

# IDENTIFYING AND DEVELOPING APPRENTICESHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Prepared for Merced Regional Adult Education  
Consortium

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In the following report, Hanover Research outlines findings from interviews with multiple contacts in California. These interviews sought to determine how other AB 86 consortia identify and establish viable apprenticeship opportunities. The report also outlines keys to success and potential challenges for adult education consortia that are working to develop apprenticeship programs in their regions.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

### INTRODUCTION

Hanover Research conducted in-depth interviews with multiple contacts in California to determine how other consortia identify and establish viable apprenticeship opportunities. This report focuses on how other Adult Education Regional Consortia are defining apprenticeships in their AB 86 reports; the nature of the partnerships that other consortia have built around apprenticeships; and specific processes needed to implement apprenticeship opportunities with local businesses.

The following report is divided into four main sections, each of which discusses a unique aspect of apprenticeship and incorporates responses from a variety of interview participants.

- Section I: Methodology
- Section II: Apprenticeship in California
- Section III: Keys to Successfully Developing Apprenticeships
- Section IV: Potential Challenges when Developing Apprenticeships

### KEY FINDINGS

- **Apprenticeships consist of two main components: on-the-job training and relevant classroom instruction.** To be considered an apprenticeship by the state, apprenticeship programs must incorporate these features. Interviewees also characterize “apprenticeship” as an alternate option to college and a pathway to sustainable employment.
- **Few AB 86 consortia have succeeded in planning effective apprenticeship opportunities to date.** State experts indicate that consortia are slowly becoming more involved in identifying and developing apprenticeship opportunities, but no consortia that interviewees are aware of have planned a full-fledged apprenticeship program as part of efforts related to AB 86. Most existing, successful apprenticeship programs that interviewees mentioned are managed by community colleges or regional adult education initiatives and had previously been established.
- **Successful apprenticeship programs rely heavily on building connections to industries.** Not only do apprenticeships respond to industry demands, but employing an apprenticeship coordinator with direct industry experience may foster an atmosphere of trust and goodwill between the partners.

- **Employers may be reluctant to partner with an apprenticeship program due to concerns about a potential low return on investment.** Employers must expend time, energy, and money training apprentices, and they must see a benefit to their participation to stay engaged. Thus, creating relevant curricula that prepare apprentices for full-time employment is key.
- **Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and the California Department of Industry's Division of Apprenticeship (DAS) are two resources for consortia that are beginning to design an apprenticeship program.** WIBs may offer financial support, while DAS consultants can advise consortia about potential apprenticeship opportunities and help them to navigate the state requirements for such a program.

## **SECTION I: METHODOLOGY**

This section provides a brief overview of the methodology used to gather information for this study.

### **IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS**

Hanover Research designed two distinct interview protocols for this project. One contained questions for experts in the state who have in-depth knowledge of how apprenticeships in California work, and the other was designed for consortia members or partners. These two protocols are included in the appendix.

Hanover began by reaching out to state experts and – through these conversations – sought to identify consortia that have identified promising apprenticeship opportunities or whose regions already have strong apprenticeship programs in place.

The nature of the topic required interviewers to adapt questioning when an interviewee had valuable information to share on the topic beyond the areas included in the interview protocols. As such, interviews tended to build on each other based on information gleaned through earlier interviews.

### **PARTICIPANTS**

Hanover Research conducted in-depth interviews with eight participants who are involved in apprenticeship programs in California, including advisors and coordinators of apprenticeship programs within specific districts or community colleges.

Three interviewed contacts work with the California Department of Industrial Relations in the Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS), and four contacts are associated with apprenticeship programs at individual districts or community colleges. One contact works in the California Community College Chancellor's Office.

All contacts expressed a willingness to be contacted directly by Merced Regional Adult Education Consortium should the consortium wish to reach out to any of these individuals for additional information or guidance. Participants' names and email addresses are shown in Figure 1.1 on the following page.

