

Work Group: PreK-12 Education
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Description of Activity by Goal and Objective

Based on the plan approved at the September meeting of the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley board, this report is formatted by responsible entity as opposed to delineating all the goals and objectives which are embedded in the responsibilities.

1. Top priorities and actions to be carried out by County Offices of Education (COE)

- a. English Learners (EL) – led by Fresno County Office of Education
Fresno County Office of Education (FCOE) concluded training sessions for cohort 1 of the English Learner Superintendents Leadership Team Academy in September. The participating districts compiled data based on new California Standardized Testing (ST) data and reported on their gains and best practice strategies implemented. A new cohort of districts also began the Academy in September. (Please refer to the Seed Grant report for more details.) FCOE has been compiling regional data for the Exemplary Practices Conference and is helping with the English Learner strand at the conference.
- b. Post Secondary Pursuits (College and Careers) – led by Kern County Office of Education
Kern County Office of Education (KCOE) has been working on the proposal to develop the College/Career Centers in Middle Schools. KCOE met with the PreK-12 Work Group on Aug. 25 to review the content of the centers and the avenue of access using collaborative Web streaming. KCOE met with the Kern Project Work Group to review the center requirements and the 20-step action grid, which will be presented to the San Joaquin Valley Project Leads Work Group on Oct. 27 to identify content development assignments and to solidify the industry focused modules. The focus on providing industry modules to excite students concerning career options will make college/career centers the bridge between academic learning and real world choices. The AT&T \$25,000 grant final requirements were met. The award letter is expected shortly. Everyone is working very hard on this project which should provide greater access to services and information concerning college and career options.
- c. Pre-Kindergarten (PreK) – led by Merced County Office of Education
Merced County Office of Education (MCOE) has been working on the Preschool Coordination and Alignment Project (PCAP), and is in the data compilation and report-writing phase. We have been working closely to coordinate the regionwide Preschool Planning Conference as the PreK strand of our Exemplary Practices Conference. MCOE has secured well-established PreK Planning Specialist Karen Hill Scott to facilitate the conference strand on Jan. 13, 2009. MCOE also is in communication with the PreK stakeholders across the region to solicit their attendance and participation at the conference.

2. Top priorities and actions to be carried out by Central Valley Educational Leadership Institute (CVELI)

Based on feedback from California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley (Partnership) board members at the June meeting, CVELI convened several meetings during the summer months to clarify plans and directions with a core group of stakeholders including: Partnership board members, county superintendents, active work group members and Secretariat staff. With active and constructive input from all involved, we streamlined and clarified our direction and major initiatives for this academic year. Additionally, Dr. Ginny Boris was hired as new co-director of CVELI at California State University, Fresno. Dr. Boris brings strong curriculum, instruction and administrative expertise to our consulting team.

The largest task this quarter for the PreK-12 Education Work Group (PreK-12) was conception and initial planning for a regional Exemplary Practices Conference (EPC) for PreK-12 education, business, and community leaders. PreK-12 secured facilities at California State University, Fresno, and set the date for Jan. 13, 2009. PreK-12 also secured keynote speakers Dr. Thelma Melendez de Santa Ana, superintendent of schools for Pomona Unified School District, and Dr. James Lanich, executive director of Just for the Kids-California. A Save-the Date Flier has been developed and distributed in our nine-county region, which includes Mariposa County. The purpose of the conference is to identify schools, districts and programs in our region that have positive, demonstrable impact on student outcomes, and share the stories and strategies with leaders who can impact policies and schools and districts in their own communities. We have outlined the conference to include at least nine strands with three workshops each on our

priority topics: English Learners, PreK, College-Going Culture, Career Education, Reading, Data Systems, Computer Literacy, Partnerships and Collaboration, and Teacher and Administrator Training Initiatives. We are working with doctoral students in educational leadership and administrative students at California State University, Fresno, to help with data collection and report writing for a white paper summarizing exemplary practices shared at the EPC. We also met with the Region 7 Computer Technology Assistance Project Director to use their online registration system for the conference. We anticipate more than 400 attendees.

CVELI hosted a Back to School Legal Update on Sept. 5 for approximately 85 district leaders on laws and regulations dealing with Student Issues, Employment, Charter Schools, Records Retention and Special Education. This session was one of 12 planned for school leadership this year. The PreK-12 partnership with Springboard School allows direct coaching support be provided to teams of educational leaders in 17 school districts. Professional development focusing on closing the achievement gap and English Learners also is provided to Valley districts through leadership networks in multiple locations across the region.

