Strong Workforce Program Four-Year Plan

2024-2027: 2026 Update

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 the 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 CCCCO's Vision 2030 roadmap prioritizes data-based approaches to advance equity in access, support, and success for every learner and reflects the current and planned work already underway by the SDI RC. The *San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium: Strong Workforce Program Four-Year Plan 2024–2027: 2026 Update* 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 to the workforce successfully. 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 with 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**
- **Reflective**
- **Sustainable Justice**
- **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
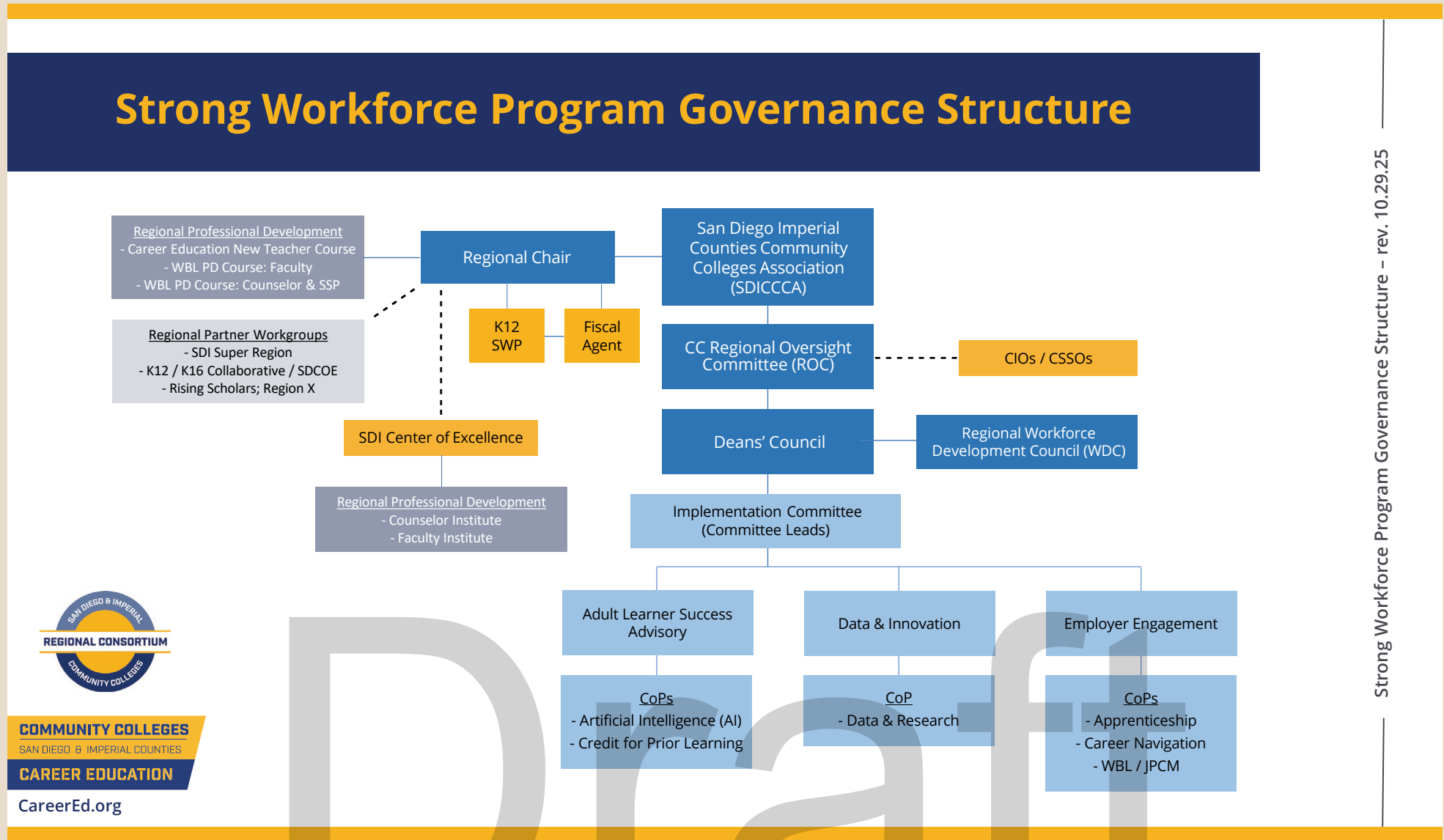
SWP Decision-Making

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 committees to the college presidents and chancellors as shown in Figure 1. SDI RC Strong Workforce Program Governance Structure. Furthermore, the SDI RC governance structure aligns with the new CCCCO Regional Collaboration and Coordination Grant. 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)—composed of the college presidents and chancellors, also known as chief executive officers (CEOs)—sets policy for the 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 communication 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. The Foundation for Grossmont & Cuyamaca Colleges 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. Representation includes chief instructional officers (CIOs) and chief student services officers (CSSOs). The ROC provides approval of funding and guidance on other issues presented for their consideration.

- The **CE Deans' Council** provides guidance to the Workforce Development Council and Implementation Committee. The 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 **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 **SWP Implementation Committee** comprises all SWP committee and community of practice (CoP) leads, who meet to discuss and resolve implementation issues. A CE dean or designee chairs the Implementation Committee.

- The **SWP Committees** comprise decision-makers who guide strategic planning and investments while embedding equity into all discussions and actions. They inform initiatives, establish strategies to achieve broader outcomes, and identify key leading indicators. Each committee is cochaired by a lead CE dean and a CE associate dean and supported by a regional staff member.

- The **CoPs** are practitioner-based groups aligned with at least one committee, focusing on investment outcomes while embedding equity in all discussions and activities. CoPs share and document best practices, uphold accountability, and collaborate to advance strategies that support broader goals. There is a designated point of contact or lead for each CoP. For 2025–2026, the SDI RC supports **the following committees** and **CoPs**:

  » **Adult Learner Success Advisory Committee**
    - Artificial Intelligence (AI) (CoP)
    - Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) (CoP)

  » **Data & Innovation Committee**
    - Data & Research (CoP)

  » **Employer Engagement Committee**
    - Apprenticeship (CoP)
    - Career Navigation (CoP)
    - Work-Based Learning & Job Placement Case Management (CoP)

Figure 1. SDI RC Strong Workforce Program Implementation

Strong Workforce Program Governance Structure

Regional Professional Development
- Career Education New Teacher Course
- WBL PD Course: Faculty
- WBL PD Course: Counselor & SSP

Regional Partner Workgroups
- SDI Super Region
- K12 / K16 Collaborative / SDCOE
- Rising Scholars; Region X

Regional Chair

San Diego Imperial Counties Community Colleges Association (SDICCCA)

K12 SWP

Fiscal Agent

CC Regional Oversight Committee (ROC)

CIOs / CSSOs

SDI Center of Excellence

Deans' Council

Regional Workforce Development Council (WDC)

Regional Professional Development
- Counselor Institute
- Faculty Institute

Implementation Committee (Committee Leads)

Adult Learner Success Advisory

Data & Innovation

Employer Engagement

CoPs
- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Credit for Prior Learning

CoP
- Data & Research

CoPs
- Apprenticeship
- Career Navigation
- WBL / JPCM

Strong Workforce Program Governance Structure – rev. 10.29.25

COMMUNITY COLLEGES
SAN DIEGO & IMPERIAL COUNTIES
CAREER EDUCATION

CareerEd.org

Note. For a description of the SWP governance structure flowchart, see Figure A1 in the Appendix.

Regional Consortium: Strong Workforce Program Approach

Alongside and within the SDI RC, partners and collaborators 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

When portions of SWP funds were reallocated in the 2024–2025 budget to expand needed programs for nursing and the United Domestic Workers labor union, the SWP regional consortia and the state's community colleges were compelled to reassess plans. As a result, the SDI RC anticipated an annual budget reduction over five years that started with a $2 million reduction in 2024–2025. Despite the new budget constraints, the SDI RC's goal is to protect its supports to the colleges with as little impact as possible. The SDI RC continues to invest in building the capacity of the colleges through its agreed-upon services and activities while remaining committed to using the following strategies in its approach:

- Foster a **collaborative relationship** with the colleges that provides facilitative leadership to support the colleges' work, increase capacity, and incentivize change.

- Provide a governance structure that includes **cross-functional and cross-institution committees**—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 committees** in conducting collaborative decision-making and guiding the colleges and CoPs 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 leads 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 (LMI), 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_, and the 2025 study and report _San Diego & Imperial Community Colleges' Adult Learner Study_. The _Black Student Equity_ study sought 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. The study identified three key Black student needs and recommendations, which were integrated into the Round 8 request for applications (RFAs) for the colleges to identify which of the research-based strategies, if any, to implement.

  The adult learner study focused on gaining a deeper understanding of the adult learner experience, including barriers, to inform programming designed to improve student success outcomes for adult learners. Similar to the Black Student Equity study, the adult learner findings will inform future RFAs designed to support change at the region's colleges.

- Create **critical-support positions**, such as work-based learning (WBL) coordinators and job placement case managers for colleges to advance career development opportunities for students. These college-based positions are available to colleges that choose to apply for funding through the regional RFAs. SWP funds also supplement the CCCCO's Economic and Workforce Development funds for the region's employer relations liaisons (ERLs), who assist colleges in identifying employer engagement needs.

- 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 SWP committees, the SDI RC identifies specific areas of improvement for the colleges that will further collective regional goals. Once the SDI RC develops and releases an RFA to communicate a project's purpose and goal, colleges are invited 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, career services, and WBL, to name just a few.

  For example, in 2023–2024 and 2024–2025, the colleges made advancements by utilizing two grants offered by the SDI RC. Colleges applied for and received planning grants to develop career services strategic plans aligned with the NACE (National Association of Colleges and Employers) professional standards and with an emphasis on ensuring that services support students who are disproportionately impacted on their respective campuses. After colleges completed their strategic plans, they applied for implementation funds. Building on this momentum, this year the region is embarking on a career services project that starts with insights from the 10 college strategic plans to identify shared priorities and guide a regional CoP focused on advancing equitable, high-impact career services across the region.

Another example of regional momentum is how colleges have been using their employer engagement grants to increase WBL opportunities and support for CE students in obtaining employment connected to their CE pathways.

- 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, the 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

The SDI RC supports impactful professional development (PD) opportunities for faculty, counselors, and staff. For example, regional PD for practitioners is designed to increase capacity in equity-centered practices such as data usage and data-informed work, WBL, or instruction. However, the range of PD offerings is one area in which the SDI RC can adjust its investment due to budget reductions. This is especially true when the SDI RC has helped colleges build the capacity of faculty to implement equity-centered practices learned from SDI RC–supported PD and/or when colleges offer their own customized version of a regional PD such as the Faculty Institute.

- **Faculty Institute.** Between February 2020 and May 2025, the SDI RC invested in the regional Faculty Institute, providing stipends for three faculty cohorts to participate in the yearlong PD. The SDI RC also funded colleges' institutional research offices to increase their capacity

to support faculty in obtaining their classroom-level data. This innovative approach enabled faculty to analyze student data from their courses and apply an equity lens to shift classroom policies and practices. In total, 518 faculty members participated, in which 61 percent of whom were CE faculty and 39 percent were non-CE faculty. The regional Faculty Institute led some colleges to customize the training for their own version of the PD. Reaching a saturation point among career education (CE) faculty and with local capacity continuing the effort, the SDI RC concluded its funding after this five-year investment. Testimonials from the Faculty Institute can be viewed on YouTube.

- **Counselor Institute.** The first regional Counselor Institute began in October 2023 in partnership with the Center of Excellence. Academic and career counselors engage in yearlong 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. Alternating yearly funding between the Faculty Institute and the Counselor Institute, the SDI RC is funding a second cohort for the Counselor Institute in 2025–2026. Cohort 1 included 134 participants, and Cohort 2 is anticipating about 113 participants.

- **Work-Based Learning Course for Faculty.** 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. Through the Work-Based Learning Course, the SDI RC accomplished its goal of supporting the integration of WBL into curricula, supporting faculty in developing

WBL knowledge, and building college capacity. In fact, during the first four years in which the Work-Based Learning Course has been offered, 238 faculty and staff have completed the course. Additionally, after completing the course, 115 faculty from across disciplines have developed WBL lessons that are available in the SDI WBL repository for all SDI faculty to access.

- **Work-Based Learning Course for Counselors and Student Support Professionals.** To further broaden student support for WBL, in fall 2025, the SDI RC introduced a new Work-Based Learning Course developed for counselors and student support professionals. By expanding WBL knowledge beyond faculty, students can expect to strengthen their connections between education and career through multiple and ongoing WBL opportunities, including noninstructional engagements, throughout their student experience.

- **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. So far, 24 faculty have participated in the course, including 9 full-time and 15 part-time staff.

Regional Assets: Partners and Collaborators

San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence

The SDI RC works closely with the San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence to access current and forecasted LMI in San Diego and Imperial Counties. The Center of Excellence 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 Center of Excellence 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 the 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. The SDI RC continues to support 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), the Imperial County Workforce Development Board, 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, an 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 with the economy's needs.

Additionally, SDI community college representatives serve on boards of the EDC, Imperial County Workforce Development Board, and the SDWP and on committees with economic development agencies, further cross-pollinating knowledge, resources, and new opportunities.

Industry Engagement

The SDI RC supports the community colleges' partnerships with industries and employers, which are especially strong in the CE programs as depicted in the SDI RC Employer Engagement Model (see Figure 24). Leadership and guidance are provided by the Employer Engagement committee, while the Career Navigation CoP, ERLs, job placement case managers, and WBL coordinators actively provide WBL and job placement opportunities for students and 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.

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.

A Community College Student's Road to Career Success

Since the launch of the 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, a 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 that 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, undergirds these components.