**Figure 1.1: Participant Contact Information**

ORGANIZATION	NAME	TITLE	EMAIL
<b>California Community College Chancellor’s Office</b>	John Dunn	Program Specialist	jdunn@cccco.edu
<b>Division of Apprenticeship Standards</b>	Diane Ravnick	Chief	dravnick@dir.ca.gov
	Glen Forman	Deputy Chief	gforman@dir.ca.gov
	Rachel Freeman	Senior Apprenticeship Consultant – Fresno, San Jose	rfreeman@dir.ca.gov
<b>Los Angeles Unified School District</b>	Oscar Meier	Apprenticeship Program Advisor (Division of Adult and Career Education)	oscar.meier@lausd.net
	Lanzi Asturias	Teacher at East Los Angeles Skills Center	lla64551@lausd.net
<b>Hacienda La Puente Adult Education</b>	Alice Johnson	Program Administrator	ajohnson@hlpusd.k12.ca.us
<b>American River College</b>	Staci Teegarden	Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship Coordinator	teegars@arc.losrios.edu

**CHALLENGES**

While in-depth interviews offered the best method of collecting the information for this report, conducting primary research on this topic presented some challenges. The landscape of apprenticeships in California can be difficult for an outsider to understand, especially given the lack of centralization.

Because of this dynamic, researchers did not abide strictly by the interview protocols in the appendix. In several cases, contacts designated as state experts answered questions intended for consortia members and vice versa. Furthermore, it quickly became apparent that few consortia have concrete plans for apprenticeship programs. Instead, community colleges and regional adult education initiatives that already developed apprenticeship programs were able to provide examples of successful techniques for starting and maintaining such programs.

## SECTION II: APPRENTICESHIP IN CALIFORNIA

Apprenticeships can be an important route to employment, especially for adult learners who may not have the resources to complete an undergraduate degree without working simultaneously. Along with other areas, AB 86 provides funding for programs for apprentices and – relatedly – short-term career technical education programs with high employment potential.

This section will discuss common definitions of apprenticeship, as well as industries in which apprenticeship programs often thrive.

### DEFINITION

Under state and federal guidelines, an apprenticeship consists of two components:<sup>1</sup>

- On-the-job training (2,000 hours)
- Relevant classroom time (130-150 hours)

In addition to these concrete traits, Ms. Staci Teegarden characterizes apprenticeship as a pathway to “getting people middle-class, skilled, high-paying jobs – livable wages to take care of their family [and] boost the economy.”<sup>2</sup>

### COMMON APPRENTICESHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Apprenticeship opportunities often emerge in trade industries, many of which can be grouped under construction. Merced Regional Adult Education Consortium identified general labor, electrical engineering, plumbing, and pipe fitting as possible apprenticeship opportunities. Along with cosmetology and barbering, these occupations are some of the most common for apprenticeship programs.

However, apprenticeship is not limited to these fields. Regardless of size or industry, almost any company can host an apprentice. While large apprenticeship programs might boast training centers and a systematic placement process, it is possible for an individual company to partner with a single student under the apprenticeship guidelines. For example, one interviewed contact suggested that Merced Regional Adult Education Consortium may wish to investigate opportunities in food sciences, agriculture, and natural resources as well.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Forman, Glen, and Diane Ravnick. Deputy Chief and Chief of California Department of Industry’s Division of Apprenticeship Standards. Telephone Interview. February 4, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Teegarden, Staci. Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship Coordinator at American River College. Telephone Interview. February 4, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Dunn, John. Program Specialist at California Community College Chancellor’s Office. Telephone Interview. February 2, 2015.

## SECTION III: KEYS TO SUCCESS

Several keys to success emerged through interviews with the eight participants. This section addresses the most important steps for establishing a successful apprenticeship program as outlined by experts in the field. These steps include (1) responding to industry demands and (2) building partnerships with a variety of players.

### RESPONDING TO INDUSTRY DEMANDS

Participants identified responding to industry demands as a critical step to building a successful apprenticeship program, which may be accomplished several different ways. Using community resources is imperative – information about potential opportunities might come from employers, students, advisory panels, and/or educators.

In Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and Hacienda La Puente Unified School District, employers have historically approached the adult education program about apprenticeship opportunities.<sup>4</sup> However, Mr. Lanzi Asturias of LAUSD notes that students can also be a valuable resource. He explains, “If something is going on in the region...we begin to get all kinds of students inquiring about this particular trade or that particular trade.”<sup>5</sup>

Two participants noted the importance of forming an advisory board of relevant employers. In LAUSD, employer trade boards or advisory boards share information about what trends are developing in various industries and identify occupations that will need training.<sup>6</sup> Advisory boards often consist of employers, industry experts, and union leaders.<sup>7</sup>

Finally, educators in the community can be a valuable resource for surfacing industry demands. According to Ms. Alice Johnson of American River College, “One of the best things you can do is have your high school counselors find out what’s going on in your community and grow that.”<sup>8</sup> At the community college level, sector navigators attempt to make education programs responsive to employment needs.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Asturias, Lanzi. Teacher at East Los Angeles Skills Center. Telephone Interview. February 6, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> [1] Ibid

[2] Teegarden, Op. cit.

