scale institutional reform.

Regional Strategies

As the SDI RC chooses to invest its SWP funds in comprehensive systems improvements, it aims to build the capacity of the colleges by using the following strategies in its approach:

- Build and maintain an **intentional relationship** with the colleges that doesn't mandate change but provides facilitative leadership to support the colleges' work, increase capacity, and incentivize change.

- Provide a governance structure that includes **cross-functional and cross-institution workgroups**—comprising partners from the region's community colleges, other education segments, workforce development, and industry—grounded in equity-centered practice that fosters collaboration and buy-in.

- **Support workgroups** in conducting collaborative decision-making and guiding the colleges in improving CE programs and student success outcomes. The SDI RC supports work that allows for collaboration and the sharing of resources across the colleges that lead to achieving economies of scale.

- Make **data-informed investment decisions** based on where the need is. By soliciting input and feedback from partners at the colleges and by using labor market information, the SDI RC assists the colleges with curriculum and program development and improvement.

- Commission and support **regional studies**, such as the 2023 study and report *Black Student Equity: Overcoming Barriers and Providing Support*, to understand the experiences of Black students in the region's community college CE programs, identify barriers, and inform programming and strategies in order to increase student success outcomes for Black students. For example, the study identified three key student needs and research-based strategies to address them.

- Create **SWP-funded positions** for each college, including work-based learning (WBL) coordinators, employer relations liaisons, and job placement case managers, in order to advance career development opportunities for students.

- Award **institutional grants** to support the colleges in improving systems and processes. In consultation with CE deans, CE associate deans, the

SWP Implementation Committee, and workgroups, the SDI RC identifies specific areas of improvement for the colleges that will further collective regional goals. Once the SDI RC develops and releases a request for applications (RFA) to communicate a project's purpose and goal, the SDI RC invites the colleges to apply and submit their plans. These often multiyear funding opportunities enable the colleges to plan and implement innovative, research-based practices in a particular area of focus that meet the needs of their students and faculty. The colleges benefit from a regional approach, in which they collaborate with one another and learn about other colleges' emerging practices. Over the years, RFAs have focused on strategies for priority sectors, pathway navigation, credit for prior learning, job placement case management, college-based marketing, and work-based learning, to name just a few.

- Take a **continuous improvement** approach in order to recognize where change is needed and how to support it. This approach involves data analysis to identify disparities and challenges, research to inform evidence-based solutions, collaboration to implement or adapt strategies, and further data analysis to measure progress. With its established structure for working collaboratively and a regional buy-in to a continuous improvement approach, SDI RC is poised to pivot and respond to shifts in foci that either the region recognizes as a need or the CCCCO introduces.

Regional Professional Development

Regional professional development (PD) for practitioners is designed to increase capacity in equity-centered practices, such as data usage and data-informed work, WBL, or instruction. Practitioners can improve their practice through impactful PD opportunities such as the following:

- **Faculty Institute.** Instructional faculty engage in two sessions over two semesters, learning to analyze student data from their courses through an equity lens, identify patterns that indicate where student success gaps exist, develop an action plan, and implement equity-centered practices. SDI RC supports the Faculty Institute with stipends for participating faculty and funds to increase data capacity in the Institutional Research offices. Since February 2020, 389 participants across the 10 colleges have attended through two cohorts. Among the participating faculty, 59 percent were CE faculty and 41 percent were non-CE faculty. Testimonials from the Faculty Institute can be viewed on YouTube. The Faculty Institute is conducted in partnership with the San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence (COE).

- **Counselor Institute.** Academic and career counselors engage in PD focused on the analysis of student data to understand disparities in student success and to implement new equity-centered practices in order to close the student success gap. The first regional Counselor Institute kicked off in October 2023 in partnership with the COE. The SDI RC provides the Counselor Institute with supports that are similar to those provided for the Faculty Institute.

- **Work-Based Learning Course.** This course supports CE faculty and other staff in working together to ensure that WBL experiences are embedded into curricula and support learning. The online course focuses on WBL as a critical instructional strategy that supports students' career development and future employment. The course takes participants through four modules, from an introduction to WBL through development of a WBL lesson plan, over approximately 20 hours of coursework.

- **Career Education Teacher Preparation Course.** This course, informed by experienced CE faculty, supports colleges in preparing new faculty

who come from industry, helping ensure their success in teaching CE courses. The online, cohort-based course is comprehensive, introducing CE teachers to topics such as understanding community college students, equity-minded teaching strategies, learning styles and support for student agency, basic teaching skills, integration of project-based learning and WBL into curricula, and assessment practices.

Regional Assets: Partners and Collaborators

San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence

The SDI RC works closely with the San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence (COE) to access current and forecasted labor market information (LMI) in San Diego and Imperial Counties. The COE produces reports about LMI to help ensure that the colleges' CE programs are aligned with the region's economic needs and that employment opportunity gaps are studied and reported to inform where new programs or practices are needed. The COE also provides data analyses in areas related to workforce development. These analyses are related to LMI and provide additional insight for program and support service decision-makers through reports such

as *Pandemic-Resilient Jobs*, *Childcare Industry Workforce Needs Study*, and *Equity Gaps in Priority Jobs and Programs*.

Workforce Development

A key component of SDI RC's approach is reflected in its strong partnerships with workforce development organizations, which are the result of intentional relationship building and collaborative efforts toward creating strategic career development opportunities for the increased economic mobility of SDI students. In 2023–2024, the SDI RC is supporting the colleges in strengthening and expanding employer relationships in order to offer equitable and more WBL and internship opportunities, particularly for the region's disproportionately impacted (DI) students.

Partnerships with, for example, the San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation (EDC), Imperial County Workforce Development Board (ICWDB), and the San Diego Workforce Partnership (SDWP) have led to SDI RC's and the colleges' involvement in Advancing San Diego. Led by the EDC, Advancing San Diego is a $3 million investment in fueling the region's economic growth in targeted industries and employing more of the region's DI population. The work of these partnerships has evolved into the creation of the Border Region Inclusive Talent Pipeline Collaborative and serves as a model for

cross-sector collaboration among education, workforce development, and industry. In recent years, the Talent Pipeline Collaborative has initiated critical projects in the region, including the K16 Collaborative Grant; collaboration with the U.S. Navy to expand capacity in relevant programs; and an application for Phase 1 of the Regional Technology and Innovation Hub Program, a new initiative of the U.S. Economic Development Administration. Such partnerships ensure that within the workforce ecosystem, the SDI community colleges are equipped to prepare their students for career opportunities in high-demand industries aligned to the economy's needs.

Additionally, SDI community college representatives serve on boards of the EDC, ICWDB, and SDWP, as well as on committees with economic development agencies, further cross-pollinating knowledge, resources, and new opportunities.

Industry

The SDI RC supports the community colleges' partnerships with industries and employers, which are especially strong in the CE programs. Leadership and guidance from the Career Navigation workgroup; the Employer Engagement committee; and people in the college-based, SWP-funded roles (i.e., WBL coordinators, employer relations liaisons, and

job placement case managers), who actively provide WBL and job placement opportunities for students, contribute to ensuring that SDI students are highly qualified candidates in a competitive workforce. The relationships offer mutual benefits to both the colleges and employers and to the students.

Adult Education

The SDI RC intentionally partners with the California adult schools in the region. The Consortium integrates adult education and noncredit community college programs into its K–14 Career Pathways workgroup efforts while also coordinating with the adult education super region, comprising the five adult education consortia in California's southern region. This integration reflects the importance of adult education and noncredit programs as an on-ramp to for-credit pathways, as shown in Figure 2: A Community College Student's Road to Career Success (see next section), and reflects the colleges' commitment to serving adults in the region who could benefit from further education or training at the community colleges.

K–12

The SDI RC is committed to partnerships with the K–12 local education agencies (LEAs) through multiple collaborative activities geared toward strengthening the path between K–12 and community college. For example, the SDI RC supports collaboration among the community colleges and K–12 LEAs in creating high-quality and seamless K–14 career and technical (CTE) pathways that lead students to community college CE programs through K–12 SWP. The SDI RC focuses especially on supporting and improving equity-focused K–14 efforts through early college credit, increased postsecondary engagement about career awareness and CE opportunities, and large-scale data collection and analyses of K–12 student and counselor surveys regarding improving services. Additionally, the SDI RC supports community college outreach to local middle and high schools, the creation of K–12-focused CE collateral that showcases LMI and career pathways information, and intersegmental PD such as the regional Counselor Conference, where K–12 counselors learn about emerging and promising counseling practices at the community colleges.

Rising Scholars

The SDI RC partners with the state-based Rising Scholars Network to support the region's community colleges that actively work to meet the unique needs of justice-involved students (i.e., formerly incarcerated individuals, incarcerated individuals, or individuals with incarcerated

Values to Partners and Collaborators

We create the space and capacity to guide successful career education programs and initiatives.

We remove barriers and make it efficient and rewarding for students to achieve their goals.

We advocate for changes to policy, processes, and practices.

family members) so that they can successfully achieve their career and education goals. This equity-centered work includes collaborating with corrections, community, and education partners to identify solutions, create resources, and foster a shared learning environment for success.

A Community College Student's Road to Career Success

Since the launch of SWP, the region's community colleges have been committed to reconceptualizing the student experience so that students are equipped with information to be able to follow clear, well-supported, efficient, and equitable paths that lead to an industry-valued certificate, an associate degree, transfer to a four-year college or university for a bachelor's degree, and the attainment of a living wage. Informed by research-based best practices and community college data, the region developed the Community College Student's Road to Career Success (Figure 2).

The Student's Road to Career Success represents a student's career journey from their secondary and postsecondary engagement as K–12 and adult students—through onboarding, student retention and transition supports, and ongoing education and career development—to their careers. The road highlights key processes needed to ensure that this journey is smooth.

Secondary & Postsecondary Engagement

The journey begins with recognizing the myriad entry points into the varied types of secondary and postsecondary engagement—outreach, alignment, and acceleration—that prospective students can use to guide them through community college. Entry points can include workforce development programs, targeted community programs, employer and self-referrals, middle school and high school, and adult education and noncredit courses.

Onboarding

Onboarding processes such as comprehensive intake, differentiated orientation, and career planning alongside education planning set students on their paths to successfully launch their college experience.

Student Retention & Transition Supports

Four interrelated components ensure students are engaged and stay on their path:

- pathway participation
- applied and work-based learning
- career readiness and employment
- transfer services

A system of supports, including financial planning, advising, tutoring, and others, undergird these components.

Ongoing Education & Career Development

When students exit the postsecondary path, they can continue their journey through options that may include further education, such as transferring to a four-year institution, taking advantage of "upskilling" opportunities, and/or learning on the job during employment and at successive workplaces over time.

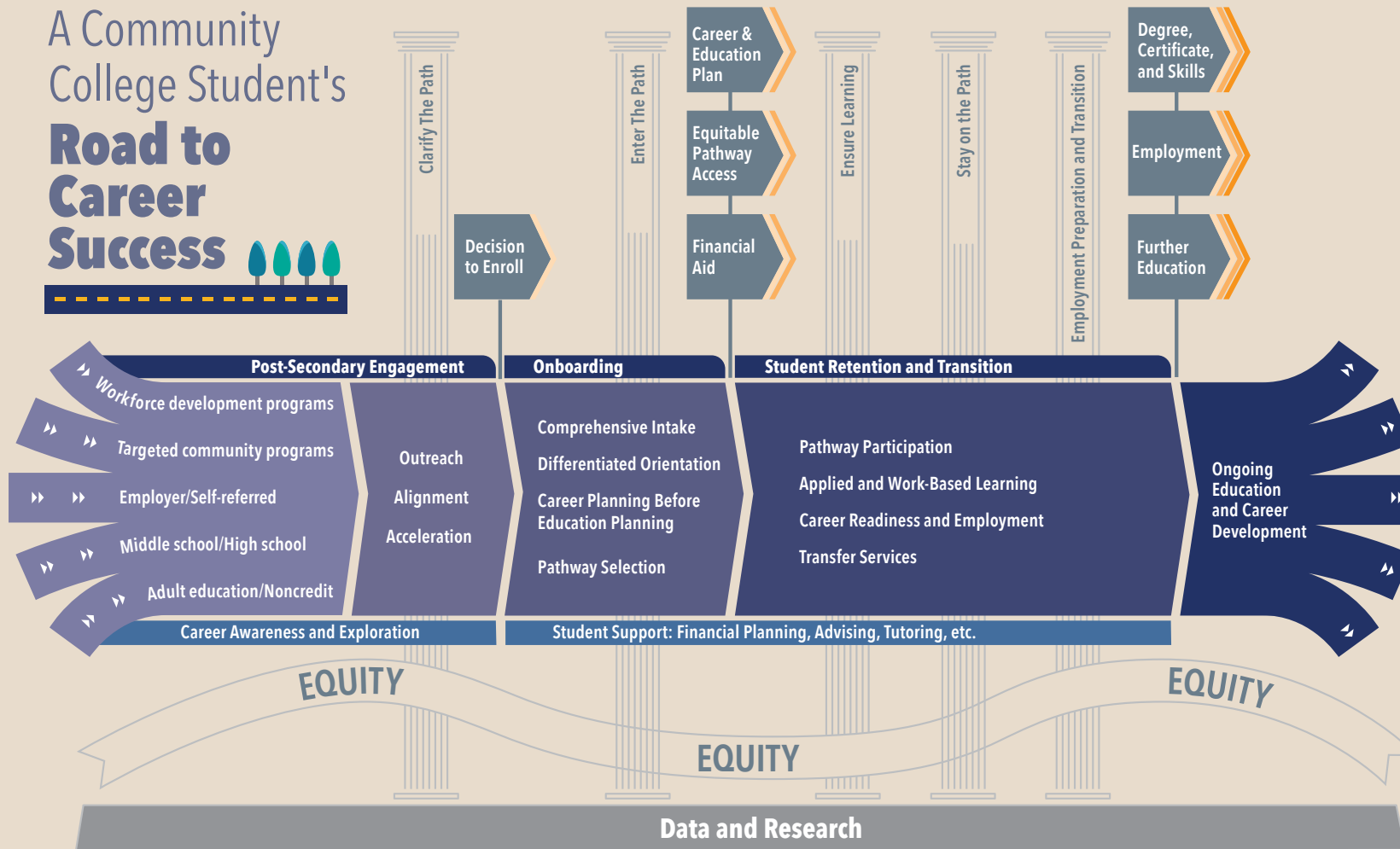## Figure 2. A Community College Student's Road to Career Success

