

Golden Sierra Job Training Agency

2020-2021 Local Plan Draft

March 2021



Golden Sierra

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I. Introduction

The last year has witnessed unprecedented disruption and labor market changes. Golden Sierra along with workforce boards across the nation were challenged to provide services to our customers (residents and businesses alike) with rigid safety standards. Due to our expansive geographic footprint, the varying topography, and weather conditions that affect some of our community, Golden Sierra had fortunately already been conducting virtual services to assist some of our more vulnerable community members including those with disabilities and those in remote areas. This model provided a foundation to rapidly build upon and scale to deliver continuous services to our reeling communities. The lessons learned and the innovations tried will propel us forward as we, our partners, and businesses reopen physical facilities and adapt to the ever-changing world of work.

Golden Sierra understands employer and community member needs transcend county borders. Therefore, we work with our regional partners as part of the Capital Region Planning Unit to build efficiencies and coordination to employers and training partners in the region. One recent example of this is the High Road Construction Careers grant where we partner with two other boards in our planning area to expand and increase the pipeline of workers in construction careers and apprenticeships. Golden Sierra has a very engaged board of employers, industry, educators, and partners, as well as a committed team of staff members. Their contributions cannot be understated. In a recent survey conducted as part of this planning process, the commitment and expertise of the staff at Golden Sierra was considered the region's greatest asset by respondents. Conversely, the need to further align and coordinate with the wide and continuously expanding partners in the workforce ecosystem was stated as an area for opportunity and growth. We continue to see the necessary interdependency of our efforts as the best opportunity to make the most difference. When we collectively come together to solve complex issues, including addressing our workforce challenges, we build a better system. As such, Golden Sierra's vision is the following:

Golden Sierra envisions a fully integrated workforce system that capitalizes on the expertise of industry and workforce partners to continuously meet the needs of business, and facilitate pathways to success for students, workers and job seekers.

As we continue to work toward full integration with limited resources, the following provides the answers to specific questions in the local plan. It is our shared hope the near future will provide the resources necessary to more fully align our workforce ecosystems.

II. The Process

The Golden Sierra Workforce Development Board (GSWDB), through Golden Sierra Job Training Agency (GSJTA), has prepared this four year workforce development plan by engaging in public input sessions, stakeholder interviews, and surveys. Golden Sierra has long standing and new local partnerships which enrich the workforce ecosystem in our region. By engaging partners through a variety of means, GSJTA has collected information and input to define and shape how our local workforce development system will help our communities recover and thrive in a post-pandemic recovery. Golden Sierra Workforce Development Board's mission is **to convene**

industry leaders and key partners to identify workforce initiatives, create innovative solutions, and measure the success of systems' ability to meet industry and workforce needs. This reflects the principles of WIOA and encapsulates the integration of services of our many partner agencies to meet the needs of both our business and job seeker populations, thereby, leading to regional economic growth and equitable, long term self-sufficiency. These goals align with the California Workforce Development Board's (CWDB) WIOA plan (State plan) outcomes of reaching a million middle skills credentials and doubling the number of apprenticeships in the next ten years and three key objectives to meet these goals; fostering demand driven skills attainment, enabling upward mobility, and aligning, coordinating and integrating programs and services.

In preparation for this local plan, GSWDB engaged regional organizer Valley Vision to conduct board and stakeholder interviews, in addition to Golden Sierra holding public input sessions. These interviews provided a wealth of information and recurrent themes that influenced the priorities and strategies identified in this plan and refined our board's five key objectives:

Five key objectives:

- 1) Leadership and strategy development encompassing best practices in inclusive workforce/economic development
- 2) Increased Business Engagement, including cross-regionally, with expanding use of digital platforms
- 3) Increased training for staff on working with traditionally disinvested populations, equity/cultural competency, trauma informed care, and usage and effective strategies with digital platforms
- 4) Expanded outreach to new training and support partners to enhance service to priority populations
- 5) Continuous improvement and refinement through establishing measurable improvements and revisiting to ensure progress.