Ongoing Education and 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

Source. San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium, 2023.
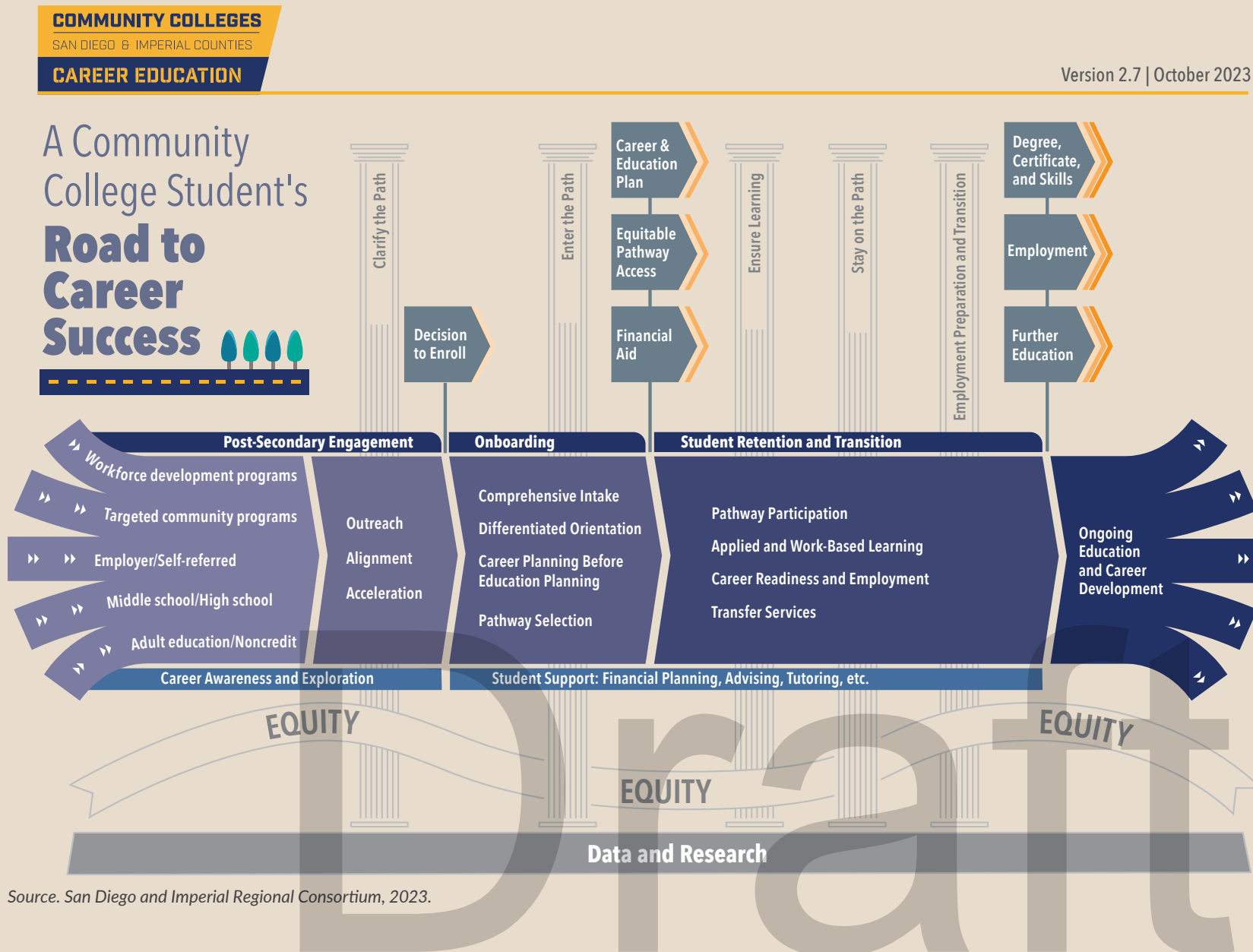
Regional Investments for 2025-2026

The SDI RC's regional approach is reflected in its annual budget and in how the SDI RC invests in its regional priorities and projects toward implementing the 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, 2025–2026

Priorities and projects	Amount
Job placement case management	$1,750,000
Sector strategies and equity outcomes	$1,250,000
Guided career pathways implementation	$1,187,580
Employer engagement	$803,000
Work-based learning coordination	$800,000
Accelerating career education outcomes	$800,000
Labor market research	$750,000
Capacity Building: Adult Learners	$500,000
Regional Consortium management (3%)	$247,597
SWP administration (2%)	$165,065
Total investment	**$8,253,242**

Source. San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium, 2025.

Region's 10-Year Investments

The work of the SDI RC has matured and advanced in the past decade while remaining strategic and responsive to supporting the San Diego and Imperial colleges and their progress in improving student outcomes. The SDI RC's 10-year investments are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. SDI RC Investments by Project and Round, 2016–2017 Through 2025–2026

Project	Target	Total investment (Rounds 1–10)	Rounds									
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Precollege outreach	Regionwide support	$5,389,065	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
Guided career pathways implementation	Regionwide support	$8,259,020		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Dual enrollment	Colleges	$800,240							x	x	x	x
Credit for prior learning	Colleges	$410,941							x	x	x	x
Pathway navigation	Colleges	$3,649,420		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Retention and success/Faculty & Counselor Institutes	Colleges	$7,207,681		x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
Sector strategies and equity outcomes	Colleges	$7,864,264	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Clinical placement planning	Regionwide support	$390,945						x	x	x	x	x
Employer engagement	Regionwide support	$4,729,944						x	x	x	x	x
Work-based learning coordination	Colleges	$6,623,559		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Job placement case management	Colleges	$15,608,558	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Marketing of CE programs	Regionwide support	$7,092,489	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		

Project	Target	Total investment (Rounds 1–10)	Rounds									
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
College-based marketing of CE programs	Colleges	$3,617,874	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		
Labor market research	Regionwide support	$5,538,233	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Capacity building: Adult learners	Regionwide support	$500,000										x
Accelerating career education outcomes	Colleges	$1,300,000									x	x
Innovative collaborative projects	Colleges	$412,802	x									
Regional research investment	Colleges	$1,704,396							x	x	x	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	$2,661,136	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
SWP administration	Regionwide support	$1,774,092	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Total investment		**$88,190,934**										

Note. For an alternative version of this table, see Table A2 in the Appendix. San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium, 2025.

Shifts Over Time

Investing in Regional Projects

During the early rounds of the SWP, the SDI RC invested in short-term, one-off, college-based projects; however, it has evolved into its current approach of applying a regional lens and providing seed money to help the colleges build capacity. The SDI RC's current strategic approach of investing in regional projects enables it to 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 share promising practices with one another.

Evolving 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 shift. 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:

- Build capacity at colleges so that faculty can learn to use class-level data to improve equity-centered practices.

- Provide online WBL courses for faculty, counselors, and student support professionals to expand and enhance WBL opportunities for students.

- Reenvision new regional committees and CoPs to meet changing needs within a structure that allows for new priorities.

Building Trust and a Partnership

The active participation and problem-solving of the consortium members have 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 WBL courses, Faculty Institute, Counselor Institute, and 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.

Moving Equity to the Center

Since the start of the 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. With SWP investments, the SDI RC equity-centered achievements include forging established relationships with partners and colleges to work collaboratively on advancing change; supporting capacity for data collection and analysis of disaggregated data; and cultivating a change culture within the committees and CoPs to lead SWP efforts based on research.

Over the years, the SDI RC has sharpened its focus on equity. Today, the region is even more equipped to assertively make a difference, building on the equity work begun in 2022–2023:

- Produce and disseminate to the colleges two commissioned Center of Excellence reports due in 2026 and intended to inform decision-making: first, an economic mobility impact report involving current Lightcast data and, second, a report about the region's adult learners and the barriers to earning a degree or certificate needed for upward mobility.

- Build new technology to support students and the colleges with a more robust and user-friendly Program Finder, inclusive of all community college CE programs, K–12 CTE pathways, adult education/noncredit programs, regional LMI, and interactive tools for students to explore and connect their career interests to available CE programs that can lead to in-demand careers and occupations in the region.

- Implement equity-minded and race-conscious recommendations to systems and practices informed by the findings from the Black Student Equity report released in 2023.

- Provide regional support through an RFA and technical assistance for colleges to develop and implement a career services strategic plan informed by the NACE standards and focused on equity-centered strategies to improve access and services to DI students. Strategies include understanding the needs of specific student populations and partnering with affiliated college programs and departments to ensure that career services staff are reaching DI students and providing needed services. Additionally, career services are improving how they collect, track, and examine student data for continuous improvement at their colleges.

- Aligned with the core message in *Vision 2030—The July 2025 Edition*, that the colleges can "no longer wait for students to come to us" (page 4), the SDI RC supports colleges in integrating career development practices into coursework and programs. One example includes the two WBL PD courses designed to expand faculty, counselor, and staff knowledge for enhancing instruction, advising, and programs, respectively, with career relevance as they work directly with students.

- 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.

- 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, ERLs, and job placement case managers.

Regional Consortium and Vision 2030

The SDI RC aims to transform the ways that educators, industry, and community partners advance economic mobility equitably, especially for individuals of minoritized groups who attend San Diego and Imperial community colleges. As described throughout this 2026 update of the San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium Four-Year Plan, the SDI RC continues to build community college capacity to create equitable systemic change and close equity gaps, sharpen equity-centered strategies and remove barriers for students, and provide supports that better align with students' needs and lived experiences to help ensure their social and economic mobility. The goals of the SDI RC align with the CCCCO's *Vision 2030 Roadmap* and the *July 2025 Edition*, focusing on equity in access, equity in success, and equity in support. The SDI RC's investments in priorities and projects (Table 3) further demonstrate how its strategic approach to increase equitable opportunities and success in higher education, improve education and career outcomes, and connect students with employment that provides family-sustaining wages is a commitment to ensuring economic mobility for those it serves.

Table 3. 2025–2026 SDI RC Investments and Alignment With Vision 2030

Priorities and project	Close equity gaps	Align education with workforce needs	Promote student-centered enrollment and support	Increase credential attainment	Ensure affordability and financial support	Build stronger partnerships	Strengthen sustainability and climate resilience
Adult learner report	x		x	x	x		
Apprenticeship	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Artificial intelligence (AI)	x	x	x	x		x	
Black Student Equity report	x		x	x	x		

Priorities and project	Close equity gaps	Align education with workforce needs	Promote student-centered enrollment and support	Increase credential attainment	Ensure affordability and financial support	Build stronger partnerships	Strengthen sustainability and climate resilience
Career services projects	x	x	x			x	
Clinical placement planning	x	x		x		x	
College-based marketing projects	x		x	x			x
Comprehensive regional needs assessment	x		x	x	x	x	
Counselor Institute/retention and success	x		x				
Credit for prior learning	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Dual enrollment	x		x	x	x	x	
Employer engagement	x	x		x		x	x
Faculty Institute/retention and success	x		x				
Internships (paid)	x	x			x	x	
Job placement case management	x	x	x	x		x	
Labor market research	x	x				x	x
Pathway navigation	x		x	x			
Precollege outreach	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Regional marketing of career education programs	x				x	x	x
Retention and success acceleration projects	x	x	x				

Priorities and project	Close equity gaps	Align education with workforce needs	Promote student-centered enrollment and support	Increase credential attainment	Ensure affordability and financial support	Build stronger partnerships	Strengthen sustainability and climate resilience
Sector strategy projects	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Sector strategy project: Blue/Green Industries	x	x				x	x
Industry-to-teacher preparation course	x	x	x			x	
Work-based learning assessment (SG-21)	x	x		x		x	
Work-based learning coordination	x	x	x	x		x	
Work-based learning course	x	x	x	x		x	

*Source. San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium, 2025.*

Draft

Aligning With Vision 2030 Benchmarks

In line with the SWP investments, the SDI region is moving in the right direction as it relates to the three Vision 2030 goals of *Equity in Access*, *Equity in Success*, and *Equity in Support* for all San Diego and Imperial students—CE and non-CE students. Figures 3–5 show the region's progress with these goals. Specifically, the San Diego & Imperial macroregion is "on track" or "exceeding" expected progress in four of five measures of *Equity in Access* (Figure 3). The region is "progressing" or "developing" on five of six measures of *Equity in Success* (Figure 4). Finally, the region is "exceeding" in all four measures in the areas of *Equity in Support* (Figure 5). Data for Figures 3–5 are informed by DataVista and reflect results from 2024, the most recent year for which data are available.

Figure 3. SDI on Track or Exceeding Expectations in Four of Five Measures of the Access Goal
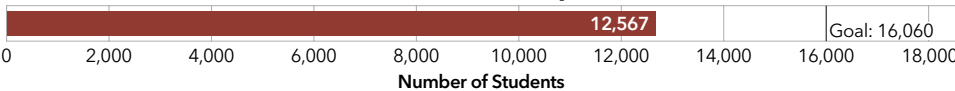
Goal 1: Access
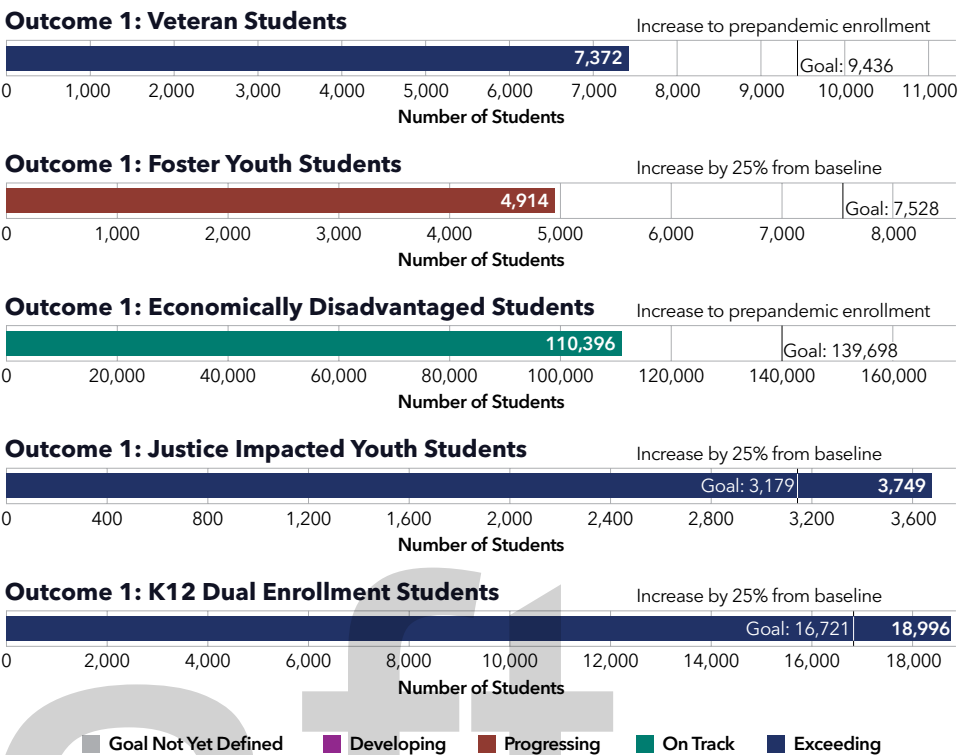
Note. **Exceeding:** *Over expected progress in the selected year* | **On Track:** *0–4.99% away from expected progress in the selected year* | **Progressing:** *5–24.99% away from expected progress in the selected year* | **Developing:** *25% or more away from expected progress in the selected year*

Source. *DataVista, 2024: San Diego and Imperial Macroregion Progress on Vision 2030 Benchmarks.*
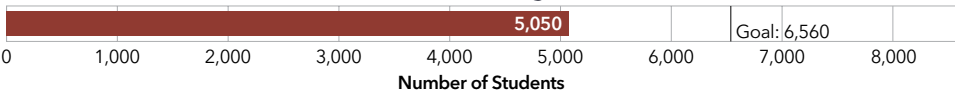
Figure 4. SDI Progressing or Developing in Five of Six Measures of the Success Goal
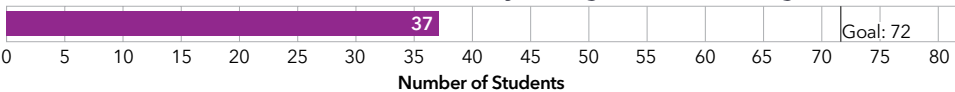
Goal 2: Success

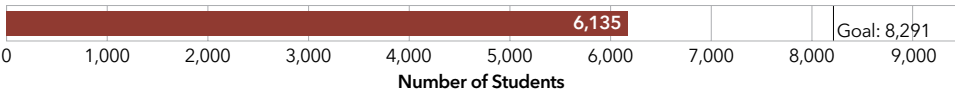**Outcome 2: Earned an Award - Vision Goal Completion Definition**

12,567 | Goal: 16,060

Number of Students

Outcome 3a: Earned an Award - Associate Degree for Transfer

5,050 | Goal: 6,560

Number of Students

Outcome 3b: Earned an Award - Community College Bachelor's Degree

37 | Goal: 72

Number of Students

Outcome 3c: Transferred to a Four-Year Institution - CSU or UC

6,135 | Goal: 8,291

Number of Students

Outcome 3c: Transferred to Nonprofit/Private/Independent 4-year

2,282

Number of Students
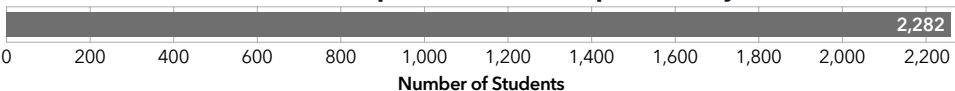
Outcome 4: Attained Living Wage
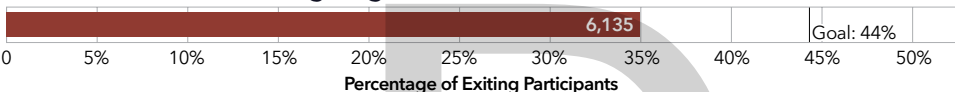
6,135 | Goal: 44%

Percentage of Exiting Participants

■ Goal Not Yet Defined ■ Developing ■ Progressing ■ On Track ■ Exceeding

Note. **Exceeding:** *Over expected progress in the selected year* | **On Track:** *0–4.99% away from expected progress in the selected year* | **Progressing:** *5–24.99% away from expected progress in the selected year* | **Developing:** *25% or more away from expected progress in the selected year*

Note. Outcome 3b is continuing to be developed. It will be added to this report as it becomes available. The Vision 2030 Goal for Outcome 3c is under development and not yet available.