A Community College Student's **Road to Career Success**

Clarify The Path

Enter The Path

Ensure Learning

Stay on the Path

Employment Preparation and Transition

Career & Education Plan

Equitable Pathway Access

Financial Aid

Decision to Enroll

Degree, Certificate, and Skills

Employment

Further Education

Post-Secondary Engagement

Workforce development programs

Targeted community programs

Employer/Self-referred

Middle school/High school

Adult education/Noncredit

Outreach

Alignment

Acceleration

Onboarding

Comprehensive Intake

Differentiated Orientation

Career Planning Before Education Planning

Pathway Selection

Student Retention and Transition

Pathway Participation

Applied and Work-Based Learning

Career Readiness and Employment

Transfer Services

Ongoing Education and Career Development

Career Awareness and Exploration

Student Support: Financial Planning, Advising, Tutoring, etc.

EQUITY   EQUITY   EQUITY   EQUITY

Data and Research

Source. San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium, 2023.

Regional Investments for 2023–2024

The SDI RC's regional approach is reflected in its annual budget and how the SDI RC invests in its regional priorities and projects toward implementing SWP (Table 1). The details of the regional priorities and projects are described in the Regional Priority sections of this plan.

Table 1. SDI RC Investments in Regional Projects, 2023–2024

Priorities and projects	Amount
Retention and success/Faculty and Counselor Institutes	$1,500,000
Job placement case management	$1,500,000
Labor market research	$1,150,000
Pathway navigation	$500,000
Employer engagement and apprenticeship	$1,320,500
Work-based learning coordination	$750,000
Pre-college outreach implementation	$620,000
Guided career pathways implementation	$685,500
Sector strategies and equity outcomes	$555,110
College-based marketing of career education programs	$500,000
Dual enrollment	$500,000
Credit for prior learning	$250,000
Career education outreach	$250,000
Marketing of career education programs	$50,000
Consortium management (3%)	$319,930
SWP administration (2%)	$213,287
Total investment	**$10,664,327**

Source. San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium, 2023.

The Regional Consortium Story

The San Diego and Imperial community colleges' progress in improving student success outcomes reflects the coordinated efforts of the colleges with the SDI RC. As the region's SWP work has matured and advanced over the past eight years, the SDI RC has also evolved to best support the colleges. The timeline below shows SDI RC's history of regional collaboration.

A History of Regional Collaboration

1963

SDICCCA

For decades, San Diego & Imperial Counties Community Colleges Association (SDICCCA) has been the organization through which the region's community college presidents and chancellors network and collaborate. Through SDICCCA, the senior leaders have built strong rapport, fellowship, trust, and regional pride in its 10 community colleges.

November 18, 1994

SDI Regional Consortium 1.0

The San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium was established as the region's fiduciary to manage the distribution of funds issued by the federal or state government, such as the Carl D. Perkins grants, the SWP grants, and other funding sources. The Foundation for Grossmont & Cuyamaca Colleges is the fiscal agent for the SDI RC.

June 15, 2016

New SWP Initiative

With the launch of SWP, SDI RC engaged the 10 community colleges as partners to understand the needs of the colleges related to CE and workforce. The process began with an inquiry that involved cross-college interviews and a needs assessment of the community colleges. This initial work led to a set of comprehensive recommendations to guide systemic change at the community colleges.

A History of Regional Collaboration (continued)

Fall 2016

SDI Regional Consortium 2.0

By leveraging SDICCCA's collaborative way of working as a region, SDI RC is designed to carry out SWP efforts and necessary support for the 10 colleges with a regional lens. The organizational structure of the consortium includes SDICCCA's leadership, the ROC, the WDC, the CE Deans' Council, and cross-functional and cross-institution workgroups focused on key change areas.

Spring 2017

SDI RC Workgroups

Within the workgroups, the SDI RC makes space for the collective body of more than 150 partners across the colleges to play active roles in determining how to address issues and make positive changes for the region. Each of the initial workgroups focused on a specific component of SWP implementation:

- Career Pathways
- Pathway Navigation
- WBL & Job Placement
- Retention, Success & Support
- Employer Engagement
- Data & Research
- Marketing

Intentional Approach to Guide, Support, and Collaborate

The SDI RC has always intended to guide and support the colleges in improving systems that lead more students to success while also building the capacity of the colleges in areas such as data-informed decision-making, equity-centered approaches, career development, and academic and nonacademic student supports. As previously stated, the SDI RC intentionally takes a collaborative rather than a mandated approach with the colleges. With representation of the colleges within each workgroup, the SDI RC has worked to establish a culture of solving problems collectively and sharing promising practices.

Shifts Over Time

Investing in Regional Projects

Compared with its approach during the early rounds of SWP, the SDI RC has shifted away from investing in short-term, one-off, college-based projects. Its current approach is to apply a regional lens and provide seed money to help the colleges build capacity. For example, as shown in Table 2, during rounds 1 through 4 (2016–2017 through 2019–2020) the SDI RC invested in one-year projects at selected colleges, including the innovative collaborative projects, the tutoring pilot project, and the 21st century employability skills pilot. Now with the SDI RC using a strategic approach of investing in regional projects, it can focus on comprehensive systems improvements across the region's community colleges. In this way, the SDI RC can better leverage its resources to support the colleges with data, PD, technical assistance, and funds. Moreover, as the SDI RC uses a regional approach to help the colleges implement new regional initiatives and new CCCCO mandates, the colleges can learn from one another.

Table 2. SDI RC Investments by Project and Round, 2016–2017 through 2023–2024

Project	Target	Total investment (Rounds 1–8)	Rounds							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Pre-college outreach	Regionwide support	5,315,665	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Guided career pathways implementation	Regionwide support	6,680,629	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Dual enrollment	Colleges	949,360							x	x
Credit for prior learning	Colleges	419,016							x	x
Pathway navigation	Colleges	3,964,321		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Retention and success/Faculty and Counselor Institutes	Colleges	6,696,723			x	x	x	x	x	x

Project	Target	Total investment (Rounds 1–8)	Rounds							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Sector strategies and equity outcomes	Colleges	4,626,523		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Clinical placement planning	Regionwide support	390,945						x	x	x
Employer engagement	Regionwide support	2,543,204						x	x	x
Work-based learning coordination	Colleges	5,025,401		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Job placement case management	Colleges	12,360,743	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Marketing of CE programs	Regionwide support	7,554,876	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
College-based marketing of CE programs	Colleges	3,858,965	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Labor market research	Regionwide support	5,087,630	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Innovative collaborative projects	Colleges	501,374	x							
Tutoring pilot project	Colleges	48,032		x						
21st century employability skills pilot	Colleges	132,659		x						
Work-based learning assessment	Colleges	165,378		x						
Improving the student enrollment process	Colleges	1,485,254		x	x	x				
Retention and success acceleration projects	Colleges	824,952		x						
Regional consortium implementation	Regionwide support	2,167,314	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
SWP administration	Regionwide support	1,444,878	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Total investment		**72,243,842**								

Note. See the appendix for a screen-reader version of Table 2.

Source. San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium, 2023.

Building Trust and a Partnership

The active participation and problem-solving of the consortium members has contributed to the building of trusted relationships within the SDI RC over the years. But it took time. Initially, the community colleges were uncertain about trusting the SDI RC. Understandably, the colleges and the SDI RC needed time to understand how best to work together in their unique relationship.

Today the SDI RC's symbiotic relationship with the colleges is the core of the region's education and workforce ecosystem. In recent years, the SDI RC has seen a shift in how the colleges rely on the consortium to support the advancement of SWP efforts and increased trust that the consortium is a reliable partner that can provide capacity-building support, resources, research-based practices, and structures for problem-solving and collaboration. For example, the colleges depend on the consortium to lead learning opportunities, including CoPs for shared learning across the colleges and PD informed by regional needs, such as the Faculty Institute for building faculty capacity for using student data to inform equity-centered practices and the online CE teacher preparation course for preparing new teachers coming from industry. The colleges have learned they can consistently depend on the SDI RC as a partner.

Evolving Workgroups and Focus Areas

The strength of the working relationship between the SDI RC and the colleges enables the SDI RC to be nimble in how it supports the colleges when needs change. As the colleges make strides in their progress and evolve, the SDI RC can identify new regional priorities that are important for continued systems change. Following are some examples of shifts in recent years:

- reenvisioning and implementing a new employer engagement model
- emphasizing the importance of WBL experiences from an equity perspective
- evolving workgroups to meet changing needs within a structure that allows for new priorities

Moving Equity to the Center

Since the start of SWP, the SDI RC has recognized the need for improving systems and practices to ensure equitable success outcomes for every student, especially for DI students. SWP investments in the region have enabled the SDI RC to, among other foundational achievements, forge established relationships with partners, including the colleges, to work collaboratively on advancing change; support capacity for data collection and analysis of disaggregated data; and cultivate a culture within the workgroups in order to lead SWP efforts based on research.

In recent years, the SDI RC has sharpened its focus on equity. The region is even more equipped to assertively make a difference from 2023–2024 through 2026–2027. The SDI RC's plans build on the equity work begun in 2022–2023:

- Implement equity-minded and race-conscious recommendations to systems and practices informed by the findings from the _Black Student Equity_ report, commissioned in fall 2022.

- Provide regional support for the colleges to develop a strategic plan for Career Services.

- Support new cohorts of faculty and counselors participating in the Faculty Institute and Counselors Institute as they learn to analyze disaggregated data and adopt data-informed practices. Continue support for existing cohorts of practitioners.

- Support the colleges and districts in building capacity around CTE data usage, such as identifying equity gaps in CE programs and access to and completion of early college credit, credit for prior learning, and WBL opportunities for DI student groups.

- Update and implement new technologies to increase internal efficiencies in order to better communicate with and support partners and the colleges. This work includes adopting RFA software to better track the colleges' outcomes for regionally supported SWP projects. To improve both external and internal efficiencies, the SDI RC has redesigned its website, My Workforce Connection, and added K–12 and adult education/noncredit programs to the Program Finder function of the region's CareerED.org website, demonstrating possibilities for a continuous intersegmental K–14 pathway.

- Increase career opportunities, including WBL and paid internships, for every student, particularly for DI students, through positions that build local capacity at the colleges: WBL coordinators, employer relations liaisons, and job placement managers.

Regional Demographics

San Diego and Imperial Counties offer a wide range of occupations and career opportunities within their diverse regional economies.

San Diego County

San Diego County is largely urban, with a highly educated workforce. The region offers a diverse economy that includes "the largest military concentration in the world and a strong tourism industry" and has become an innovation hub in cybersecurity, wireless technologies, and software. Top local employers in the region are the U.S. Navy; the University of California, San Diego; Sharp HealthCare; and the County of San Diego. In Q1 2023, San Diego led employment growth in California, with the strongest growth in government and leisure and hospitality.

(Source. San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation)

Imperial County

Imperial County is largely rural and boasts a strong and established agricultural industry. The county is emerging in renewable energy production and is quickly growing its capacity to produce energy through solar, geothermal resources, and wind. Imperial County is also emerging as California's "Lithium Valley," developing mineral extraction facilities to support the state's investment in electric-fueled transportation.

(Source. Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation)

San Diego and Imperial Counties span the width of California at the state's most southern region, with the Pacific Ocean to the west, Arizona to the east, Riverside County to the north, and Mexico to the south.