Consistent with the state policy framework, the GSWDB adopts a regional approach to the identification of priority economic and occupational sectors. It begins this process by utilizing the following driven data sources in addition to those referenced in the Capital Region's regional plan document:

1. [**Our Path Forward: The Prosperity Strategy.**](#) (Exhibit A) This report is the comprehensive economic development five year plan (2020 - 2025) for the counties of Yuba, Yolo, Sutter, El Dorado, Placer and Sacramento. The Golden Sierra WDB is a partner in The Prosperity Strategy and the Golden Sierra Job Training Agency (GSJTA) Executive Director sits on the Steering Committee.
2. [**Sierra Business Council Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.**](#) (Exhibit B) This report is the comprehensive economic development five year plan (2018 - 2022) for the counties of Placer and El Dorado within Golden Sierra's service area in addition to Sierra and Nevada counties. This plan rightfully calls our Broadband access and adoption as a primary economic development barrier for the rural areas of these counties.

3. [Capital Region Industry Clusters of Opportunity and Local Area Projections](#). (Exhibit C) This provides an update to the previous Capital Region Report highlighting industry clusters of opportunity for the Capital Region and Local Area Projections through 2024.
4. [EDD Labor Market Analysis](#). (Exhibit D) Golden Sierra receives regular updates from EDD. This exhibit details the most current data on fluctuations in the market due to the pandemic disruption and recovery trajectory.

Based on the sources described above, the Board has identified the following target industry sectors and occupational clusters within the region that are currently high wage, high demand and that are vital to both the local and regional economy.

- Health and Life Sciences;
- Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation;
- Energy, Construction and Utilities (including Clean Economy)
- Information, Communication and Technology
- Manufacturing and Transportation (including Future Mobility)
- Agribusiness, Food and Beverage Production

Both the Clean Economy and Future Mobility are emerging as strong regional economic and workforce drivers with significant investments being made in neighboring counties. Golden Sierra participates in the support of the [California Mobility Center](#) and [Sacramento Valley Manufacturing Initiative](#) who work together to build pipelines for quality jobs in these areas.

A. WIOA Core and Required Partner Coordination

i. The One-Stop Operator

The GSWDB plan assigns many of the critical functions of systems alignment to the One-Stop Operator secured through a competitive procurement process. In the Golden Sierra region the one-stop operator facilitates value added, collaborative partner meetings directing the partners toward key priorities identified in the state plan. The Operator takes a leadership role in the quarterly partner meetings while identifying work assignments that occur between the quarterly meetings, and assisting with expanding partnerships with other service providers in the Golden Sierra workforce ecosystem. They play an integral role in assisting GSWDB with systems alignment and integration. Furthermore, the Operator assists the board in providing oversight to the local service providers while monitoring the partners' commitments as identified in the MOUs.

The One Stop Operator is responsible for:

- In conjunction with Workforce Board oversight and designated administrative staff, coordinating the implementation of negotiated Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and Cost Sharing Agreements (CSA) with all mandated partners.
- The convening and facilitation of quarterly WIOA partner meetings that focus on systems alignment, process improvement and building value added collaboration amongst system partners.
- Acting as a liaison between the workforce board and the system partners including attending meetings of the workforce board and/or its Executive Committee to receive direction and to report on progress no less than three times annually.

ii. Partners

The local system includes the available required partners identified in WIOA. These partners have documented their commitments by executing Memorandums of Understanding and by completing Infrastructure Funding Agreements as identified in WIOA, and required by the State. The Golden Sierra regional partnership is robust, and though not all additional partners are mentioned here, also includes:

- 3 community College Districts (two of which span regions outside the Golden Sierra boundaries)
- 3 Adult Ed Block Grant Consortiums
- 5 Adult Education Providers
- 2 Sector Navigators (Advance Manufacturing and Retail/Hospitality and Tourism)
- 2 County Economic Development Departments
- 2 City Economic Development Departments
- 3 County Offices of Education
- 3 Health and Human Service Agencies
- County Probation Offices
- Multiple Chambers of Commerce and Business Associations
- And a number of Community Based Organizations who serve various populations including foster youth, veterans, the homeless and persons with disabilities.