*Source. DataVista, 2024: San Diego and Imperial Macroregion Progress on Vision 2030 Benchmarks.*

Figure 5. SDI Exceeding Expectations in All Four Measures of the Support Goal

Goal 3: Support

Outcome 5: Students Receiving Pell Grants

64,730 | Goal: 65,260
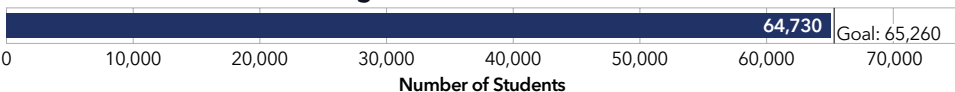
Number of Students

Outcome 5: Students Receiving California College Promise Grants

94,068 | Goal: 97,306

Number of Students
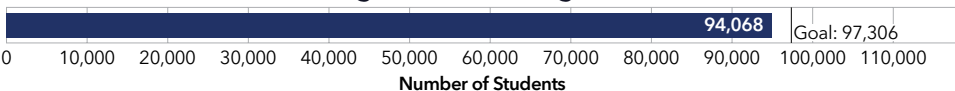
Outcome 6: Average Number of Semester Units Accumulated - Associate Degree for Transfer Earners

Goal: 79 | 81

Number of Semester Units
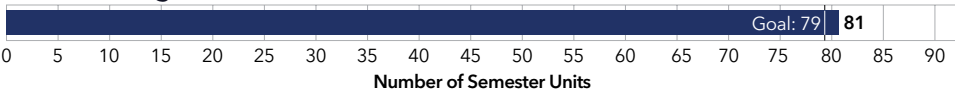
Outcome 6: Average Number of Semester Units Accumulated - Associate Degree Earners
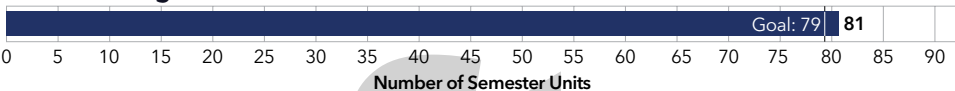
Goal: 79 | 81

Number of Semester Units

■ Goal Not Yet Defined ■ Developing ■ Progressing ■ On Track ■ Exceeding

Note. **Exceeding:** *Over expected progress in the selected year* | **On Track:** *0–4.99% away from expected progress in the selected year* | **Progressing:** *5–24.99% away from expected progress in the selected year* | **Developing:** *25% or more away from expected progress in the selected year*

Source. DataVista, 2024: San Diego and Imperial Macroregion Progress on Vision 2030 Benchmarks.

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 and has 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 San Diego County include the U.S. Navy, Scripps Health, University of California San Diego, Sharp HealthCare, General Atomics, and Marriott International.

(Source. Lightcast 2025.03; "Job Posting Analytics." 2022–2024)

Imperial County

Imperial County is largely rural and boasts a strong and established agricultural industry. It continues to be the state's leading producer of many agricultural crops. In 2025, Imperial County became the top North American region in renewable energy production and geothermal energy production. Imperial County is also emerging as California's "Lithium Valley," developing mineral extraction facilities to support the state's investment in electric-fueled transportation. Top local employers in Imperial County include the State of California, Imperial Valley College, El Centro Regional Medical Center, and Imperial Irrigation District.

(Sources. Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation; Lightcast 2025.03; "Job Posting Analytics." 2022–2024)
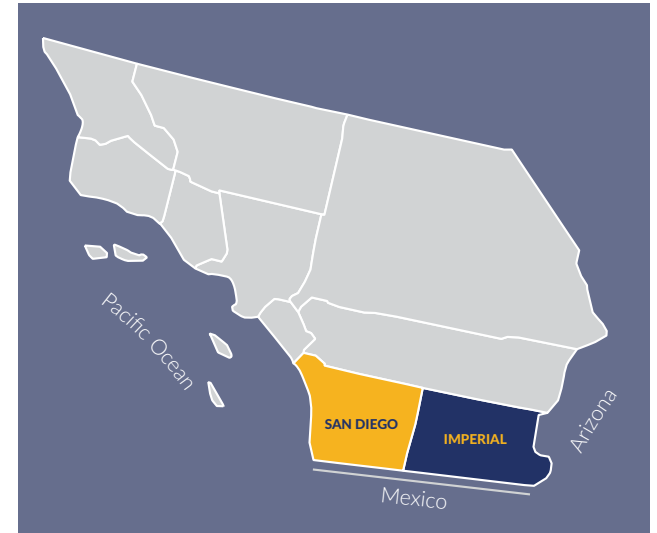
San Diego and Imperial Counties span the width of California at the state's most southern region, with the Pacific Ocean to the west, Arizona to the east, Riverside County to the north, and Mexico to the south.
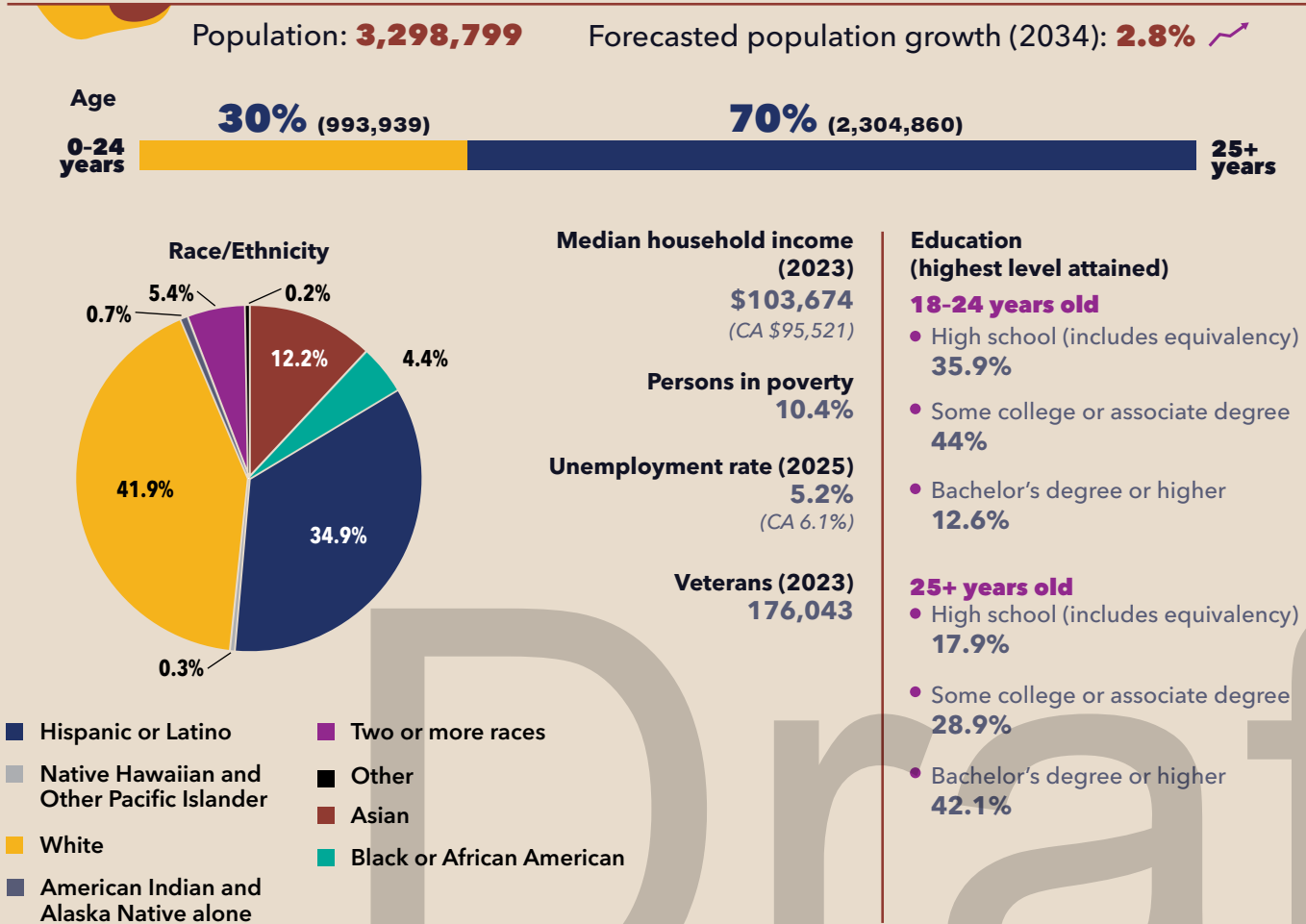
San Diego County is the second most populous county of 58 counties in California and the fifth largest county in the United States.

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 6 and 7) are reflected in the region's diversity of population size, race and ethnicity, income, and education as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau (2024), California Employment Development Department, and Census Reporter.

Figure 6. Demographics of San Diego County

San Diego County

Population: **3,298,799**   Forecasted population growth (2034): **2.8%** 📈

Age

30% (993,939)   **70%** (2,304,860)

0-24 years   **25+ years**

Race/Ethnicity

5.4%
0.7%
0.2%
12.2%
4.4%
41.9%
34.9%
0.3%

Median household income (2023)
$103,674
(CA $95,521)

Persons in poverty
10.4%

Unemployment rate (2025)
5.2%
(CA 6.1%)

Veterans (2023)
176,043

Education (highest level attained)

18-24 years old
- High school (includes equivalency) **35.9%**
- Some college or associate degree **44%**
- Bachelor's degree or higher **12.6%**

25+ years old
- High school (includes equivalency) **17.9%**
- Some college or associate degree **28.9%**
- Bachelor's degree or higher **42.1%**

Legend:
- 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

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent because of rounding. For tables of the data shown here, see Figures A6 and A7 in the Appendix.

Figure 7. Demographics of Imperial County

Imperial County

Population: **181,724**   Forecasted population growth (2034): **7.8%** ⤴

Age

37% (67,763)   **63%** (113,961)

0-24 years   25+ years

Race/Ethnicity

1.4%
0.2%
1.1% 1.4% 1.2%
        1%
8.8%

86.3%

- ◼ 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 (2023)
$60,243
(CA $95,521)

Persons in poverty
19.6%
(CA 12.5%)

Unemployment rate (2025)
20.2%
(CA 6.1%)

Veterans (2023)
3,663

Education (highest level attained)

18-24 years old
- High school (includes equivalency) **34.1%**
- Some college or associate degree **48.1%**
- Bachelor's degree or higher **4.1%**

25+ years old
- High school (includes equivalency) **25.9%**
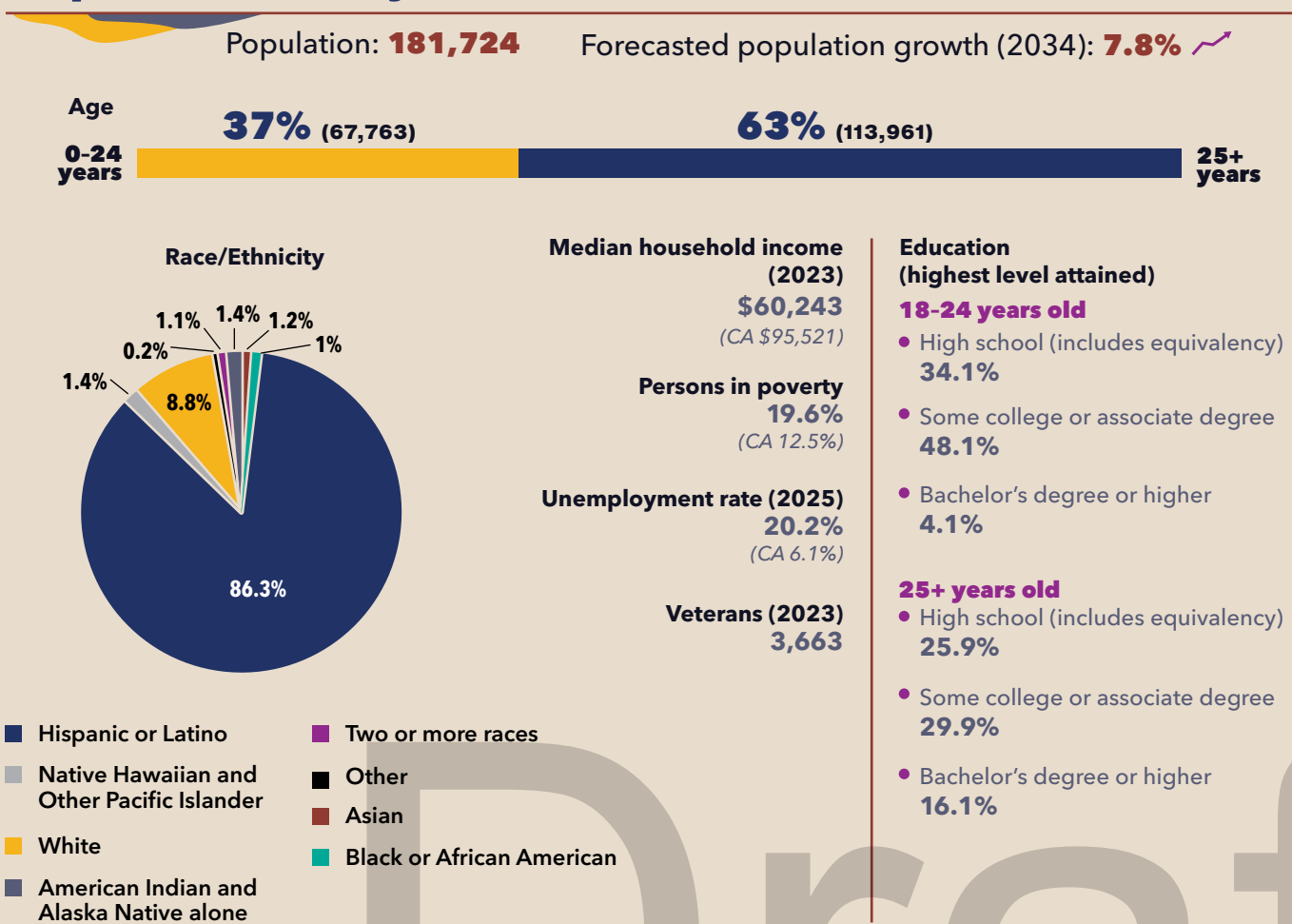- Some college or associate degree **29.9%**
- Bachelor's degree or higher **16.1%**

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent because of rounding. For tables of the data shown here, see Figures A6 and A7 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 provides LMI that drives community college CE program development. For example, during 2024–2025 the 10 colleges requested 50 LMI reports from the Center of Excellence to inform local decision-making for 30 programs. While the Center of Excellence equips the region's colleges with comprehensive analyses of the middle-skills labor market, it also leads the Data & Innovation Committee, the latter of which comprises institutional researchers who identify and address common research needs across the region. Some key research is detailed in this section, while the full list of the region's LMI resources can be found at the SDI RC's website.