San Diego County is the second most populous county of 58 counties in California and the fifth largest county in the United States.
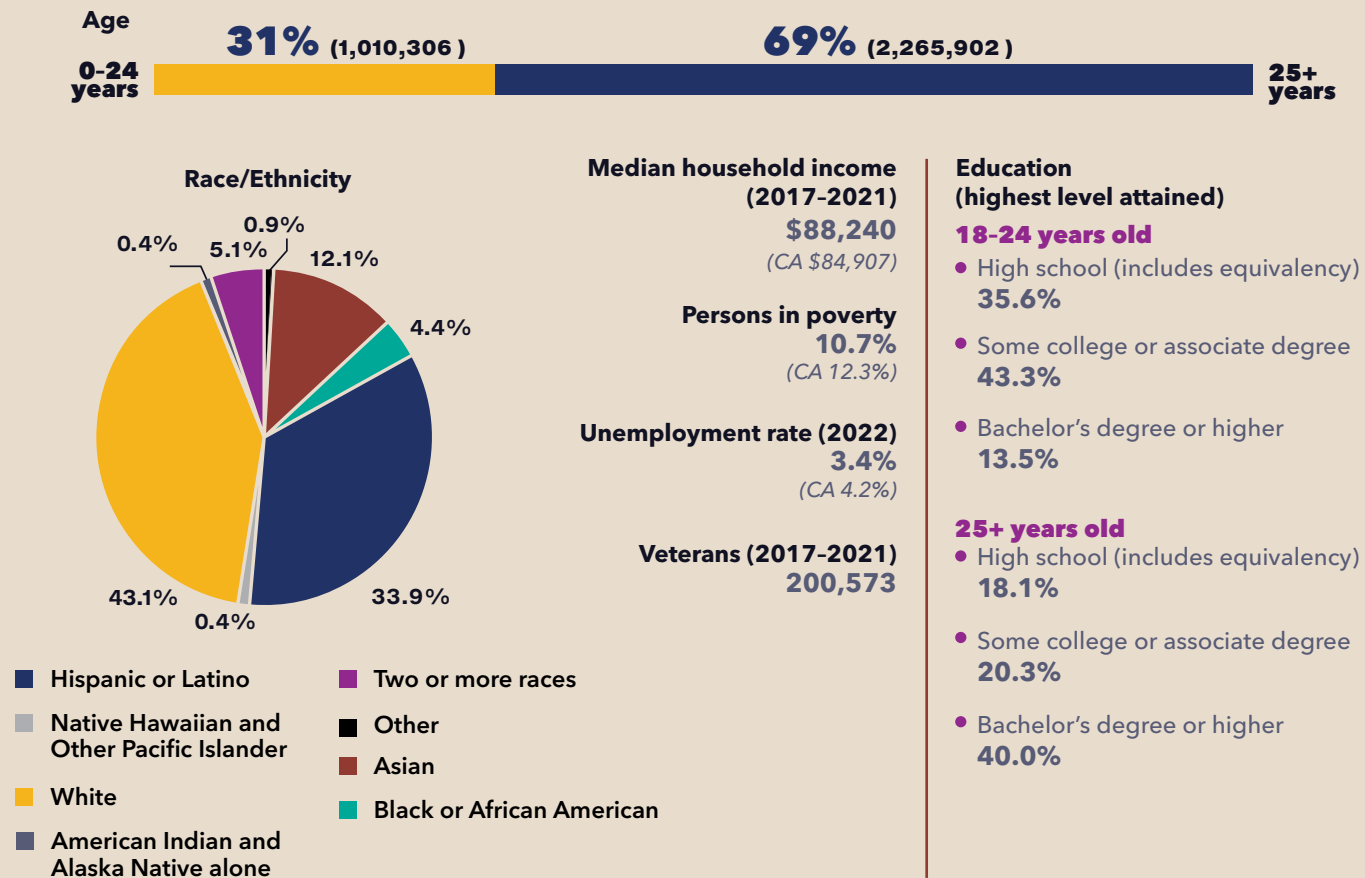
Imperial County is the least populous county in southern California and is the 31st largest county in the state.

The demographics of San Diego and Imperial Counties (Figures 3 and 4) are reflected in the region's diversity of population size, race and ethnicity, income, and education as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau (2021, 2022).

Figure 3. Demographics of San Diego County

San Diego County

Population: **3,276,208**   Forecasted population growth (2030): **9%** 📈

Age

31% (1,010,306)   **69%** (2,265,902)

0-24 years   25+ years

Race/Ethnicity

0.4% 5.1% 0.9% 12.1% 4.4% 0.4% 43.1% 33.9%

- Hispanic or Latino
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
- White
- American Indian and Alaska Native alone
- Two or more races
- Other
- Asian
- Black or African American

Median household income (2017-2021)
$88,240
(CA $84,907)

Persons in poverty
10.7%
(CA 12.3%)

Unemployment rate (2022)
3.4%
(CA 4.2%)

Veterans (2017-2021)
200,573

Education (highest level attained)

18-24 years old
- High school (includes equivalency) **35.6%**
- Some college or associate degree **43.3%**
- Bachelor's degree or higher **13.5%**

25+ years old
- High school (includes equivalency) **18.1%**
- Some college or associate degree **20.3%**
- Bachelor's degree or higher **40.0%**

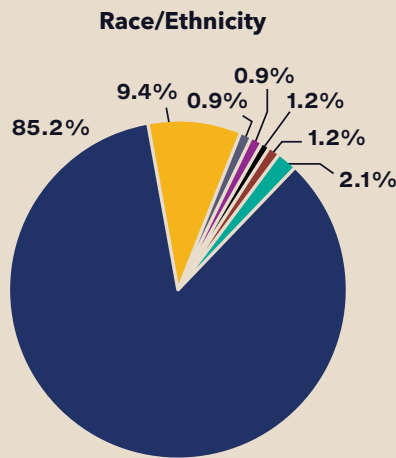*Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% because of rounding. Complete data for Figures 3 and 4 are provided in the appendix.*

Figure 4. Demographics of Imperial County

Imperial County

Population: **178,713**   Forecasted population growth (2030): **3%** 📈

Age

38% (67,358)   **61%** (111,355)

0-24 years | **25+ years**

Race/Ethnicity

85.2%
9.4%
0.9%
0.9%
1.2%
0.9%
1.2%
2.1%

- ■ Hispanic or Latino
- ■ White
- ■ American Indian and Alaska Native alone
- ■ Two or more races
- ■ Other
- ■ Asian
- ■ Black or African American

Median household income (2017-2021)
$49,078
(CA $84,907)

Persons in poverty
17.3%
(CA 12.3%)

Unemployment rate (2022)
14.7%
(CA 4.2%)

Veterans (2017-2021)
5,605

Education (highest level attained)

18-24 years old
- High school (includes equivalency) **34.7%**
- Some college or associate degree **53.4%**
- Bachelor's degree or higher **1.2%**

25+ years old
- High school (includes equivalency) **26.0%**
- Some college or associate degree **26.2%**
- Bachelor's degree or higher **13.5%**

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100% because of rounding. Complete data for Figures 3 and 4 are provided in the *appendix.*

Regional Labor Market Information and Landscape

San Diego and Imperial Counties each have their own thriving economies—from the life sciences and military and defense industries in San Diego to the long-established agribusiness and mineral extraction industries in Imperial County that have paved the way for the new lithium industry. Each county's industry needs and individuals and families making up the local workforce have unique characteristics.

The San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence (COE) provides labor market information (LMI) that drives community college CE program development. The COE equips the region with comprehensive analyses of the middle-skills labor market while also leading the Data & Innovation workgroup, the latter of which is made up of institutional researchers who identify and address common research needs across the region. Some key research is detailed in this section, and the full list of the region's LMI resources can be found at the SDI RC's website.

Increased Labor Market Demands

Between 2022 and 2032, the number of jobs in San Diego and Imperial Counties is expected to increase by 14 percent and 18 percent respectively, as shown in the data reported from the COE (see Table 3).

Table 3. Number of Jobs and Projected Percentage Change in San Diego County, Imperial County, and California, 2022–2032

Region	Jobs, 2022	Jobs, 2032	Job change, 2022–2032	Projected percentage change
San Diego County	1,767,478	2,007,861	240,383	14%
Imperial County	68,865	81,301	12,436	18%
California	20,352,832	23,201,331	2,848,499	14%

Source. San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence, 2023.

Selection of Regional Priority Industry Sectors

To adequately meet the demands of the local labor market across the two counties, the SDI RC has selected four priority industry sectors among the 11 industry sectors in order to guide the region's community colleges in strategic planning and program development. These four sectors are Advanced Manufacturing, Advanced Transportation & Logistics, Health, and Information Communication Technologies & Digital Media.

- **Advanced Manufacturing**
- **Advanced Transportation & Logistics**
- Agriculture, Water & Environmental Technologies
- Business & Entrepreneurship
- Education & Human Development
- Energy, Construction & Utilities
- **Health**
- **Information Communication Technologies (ICT) & Digital Media**
- Life Sciences & Biotechnology
- Public Safety & Government
- Retail, Hospitality & Tourism

The SDI RC selected these four sectors based on industry demand, potential living wage, and the programs offered at the San Diego and Imperial community colleges. Informing the selection were the analyses detailed in the COE's two 2022 reports, _Sector Analysis: San Diego County_ and _Sector Analysis: Imperial County_, which examined the 11 industry sectors across 15 metrics, including number of jobs, percentage of change in job availability over time, average entry-level earnings by job, and average median earnings by job. The analyses also include qualitative data from town hall meetings and inclusive feedback strategies solicited from partners across the region.

Jobs and Earning Potential by Priority Sectors

With the LMI that the COE prepares, the community colleges can better understand the region's job demand and wage information in order to support individuals and families in earning a living wage. Job and wage information by priority sector in San Diego County is shown in Table 4 and in Imperial County in Table 5. Median hourly earnings for all 11 sectors in the two counties can be found in the _Career Education Guide 2023–2024_ developed for the San Diego and Imperial community colleges.

Table 4. Number of Jobs, Job Change Percentage, and Earnings by Priority Sector in San Diego County, 2022

Indicator *Analysis by SOC CODES*	Advanced Manufacturing	Health	Advanced Transportation & Logistics	ICT & Digital Media
Number of jobs by sector in San Diego, 2022	127,528	245,883	135,449	91,404
Percentage job change by sector in San Diego, 2012–2022	11%	24%	23%	21%
Average entry-level hourly earnings by sector in San Diego, 2022	$21.07	$39.03	$22.89	$28.31
Average median hourly earnings by sector in San Diego, 2022	$25.46	$51.41	$27.92	$37.83

Source. Lightcast 2023.02; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

Table 5. Number of Jobs, Job Change Percentage, and Earnings by Priority Sector in Imperial County, 2022

Indicator *Analysis by SOC CODES*	Advanced Manufacturing	Health	Advanced Transportation & Logistics	ICT & Digital Media
Number of jobs by sector in Imperial, 2022	2,933	12,965	5,876	941
Percentage job change by sector in Imperial, 2012–2022	20%	22%	19%	8%
Average entry-level hourly earnings by sector in Imperial, 2022	$10.57	$22.76	$18.24	$18.93
Average median hourly earnings by sector in Imperial, 2022	$12.43	$28.14	$23.48	$23.85

Source. Lightcast 2023.02; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

Equity Gaps in Priority Sectors

With the SDI RC's commitment to equity, workgroups such as Employer Engagement, Marketing, and Data & Innovation are engaged in making connections between LMI and equity gaps in regional priority sector jobs and community college enrollment. To better understand the equity gaps in the priority sectors, the COE released two 2023 reports, _Equity Gaps in Priority Jobs and Programs: San Diego County_ and _Equity Gaps in Priority Jobs and Programs: Imperial County_, which document labor market demand and postsecondary program data for each county. These reports pinpoint priority jobs (jobs with earnings above the living wage and in high demand) and priority programs (programs that train for priority jobs). The reports identify equity gaps by race/ethnicity, age, and gender for each job and program. For the jobs, the COE compared the demographics of each job with the workforce overall. For the programs, the COE compared the demographics of each program with the overall community college student population.

To further the end goal of growing and supporting priority programs and equitable representation in priority jobs, the findings of these reports can inform diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging strategies such as targeted recruitment and retention efforts for priority programs. These goals and strategies are also reflected in the sections on SDI RC regional priorities and projects in this plan.

# Career Education Student Demographics

The regional demographic data and LMI in the previous sections illustrate the labor market landscape of San Diego and Imperial Counties and the need to educate and employ a growing population by 2030. The data also show a need to increase the economic mobility of the region's residents who are not earning a family-sustaining wage and identify industry sectors in which job growth is anticipated.

CE programs serve an important and key role in preparing students for career success, and the aforementioned LMI helps the colleges align CE programs to the region's labor market needs. Demographic data of the region's CE students provides another lens for understanding who CE students are at San Diego and Imperial community colleges, how many enroll in CE programs, and what supports CE students, particularly CE students from DI populations, need to succeed.

CE Enrollment

In 2020–2021, the 10 San Diego and Imperial community colleges served a total of 167,742 students, including 85,374 CE students (Figure 5). In San Diego and Imperial Counties, CE students comprise about one half of the students enrolled at the community colleges.