<sup>7</sup> Teegarden, Op. cit.

<sup>8</sup> Johnson, Alice. Hacienda La Puente Adult Education. Telephone Interview. February 5, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> [1] Forman and Ravnick, Op. cit.

[2] “Deputy Sector Navigators.” Los Angeles Orange County Regional Consortia. <http://www.laocrc.org/about/dsns>

## BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

The success of apprenticeship programs often depend on networks and relationships. These partnerships must address the needs of both the end-user (employers) and potential apprentices, so it is particularly important to work with industry insiders to ensure the relevance and sustainability of a program.

In addition to using the tactics outlined earlier in this report to find partnership opportunities, LAUSD drew upon a list of employers under contract with the district to identify potential partners.<sup>10</sup> Contacts at Hacienda La Puente Adult Education and American River College also noted the importance of a building a network using familiar contacts. For example, the first apprenticeship coordinator at American River College was a carpenter by trade. Ms. Teegarden describes her as

[having] that industry connection....since she came from the trades and was involved – I think she was a union rep for a while – she already had that labor relationship established, so she was able to get the folks on board to be on the advisory board.<sup>11</sup>

## EMPLOYER INVOLVEMENT

According to participants, involving current or potential employers is best way to develop and maintain an apprenticeship program. In addition to offering valuable insight on industry trends, employers can also help shape the curriculum.

As Ms. Diane Ravnick and Mr. Glen Forman note, “At the core... [apprenticeships] are employer-driven. We are responsible to individual employers who say, ‘Gee, all of my machinists are retiring, and I’m going to need 20 new machinists,’ or [when] there’s someone expanding their business.”<sup>12</sup> To respond effectively to these types of demands, apprenticeship programs would benefit from having program curricula and training designed in tandem with employers. Mr. Lanzi Asturias explains:

Part of the design is including the employer from the get-go so that they can help define what their needs are in terms of skills required for employment. That can also help in defining what the pathway is – what skills will be needed later as the student continues to get additional education and acquire additional skills that will result in increased salaries for the employee.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Meier, Oscar. Apprenticeship Program Advisor (Division of Adult and Career Education) at Los Angeles Unified School District. Telephone Interview. February 5, 2015.

<sup>11</sup> Teegarden, Op. cit.

<sup>12</sup> Forman and Ravnick, Op. cit.

<sup>13</sup> Asturias, Op. cit.

### *DIVISION OF APPRENTICESHIPS*

Participants also recommend that a consortium that is interested in building out programs for apprentices work with the California Department of Industrial Relation's Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS). Field officers in each region can help connect consortia to potential employers, as well as advise them on registering and managing an apprenticeship program within California's guidelines. Mr. Dunn recommends the DAS as "the starting point for everyone."<sup>14</sup>

One participant, Mr. Oscar Meier, frequently advises districts on compliance with state apprenticeship standards. In conversations with Hanover Research, he indicated he would be willing to advise Merced Regional Adult Education Consortium, saying, "If anyone wants me to go out there and walk them through it, just let me know."<sup>15</sup>

### *WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARDS*

Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) can act as another valuable resource for a consortium that is focusing on building apprenticeship programs. In Ms. Teegarden's words, "Anyone who is trying to start up this kind of program – if they don't have their local WIB on board, they're going to have a hell of a time."<sup>16</sup>

In addition to offering connections to industry leaders, WIBs may also provide financial support for apprentices or apprenticeship programs. Mr. John Dunn points out the benefits of involving the local WIB early on:

If you set up an apprenticeship program and the pay rate is \$10 an hour, that's still not quite enough to pay for your daily needs. So in some cases, WIBs have helped out with gas money for apprentices. But that's localized. So each place – that would be an important conversation to have with the local WIB to say, "Hey, we're looking to start this program. This is what it looks like. What kind of support or services can you help us with to make sure these apprentices are successful?"<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Dunn, John. Program Specialist at California Community College Chancellor's Office. Telephone Interview. February 6, 2015.

<sup>15</sup> Meier, Op. cit.

<sup>16</sup> Teegarden, Op. cit.

<sup>17</sup> Dunn, February 6, 2015 interview, Op. cit.

## SECTION IV: POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

Starting an apprenticeship program presents several challenges. This section addresses challenges to anticipate and describes employer hesitations and structural difficulties presented by the nature of AB 86 consortia that may complicate apprenticeship program development.