Increased Labor Market Demands

Between 2024 and 2034, the number of jobs in San Diego and Imperial Counties is expected to increase by 6.5 percent and 8.6 percent, respectively, as shown in the projected data reported by Lightcast (see Table 4).

Table 4. Number of Jobs and Projected Percentage Change in San Diego County, Imperial County, and California, 2024–2034

Region	Jobs, 2024	Jobs, 2034	Job change, 2024–2034	Projected percentage change
San Diego County	1,813,620	1,931,945	118,325	6.5%
Imperial County	74,690	81,137	6,447	8.6%
California	20,651,050	22,140,213	1,489,163	7.2%

Note. The California data are from 2023; the San Diego & Imperial data are from 2022.

Source. Lightcast 2025.03; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

Selection of Regional Priority Industry Sectors

To adequately meet the demands of the local labor market across the two counties, the SDI RC selected 4 priority industry sectors among the 11 industry sectors to guide the region's community colleges in strategic planning and program development. By keeping consistent with the same four priority sectors from 2023–2024 through 2025–2026, the SDI RC enables the colleges to continue their focus and use their planning and implementation grants to enact change. The four priority sectors are Advanced Manufacturing, Advanced Transportation & Logistics, Health, and Information Communication Technologies (ICT) & 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

Draft

The SDI RC selected these four sectors based on analyses of multiple regional data sources. First, the SDI RC considered industry demand, potential living wage, and the programs offered at the San Diego and Imperial community colleges. The analyses detailed in the Center of Excellence'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—informed the selection. The analyses also included qualitative data from town hall meetings and inclusive feedback strategies solicited from partners across the region.

Further, the region's priority sectors align with the state's priority sectors as described in the CCCCO's _Vision 2030 Roadmap_. For example, the SDI RC's support to expand access and success in Advanced Transportation & Logistics includes programs involving hybrid/electric vehicles. Its support in Advanced Manufacturing, Health, and ICT & Digital Media includes expanded success, access, and support in STEM, especially for DI students. One college is developing a psychiatric technician program to address behavioral health needs in the region; it will be the only such program in San Diego and Imperial Counties. Another college is developing a noncredit vocational nursing program in an effort to create a pipeline to registered nursing and Bachelor of Science in nursing (BSN) programs in the region. Finally, the SDI RC supports work in the Education & Human Development space by funding entrepreneurship opportunities in child development programs.

Jobs and Earning Potential by Priority Sectors

With the LMI that the Center of Excellence 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. Several resources for accessing job and wage information by priority sector can be found on the SDI RC website such as the _San Diego and Imperial County LMI Fast Facts_, Priority Jobs and Programs reports, Sector Map Tool with LMI, and previous Career Education Guides and sector handouts for both San Diego County and Imperial County. A sample page from the interactive Sector Map Tool with its filters is shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8. Sample Page From San Diego & Imperial Counties Sector Map Tool
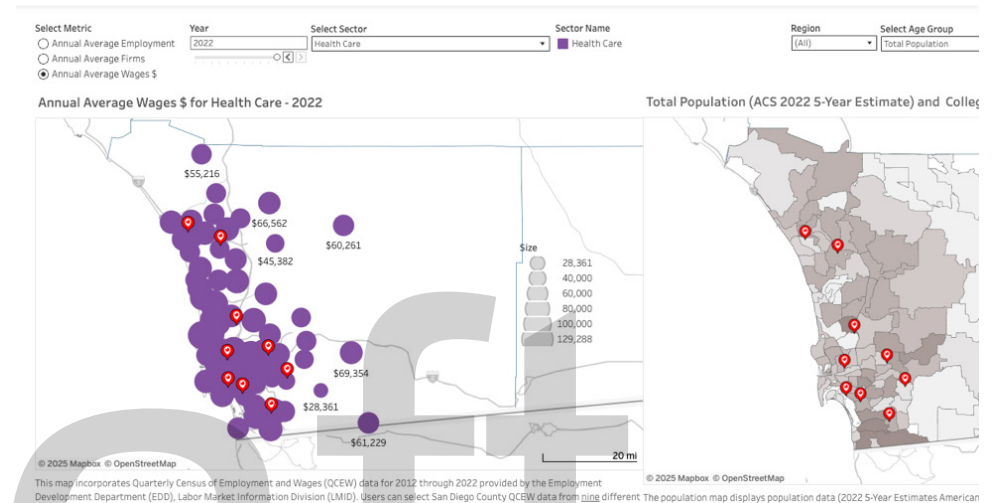
Table 5. Number of Jobs, Job Change Percentage, and Earnings by Priority Sector in San Diego County, 2024–2029

Indicator *Analysis by SOC CODES*	Advanced Manufacturing	Health Care	Advanced Transportation & Logistics	ICT & Digital Media
Number of jobs by sector in San Diego, 2024	116,259	280,218	145,787	24,871
Percentage job change by sector in San Diego, 2024–2029	2%	10%	4%	2%
Average entry-level hourly earnings by sector in San Diego	$24.00	$45.02	$26.61	$35.07
Average median hourly earnings by sector in San Diego	$28.85	$59.67	$31.82	$44.27

Source. Lightcast 2025.03; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

Table 6. Number of Jobs, Job Change Percentage, and Earnings by Priority Sector in Imperial County, 2024–2029

Indicator *Analysis by SOC CODES*	Advanced Manufacturing	Health Care	Advanced Transportation & Logistics	ICT & Digital Media
Number of jobs by sector in Imperial, 2022	3,186	12,965	6,878	941
Percentage job change by sector in Imperial, 2012–2022	20%	22%	19%	8%
Average entry-level hourly earnings by sector in Imperial, 2022	$13.71	$28.31	$21.54	$21.51
Average median hourly earnings by sector in Imperial, 2022	$16.77	$39.34	$28.88	$26.82

Source. Lightcast 2025.03; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

Equity Gaps in Priority Sectors

With the SDI RC's commitment to equity, the region's committees, such as Employer Engagement 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 Center of Excellence 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 Center of Excellence compared the demographics of each job with the workforce overall. For the programs, the Center of Excellence 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 with 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 2023–2024, the 10 San Diego and Imperial community colleges served a total of 193,004 students, including 89,426 CE students (Figure 9), demonstrating a 6 percent and 7 percent one-year growth, respectively. In San Diego and Imperial Counties, CE students compose almost one half of the students enrolled at the community colleges. (All DataVista data that inform Figures 9–15 represent the most recent data when this report was published.)

Figure 9. Nearly One Half of San Diego and Imperial Community College Students Are Enrolled in a CE Course, 2023–2024
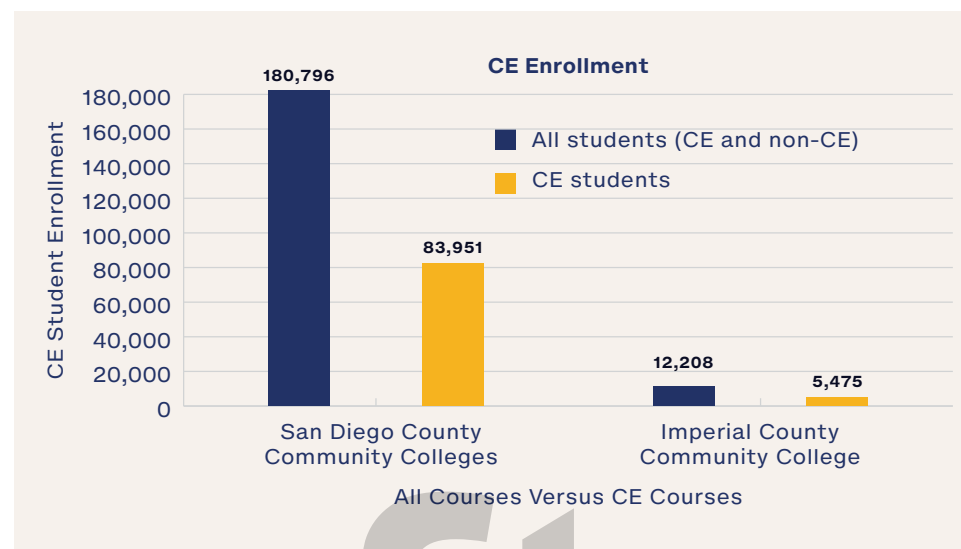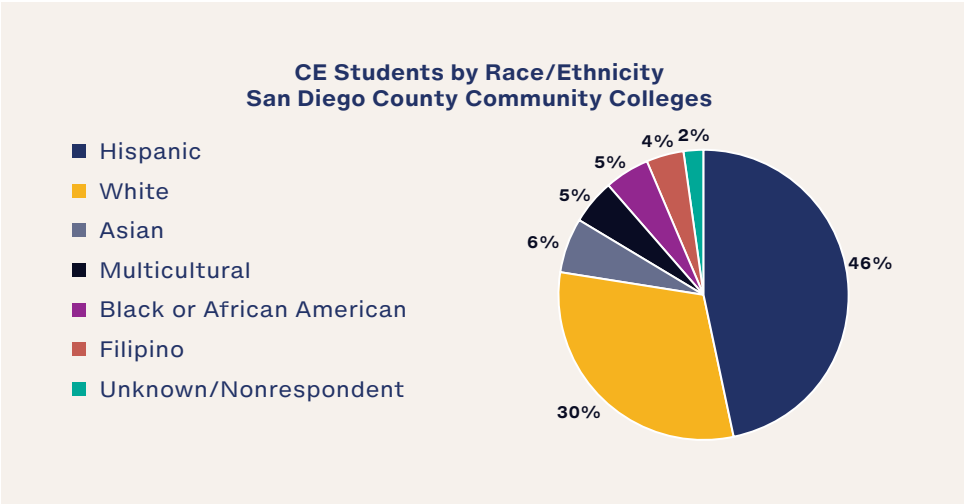

Note. For a table of the data shown here, see Figure A9 in the Appendix.

Source. DataVista, 2023–2024.
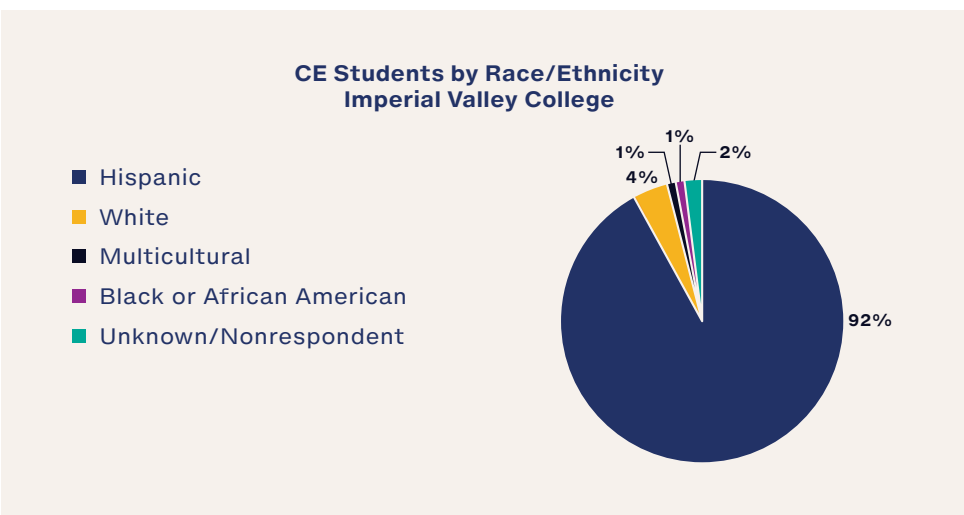
CE Students by Race/Ethnicity

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 10 and 11).

Figure 10. 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

46%, 30%, 6%, 5%, 5%, 4%, 2%

Note. For a table of the data shown here, see Figure A10 in the Appendix.

Source. DataVista, 2023–2024.

Figure 11. Ninety-Two Percent of CE Students Identify as Hispanic at Imperial Valley College

CE Students by Race/Ethnicity
Imperial Valley College

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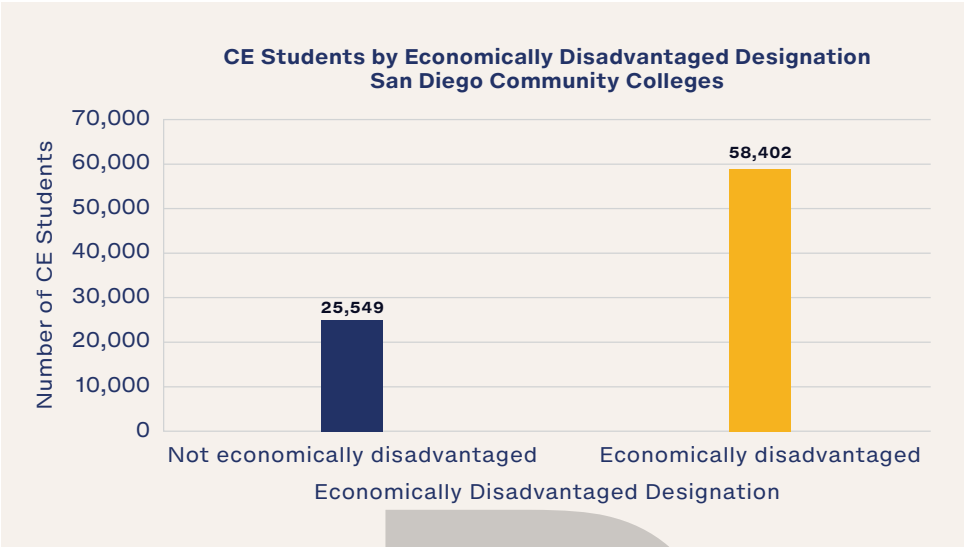- Black or African American
- Unknown/Nonrespondent

92%, 4%, 1%, 1%, 2%

Note. For a table of the data shown here, see Figure A11 in the Appendix.