Figure 5. One Half of San Diego and Imperial Community College Students Are Enrolled in a CE Course, 2020–2021
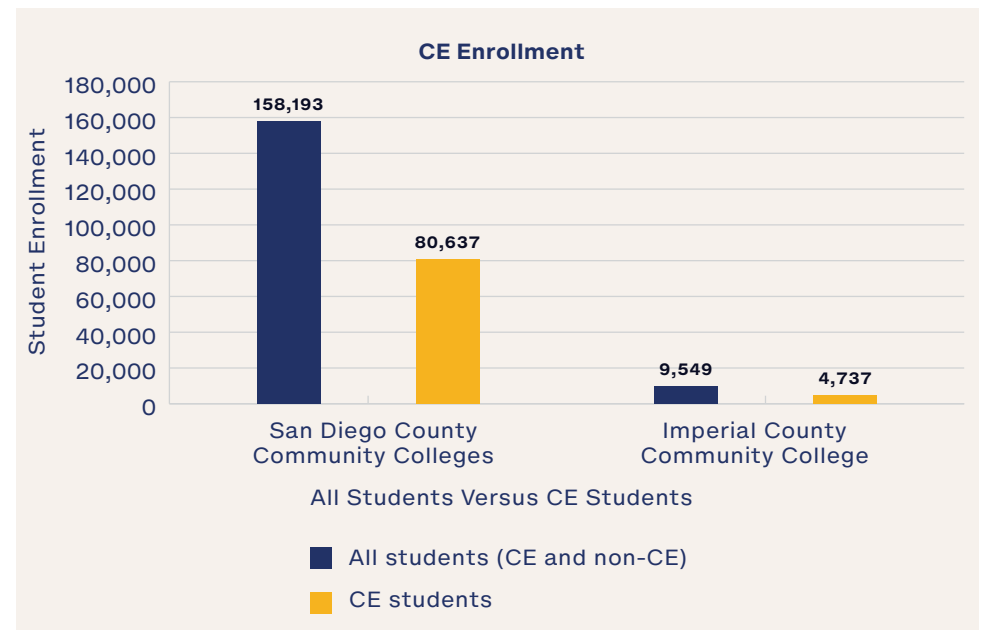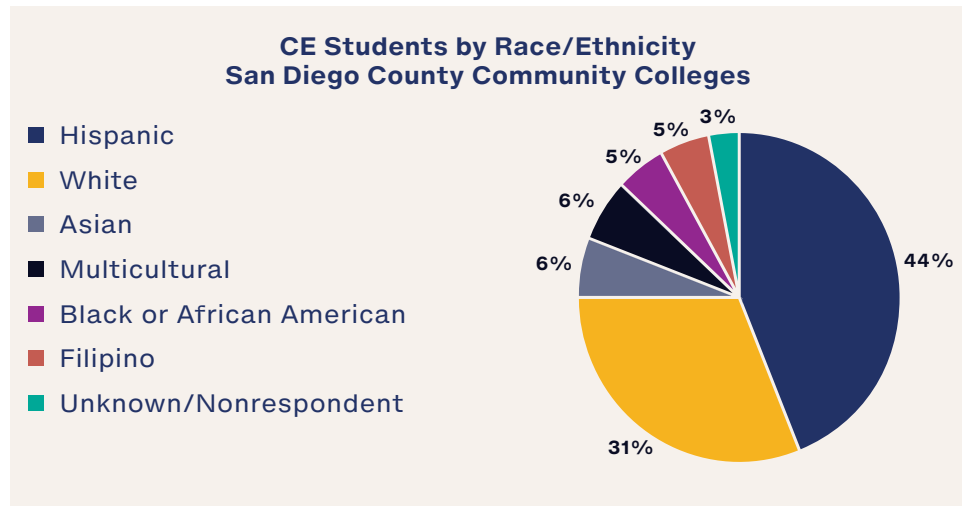

Note. Complete data for Figure 5 are provided in the appendix.

Source. LaunchBoard, 2020–2021.
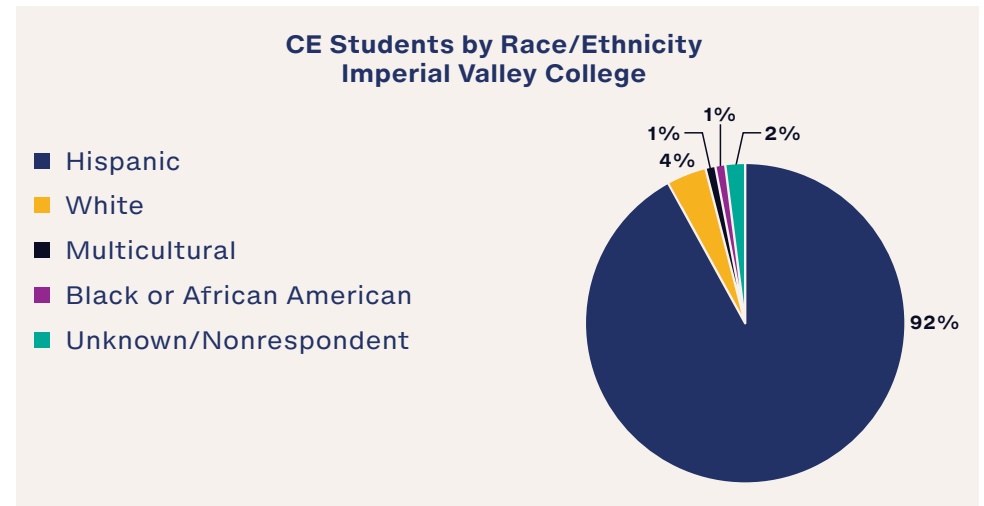
CE Students by Race/Ethnicity

With a CE student population highly diverse in terms of race/ethnicity, socioeconomics, and age, SDI community colleges are trying to intentionally design programs and supports to meet the range of student needs (see Figures 6 and 7).

Figure 6. Two Thirds of CE Students Identify As Students of Color at San Diego County Community Colleges

**CE Students by Race/Ethnicity
San Diego County Community Colleges**

- Hispanic
- White
- Asian
- Multicultural
- Black or African American
- Filipino
- Unknown/Nonrespondent

44%
31%
6%
6%
5%
5%
3%

Note. Complete data for Figure 6 are provided in the appendix.
Source. LaunchBoard, 2020–2021.

Figure 7. Ninety-Two Percent of CE Students Identify As Hispanic at Imperial Valley College

**CE Students by Race/Ethnicity
Imperial Valley College**

- Hispanic
- White
- Multicultural
- Black or African American
- Unknown/Nonrespondent

92%
4%
1%
1%
2%

Note. Complete data for Figure 7 are provided in the appendix.
Source. LaunchBoard, 2020–2021.

CE Students by Economically Disadvantaged Designation

The Perkins Act V ensures that all secondary and postsecondary students, but especially historically underrepresented students, are provided high-quality CTE programs. In the region's community colleges, more than three quarters of CE students are adults with a low income, individuals who are unsheltered, and individuals who have aged out of foster care (see Figures 8 and 9).

Figure 8. Nearly 75 Percent of CE Students Are Designated Economically Disadvantaged at San Diego County Community Colleges

CE Students by Economic Designation
San Diego Community Colleges

Not economically disadvantaged: 21,772
Economically disadvantaged: 58,865
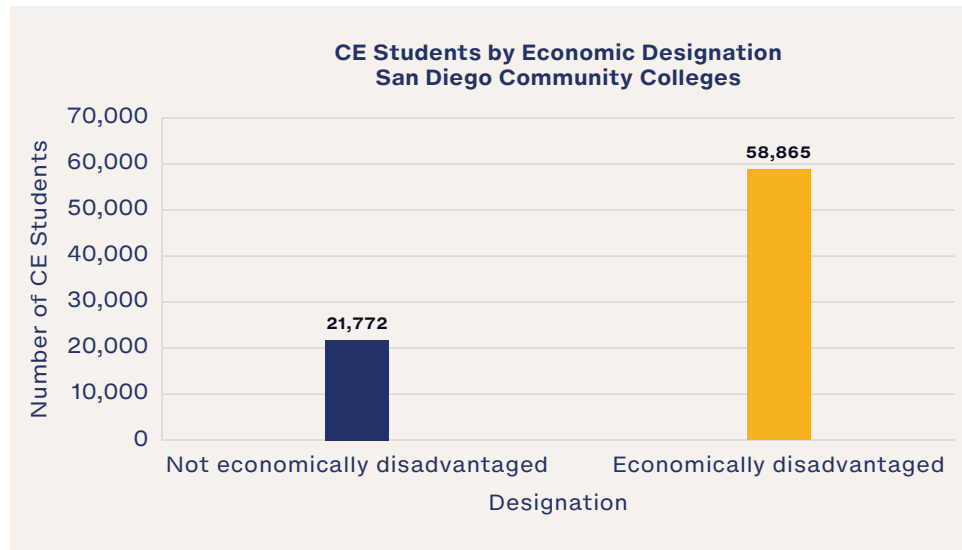
Note. Complete data for Figure 8 are provided in the appendix.
Source. LaunchBoard 2020–2021.

Figure 9. More Than Ninety Percent of CE Students Are Designated Economically Disadvantaged at Imperial Valley College

CE Students by Economic Designation
Imperial Valley College

Not economically disadvantaged: 426
Economically disadvantaged: 4,311
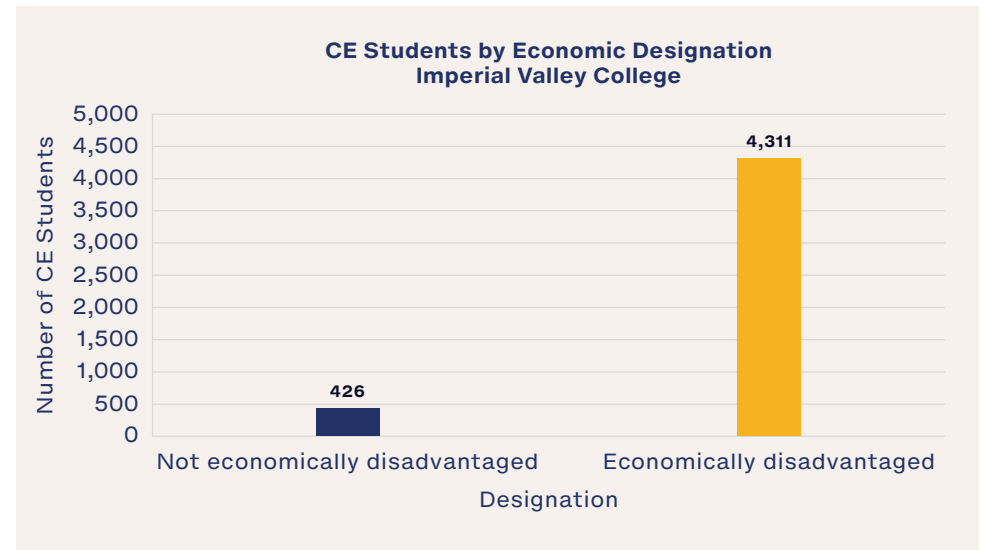
Note. Complete data for Figure 9 are provided in the appendix.
Source. LaunchBoard 2020–2021.

CE Students by Age Group

SDI community college students who are enrolled in CE programs span a wide range of age groups. About one half of San Diego CE students and two thirds of Imperial CE students comprise two age groups: *19 years or younger and 20 to 24 years*. The remaining students are older adults, aged 25 and older. (see Figures 10 and 11). Some of these "nontraditional"
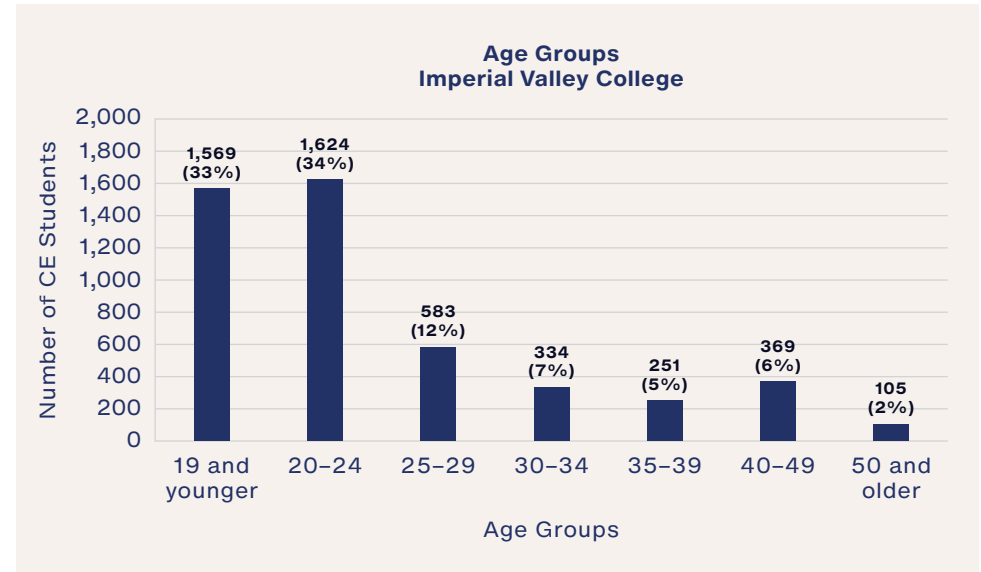
Figure 10. One Half of CE Students Are 24 Years Old or Younger in San Diego County Community Colleges
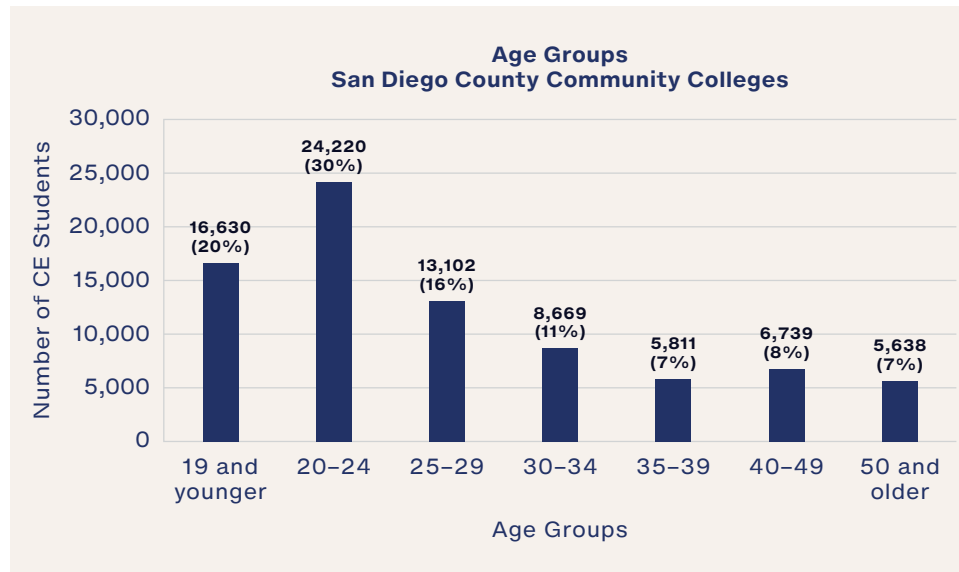
Note. Complete data for Figure 10 are provided in the appendix. Percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding.