We met with consultants and members of the Higher Education and Workforce Development Work Group and the Economic Development Work Group to develop plans and solicit involvement for a joint meeting of the three groups on Oct. 15.

Together with the Central Valley Higher Education Consortium/Higher Education Work Group, we identified needs for sharing information and data systems to facilitate the transition between high school and higher education. This quarter, we developed a pilot project together with California Partnership for Achieving Student Success (Cal-PASS), West Hills Community College District (WHCCD) and all school districts in the service area. Funded by WHCCD, approximately 30 individuals from the schools in that region attended a workshop conducted by three key staff people from Cal-PASS. The ultimate goal of this project is that all schools in the area sign MOUs with Cal-PASS to participate in data sharing and a professional learning community to engage faculty across segments in instructional conversations between high schools and colleges to enhance articulation student success.

PreK-12 completed development of a resolution on school reform which was approved at the September Partnership board meeting.

Several activities were completed to facilitate communications with and for PreK-12. PreK-12 held major meetings this quarter with the County Superintendents on Aug. 25 at the Tulare County Office of Education, and a full work group meeting on Sept. 22 in Mariposa, which also included the Region 7 county superintendents. PreK-12 is trying a new format for meetings, holding one hour prior to and another hour with the Region 7 superintendents and/or county curriculum and instruction leaders in conjunction with their regular meeting dates. This quarter PreK-12 developed an electronic newsletter and disseminated two issues (August, September). PreK-12 also had several subgroup meetings and conference calls with key stakeholders, meetings with other work group consultants and attended the legislative staffers meetings. PreK-12 continues to compile and post a compilation of news articles summarized on a monthly basis and to maintain the work group Web page.

Special events attended this quarter:

- √ State of California Education Forum and Roundtable discussion with Senator Gloria Romero and Assembly Member Juan Arambula, July 17
- √ Joint meeting of City of Fresno and Fresno Unified School District, July 30
- √ Meeting on Aug. 20 with UC Merced and UC Bakersfield representatives to discuss College Tools Workshop to be held in Fresno on Oct. 14.
- √ Latina Issues Roundtable "Status of Latinas in the San Joaquin Valley," Aug. 27
- √ Kremen School of Education Community Council, Sept. 16
- √ First session of cohort 2 and last session of cohort 1 of the English Language Learner Leadership Academy (Seed Grant), Sept. 23.
- √ Meeting of the Region 7 Curriculum and Instruction Specialists, Sept. 26

Planned Activities by Goal and Objective (for next 3-6 months)

- a. Secure sponsorships, complete plans, arrange all speakers, finalize program brochure, registration, and outreach for Exemplary Practices Conference to be held Jan. 13, 2009.
- b. Host meeting of leaders from California State University campuses Bakersfield, Stanislaus, and Fresno, and Fresno Pacific University to share current plans and assist in developing other leadership opportunities in the Central Valley.
- c. Participate in joint PreK-12, Economic Development and Higher Education and Work Force Development Planning meeting/workshop.

- d. Work with the Anytime Anywhere Learning Foundation to expand the alternatives and resources available to school districts in the region for enhancing computer literacy.
- e. Monitor implementation of Cal-PASS in the target districts/area. (Oct-Dec 2008)
- f. Identify legislative and funding priorities, and communicate them to legislators and Office of the Secretary of Education.
- g. Identify curricula, programs and best practices in career education that support target industry clusters and disseminate information about exemplary programs at the EPC and/or Superintendents network.
- h. Pursue funding alternatives to continue the work of PreK-12 and broad-based regional activities that support the Strategic Action Proposal of the Partnership.

Challenges/Problems/Bottlenecks/Feedback

1. Based on feedback from Partnership board members and their concerns about our direction, we needed to invest time dissecting the many complex issues of our plan to streamline our efforts and identify specific stakeholders with specific responsibilities for fewer issues.
2. State budget delays and threatened cutbacks made it difficult for school districts to plan during the summer months and for the beginning of the academic year.
3. While PreK-12 has good relationships with staff members at California's Office of the Secretary of Education, the resignation and departure of Sec. David Long is a setback for our work at the state level.

If you have coordinated any outreach, please describe briefly.

The major outreach this quarter was to develop a Save the Date flier for the Exemplary Practices Conference and to distribute it as far and wide as possible.

Also completed our annual report for the Partnership Annual Report for the Dec. 11 Annual Meeting.