iii. Partner referrals and coordination

GSJTA and its partners share information during quarterly partner meetings. These meetings include the Career Service providers as well as the required WIOA partners and other important system stakeholders. These meetings provide an opportunity for partners to receive up to date labor market information, share resources and knowledge. This helps build the capacity of our local system, maximize efficiency by reducing duplication, leverage program funding, and improve referrals to meet state goals. Additionally, these and additional meetings provide opportunities for staff and partner development on topics such as the use of the CalJOBS system, how to best meet WIOA performance measures, trauma informed care, cultural competency, working with individuals with disabilities, employer engagement and other topics. With the transition to primary remote services during the pandemic, Golden Sierra has been fortunate to have Advance as one of our service providers. As leaders in providing virtual education, they bring proven strategies into quarterly partner meetings to improve virtual learning and engagement outcomes.

Additionally, during these meetings partners organizations share what services are available to clients, what clients can expect, and how best to make appropriate referrals. Golden Sierra has a partner referral form which can be transmitted electronically intended to enhance warm handoffs, accelerate collaboration, and reduce duplication by identifying client needs to the referring organization. Partner organizations receive instruction and training on utilizing this form and other referral mechanisms during quarterly provider meetings and as new providers come on board.

iv. Co-enrollment and/or common case management

GSWDB has adopted co-enrollment as a preferred delivery strategy whenever possible. Strategic co-enrollment can provide benefits to participants and the workforce system by providing additional case management support, leveraging resources, eliminating duplication of services, and improving participant experiences and outcomes. Co-enrollment with partners can streamline the provision of intensive services such as case management, job search assistance, and follow-up services.

GSJTA works with program partners to co enroll when appropriate. These partners include the Employment Development Department (EDD), Health and Human Service Agencies (HHS), the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), veteran service programs, adult education, regional community colleges and others. The co-enrollment and braiding of resources and expertise allows partner organizations the ability to leverage the appropriate components of each program, therefore, enhancing outcomes such as certifications, job placement, earnings and retention of employment.

Eligibility for co-enrollment is addressed by strategically cross training GS staff and partner organizations. Staff from partnering organizations take part in regular quarterly meetings that involve awareness of program related benefits and eligibility overviews. Each partner retains expertise and responsibility for their relative programs and ongoing information sharing to assist participating organizations in making the correct referrals, therefore, reducing errors and duplication.

v. Facilitating access through the use of technology and other means

Much of the Golden Sierra region is rural in nature. Limited broadband availability, especially when considering today's heavy bandwidth virtual tools, presents unique challenges when attempting to provide services virtually within outlying areas. Currently, the majority of the region's broadband access is expanding under the direction of the Gold Country Broadband Consortium (GCBC). The GCBC is a public-private partnership aimed at increasing digital access and use in Nevada, Placer, El Dorado, Sierra and eastern Alpine counties. The GCBC is one of 14 regional consortia in the State funded by the California Advanced Services Fund Rural and Urban Regional Broadband Consortia grant program. The Consortium was formed to leverage regional, state and national resources as an investment in improving and expanding broadband access.

The primary tool available region wide providing virtual access to job seekers and employers is the CalJOBS (CJ) system. The CJ system includes a multitude of useful tools that can be universally accessed by both audiences through a simple online registration process. This process can be completed at home, in the business, at a library or through the mobile application. The CJ system includes tools for job seekers such as resume builders, career explorers, career assessments, job search listings, alerts, labor market information and unemployment services and makes these tools available in formats useful to people with disabilities. Though not all Core partners have direct access to managed services via CJ all partners have received training on the availability of services through the CJ system. Furthermore, the partners are encouraged to register their appropriate clients, students and consumers. Ongoing training on CalJobs is provided as new partners are developed.