Source. LaunchBoard, 2020–2021.

Figure 11. Two Thirds of CE Students Are 24 Years Old or Younger at Imperial Valley College

Note. Complete data for Figure 11 are provided in the appendix. Percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding.

Source. LaunchBoard, 2020–2021.

Reasons High School Students Choose Community College

In 2023, the SDI RC wanted to understand the perspectives of the region's high school students concerning their interests and reasons for choosing community college as their option after high school. Between January and March 2023, more than 10,000 high school students from the region participated in the *Options After High School* survey. Among 1,822 high school seniors (class of 2023) who indicated that community college was their choice for postsecondary education, 59.2 percent identified as Hispanic or Latine[1] and 37 percent identified as White. Students indicated the following reasons for choosing community college for their postsecondary education:

- Saving money was their primary reason for choosing community college (reported by 64.9 percent of the students).

- Community college programs will help them prepare for a career (reported by one third of the students).

- Community colleges have connections to local employers for internships and jobs (reported by one third of the students).

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1 Latine is an inclusive term now commonly used by Spanish speakers.

Strong Workforce Program Metrics

Today, the SDI RC has established itself as an integral entity in the collective efforts of systems change toward increasing opportunities for student success. The results of these efforts are reflected in the commitment to improvement and innovation, collaborative work, and measurable progress at the region's 10 community colleges. Since 2015–2016, the year prior to the launch of SWP, **SDI community colleges have moved the needle in educating and preparing more CE students who are completing CE credits, attaining degrees and certificates, and earning higher wages after exiting**.

The progress of SWP at the SDI community colleges is measured by the SWP Metrics, which are aligned to the CCCCO's Student Success Metrics and categorized by momentum, success, employment, and earnings, as shown in Figures 11 through 18. In the case of the metric "employment in a related field of study," the rate fell slightly; however, the SDI community colleges are actively focused on increasing career opportunities. Separate from the Student Success Metrics, the colleges examine disaggregated data to understand and improve the outcomes of DI students. All data presented are from LaunchBoard and report on the academic years between 2015–2016 (the last year prior to SWP) and 2021–2022 (the most recent year for which there is data) unless noted.

Momentum

Career Education Course Completion

The rate of SDI CE students who completed a noncredit CE or workforce preparation course or had a minimum of 48 contact hours in a single year **increased** from 57 percent to 84 percent between 2015–2016 and 2021–2022 (Figure 12).

### Figure 12. CE Course Completion Rates Grew by Nearly 50 Percent Over a Seven-Year Period

CE Students Who Completed a Noncredit CE or Workforce Preparation Course
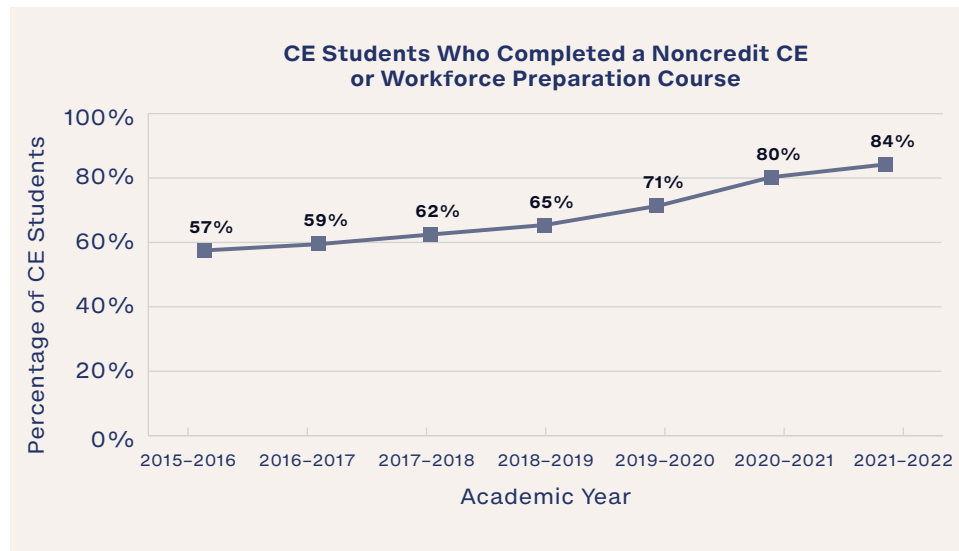
Note. Complete data for Figure 12 are provided in the appendix.

Source. LaunchBoard, 2015–2016 through 2021–2022.

9+ Career Education Units

SDI colleges saw an **increase** in CE students successfully completing nine or more CE credits in a single year, rising from 16 percent to 19 percent between 2015–2016 and 2021–2022 (Figure 13).

Figure 13. Proportion of Students Completing 9+ CE Credits Rose by About 19 Percent Over a Seven-Year Period

CE Students Who Earned 9 or More CE Units in a Single Year
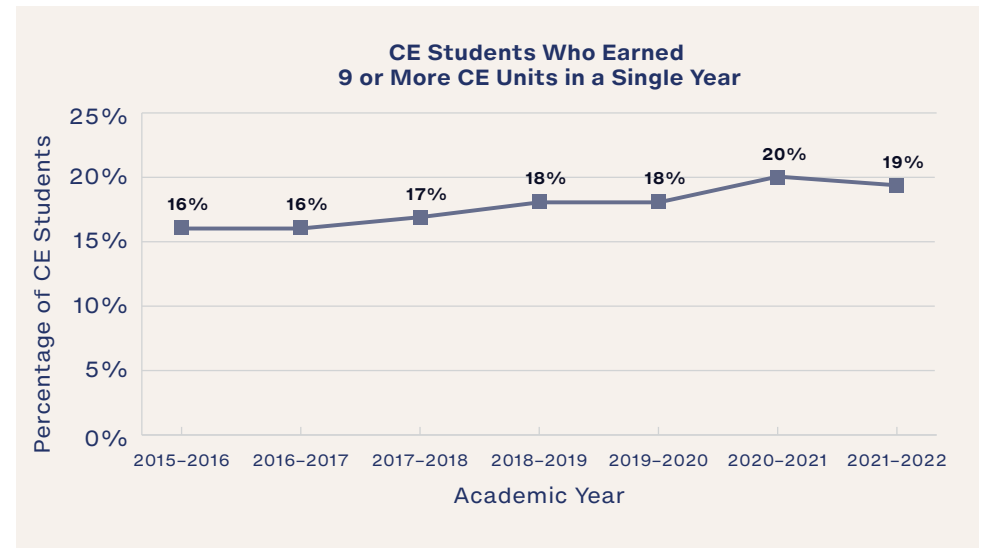
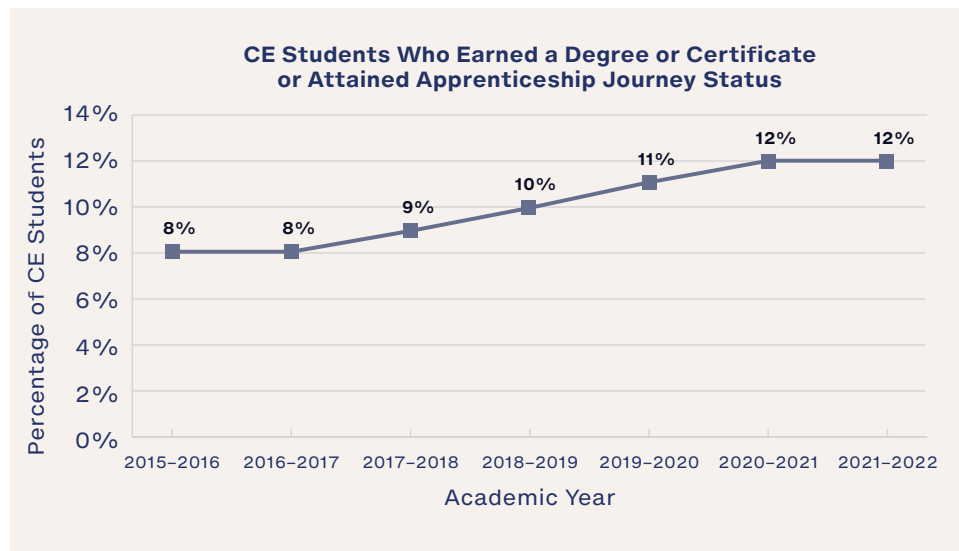*Note. Complete data for Figure 13 are provided in the appendix.*

Source. LaunchBoard, 2015–2016 through 2021–2022.

Success

Degree Completion

The rate of SDI CE students who earned a noncredit certificate, a CCCCO-approved certificate, an associate degree, and/or a CCC baccalaureate degree or attained apprenticeship journey status steadily **increased** from 8 percent to 12 percent between 2015–2016 and 2021–2022 (Figure 14).

Figure 14. Percentage of CE Students Who Earned Degrees, Certificates, or Journeyman Status Rose by Half Over a Seven-Year Period
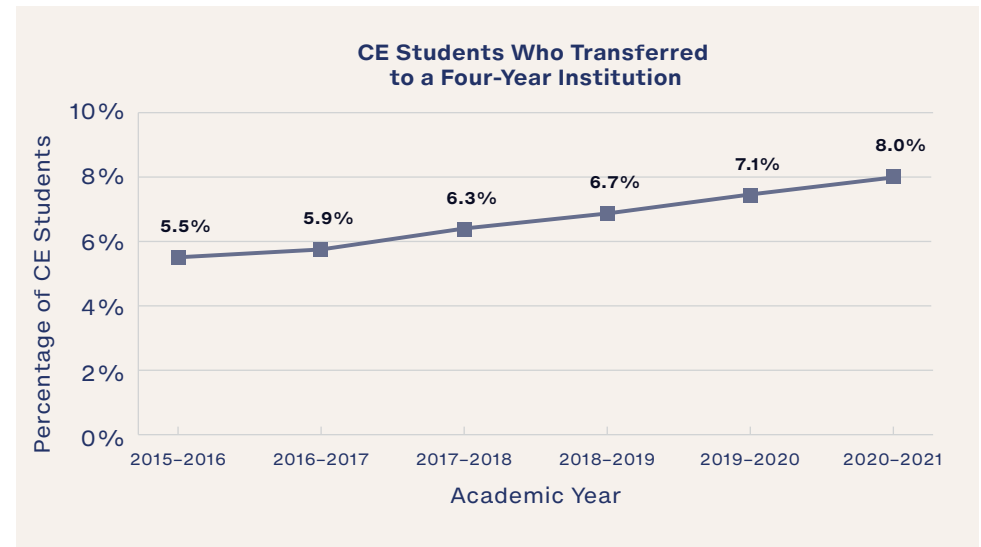
CE Students Who Earned a Degree or Certificate or Attained Apprenticeship Journey Status

Academic Year	Percentage of CE Students
2015–2016	8%
2016–2017	8%
2017–2018	9%
2018–2019	10%
2019–2020	11%
2020–2021	12%
2021–2022	12%

Note. Complete data for Figure 14 are provided in the appendix.

Source. LaunchBoard, 2015–2016 through 2021–2022.

Transfer to a Four-Year Institution

The rate of SDI CE students who transferred to a four-year institution **rose** from 5.5 percent to 8 percent between 2015–2016 and 2020–2021, despite a 14 percent decline in CE student enrollment during the same years (in 2015–2016, 98,867 students enrolled in a CE course, and in 2020–2021, 85,819 students enrolled) (Figure 15).