Source. DataVista, 2023–2024.

# 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 12 and 13).

Figure 12. Seventy Percent of CE Students Are Designated Economically Disadvantaged at San Diego County Community Colleges

CE Students by Economically Disadvantaged Designation
San Diego Community Colleges

Not economically disadvantaged: 25,549
Economically disadvantaged: 58,402

Note. For a table of the data shown here, see Figure A12 in the Appendix.

Source. DataVista, 2023–2024..

Figure 13. Ninety-Two Percent of CE Students Are Designated Economically Disadvantaged at Imperial Valley College

CE Students by Economically Disadvantaged Designation
Imperial Valley College

Not economically disadvantaged: 415
Economically disadvantaged: 5,060
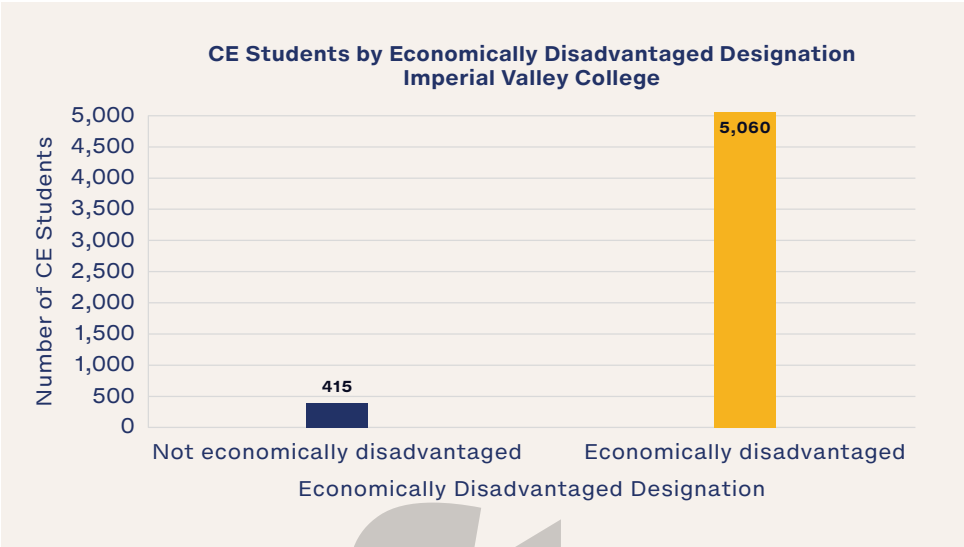
Note. For a table of the data shown here, see Figure A13 in the Appendix.

Source. DataVista, 2023–2024.

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 are 24 years old or younger. The remaining students are older adults aged 25 and older (see Figures 14 and 15). Some of these nontraditional older adult students may be upskilling to seek higher wages, making career changes, returning to civilian life, or attending college for the first time.

Figure 14. One Half of CE Students Are 24 Years Old or Younger at San Diego County Community Colleges
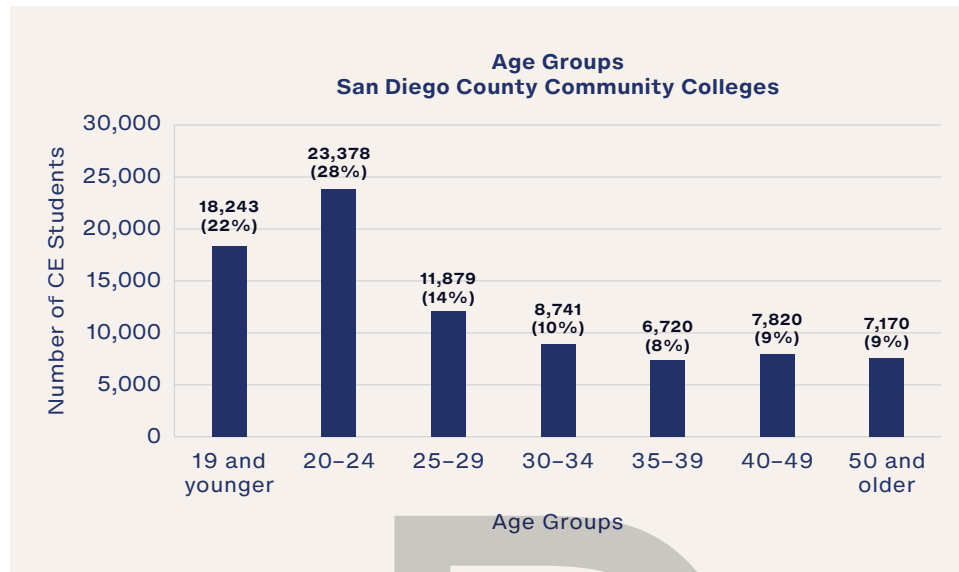
Note. For a table of the data shown here, see Figure A14 in the Appendix. Percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding.

Source. DataVista, 2023–2024.

Figure 15. Nearly Two Thirds of CE Students Are 24 Years Old or Younger at Imperial Valley College
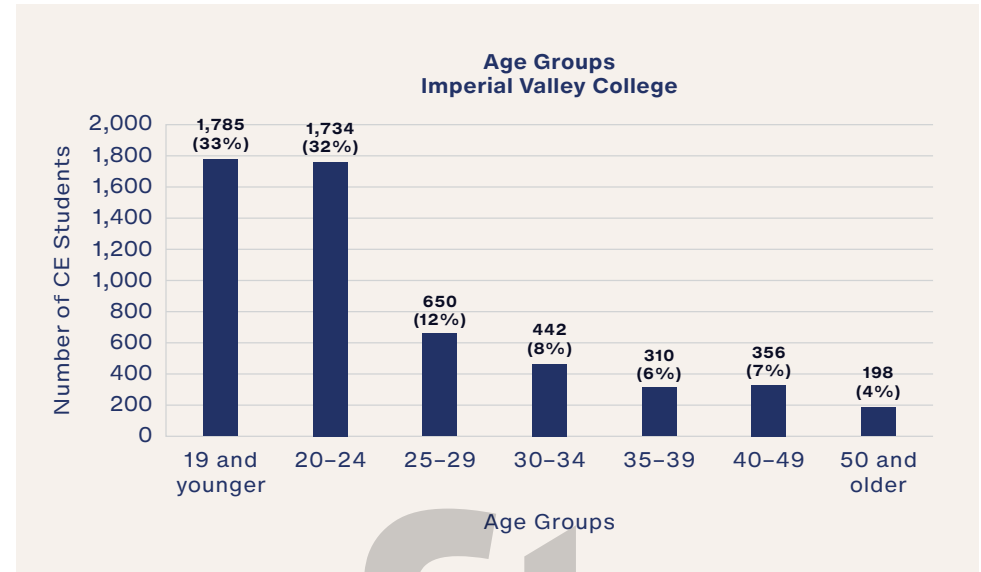
Note. For a table of the data shown here, see Figure A15 in the Appendix. Percentages do not add to 100 because of rounding.

Source. DataVista, 2023–2024.

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 the 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. In fact, as a region, SDI community colleges have shown progress in all eight SWP metrics since 2015–2016.**

The progress of the SWP at the SDI community colleges, measured by the SWP Metrics, are aligned to the CCCCO's Student Success Metrics and categorized by momentum, success, employment, and earnings, as shown in Figures 16–23. 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 DataVista and report on the academic years between 2015–2016 (the last year prior to the SWP) and 2023–2024 (the most recent year for which data were available when this report was published) unless noted. Some data from previous years (under LaunchBoard) have been updated to reflect calculation changes under DataVista.

Momentum

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 15 percent to 20 percent between 2015–2016 and 2023–2024 (Figure 16).

Figure 16. Proportion of Students Completing 9+ CE Credits Rose by About 30 Percent Over a Nine-Year Period

CE Students Who Earned 9 or More CE Units in a Single Year
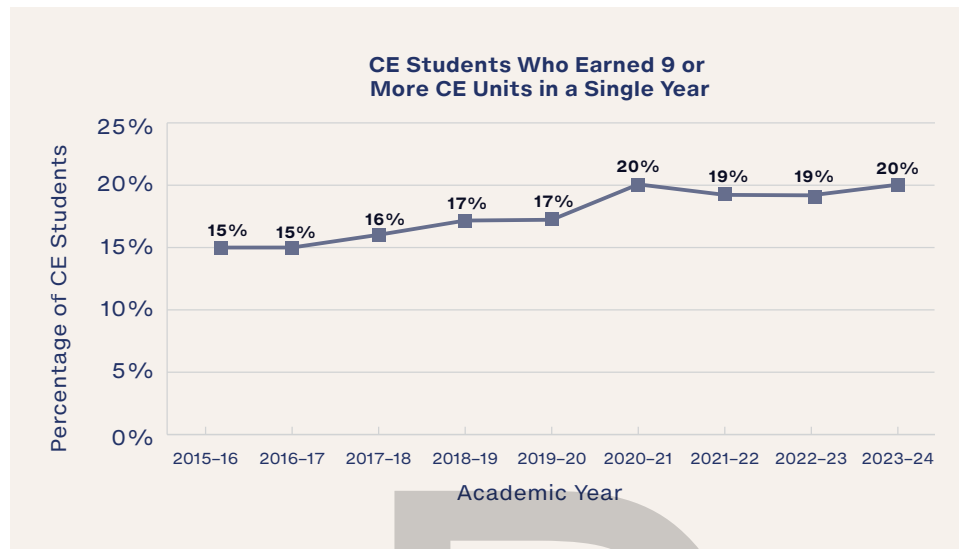
Note. For a table of the data shown here, see Figure A16 in the Appendix.

Source. DataVista, 2015–2016 through 2023–2024.

Noncredit CE or Workforce Preparation Course Completion

The rate of SDI students who completed a noncredit CE or workforce preparation course or had a minimum of 48 contact hours in a single year **increased** from 56 percent to 69 percent between 2015–2016 and 2023–2024 (Figure 17).

Figure 17. CE Course Completion Rates Grew by Nearly 25 Percent Over a Nine-Year Period

CE Students Who Completed a Noncredit CE of Workforce Preparation Course

Note. For a table of the data shown here, see Figure A17 in the Appendix.

Source. DataVista, 2015–2016 through 2023–2024.

Success

Award Completion

The rate of SDI CE students who earned a noncredit certificate, a CCCCO-approved certificate, an associate degree, and/or a California Community Colleges baccalaureate degree or attained apprenticeship journey status **increased** from 8 percent to 12 percent between 2015–2016 and 2023–2024 (Figure 18).

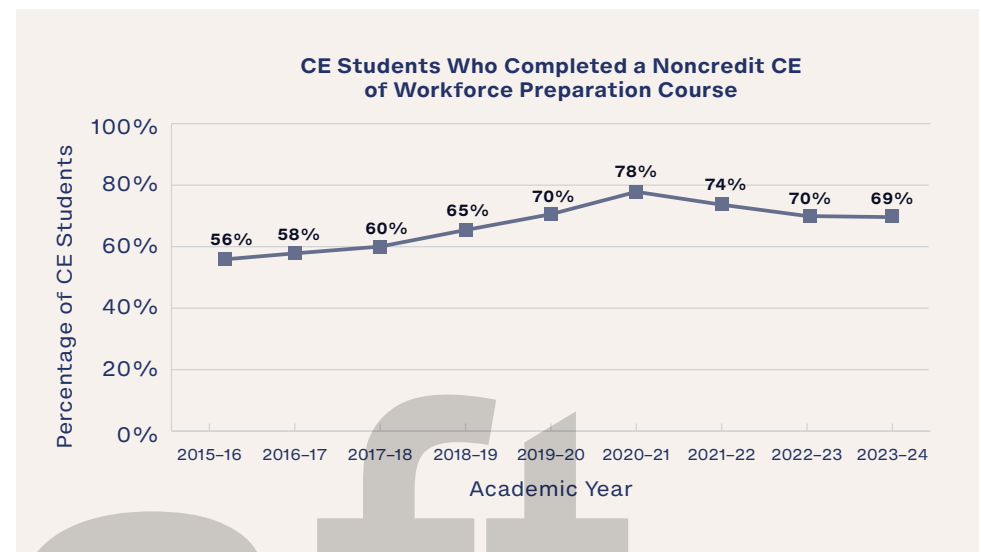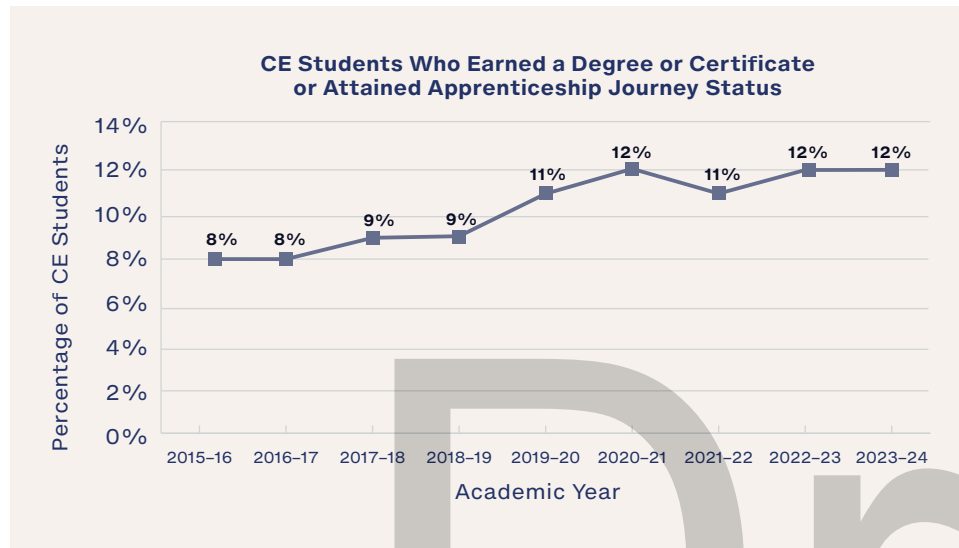### Figure 18. Percentage of CE Students Who Earned Degrees, Certificates, or Apprenticeship Journey Status Rose by Half Over a Nine-Year Period

Note. For a table of the data shown here, see Figure A18 in the Appendix.

Source. DataVista, 2015–2016 through 2023–2024.

Transfer to a Four-Year Institution

The rate of SDI CE students who transferred to a four-year institution **rose** from 5 percent to 6 percent between 2015–2016 and 2022–2023 (Figure 19).

Figure 19. Rate of CE Students Who Transferred to a Four-Year Institution Rose Slightly in an Eight-Year Period

Note. For a table of the data shown here, see Figure A19 in the Appendix.

Source. DataVista, 2015–2016 through 2022–2023.

Employment

Employment in Related Field of Study

Among SDI CE students who exited, the rate of students who transitioned to jobs related to their fields of study **rose** slightly between 2015–2016 and 2021–2022 (Figure 20).

Figure 20. Rate of CE Students Working in Jobs Related to Their Field of Study Rose Slightly in a Seven-Year Period

Note. For a table of the data shown here, see Figure A20 in the Appendix.

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

Earnings

Median Annual Earnings

The median annual earnings **rose** from $40,210 to $43,940 between 2015–2016 and 2022–2023 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 21).