### EMPLOYER HESITATIONS

Some interviewed contacts caution that employers may be hesitant to get involved with an apprenticeship program. Whether involved at an advisory level or as potential employer, industry leaders may be cautious about partnering with apprenticeship programs because they want to avoid union involvement or for fear a low return on investment.

### UNION INVOLVEMENT

It is a frequent misconception that apprenticeship programs necessitate union involvement. This perception might be particularly prevalent in the Central Valley, where unions have a strong presence, or in industries with a history of unionization (i.e., automobile manufacturing).<sup>18</sup>

Unions can be powerful partners in apprenticeship programs because they offer sustained employment and job security.<sup>19</sup> However, apprenticeships do not need to partner with unions. Any local business – even small businesses – can take on apprentices. Regardless, “wherever you’re at in your current situation as an employer [with unionization], [apprenticeship] isn’t going to move the needle in one direction or the other.”<sup>20</sup>

### RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Apprenticeship programs ask employers to invest time, energy, and resources into apprentices. When American River College began offering apprenticeship programs, it experienced a significant apprentice drop-out rate. Ms. Teegarden explains:

The idea behind apprenticeship is that you can have no skills, knowledge, whatever, of the craft. What we found out was that a lot of apprenticeships were seeing a problem with folks coming in...and then [apprentices] didn’t really know what their scope of work would be [so they would] jump ship.<sup>21</sup>

To combat apprenticeship drop-out and improve the return on investment for employers, American River College worked with industry experts to identify the qualities and skills apprentices needed to succeed. Then, the College marketed apprenticeship opportunities more deliberately. Ms. Teegarden characterizes the current relationship between American

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<sup>18</sup> Dunn, February 6, 2015 interview, Op. cit.

<sup>19</sup> Meier, Op. cit.

<sup>20</sup> Dunn, February 6, 2015 interview, Op. cit.

<sup>21</sup> Teegarden, Op. cit.

River College and employers as strong, noting that employers “really want people coming in because this is what they’re passionate about. This is what they want to do for the next 25 or 30 years, and invest in their workforce. So I think they feel that what we’re doing kind of helps people self-weed themselves.”<sup>22</sup>

## STRUCTURAL DIFFICULTIES

While apprenticeship programs may thrive at a community college or at the adult education level, this research did not identify any specific Adult Education Regional Consortia that have successfully planned and launched programs for apprentices in their region to date as part of the efforts linked to AB 86. Furthermore, the process for starting an apprenticeship program (especially as a consortium) is not standardized.

Mr. Dunn spoke extensively about the lack of centralization among apprenticeship efforts throughout the state. While budget constraints seem to prevent consortia from hiring an employee to perform the outreach and coordination efforts that would centralize the process, Mr. Dunn thinks “regional consortia could – if they decided to make that a priority instead of the other [four] priorities they’re supposed to look at – be a central repository of information for employers.”<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Teegarden, Op. cit.

<sup>23</sup> Dunn, February 6, 2015 interview, Op. cit.

## APPENDIX: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

### QUESTIONS FOR STATE EXPERTS

- How would you define “apprenticeship”? Do you think this definition aligns with how AB 86 consortia are defining “apprenticeship” in their AB 86 reports?
- How should education leaders go about identifying the most promising apprenticeship options for their region?
- What are the key steps of the process for implementing apprenticeship opportunities with local business?
- Are you aware of any districts in California that have done a particularly good job of identifying and developing apprenticeship opportunities in the regions that they serve?
  - Are you aware of any specific challenges that these districts faced?
  - What factors have contributed to the successful development of these opportunities?

### QUESTIONS FOR CONSORTIA MEMBERS

- How is your consortium defining “apprenticeship” in your AB 86 report?
- How did your consortium or other leaders in the region go about identifying promising apprenticeship opportunities?
- What apprenticeships are currently in place in your region?
  - Which are under development or consideration for future development?
  - For how long have these opportunities been in place?
- What key steps were involved to implement apprenticeship opportunities with local business?
  - Can you highlight any specific keys to success?
  - Who is involved in this process?
  - How long did it take to establish these opportunities?
- What is the nature of the partnerships that have been built around apprenticeships?
- Do you measure the success of these programs? Is there a feedback loop in place to make continuous improvements to existing programs?

## PROJECT EVALUATION FORM

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<http://www.hanoverresearch.com/evaluation/index.php>

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