Figure 15. Rate of CE Students Who Transferred to a Four-Year Institution Rose by More Than 30 Percent in a Six-Year Period

CE Students Who Transferred to a Four-Year Institution

Academic Year	Percentage of CE Students
2015–2016	5.5%
2016–2017	5.9%
2017–2018	6.3%
2018–2019	6.7%
2019–2020	7.1%
2020–2021	8.0%

Note. Complete data for Figure 15 are provided in the appendix.
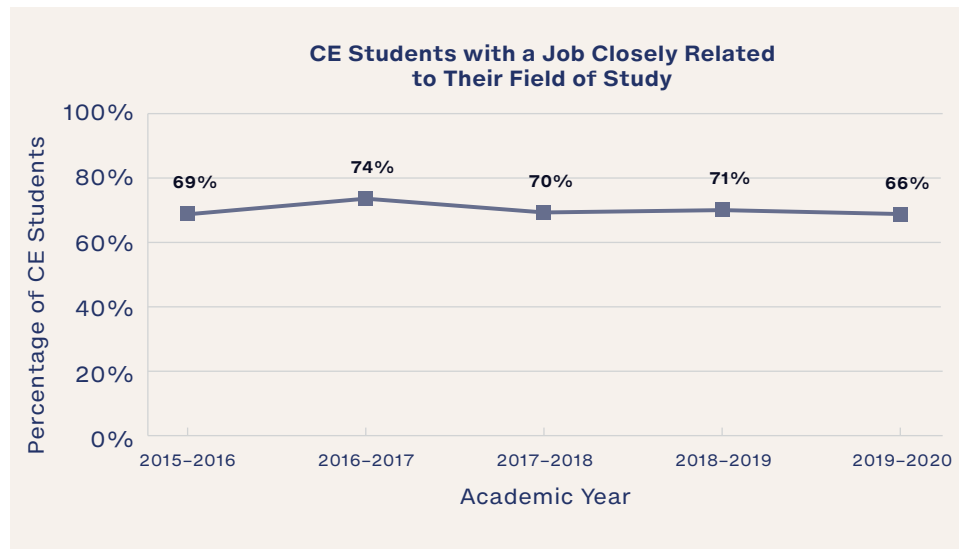
Source. LaunchBoard, 2015–2016 through 2020–2021.

Employment

Employment in Related Field of Study

Despite **slight declines** in job placement rates between 2015–2016 and 2019–2020, about three out of five SDI CE pathway students transitioned to jobs related to their fields of study upon program completion in 2019–2020 (Figure 16).

**Figure 16. Rate of CE Students Working in Jobs Related to Their Field of Study Fell Slightly in a Five-Year Period**

Note. Complete data for Figure 16 are provided in the appendix.
Source. LaunchBoard, 2015–2016 through 2019–2020.

Earnings

Median Annual Earnings

The median annual earnings **rose** from $35,599 to $39,500 between 2015–2016 and 2020–2021 for SDI CE students who exited the community college system and who did not transfer to any postsecondary institution during that period of time (Figure 17).

Figure 17. Median Annual Earnings of Exiting CE Students Rose About 11 Percent in a Six-Year Period
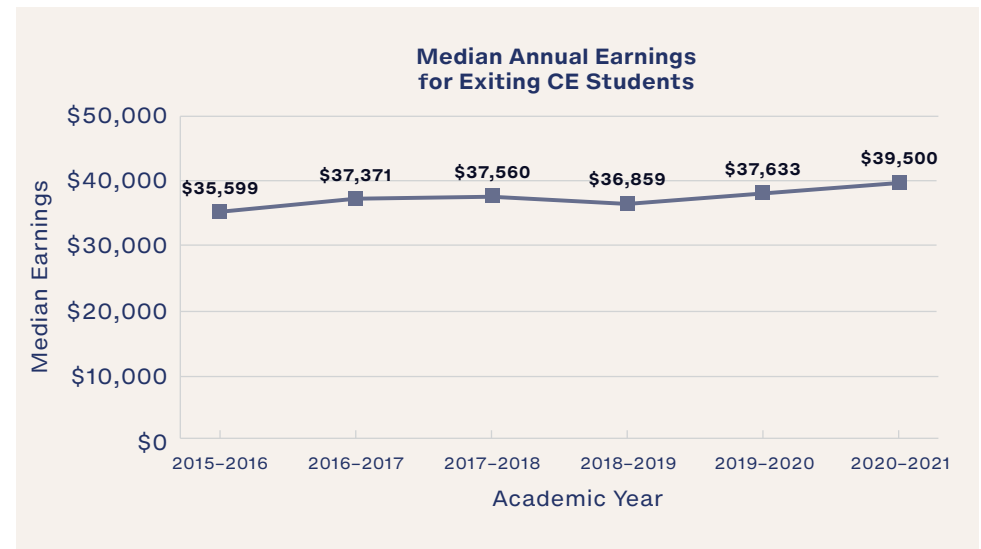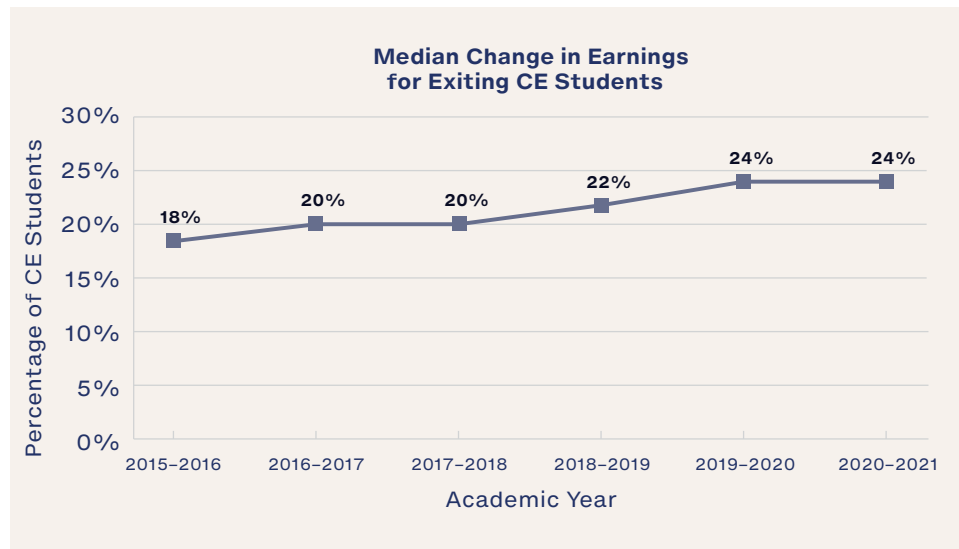

Note. Complete data for Figure 17 are provided in the appendix.
Source. LaunchBoard, 2015–2016 through 2020–2021.

Median Change in Earnings

The median change in earnings prior to community college enrollment and after exiting **rose** by one third, from 18 percent to 24 percent, between 2015–2016 and 2020–2021 for SDI CE students who exited college and did not transfer to any postsecondary institution (Figure 18).

**Figure 18. Median Change in Earnings for Exiting CE Students Trended Upward in a Six-Year Period**

Note. Complete data for Figure 18 are provided in the appendix.
Source. LaunchBoard, 2015–2016 through 2020–2021.

Attainment of the Living Wage

Among SDI CE students who exited college and did not transfer to any postsecondary institution, a little over half (52 percent) obtained living-wage jobs in 2020–2021, **up** from 47 percent in 2015–2016 (Figure 19).

Figure 19. Rate of CE Students Who Attained the Living Wage Following Exit Rose 5 Percent Over a Six-Year Period
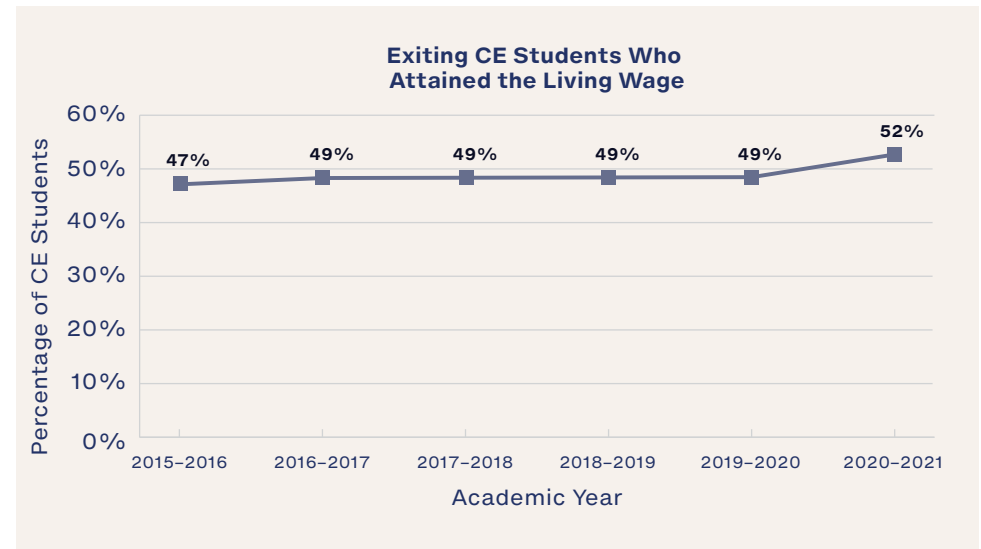
Note. Complete data for Figure 19 are provided in the appendix.
Source. LaunchBoard, 2015–2016 through 2020–2021.

Regional Consortium Goals and SWP Objectives

SDI REGIONAL CONSORTIUM

GOALS

Build college capacity to create equitable systemic change which closes equity gaps

Unify the workforce ecosystem

Advocate for changes to policy, processes, and practices

SDI Regional Consortium SWP Objectives

To achieve its three overarching goals, the SDI RC is committed to accomplishing the following five SWP objectives, which are measurable and action oriented.

1. Provide guidance, support, and funding to the colleges to address the regional priorities.

2. Provide guidance, support, and funding to the colleges to implement recommendations from the *Black Student Equity* report.

3. Provide guidance, support, and funding to the colleges to implement recommendations from the K–14 Career Pathways workgroup for the development of high-quality K–14 career pathways.

4. Engage with the San Diego Workforce Partnership and the San Diego and Imperial EDCs to strengthen collaboration among all organizations that can lead to increased career and employment opportunities for students.

5. Develop a sustainable regional structure dedicated to providing pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities for students through collaborative community college and industry partnerships.

Overview of Regional Priorities

Regional Priorities

With consideration to the region's LMI, the demographics of the region's population, the needs of SDI students, and the community colleges' SWP progress, the SDI RC has identified five **regional priorities** to guide the work in support of the colleges toward achieving the region's SWP objectives.

K–12 partners who are developing K–12 SWP plans and applying for regional K–12 SWP funds can reference these regional priorities and utilize a crosswalk to in-demand sectors aligned to K–12 career pathways as resources to inform their plans.

1 To **better prepare the region's prospective students** for college through outreach, alignment, and acceleration

2 To **better onboard and support students** in their education and prepare them for the workforce and launch of their careers

3 To **involve employers** in students' preparation for the workforce and provide opportunities through aligned curricula, career exploration, WBL experiences, and job placement toward increasing students' socioeconomic mobility

4 To **ensure that colleges have data-based resources** to make informed programmatic decisions that equitably benefit students and create opportunities for them while supporting regional continuous improvement

5 To **increase awareness** throughout the region of the San Diego and Imperial community colleges and Career Education programs

Workgroups and Committees

K–14 Career Pathways

Career Navigation

Retention, Success & Support

Employer Engagement

Marketing

Data & Innovation

Six distinct workgroups, plus related committees and ad hoc committees as needed, lead the efforts to enact the regional priorities through their own sets of goals and activities. (See the Regional Consortium: Governance section earlier in this plan for information about the committees.) Aligned to the regional goals, the focus and work of the workgroups and committees reflect the region's commitment to equity and its goal of ensuring that every student is guided toward career and education opportunities for increased socioeconomic mobility.

Regional Priority 1

Regional Priority

To better prepare the region's prospective students for college through outreach, alignment, and acceleration

Workgroup

The **K–14 Career Pathways workgroup** is the overarching workgroup focused on enacting regional priority one. The workgroup comprises several entities, each of which is focused on a set of key activities related to secondary and postsecondary engagement that involves outreach, alignment, and acceleration. These entities include, but are not exclusive to, the Adult Education/Noncredit (AE/NC) committee, the Credit for Prior Learning committee, and the Rising Scholars committee. Collectively, their activities and projects—all aligned to regional priority one—contribute to the efforts and accomplishments of this multifaceted workgroup.

Accomplishments

Following are key accomplishments of the K–14 Career Pathways workgroup contributing to the region's SWP goals:

Administered *Options After High School Survey* twice to all high school CTE students in the region.

Response rate increased by almost 70 percent between the first and second administration. Results have yielded recommendations for the region, colleges, and K–12 partners and a district-level dashboard of results.

Showcased promising practices during workgroup meetings.

In an organized series of presentations, members presented challenges and solutions regarding career pathways (e.g., career pathway course guides, apprenticeships, adult dual enrollment [DE]).

Supported efforts of the community colleges' outreach CoP, focused on middle and high schools.