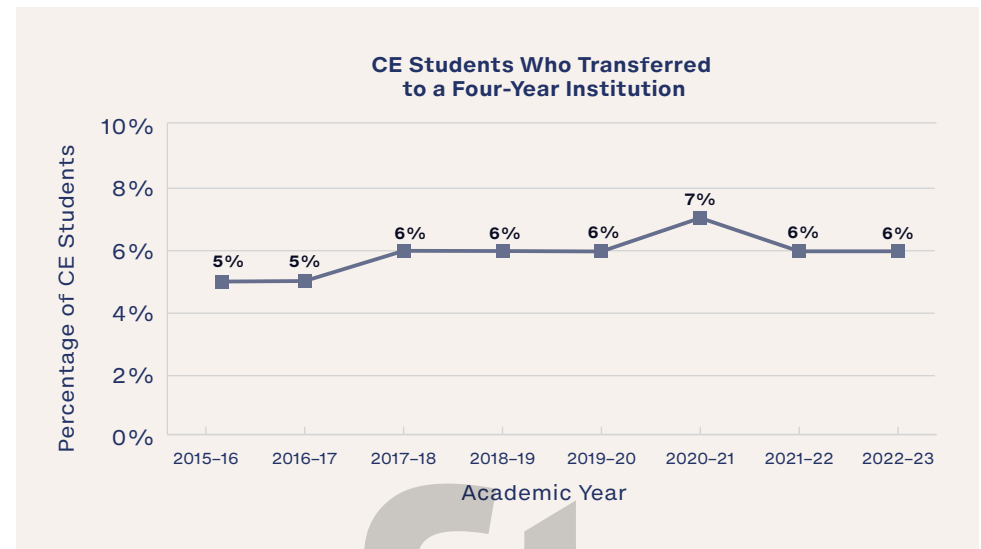**Figure 21. Median Annual Earnings of Exiting CE Students Rose About 9 Percent in an Eight-Year Period**

Note. For a table of the data shown here, see Figure A21 in the Appendix.

Source. DataVista, 2015–2016 through 2022–2023.

Median Change in Earnings

The median change in earnings prior to community college enrollment and after exiting **rose** by 58 percent, from 19 percent to 30 percent, between 2015–2016 and 2022–2023 for SDI CE students who exited college and did not transfer to any postsecondary institution (Figure 22).

Figure 22. Median Change in Earnings for Exiting CE Students Trended Upward in an Eight-Year Period

Median Change in Earnings for Exiting CE Students

(Line chart — Percentage of CE Students vs. Academic Year)

- 2015–16: 19%
- 2016–17: 23%
- 2017–18: 22%
- 2018–19: 25%
- 2019–20: 27%
- 2020–21: 31%
- 2021–22: 30%
- 2022–23: 30%

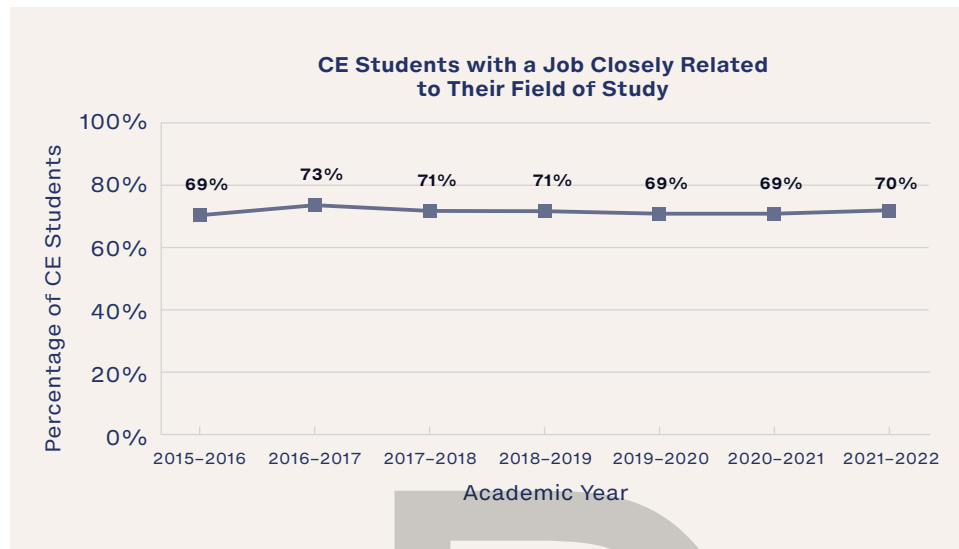*Note. For a table of the data shown here, see Figure A22 in the Appendix.*

Source. DataVista, 2015–2016 through 2022–2023.

Attainment of the Living Wage

Among SDI CE students who exited college and did not transfer to any postsecondary institution, 40 percent obtained living-wage jobs in 2022–2023, *up* from 36 percent in 2015–2016 (Figure 23).

Figure 23. Rate of CE Students Who Attained the Living Wage Following Exit Rose 11 Percent Over an Eight-Year Period

Exiting CE Students Who Attained the Living Wage

(Line chart — Percentage of CE Students vs. Academic Year)

- 2015–16: 36%
- 2016–17: 38%
- 2017–18: 39%
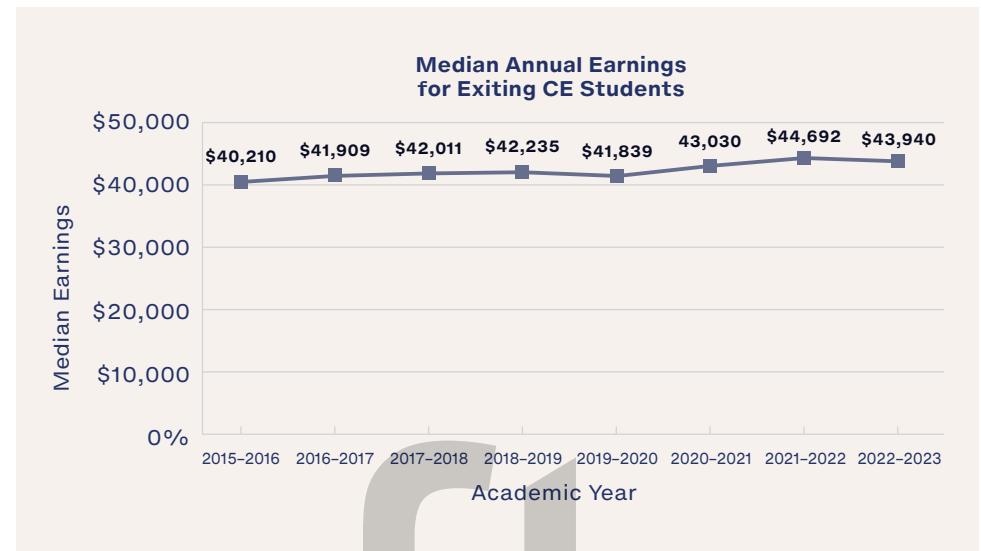- 2018–19: 39%
- 2019–20: 38%
- 2020–21: 38%
- 2021–22: 40%
- 2022–23: 40%

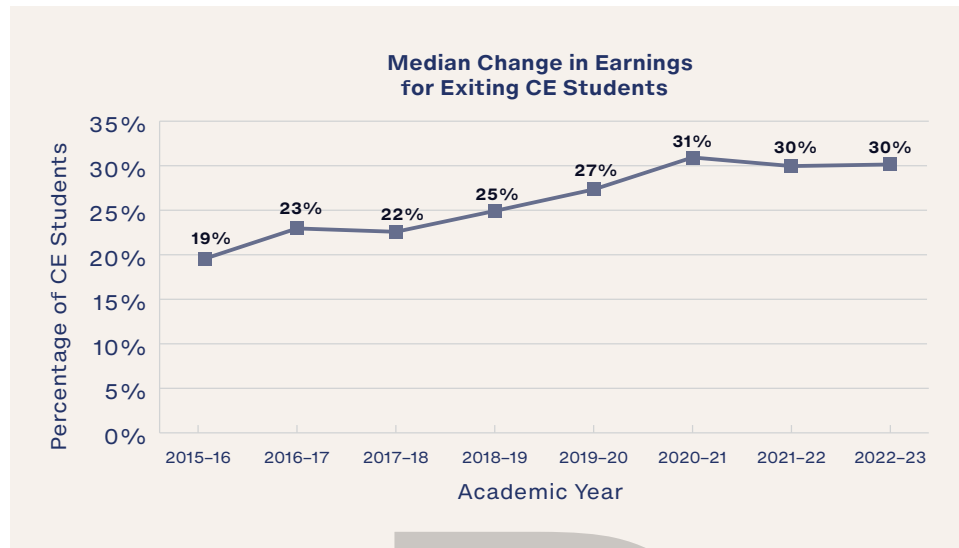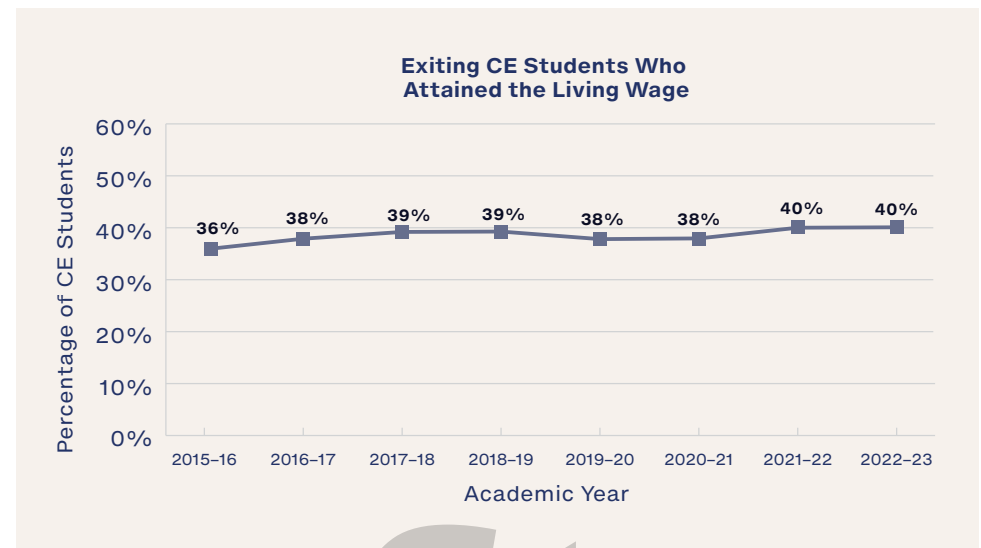*Note. For a table of the data shown here, see Figure A23 in the Appendix.*

Source. DataVista, 2015–2016 through 2022–2023.

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*, the *Adult Learner Study report*, and the *Student Support Services Experiences Study report*.

3. Provide guidance, support, and funding to the colleges to implement recommendations from committees and K–12 partners for the development of high-quality K–16 pathways.

4. Engage with the SDWP 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 of 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 guidance document to in-demand sectors aligned with 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

Committees and Communities of Practice

Data & Innovation Committee

- Data & Research CoP

Employer Engagement Committee

- Apprenticeship CoP
- Career Navigation CoP
- Work-Based Learning & Job Placement Case Management CoP

Adult Learner Success Advisory Committee

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) CoP
- Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) CoP

The region utilizes cross-college committees and CoPs to guide the regional work and address regional priorities. This year, three committees are leading this work. Aligned with the regional goals, the focus and work of the 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. These committees strategize, prioritize and advocate in support of the practitioner-led CoPs.

Separate from the committees are the cross-college CoPs, comprising practitioners who convene regularly to share promising practices and leverage the experiences of others for the purpose of problem-solving challenges to advance equity in their area of focus.

Data & Innovation Committee

Purpose

Foster equitable economic mobility by ensuring that improvements to college programs and services are informed by the best available information and accountable to the broader Southern Border communities.

Goals

Build leadership and research capacity to leverage data, literature, and evaluation that informs decision-making, guides investments, and improves regional SWP outcomes.

Objectives

- Develop shared definitions of success and common measures across regional initiatives.

- Promote advanced data analysis and visualization methods, including predictive/prescriptive analytics and equity gap analyses.

Community of Practice

- Data & Research

Transition to Committee and CoPs

The **Data & Innovation committee**, formerly the Data & Innovation workgroup, helps facilitate data-informed, programmatic decision-making by building the capacity of college interest holders to conduct data-driven work as a practice and by serving as data and research experts for problem-solving data-related issues. The committee, in collaboration with the Center of Excellence, trains CE research experts who are dedicated to supporting the data needs of CE projects and the work of the colleges' institutional research offices. The committee also provides direction to the **Data & Research CoP**. The activities and projects of the Data & Innovation committee and the Data & Research CoP align with regional priority four.

Data & Innovation Accomplishments 2024–2025

Following are key accomplishments of the newly renamed Data & Innovation committee and the Data & Research CoP contributing to the region's SWP goals:

Student equity advancement & data alignment

The committee and CoP facilitated regional dialogue on equity-focused methodologies, including approaches for calculating disproportionate impact in dual enrollment access, exploring data linkages with homelessness records to better understand and support transition-aged youth, supporting the Adult Learner Study (conducted by the San Diego & Imperial Center of Excellence), and working with Lightcast to complete the economic impact studies. These shared conversations advanced common strategies for identifying and addressing equity gaps across colleges.

Examples of materials presented and discussed include the following:

- *Calculating DI in Access to College Courses for High School Students*
- *Outcomes for Young Adults with Experiences of Homelessness*
- *Context for Adult Learners and Economic Impact Studies*

Knowledge-sharing on data tools and equity resources

The committee and CoP supported cross-college exchange around new and emerging data resources, such as the San Diego Community College District (SDCCD) WBL Dashboard, the *SDCCD CTE Definitions Guide,* and DataVista. These efforts emphasized consistent terminology and reporting practices while strengthening the region's ability to use data tools for programmatic decision-making.

Examples of resources shared and discussed include the following:

- *SDCCD WBL Dashboard*
- *SDCCD CTE Definitions Guide*

Advancement of regional initiatives

The committee and CoP continued to support the Faculty Institute, Counselor Institute, and CTE research expert positions, ensuring that these capacity-building programs remain as regional assets that support equity-focused, inquiry-driven work. They supported and streamlined a regional evaluation of the Faculty Institute to assess faculty success and retention through both pre- and post-institute data, looking at enrollment, retention, and success over a period of two years before and after participation. They created space for other regional workgroup leads and initiative leads to bring data projects and research questions to the Data & Innovation Committee for members to provide feedback and guidance.

Program completion metrics and outcomes

The committee and CoP facilitated regional discussions to refine definitions and methodologies for measuring program completion and postcompletion employment outcomes with the goal of strengthening alignment across colleges, improving accuracy in reporting and creating clearer measures of CTE student success. They identified priority data/research areas of need, including access to labor market data; consistent data collection for WBL and placement; CTE definitions; and regional data request practices, timelines, and expectations.

Draft

Employer Engagement Committee

Purpose

Foster equitable economic mobility by strengthening collaboration with employer and industry partners to ensure that educational programs, work-based learning, and career services align with evolving workforce needs.

Goal

Unite the workforce ecosystem to equitably increase work-based learning and employment opportunities for community college students.

Objectives

- Strengthen and enhance the regional employer engagement framework to center community college students and create equitable outcomes.