Even prior to the pandemic, GSWDB understood that there are multiple obstacles faced by individuals with significant barriers to employment in rural and urban areas. To that end, GSWDB partners provide free job readiness workshops via Zoom and YouTube outside of the physical AJCC locations. These workshops act as an extended arm of the AJCCs, therefore, reaching far more individuals than would otherwise be possible. GSWDB also utilizes Metrix online learning to provide free skill building workshops to job seekers that can be accessed remotely. In addition, GSWDB contracts with Adult and private schools to provide free workshop series to further enhance our virtual offerings and skill building activities to job seekers throughout our jurisdiction. Service providers are encouraged to meet their constituents' needs through the use of mobile tools such as tablets and laptops and online platforms such as Zoom and Skype as rural regions limit the ability to meet in physical locations.

In addition to serving participants virtually, Golden Sierra has been providing virtual career fairs which have increased since the onset of the pandemic. This method of delivering career services to the business community has been well received by both employers and job seekers. With the increase in telework opportunities giving employers the ability to recruit job seekers from a larger geographic area, Golden Sierra anticipates this virtual service increasing and providing a wider range of economic opportunities for our rural regional workforce.

vi. Coordination of the provision of appropriate supportive services

The onset of the pandemic provided an enhanced need for supportive services in our region like much of the nation. In addition to utilizing WIOA 1 funds, Golden Sierra was able to secure additional supportive services funding through a National Dislocated Worker Grant. With the rising costs of rent and cost of living in our region, supportive services are becoming increasingly important for participant success in training programs and entering employment. Additionally, the expansion of community college Promise Programs provide opportunities for no or low cost education that did not exist prior. While understandable in intent, the required training percentage allocation currently constrains local areas including Golden Sierra from providing the robust support services necessary to carry participants through training to self-sufficient careers. Through staff and partners surveys, the ability to provide more robust support services arose as the single greatest need to serve job seeker populations in our region.

Supportive Services for items such as transportation assistance, required clothing, books, tuition, childcare etc. are coordinated by case managers through our local partners to ensure available sources of funds are exhausted prior to the use of WIOA funding for these services as is reflected in law and in local policy. GSWDB partners coordinate with the Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Rehabilitation, nonprofit and other sources prior to utilizing WIOA funds. While support service needs overall have been increasing, the last year has witnessed a dramatic increase in the need and provision of support services. This is one example of how the 30% direct training requirement (DTR) is at odds with what's needed on the front lines. Very little support service dollars can be counted towards the DTR, however, these supports are more critical than ever as our community members recover from the devastation of the pandemic and rebuild their livelihoods.

vii. Compliance with WIOA Section 188 and ADA

a. Designation of an Equal Opportunity Officer

Consistent with WSD15-24, the local area has designated an Equal Opportunity (EO) officer who is responsible for coordinating its obligations under these regulations. The local area is committed to assigning sufficient staff and resources to the EO Officer to ensure compliance with WIOA Section 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).

b. Notice and Communication

The local area provides initial and continuing notice of nondiscriminatory practices and the right to file a complaint by posting information (posters) in prominent locations within the AJCC. These notices are also made available to each participant; a copy of an acknowledgement of receipt is signed by the participant and included in the case file (see GSC 01-05 and GSC 01-06). Alternative formats are provided upon request to people with disabilities.

The local area ensures media and other communications which promote WIOA programs or activities include the following tagline: "This WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities." In instances where materials indicate the local area may be reached by telephone, the California Relay Service number is provided. In instances where persons with limited English proficiency are served, the local area takes reasonable steps to ensure individuals receive the language assistance necessary to afford them meaningful access to programs, services, and information according to the LEP Directive (WSD17-03).

c. Assurances

The local area has implemented policies and procedures to ensure that all contracts, cooperative agreements, and job training plans contain a nondiscrimination assurance statement.

d. Universal Access

As required in Title 29 CFR Section 38.42, the local area ensures universal access to WIOA Title I financially assisted programs and activities by doing the following:

- Implementing an outreach and recruitment plan to solicit participation of all potentially WIOA Title I eligible reportable individuals in the entire locale.
- Creating an outreach and recruitment plan that will reach specific target populations through media, schools, and community services groups.
- Considering a pool of individuals for participation that includes members of all gender identities, various racial and ethnic age groups, and individuals with disabilities.