College outreach CoP piloted a series of events ("Map Your Path") that showcased CE programs to engage students from high schools with low college-going rates (by pathway, not by feeder school).

Launched and promoted regional career mapping K-14 Program Finder.

Project includes a website that graphically displays how the region's high schools, adult schools, and college pathways connect and that provides tools and resources that practitioners, students, and parents can use to navigate the site.

Compiled baseline data to provide regional view of early college credit access and success.

Collected aggregated course-level DE and articulation credit by exam (CBE) data for students enrolled in high school DE or CBE in 2021–2022. Collected the number of college and high school courses with an articulation agreement.

Launched and continued support of the regional dual enrollment CoP.

Supported K–14 DE practitioners by hiring DE consultant; convening CoP for K–14 DE practitioners; conducting needs assessment; providing resources on a regional webpage; and assisting via office hours and one-on-one consulting with adult education, colleges, and K–12 LEAs as requested. Provided grant support for K–12 LEAs and made possible DE SWP funding to colleges with regional RFA.

Long- and Short-Term Goals for K–14 Career Pathways

Four-Year Goals

Goal 1: Strong, collaborative, and integrated working relationships across K–14 CE pathways focused on regional SWP goals and priority sectors.

Goal 2: Equity in regional CE pathway students' success with inclusive K–14 transition supports.

Goal 3: Adaptable career pathways that meet regional priority workforce demands.

Goal 4: Broad awareness and understanding of regional career pathways from middle school and high school, adult education, and community college.

Goal 5: Accessible high-quality CE pathways to high-wage, high-demand occupations that include career exploration, work-based learning, and pathway accelerators for each student.

One-Year Goals

Goal 1: Outreach & Alignment. Ensure equitable access and smooth transitions; support the collaborative growth of high-quality existing and new CE pathways by increasing awareness and identifying opportunities for strengthened alignment with industry and across educational segments (K–12, adult education, community college).

Goal 2: Alignment. Develop, implement, regularly update, and promote a career mapping K–14 Program Finder that helps facilitate program alignment and encourage collaboration among partners to improve transitions and postsecondary pathway completion.

Goal 3: Acceleration. Accelerate student completions by improving, aligning, and expanding CE early college credit opportunities for DI students.

One-Year Projects and Strategies

The K–14 Career Pathways workgroup plans to engage in activities toward achieving its one-year goals. The majority of the work will take place through CoPs and through the new K–14 Equitable Career Pathways Project.

1. Continue to support Early College Credit practitioners through regional CoPs.

2. Complete a second round of the *Options After High School Survey* and provide updated recommendations for engagement for community colleges, community college districts, and the region.

3. Finalize regional endorsement of the *Recommendations for Community Colleges to Support Development of High-Quality K–14 Career Pathways* document.

4. Launch new Program Finder tool; support promotion and use with K–14 audience.

5. Pilot the K–14 Equitable Career Pathways Project.

Additional Workgroup Projects

Adult Education/Noncredit

Focus

Increase awareness of adult education and noncredit programs at institutions and for students, ensure curriculum and instruction incorporate skills that align with industry needs, ensure students have access to training programs and career pathways with multiple entry and exit points, and examine equitable learning across student populations.

Accomplishments

- Held SDI RC–sponsored workshops for the region's adult education providers to identify needs and work toward alignment among systems.

- Provided facilitated training sessions with adult education consortia representatives to identify, align, and bundle courses.

- Developed a data repository to store CTE programs in order to help set the stage for future horizontal and vertical alignment, coordination, and sharing of best practices.

Offerings were classified by type and capacity to lead into jobs, clustered into coherent sequences or bundles (occupational training programs [OTPs]), and coded to Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system. Created a user guide.

- Formed a data CoP to ensure the repository was kept current.

- Created an adult education college credit flier to illustrate acceleration options for students.

- Began horizontal alignment work.

- Uploaded adult education data to the regional K–14 Program Finder tool.

Goals

- Continue horizontal alignment until all OTPs are complete.

- Begin vertical alignment between AE/NC and credit community college courses and programs.

- Promote sharing of best practices in alignment and transition.

Credit for Prior Learning

Focus

Increase regional awareness and implementation of credit for prior learning (CPL), by which college credit is awarded for validated college-level skills and knowledge gained outside of a college classroom.

Accomplishments

- Initiated a regional approach to CPL across 10 colleges within the region by providing training, exposure, and implementation support.

- Provided funding for a faculty CPL lead to participate in PD and then support the development of a CPL process on their own campus.

- Formed a regional CPL CoP from this group.

- Attended the 2021 Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) Conference held in San Diego. Twenty-one attendees from the SDI region attended.

- Trained CPL leads and campus colleagues on topics such as student services processes in evaluations and counseling for CPL.

- Developed a catalog of marketing videos available on the regional website CareerEd.org.

- Developed a course housed in the CCCCO's Vision Resource Center to support system professionals in the planning and implementation of a local CPL program.

- Assisted colleges in identifying the best way to respond to a regional RFA, providing continued support based on their starting point in FY 2023–2024.

Goals

The CPL technical assistance provider/coach will continue to support the regional efforts by holding one-on-one meetings with all college CPL leads to do the following:

- Provide guidance in implementing tasks agreed upon in the CPL RFA.

- Assist with progress reporting as needed for the RFA.

- Offer hands-on CPL training/PD workshops for faculty, staff, and administrators.

- Provide written and verbal update on status of work at each college awarded a CPL RFA.

Rising Scholars

Focus

- Expand the number of justice-involved students participating and succeeding in the region's community colleges.

Accomplishments

- Initiated meetings within the region; guest speakers addressed topics of interest.

- Formed subcommittee to design a series of student workshops.

- Promoted the Onward! Online Workshop Series for Formerly Incarcerated Students and offered it to the statewide network.

Goals

- Continue the student-centered focus, building a community of connections and support.

- Design a spring 2024 student workshop around the needs of the Rising Scholars population.

- Continue sharing resources and best practices.

Regional Priority 2

Regional Priority

To better onboard and support students in their education and prepare them for the workforce and launch of their careers

Workgroup

Career Navigation

(formerly Pathway Navigation and Work-Based Learning/Job Placement)

Evolution of Career Navigation Workgroup

The **Career Navigation workgroup** launched in fall 2023, following the community colleges' response to a Career Navigation RFA earlier in the year. This workgroup is the combination of two key workgroups (Pathway Navigation and Work-Based Learning/Job Placement) that have grown more connected in recent years.

- The **Pathway Navigation workgroup** focused on adopting and embedding onboarding strategies for every student—namely, intake processes, outreach, pre-enrollment engagement, orientation, and career exploration and planning processes—all aligned with the community colleges' Guided Pathways and Student Equity and Achievement Program efforts. The regional colleges achieved significant gains, but also uncovered the need to support career services and better expose students to and prepare them for careers.

- The **Work-Based Learning workgroup** focused on improving and increasing WBL and job placement opportunities across the continuum of experiences that would lead students to better job opportunities and employment outcomes. This included embedding WBL coordinators and job placement case managers on campuses in the region and the development of an employer engagement model to connect the region's employers to the workgroup.

Both the Pathway Navigation and the WBL workgroups agreed on the interconnectedness of their respective projects around supporting students, especially the region's DI students. The new Career Navigation workgroup focuses on providing the support that students need to learn about careers and pathways and to gain a competitive edge for entering the workforce. Career services on campuses are critical in offering students the opportunities to explore career options; understand and experience workplace expectations; hone soft skills; and find employment opportunities via career assessments, WBL, or job-referral programs. Thus, based on the colleges' need for career services support and on research pointing to career development as integral to student success, the SDI RC is committed to supporting the colleges through the efforts of the Career Navigation workgroup.

Accomplishments

Following are samples of key accomplishments of the Pathway Navigation and WBL workgroups contributing to the region's SWP goals:

PATHWAY NAVIGATION: Developed Pathway Navigation CoP.

Established ongoing CoP consisting of key practitioners and leaders on campuses to grapple with critical equity issues and share promising practices. Workgroup included student voice through student panels to better understand onboarding issues that students face, especially those from DI populations. After six years, the group has established trust and a charge for equity-focused practices, building capacity across the region.

PATHWAY NAVIGATION: Aligned Pathway Navigation and Guided Pathways.

With the common goal of supporting students as they enter the path, the group worked to break down the silos in order to align and integrate the college's Guided Pathways and Pathway Navigation efforts.

PATHWAY NAVIGATION: Established key practices for using data to address equity in onboarding practices.

With a shared charge of supporting DI students, especially Black students, the workgroup prioritized the need to identify data sources, equity gaps, and needs around creating data-driven onboarding practices. Colleges documented and shared their onboarding practices.

WBL: Embedded job placement case managers and WBL coordinators at each college.

Identified need to connect students with WBL experiences and direct student career placement using a case management approach. These annually funded positions exist across the region through SWP.

WBL: Developed SG21 Framework.

The framework facilitates use of the SG21 data tool to ensure students receive equitable access to WBL opportunities. The workgroup also established a shared understanding of all types of WBL activities and the critical connection between WBL and equity through a glossary of shared definitions that is foundational to the framework and approved by the college presidents.

WBL: Developed and implemented faculty PD course about the importance of WBL.

A 20-hour Canvas course on WBL covers topics regarding equity, access, and the WBL continuum. Regionally, over 200 faculty have participated, and other regions are duplicating the effort.

Long- and Short-Term Goals for Career Navigation

Four-Year Goals
Goal 1: A career services experience that gives every student, especially populations of DI students, myriad opportunities for career awareness and career exploration throughout their student journey.
Goal 2: Increased participation of students in WBL.
Goal 3: Embedded career navigation processes into all community college coursework.
Goal 4: Successful implementation of colleges' unique Career Services strategic plans over three years with support and technical assistance from the Regional Consortium.

One-Year Goals
Goal 1: Merge the Pathway Navigation and WBL workgroup membership into the new Career Navigation workgroup.
Goal 2: Support colleges in reviewing current practices and creating effective and impactful Career Services strategic plans, including the use of the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) standards evaluation tool.
Goal 3: Continue to provide support for existing and ongoing Pathway Navigation and WBL projects from each of the former workgroups.

One-Year Projects and Strategies

The Career Navigation workgroup plans to engage in projects and strategies toward achieving its one-year goals.

1. Integrate the existing and ongoing projects of the Pathway Navigation and WBL workgroups into the common Career Navigation workgroup goals.

2. Build capacity to help the workgroup understand the connections among career development, WBL, and equity impacts on lifelong learning and social mobility.

3. Create a timeline for using NACE standards to identify strengths and gaps in a college's career services offered, identifying areas of focus for the strategic planning process.

4. Support colleges by providing PD, technical assistance, and CoPs as they develop their career services strategic plan.

5. Continue offering the WBL PD Course for faculty.

6. Showcase career planning efforts (e.g., *Career Everywhere* report).

7. Explore how to collect regional data for SG21.

Regional Priority 3

Regional Priority

To involve employers in students' preparation for the workforce and provide opportunities through aligned curricula, career exploration, WBL experiences, and job placement toward increasing students' socioeconomic mobility

Workgroup

The **Employer Engagement workgroup** is the overarching workgroup focused on enacting regional priority three. The workgroup comprises several entities, each of which is focused on a set of key activities that involve employers engaging in a myriad of opportunities to prepare students for the workforce. These entities are the Regional Apprenticeship committee, along with the region's teams of WBL coordinators, employer relations liaisons (ERLs), and job placement case managers dedicated to the individual colleges. Collectively, their activities and projects—aligned to regional priority three—contribute to the efforts and accomplishments of this multifaceted workgroup.

Accomplishments

Following are key accomplishments of the Employer Engagement workgroup contributing to the region's SWP goals:

New employer engagement model

Successfully launched a new Employer Engagement Model (Figure 20) and hired 10 ERLs, each focused on the employer relationships at their college.

New platform for managing employer engagement

Implemented regional customer relationship management (CRM) tool, HubSpot, that ERLs can use to provide monthly reporting of employer engagement activities. This tool tracks each college's progress toward meeting its localized needs.

Knowledge sharing

Presented the region's unique Employer Engagement Model and its use of a CRM to nearly all of the other regional consortia and to the California Community College Association for Occupational Education.

Presented on the collaborative workforce-education-industry relationships and structure of Advancing San Diego, which helps ensure that students learn skills from the colleges' industry-valued programs.

More career development and job opportunities for students

Increased WBL and job opportunities in the region by cultivating more and stronger employer-college relationships. In 2022–2023, the ERLs met or collaborated with 1,126 employers in the region, resulting in 1,902 WBL and job opportunities, plus participation in other career activities such as speaker panels and career fairs.

Strengthened partnerships with economic and workforce agencies

Established and improved relationships between the SDI RC and partners—San Diego Regional EDC, SDWP, East County EDC, North County EDC, South County EDC, Imperial Valley EDC, and Imperial County Workforce Development Board—and furthered the collaborative work of Advancing San Diego at the colleges.