- Leverage quantitative and qualitative LMI to create and align programs with emerging industry trends and skills demands.

Communities of Practice

- Apprenticeship (new)
- Career Navigation
- Work-Based Learning & Job Placement Case Management

Transition to Committee and CoPs

The newly restructured **Employer Engagement Committee** (formerly Employer Engagement workgroup) is the overarching group focused on enacting regional priorities two and three. The deans and associate deans who compose the members of this committee set the direction for multiple CoPs. The three CoPs focused on employer engagement are the **Apprenticeship CoP**, **Career Navigation CoP**, and **Work-Based Learning & Job Placement Case Management CoP**.

As with all of the region's CoPs, members are practitioners and include WBL coordinators, job placement case managers, and ERLs, career counselors, career center staff, faculty, deans, and associate deans from the individual colleges—all of whom are integral to ensuring that students benefit from myriad and meaningful career experiences that can lead to employment

Employer Engagement Model

The Employer Engagement Committee maintained the Employer Engagement Model (Figure 24) and continued working with the 10 ERLs, each of whom focused on the employer relationships at their college or for their specific focus areas, such as health or apprenticeships. The model employs a blended approach of college-focused work and sector-based employer engagement, including members of the Health, Advanced Manufacturing, and Advanced Transportation & Logistics sectors.

Figure 24. 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 — College Employer Engagement Teams — TECHNOLOGY & COLLABORATION — Regional Employer Engagement Team

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. For a table of the data shown here, see Figure A22 in the Appendix.
Source. DataVista, 2015–2016 through 2022–2023.

Employer Engagement: Employer Relations Liaisons Accomplishments 2024–2025

Following are key 2024–2025 accomplishments of the 10 ERLs who contributed to advancing SDI RC's priorities two and three.

Employer engagement activities and agreements

Across the region, ERLs engaged employers in a total of 1,232 meetings, developing new employer relationships, maintaining relationships, and networking at employer events (Figure 25). As a result, ERLs formalized 3,089 employer agreements across 11 industry sectors (Figure 26), including agreements with 1,344 new employers.

WBL opportunities for students

ERLs developed over 2,601 unduplicated WBL activities for students across the colleges while collaborating with new employers in the region to accomplish this significant effort. Activities spanned the WBL spectrum, including internships, job shadows, mentorships, company tours, and more.

Student job opportunities for social mobility

ERLs developed 5,096 student job opportunities that spanned all 11 industry sectors in the region and aligned with colleges' specific programmatic needs. In addition, 230 industry members were added to college advisories across the 10 colleges.
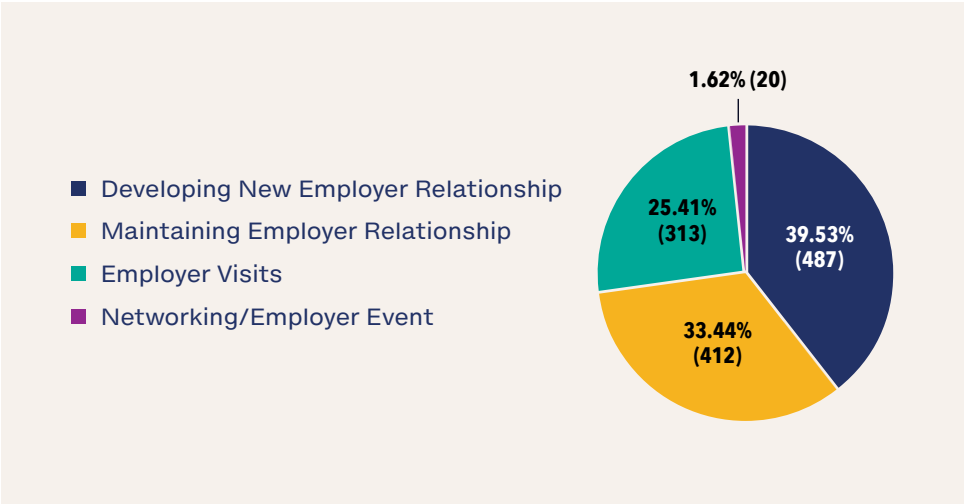
Selection of employer engagement success stories

- A Cuyamaca College student successfully leveraged options that she learned about from meeting with the college's job placement case manager. The student learned about San Diego's Verified Program in Business, attended a Cuyamaca networking event in spring 2025, and earned an internship at the East County Schools Federal Credit Union. The student has transferred to San Diego State University, majoring in human resources, and will be the keynote speaker at the spring 2026 Cuyamaca networking event and a panelist on the Cuyamaca College Business Office Technology Virtual Panel in fall 2026.

- The Imperial Valley College ERL secured a new partnership with Earthrise Nutritionals so that the college's students could have opportunities to intern and earn certificates in the college's Plant Operator Program. Earthrise fills the gap caused by the delay of the anticipated growth of the lithium industry. The new partnership has deepened to include expanded internships in other areas of study, site tours, LIFT Program advisory participation, and access to the new Earthrise Engineering Center, enabling the college's students to participate in real-world research projects and gain work experience.

- At MiraCosta College, the ERL strengthened a relationship with the CEO of Senior Tech Connect by suggesting a model of hiring student interns to grow his small business. The CEO, following a successful experience with an intern from the college, realized the value of interns and since then participated in a MiraCosta Employer Connection Luncheon, serving as a panelist to discuss careers in social services. At this event, he took on another intern, a retired Marine Corps veteran and MiraCosta student majoring in accounting, who is now the bookkeeper and finance manager at the company.

- ERLs helped establish the Business Advisory Board, a strong and active partnership between San Diego Mesa College and local industry leaders. This partnership has fostered deep employer engagement, such as participating in events and the hiring of Mesa College students and alumni and collaborating with faculty and staff to develop a new human resources certificate program.

- Miramar College participated in the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority's Take Flight program, which led to a collaboration and then an expanded relationship with the Authority's human resources team The Authority now offers new internship opportunities to Miramar College students. In fact, a Miramar student was chosen as the only community college student to join the 2025 cohort of the San Diego International Airport's Quieter Home internship program. In addition, the ERL has greatly contributed to student and alumni employment at Miramar, which now hosts small job fairs focused on student's academic and career pathways.

- Palomar College's career center partnered with its Black Student Success Team to host the Business Pathway Career Fair, providing students with access to WBL opportunities. This project's intentional collaboration with Black-owned businesses and companies, who are committed to closing the equity gap, provided culturally relevant guidance and access to inclusive career pathways.

- San Diego City College became the region's first community college to offer the Community-Based Immigration Legal Services Pathway Fellowship, involving a partnership with the California Youth Leadership Corps and the Catholic Legal Immigration Network. Twelve San Diego City College students were selected for this exceptional opportunity to gain experience in immigration law and social justice.

- Southwestern College students in the culinary program attended a career panel event, inspired from learning about the career journeys of several chefs working at the Gaylord Pacific Resort. The resort's human resources manager discussed opportunities at the resort, which soon led to at least two Southwestern students accepting job offers.

- The Director for Regional Health Initiatives has significantly advanced nursing and allied health education in San Diego by building partnerships with key organizations and coordinating collaborative meetings. Achievements include securing funding for nursing programs, launching a shared resource center, ensuring clinical placements, and establishing apprenticeship programs.

ERL and Employer Engagement Activities

Figure 25. ERLs Engaged in 1,232 Employer Meetings and Events, 2024–2025

Legend:
- Developing New Employer Relationship
- Maintaining Employer Relationship
- Employer Visits
- Networking/Employer Event

1.62% (20)
25.41% (313)
39.53% (487)
33.44% (412)

Note. For a table of the data shown here, see Figure A25 in the Appendix.

Source. San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium, 2024–2025.

Figure 26. ERLs formalized 3,089 Employer Agreements Across 11 Sectors, 2024–2025
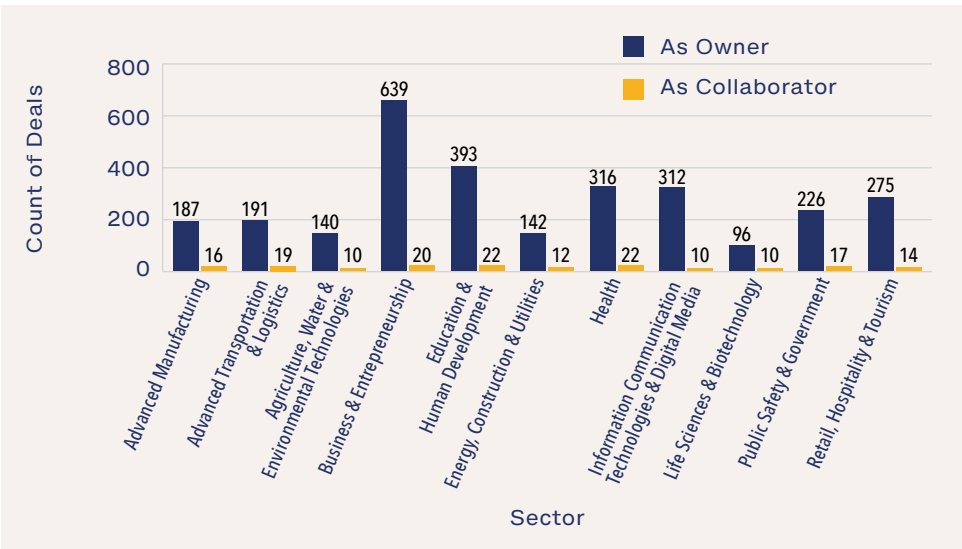
Note. For a table of the data shown here, see Figure A26 in the Appendix.

Source. San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium, 2024–2025.

Employer Engagement: Career Navigation Accomplishments 2024–2025

Following are samples of key accomplishments of the former Career Navigation workgroup and CoP contributing to the region's SWP goals:

Colleges' development of career services strategic plans

Supported the development of colleges' career services strategic plans, produced by 8 out of 10 San Diego and Imperial community colleges plus one community college district. SDI RC provided technical assistance to ensure successful strategic plan development. Colleges participated in a guided process, facilitated by the SDI RC, to complete the *NACE Professional Standards for College and University Career Services Self-Assessment* to inform their strategic plans.

Career services community of practice

Organized and convened a monthly career services CoP—a trusted space for professionals to share, learn, and overcome barriers to success. Participants included deans, associate deans, career center staff, WBL coordinators, job placement case managers, ERLs, and regional staff.

Developed of career navigation tools

Developed *The Career Navigation Toolkit*, including a framework and a customizable graphic, to support the San Diego and Imperial community colleges with their processes and services in implementing and expanding career development activities with an equity lens.

Development of disability awareness training

Supported the San Diego Community College District with the development of the Disability Awareness Training for employers.

Analysis of career services strategic plans to identify trends and gaps

Collected and analyzed process data from the career services strategic plans to identify common trends and improve student services that are delivered to meet students where they are.

Employer Engagement: Apprenticeship Accomplishments 2024–2025

Following are key 2024–2025 accomplishments of the apprenticeship efforts in the region.

SDI RC and SDWP apprenticeship convening

In May 2025, the SDI RC partnered with the SDWP to host *Manufacturing Talent: The Power of Apprenticeships*, a convening designed to strengthen collaboration among industry, education, and workforce leaders. The event featured a comprehensive overview of apprenticeships, including the ways they differ from internships and other training models, the return on investment for employers, and the role of regional partners in addressing skills gaps.

Employers heard directly from peers during testimonial sessions that highlighted real-world success stories, industry-specific insights, and the experiences of both businesses and apprentices. Open discussions provided a platform for manufacturers to voice concerns, share challenges, and identify opportunities for stronger collaboration with educational institutions and intermediaries such as the LAUNCH Apprenticeship Network.

The program concluded with a call to action, equipping participants with resources to connect with apprenticeship experts, guidance on engaging with K–12 and community college partners, and next steps for follow-up consultations. The *Manufacturing Talent* convening underscored the critical role of cross-sector partnerships in developing a resilient manufacturing workforce pipeline that supports regional economic growth.

Equity-driven pathways

The SDI RC continued its support and commitment to building inclusive, sustainable pipelines that connect education, workforce training, and meaningful career opportunities by making significant strides in advancing apprenticeship opportunities and strengthening equity-driven pathways. One significant example was securing a $750,000 grant from the James Irvine Foundation and partnering with the community-based organizations Rise Up Industries and Vehicles for Change to provide wraparound and supportive services for justice-impacted apprentices. This program enabled the apprentices to enroll in community colleges and continue their education.

College and industry partnerships

New program development has been a priority, particularly in the advanced manufacturing and health care sectors. Such examples include (a) San Diego City College and GKN Aerospace launching a registered apprenticeship program for industrial maintenance technicians, who are offered free tuition to complete courses at City College alongside paid, on-the-job training; and (b) Imperial Valley College partnering with El Centro Regional Medical Center to develop a new apprenticeship for medical assistants, which is set to launch in spring 2026.

Pre-apprenticeship pathways

The SDI RC further supported pre-apprenticeship pathways to expand access to high-demand careers. For example, Imperial Valley College joined with the SDWP and building trades partners of San Diego and Imperial Counties to establish a pre-apprenticeship program for individuals pursuing careers in the construction trades. Miramar College secured a California Opportunity Youth Apprenticeship (COYA) planning grant for $286,715 to plan a fire trades pre-apprenticeship pathway and an implementation grant for $1,200,000. San Diego College of Continuing Education also secured a COYA planning grant for $298,430 for its fire and rescue pre-apprenticeship pathway.

Adult Learner Success Advisory Committee

Purpose

Guide regional efforts to strengthen policies, practices, and partnerships that support the diverse needs of adult learners across the San Diego and Imperial community colleges. Grounded in insights from the Center of Excellence's *Adult Learner Study* report and the *Adult Learner Building Capacity Summit*, the Adult Learner Success Advisory Committee will provide strategic direction and recommendations for developing the eventual and ongoing regional Adult Learner Success Committee.

Objectives

- Guide the planning, design, and follow-up from the *Adult Learner Building Capacity Summit*.

- Review and operationalize recommendations from the *Adult Learner Report* to inform regional action.

- Identify opportunities and alignment with related activities, including the Artificial Intelligence CoP and the Credit for Prior Learning CoP, for example.

Communities of Practice

- Artificial Intelligence (AI)

- Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) CoP

Purpose: Support colleges in responsibly and effectively adopting AI practices that enhance adult learner engagement and success.

The AI CoP is getting started in 2025–2026 to advance the region's adult learner success goals by helping colleges understand and effectively integrate AI tools to enhance teaching, learning, and student support toward preparing students for an AI-driven workforce. In collaboration with AI Fellows and AI ChangeMakers, the CoP is conducting a regional scan of AI use and facilitating shared learning to ensure all colleges can confidently and equitably engage with AI innovations.

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) CoP

Purpose: Expand access to CPL through consistent, equitable regional policies and practices.

The CPL CoP is getting started in 2025–2026 to advance the region's adult learner success goals by expanding equitable access to CPL opportunities that recognize adult learners' prior experiences and accelerate their progress toward credentials. Through regional alignment, training, and equity-focused practices, the CoP supports colleges in creating transparent, student-centered CPL systems that reduce time to completion and improve outcomes for adult learners.

Appendix: Descriptions of Figures

This appendix provides descriptions of the figures in this document for readers who are sight-impaired.