Figure 20. San Diego and Imperial Counties Strong Workforce Employer Engagement Model

ENGAGEMENT DRIVERS

Regional Employer Engagement Team

Director of Strategic Partnerships
Director of Apprenticeships
Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research
Employer Relations Liaisons
Industry Relations Consultants

Regional Partners

Economic Development Corporations
Workforce Development Boards
Community-based Organizations
Industry, Labor, & Trade Associations
Chambers of Commerce
Local Education Agencies

College Employer Engagement Teams

Work-based Learning Coordinators, Job Placement Case Managers, & Career Centers at:

Cuyamaca College
Grossmont College
Imperial Valley College
MiraCosta College
Palomar College
San Diego City College
San Diego College of Continuing Education
San Diego Mesa College
San Diego Miramar College
Southwestern College

Regional Partners

Industry Sectors

TECHNOLOGY & COLLABORATION

Regional Employer Engagement Team

College Employer Engagement Teams

COLLEGE OUTCOMES

- Student preparation: knowledge, skills & abilities aligned to industry needs
- Equitable work-based learning
- Careers that lead to social mobility

EMPLOYER OUTCOMES

- Access to a well-trained talent source
- Early exposure to students in work-based learning
- Training resources for current staff

Industry Sectors

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Advanced Transportation & Logistics
- Agriculture, Water, & Environmental Technologies
- Business & Entrepreneurship
- Education & Human Development
- Energy, Construction, & Utilities
- Healthcare
- Information Communication Technologies & Digital Media
- Life Sciences & Biotechnology
- Public Safety
- Retail, Hospitality, & Tourism

Note. See the appendix for a full description of Figure 20. Source. San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium, 2023.

Long- and Short-Term Goals for Employer Engagement

Four-Year Goals
Goal 1: Increase outreach to employers to create more WBL opportunities for students.
Goal 2: Cultivate relationships with employers that lead to increased equitable student employment opportunities and outcomes.
Goal 3: Develop approaches that are more responsive to employers' immediate training needs, particularly with emerging technologies.
Goal 4: Continue to foster strong relationships with regional and local workforce development, community-based organizations, industry, and LEAs.

One-Year Goals
Goal 1: Generate and develop equitable and more WBL opportunities for students.
Goal 2: Increase student job opportunities in careers that lead to social mobility and improve employment outcomes.
Goal 3: Develop programmatic approaches that are more responsive to employers' immediate training needs, particularly with emerging technologies.

One-Year Projects and Strategies

The Employer Engagement workgroup, specifically the ERLs, plan to implement the key performance indicators established for the Employer Engagement Model by engaging in the following activities:

1. Actively participate in employer engagement activities, including meetings, phone calls, emails, and visits.

2. Actively engage with key college partners (e.g., faculty, deans, WBL coordinators, job placement case managers, career center) involved in WBL and employment outcomes.

3. Collaborate with new and existing employers, as well as colleges, to develop more WBL and job opportunities.

4. Attend multiple networking events each month and follow up with new contacts.

5. Assist colleges in identifying industry contacts for advisories and to improve advisory experience.

6. Collaborate with colleges to develop a college-employer partner gap analysis.

7. Support college events that promote WBL and employment for students.

Additional Workgroup Projects

Apprenticeships

Focus

Identify opportunities for efficient collaboration and opportunities to build or expand the apprenticeship model as an equity-centered strategy, encourage transparency, and leverage existing resources to further serve students and employers.

Accomplishments

- Created a regional apprenticeship planning team, which identified the need for an apprenticeship director and led to the hiring and onboarding of the new apprenticeship director.

- Through the Regional Apprenticeship Planning Team, identified the need to further educate the region on apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships, which led to the development and delivery of a five-session PD series in partnership with High Road Alliance to equip college leaders with expanded knowledge about apprenticeships.

- Identified employer engagement resources for ERLs and conducted an ERL training on apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships.

- Created a new online apprenticeship resource library, primarily for community college staff to strengthen apprenticeship opportunities.

- Developed new partnership with LAUNCH Apprenticeship Network to strengthen the capacity of community colleges to work effectively with business and industry in developing and sustaining pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs.

- Collaborated with the San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence on a regional apprenticeship report, which will provide a foundation for informing and guiding regional priorities and investments regarding apprenticeships over the next three to five years.

- Developed a revised definition of "apprenticeship" for the WBL glossary, inclusive of new and innovative sectors outside the building trades.

Goals

- Develop a regional intermediary structure to support and expand equitable access to registered apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships in the region.

- Work collaboratively with industry and community college partners, exploring regional sector-based strategies to identify new apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship opportunities in high-growth industries, including new and innovative sectors.

- Engage in cooperative efforts with community college and industry partners to offer technical and related support and establish viable funding strategies to build local capacity and ensure successful initiation and long-term growth and sustainability.

Regional Priority 4

Regional Priority

To ensure that colleges have data-based resources to make informed programmatic decisions that equitably benefit students and create opportunities for them while supporting regional continuous improvement

Workgroup

Data & Innovation

The **Data & Innovation workgroup** helps facilitate data-informed, programmatic decision-making by building the capacity of college stakeholders to conduct data-driven work as a practice and by serving as data and research experts for problem-solving data-related issues. The workgroup, in collaboration with the COE, trains CTE research experts who are dedicated to supporting the data needs of CTE projects and the work of the colleges' institutional research offices. The activities and projects of the Data & Innovation workgroup align to regional priority four.

Accomplishments

Following are key accomplishments of the Data & Innovation workgroup contributing to the region's SWP goals:

Partnership with San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence

Established strong relationship with the COE, which led to collaborative work.

- Supported the regional Faculty Institute and the Counselor Institute in building capacity in data-driven work.

- Identified current LMI and emerging trends for informing programmatic decisions.

- Contributed to the 2023 study and report *Black Student Equity: Overcoming Barriers and Providing Support*.

Capacity building for data-driven practices

In partnership with the COE, conducted the Faculty Institute and the Counselor Institute to build data literacy among the region's faculty and counselors so that they can conduct inquiry- and data-driven work that improves student success outcomes, especially for DI students, while improving practices and shifting mindsets.

Support for data-driven work

Designed job descriptions for the temporary CTE research experts and successfully advocated for funding from the Regional Consortium to expand research capacity for CE data requests that support SWP projects.

Support for professional development

Designed the job description for the regional research associate and successfully advocated for funding from the Regional Consortium to facilitate communication, planning, and execution of PD in the region.

Data and research expertise

Provided a reliable forum for problem-solving related to data needs from the region. Regional workgroup leads have used the Data & Innovation workgroup as a resource for answering data questions and getting feedback on data products.

Two examples include the Marketing workgroup requesting data related to military-affiliated communities and the K–14 Career Pathways workgroup seeking feedback on a DE dashboard.

Long- and Short-Term Goals for Data & Innovation

Four-Year Goals

Goal 1: Meet the ongoing data needs of the community colleges with regional data support so that the colleges are equipped to make data-informed decisions to achieve their goals.

Goal 2: Establish a sustainable communications channel with the CCCCO by identifying best-fit methods and testing new approaches that work for the ongoing and reliable sharing of information.

Goal 3: Institute an annual Data & Innovation showcase that enables the colleges to share knowledge about data-based products and usage implemented by faculty, counselors, and the college research offices.

One-Year Goals

Goal 1: Increase staffing capacity of institutional research offices so that they can focus on meeting the colleges' data needs in order to achieve SWP objectives.

Goal 2: Increase capacity of the Data & Innovation workgroup to understand the MIS LaunchBoard and internal data product alignments to better support the SWP efforts of the community colleges.

Goal 3: Establish and maintain a regional digital library of curated resources, best practices, and frameworks in order to support the community colleges' practitioners with vetted, evidence-based resources for improving practice.

One-Year Projects and Strategies

The Data & Innovation workgroup plans to engage in the following projects and strategies toward achieving its one-year goals.

1. **Support for more data use at the community colleges.** As the community colleges strengthen and expand practices of data-based decision-making, the requests for data have increased. For example, participants in the Faculty Institute and Counselor Institute need disaggregated classroom-level and/or college-level data, workgroups request institution-level data, and colleges need data to analyze specific CE needs at their institutions (e.g., program review, strategic enrollment management). The Data & Innovation workgroup, in partnership with the COE, is hiring and training seven new temporary CTE research experts who will be dedicated to regional CTE projects from 2023–2024 through 2024–2025 in order to increase capacity at the colleges' institutional research offices.

2. **Increased internal capacity with MIS LaunchBoard to better support the community colleges.** The Data & Innovation workgroup and other SDI researchers are committed to participating in year-long PD on the MIS LaunchBoard, learning from WestEd and the CCCCO experts how new updates to MIS LaunchBoard impact legislation, policy, and reporting. This knowledge will improve the capacity of the regional data team to support the community colleges.

3. **Digital library of promising practices for teaching and counseling.** To support the work of the region's researchers, instructional faculty, and counselors, the Data & Innovation workgroup is developing a comprehensive digital library of vetted resources about promising pedagogy, counseling, and research practices. The library will have a web-based interface and a navigable search bar for easy access. Consideration for how to integrate the digital library into the Faculty Institute, Counselor Institute, and other PD opportunities is underway.

Regional Priority 5

Regional Priority

To increase awareness throughout the region of the San Diego and Imperial community colleges and CE programs

Workgroup

Marketing

Evolution of Marketing Workgroup

In keeping with the SDI RC's approach to being nimble and responsive to the evolving needs of the community colleges, the SDI RC has shifted regional priority five from a *regional effort* to *regional support* for the colleges to build their capacity through college-based marketing strategies. Colleges now have agency to plan and implement marketing strategies in order to improve awareness, recruitment, retention, and completion of CE programs with the focus of reaching their unique audience of CE students. The Marketing workgroup sunsetted in December 2023.

Marketing Workgroup Accomplishments (through December 2023)

Following are key accomplishments of the Marketing workgroup contributing to the region's SWP goals:

Market research data to inform macro- and micro-campaigns on regional awareness

Completed qualitative and quantitative market research on regional awareness and perception of local community colleges, which led to the development of one macro- and five micro-campaigns.

Market research data to inform campaign on regional awareness for military-affiliated communities

Completed qualitative and quantitative market research on regional awareness and perception of local community colleges with regard to SDI military and military-affiliated communities, which led to a specialized campaign specific to this population.

Regional campaign for CE awareness

Reached consensus on regional campaign design and media plan to achieve mutually beneficial awareness of CE programs within the region through consistent information sharing and collaboration.

Regional campaign strategy involving media

Created regional marketing campaign called Community Crafted, inclusive of design, media planning, purchase, and placement.

Culturally inclusive campaign for CE awareness in Imperial County

Created individualized campaign creative, messaging, and tactics specific to the diverse economy and target audiences within the Imperial County community.

Regional campaign for CE awareness with broader audience

Leveraged regional funding for broader audience engagement, including digital advertising inside San Diego's Petco Park.

College-Based Marketing Accomplishments

As the SDI RC has shifted to supporting college-based marketing efforts, following are some of the community colleges' marketing accomplishments thus far:

Individual Colleges

- Developed a CE marketing plan.

- Implemented a centralized CRM system to leverage automation and to strengthen both internal and external communications with students.

- Adopted a search engine optimization (SEO) program, which enables the college to access and examine its website analytics and increase traffic to CE web pages.

- Piloted a case management service that provided prospective students with registration questions and individual follow-up from college staff. Data showed that 194 students were assisted and 122 students matriculated. Positive feedback indicated that students were overwhelmingly grateful for the support.

- Piloted a completion campaign with their business/economics students, which determined that 633 students identified as potentially obtaining a degree in business/economics and fell into three categories: (a) completed requirements and did not apply to graduate, (b) completed requirements and needed to reapply to college to apply to graduate, and (c) had missing requirements on transcripts and were close to completion. The results indicated that 210 students applied for graduation.

- Developed a social media and web streaming campaign targeted to ZIP codes within their district boundaries. Results included cost efficiency well above industry standard.

Multiple Colleges

- Created targeted marketing videos to highlight their colleges' unique CE programs.

- Created CE program-specific marketing kits for recruitment events.

Long- and Short-Term Goals for Marketing

Four-Year Goals

For the long term, the SDI RC is supporting the community colleges' marketing efforts through the following four-year goals:

Goal 1: Provide support to increase awareness, elevate perceptions, and bolster retention and completion of CE programs.

Goal 2: Address regional priorities and directions with the appropriate marketing resources.

Goal 3: Support data analysis and informed decision-making through an equity lens to define marketing audiences and strategies.

One-Year Goals

Prior to sunsetting in December 2023, the Marketing workgroup achieved the following short-term goals:

Goal 1: Completed the regional awareness campaign.

Goal 2: Launched the regional military-affiliated campaign.

Goal 3: Engaged with local college/district marketing professionals to share best practices on research and campaigns.

Transitional One-Term Goals

For the remainder of 2023–2024, the SDI RC continues to support the community colleges' marketing efforts through the following one-term goals:

Goal 1: Evaluate the performance of the regional awareness campaign.

Goal 2: Support college-based marketing investments.

One-Year Projects and Strategies

Marketing efforts will include the following activities toward achieving the SDI RC's short-term goals.

- Assess the regional awareness campaign based on college use of materials and data analytics.

- Continue to support the community colleges with their proposed college-based marketing applications.

- Support ways for the colleges to explore marketing strategies to increase awareness, elevate perceptions, and bolster retention and completion of CE programs.