Figure A1. SDI RC Strong Workforce Program Governance Structure

Overview and Presentation

The flowchart in Figure 1 depicts each segment of the SDI RC governance structure and how each serves a role in supporting the implementation of the Strong Workforce Program.

The San Diego Imperial Counties Community College Association (SDICCCA) oversees the regional chair, the Regional Oversight Committee, the Deans' Council, and the Regional Workforce Development Council:

- The regional chair oversees the K–12 Strong Workforce Program, the fiscal agent, and Regional Professional Development and partners with the SDI Center of Excellence and Regional Partner Workgroups.

- The Regional Oversight Committee includes representation from Chief Instructional Officers (CIOs) and Chief Student Services Officers (CSSOs).

- The Deans' Council provides guidance to the Regional Workforce Development Council and the Implementation Committee.

The Implementation Committee is made up of the leads of the three committees and six CoPs:

- Adult Learner Success Advisory Committee
  - » Artificial Intelligence (AI) (CoP)
  - » Credit for Prior Learning (CoP)
- Data & Innovation Committee
  - » Data & Research (CoP)
- Employer Engagement Committee
  - » Apprenticeship (CoP)
  - » Career Navigation (CoP)
  - » Work-Based Learning & Job Placement Case Management (CoP)

Note: See Figure 1.

Table A2. SDI RC Investments by Project and Round, 2016–2017 Through 2024–2025

Project	Target	Total investment (Rounds 1–10)	Rounds
Precollege outreach	Regionwide support	$5,389,065	Rounds 1–8
Guided career pathways implementation	Regionwide support	$8,259,020	Rounds 2–10
Dual enrollment	Colleges	$800,240	Rounds 7–10
Credit for prior learning	Colleges	$410,941	Rounds 7–10
Pathway navigation	Colleges	$3,649,420	Rounds 2–10
Retention and success/Faculty and Counselor Institutes	Colleges	$7,207,681	Rounds 3–9
Sector strategies and equity outcomes	Colleges	$7,864,264	Rounds 2–10
Clinical placement planning	Regionwide support	$390,945	Rounds 5–10
Employer engagement	Regionwide support	$4,729,944	Rounds 6–10
Work-based learning coordination	Colleges	$6,623,559	Rounds 2–10
Job placement case management	Colleges	$15,608,558	Rounds 1–10
Marketing of CE programs	Regionwide support	$7,092,489	Rounds 1–8
College-based marketing of CE programs	Colleges	$3,617,874	Rounds 1, 3–8
Labor market research	Regionwide support	$5,538,233	Rounds 1–10
Capacity building: Adult learners	Regionwide support	$500,000	Round 10
Accelerating career education outcomes	Colleges	$1,300,000	Rounds 9–10
Innovative collaborative projects	Colleges	$412,802	Round 1
Regional research investment	Colleges	$1,704,396	Rounds 7–10
Tutoring pilot project	Colleges	$48,032	Round 2
21st century employability skills pilot	Colleges	$132,659	Round 2
Work-based learning assessment	Colleges	$165,378	Round 2
Improving the student enrollment process	Colleges	$1,485,254	Rounds 2–4
Retention and success acceleration projects	Colleges	$824,952	Round 3
Regional consortium implementation	Regionwide support	$2,661,136	Rounds 1–10
SWP administration	Regionwide support	$1,774,092	Rounds 1–10
Total investment		**$88,190,934**	

Source. San Diego and Imperial Regional Consortium, 2025.

Note: See Table 2.

Figures A6 and A7. Demographics of San Diego and Imperial Counties

Overview and Presentation

The infographics show the overall demographics of San Diego and Imperial Counties.

Numerical Values Presented in the Infographic

Demographic	San Diego County	Imperial County
Population	3,298,799	181,724
Forecasted population growth by 2034 (2024 baseline year)	2.8%	7.8%
Age: 0–24 years old	993,939 (30%)	67,763 (37%)
Age: 25 years and older	2,304,860 (70%)	113,961 (63%)
Race/ethnicity: American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0.2%	1.4%
Race/ethnicity: Asian	12.2%	1.2%
Race/ethnicity: Black or African American	4.4%	1%
Race/ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino	34.9%	86.3%
Race/ethnicity: Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.3%	1.4%
Race/ethnicity: White	41.9%	8.8%
Race/ethnicity: Other	0.7%	0.2%
Race/ethnicity: Two or more races	5.4%	1.1%
Veterans (2023)	176,043 (7%)	3,663 (2.8%)
Median household income (2023) (California median household income during this period: $95,521)	$103,674	$60,243
Unemployment rate (July 2025) (California unemployment rate during this period: 6.1%)	5.2%	20.2%
Persons in poverty (persons in poverty in California during this time: 12.5%)	10.4%	19.6%

Demographic	San Diego County	Imperial County
Highest level of education attained, 18–24 years old: High school (includes equivalency)	35.9%	34.1%
Highest level of education attained, 18–24 years old: Some college or associate degree	44%	48.1%
Highest level of education attained, 18–24 years old: Bachelor's degree or higher	12.6%	4.1%
Highest level of education attained, 25 years old and older: High school (includes equivalency)	17.9%	25.9%
Highest level of education attained, 25 years old and older: Some college or associate degree	28.9%	29.9%
Highest level of education attained, 25 years old and older: Bachelor's degree or higher	42.1%	16.1%

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100% because of rounding. Source. U.S. Census Bureau, CA Employment Development Department, Census Reporter.

Note: See Figure 6 and Figure 7.

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Figure A9. Nearly One Half of San Diego and Imperial Community College Students Are Enrolled in a CE Course, 2023–2024

Overview and Presentation

The bar graph shows that during the 2023–2024 academic year, nearly one half of students who attended San Diego and Imperial community colleges were enrolled in a CE course.

Numerical Values Presented in the Graph

County	All students (CE and non-CE)	CE students
San Diego County community colleges	180,796	83,951
Imperial County community college	12,208	5,475

Source. DataVista, 2023–2024.

Note: See Figure 9.

Figure A10. Two Thirds of CE Students Identify as Students of Color at San Diego County Community Colleges

Overview and Presentation

The pie chart shows the distribution of CE students at San Diego community colleges by race/ethnicity during the 2023–2024 academic year.

Numerical Values Presented in the Graph

Race/Ethnicity	Percentage of CE students
Hispanic	46%
White	30%
Asian	6%
Black or African American	5%
Multiracial	5%
Filipino	4%
Unknown	2%

Source. DataVista, 2023–2024.

Note: See Figure 10.

Figure A11. Ninety-Two Percent of CE Students Identify As Hispanic at Imperial Valley College

Overview and Presentation

The pie chart shows the distribution of CE students at Imperial Valley College by race/ethnicity during the 2023–2024 academic year.

Numerical Values Presented in the Graph

Race/Ethnicity	Percentage of CE students
Hispanic	92%
White	4%
Unknown	2%
Black or African American	1%
Multiracial	1%

Source. DataVista, 2023–2024.

Note: See Figure 11*.*

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Figure A12. Seventy Percent of CE Students Are Designated Economically Disadvantaged at San Diego County Community Colleges

Overview and Presentation

The bar graph shows that during the 2023–2024 academic year, 70 percent of CE students who attended San Diego community colleges were designated economically disadvantaged.

Numerical Values Presented in the Graph

Economic designation	Number of CE students
Economically disadvantaged	58,402
Not economically disadvantaged	25,549

Source. DataVista, 2023–2024.   ***Note: See Figure 12.***

Figure A13. Ninety-Two Percent of CE Students Are Designated Economically Disadvantaged at Imperial Valley College

Overview and Presentation

The bar graph shows that during the 2023–2024 academic year, 92 percent of CE students who attended Imperial Valley College were designated economically disadvantaged.

Numerical Values Presented in the Graph

Economic designation	Number of CE students
Economically disadvantaged	5,060
Not economically disadvantaged	415

Source. DataVista, 2023–2024.   ***Note: See Figure 13.***

Figure A14. One Half of CE Students Are 24 Years Old or Younger in San Diego County Community Colleges

Overview and Presentation

The bar graph shows that during the 2023–2024 academic year, 50 percent of students who attended San Diego community colleges were 24 years old or younger.

Numerical Values Presented in the Graph

Age	Number of CE students	Percentage of CE students
19 years old and younger	18,243	22%
20–24 years old	23,378	28%
25–29 years old	11,879	14%
30–34 years old	8,741	10%
35–39 years old	6,720	8%
40–49 years old	7,820	9%
50 years old and older	7,170	9%

Source. DataVista, 2023–2024.

Note: See Figure 14.

Figure A15. Nearly Two Thirds of CE Students Are 24 Years Old or Younger at Imperial Valley College

Overview and Presentation

The bar graph shows that during the 2023–2024 academic year, 64 percent of students who attended Imperial Valley College were 24 years old or younger.

Numerical Values Presented in the Graph

Age	Number of CE students	Percentage of CE students
19 years old and younger	1,785	33%
20–24 years old	1,734	32%
25–29 years old	650	12%
30–34 years old	442	8%
35–39 years old	310	6%
40–49 years old	356	7%
50 years old and older	198	4%

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent because of rounding. Source. DataVista, 2023–2024.

Note: See *Figure 15.*

Figure A16. Proportion of Students Completing 9+ CE Credits Rose by About 30 Percent Over a Nine-Year Period

Overview and Presentation

The line graph shows that the percentage of CE students who completed nine or more CE units in a single year rose from 15 percent during the 2015–2016 academic year to 20 percent during the 2023–2024 academic year.

Numerical Values Presented in the Graph

Academic year	Percentage of CE students
2015–2016	15%
2016–2017	15%
2017–2018	16%
2018–2019	17%
2019–2020	17%
2020–2021	20%
2021–2022	19%
2022–2023	19%
2023–2024	20%

Source. DataVista, 2015–2016 through 2023–2024.

Note: See Figure 16.

Figure A17. Noncredit CE or Workforce Preparation Course Completion Rates Grew by Nearly 25 Percent Over a Nine-Year Period

Overview and Presentation

The line graph shows that the percentage of students who completed a noncredit CE or workforce preparation course rose from 56 percent during the 2015–2016 academic year to 69 percent during the 2023–2024 academic year.

Numerical Values Presented in the Graph

Academic year	Percentage of CE students
2015–2016	56%
2016–2017	58%
2017–2018	60%
2018–2019	65%
2019–2020	70%
2020–2021	78%
2021–2022	74%
2022–2023	70%
2023–2024	69%

Source. DataVista, 2015–2016 through 2023–2024.

Note: See Figure 17.

Figure A18. Percentage of CE Students Who Earned Degrees, Certificates, or Apprenticeship Journey Status Rose by Half Over a Nine-Year Period

Overview and Presentation

The line graph shows that the percentage of CE students who earned a degree or certificate or attained apprenticeship journey status rose from 8 percent during the 2015–2016 academic year to 12 percent during the 2023–2024 academic year.

Numerical Values Presented in the Graph

Academic year	Percentage of CE students
2015–2016	8%
2016–2017	8%
2017–2018	9%
2018–2019	9%
2019–2020	11%
2020–2021	12%
2021–2022	11%
2022–2023	12%
2023–2024	12%

Source. DataVista, 2015–2016 through 2022–2024.

Note: See Figure 18.

Figure A19. Rate of CE Students Who Transferred to a Four-Year Institution Rose Slightly in an Eight-Year Period

Overview and Presentation

The line graph shows that the percentage of CE students who transferred to a four-year institution rose from 5 percent during the 2015–2016 academic year to 6 percent during the 2022–2023 academic year.

Numerical Values Presented in the Graph

Academic year	Percentage of CE students
2015–2016	5%
2016–2017	5%
2017–2018	6%
2018–2019	6%
2019–2020	6%
2020–2021	7%
2021–2022	6%
2022–2023	6%

Source. DataVista, 2015–2016 through 2022–2023.

Note: See *Figure 19.*

Figure A20. Rate of CE Students Working in Jobs Related to Their Field of Study Rose Slightly in a Seven-Year Period

Overview and Presentation

The line graph shows that the percentage of CE students who exited and worked in a job that closely related to their field of study rose from 69 percent during the 2015–2016 academic year to 70 percent during the 2021–2022 academic year.

Numerical Values Presented in the Graph

Academic year	Percentage of CE students
2015–2016	69%
2016–2017	73%
2017–2018	71%
2018–2019	71%
2019–2020	69%
2020–2021	69%
2021–2022	70%

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

Note: See Figure 20.

Figure A21. Median Annual Earnings of Exiting CE Students Rose About 9 Percent in an Eight-Year Period

Overview and Presentation

The line graph shows that the median annual earnings of exiting CE students rose from $40,210 during the 2015–2016 academic year to $43,940 during the 2022–2023 academic year.

Numerical Values Presented in the Graph

Academic year	Median earnings
2015–2016	$40,210
2016–2017	$41,909
2017–2018	$42,011
2018–2019	$42,235
2019–2020	$41,839
2020–2021	$43,030
2021–2022	$44,692
2022–2023	$43,940

Source. DataVista, 2015–2016 through 2022–2023.

Note: See *Figure 21.*

Figure A22. Median Change in Earnings for Exiting CE Students Trended Upward Over an Eight-Year Period

Overview and Presentation

The line graph shows that the median change in earnings for exiting CE students rose by 58 percent, from 19 percent during the 2015–2016 academic year to 30 percent during the 2022–2023 academic year.

Numerical Values Presented in the Graph

Academic year	Percentage of exiting CE students
2015–2016	19%
2016–2017	23%
2017–2018	22%
2018–2019	25%
2019–2020	27%
2020–2021	31%
2021–2022	30%
2022–2023	30%

Source. DataVista, 2015–2016 through 2022–2023.

Note: See Figure 22.

Figure A23. Rate of CE Students Who Attained the Living Wage Following Exit Rose 11 Percent Over an Eight-Year Period

Overview and Presentation

The line graph shows that the percentage of exiting CE students who attained the living wage rose by 11 percent, from 36 percent during the 2015–2016 academic year to 40 percent during the 2022–2023 academic year.

Numerical Values Presented in the Graph

Academic year	Percentage of exiting CE students
2015–2016	36%
2016–2017	38%
2017–2018	39%
2018–2019	39%
2019–2020	38%
2020–2021	38%
2021–2022	40%
2022–2023	40%

Source. DataVista, 2015–2016 through 2022–2023.

Note: See *Figure 23.*

Figure A24. San Diego and Imperial Counties Strong Workforce Employer Engagement Model

Overview and Presentation

The strong workforce employer engagement model is depicted by a wheel whose hub is the SDI RC's Regional Employer Engagement Team. Through technology and collaboration, this team works with the three segments of the wheel— regional partners, each college's employer engagement team, and industry sectors—to involve employers in students' preparation for the workforce and provide opportunities for increasing students' socioeconomic mobility.

The desired outcomes of each party in the college–employer collaboration are as follows:

College outcomes

- Student preparation: knowledge, skills, and abilities aligned with 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

The following teams compose the hub and segments of the wheel:

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, and trade associations

- Chambers of congress

- Local education agencies

College employer engagement teams

These teams consist of work-based learning coordinators, job placement case managers, and career centers at the following colleges:

- 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 Industry sectors

Industry sectors

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

Note: See Figure 24.

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