- Establishing a hiring and eligibility process that is accessible to qualified individuals with disabilities.
- Utilizing facilities designed to provide reasonable access to individuals with disabilities in the following areas: training, job structure, work schedule, work procedure, and work equipment and auxiliary aids accommodations.

e. Obligation Not To Discriminate On The Basis Of Disability

The local area has established a reasonable accommodation policy and procedure guide. In addition, the local area actively participates in biennial compliance monitoring to ensure physical and programmatic accessibility. The local area provides the following:

- Designated parking for the disabled that is accessible to the building entrance, free of any barriers.
- Signage at a primary entrance to each of the inaccessible facilities, directing users to a location at which they can obtain information about accessible facilities.
- The international symbol for accessibility at each primary entrance of an accessible facility.
- Building entrance doors that can be opened with one hand.
- Accessible information at public counter or reception areas.
- At least one accessible public telephone per floor.
- Accessible meeting rooms with Braille symbols at an accessible height.
- Accessible restrooms.
- Alternative methods to ensure that training, job structure, work schedule, work procedure, and work equipment are available to individuals with disabilities when the facilities are not physically accessible to individuals with disabilities.

f. Data and Information Collection and Maintenance

The local area complies with WIOA Section 188 by collecting and maintaining demographic data in CalJOBS, the statewide labor exchange system. Confidential information is safeguarded from improper use, disclosure, or transmission. For example, a participant's health/medical information is retained in a separate case file and stored in a separate location. Any complaints alleging discrimination are maintained in a log and shared with the EEO Office each calendar year.

g. Monitor for Compliance

As required by law and related regulations, the local area participates in on-site reviews and other forms of monitoring to ensure compliance.

h. Complaint Processing Procedures

The local area has established procedures for resolving allegations of noncompliance with applicable nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions. The complaint processing procedures are consistent with the guidance found in WSD 15-24.

Neither GSWDB nor its Administrative Entity GSJTA has received notice of corrective actions or sanctions with regard to non-discrimination practices or equal opportunity procedures. To best address the needs of people with disabilities the local area is committed to providing appropriate training activities for staff and its subrecipients including sensitivity and policy training. Additionally,

i. Training

Golden Sierra's Disability Resource Coordinator is responsible for staff development efforts and coordinates regular capacity building activities to ensure AJCC staff and partners are properly equipped to address the unique needs of individuals with disabilities. The following training opportunities are provided to staff and required and other one-stop partners:

- Serving Job Seekers with Disabilities in the Workforce Development System
- Service Animal Etiquette
- Communicating with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Implementing WIOA Section 188
- SSA Ticket to work Program
- Mental Health First Aid
- Disability Benefits 101
- Reasonable Accommodations

To maintain relevant training and information, AJCC staff attend the quarterly Disability Employment Initiative/Disability Employment Accelerator meetings organized by the EDD and the annual conference organized by the National Employment Network Association (NENA). These conferences allow staff to share best practices and learn about new programs/resources which are then shared with our One Stop Operator, required and other partners.

B. State Strategic Partner Coordination

i. County Health and Human Services Agencies/CalFresh E & T Services

Each of these counties in the Golden Sierra Workforce Development Region (GS region) have CalFresh programs, however, currently, Placer County is the only member in the region with a CalFresh Employment and Training (E & T) program. Regardless, Golden Sierra works with all three counties to help meet the goals of the CalFresh program broadly and the CalFresh E & T program specifically. Within the CalFresh E & T partnership agreement Golden Sierra works specifically at helping with integration of CalFresh E & T with the public workforce system to increase outcomes in jobs and wages for participants.

The workforce system and the programs administered by the Health and Human Services Agencies (HHSA) throughout the GS region have partnered for many years to leverage resources and braid funding in order to offer a full continuum of services to public assistance recipients including those receiving CalFresh. The goal of this partnership has always been to foster better

employment outcomes for our mutual participants. GSJTA and the local HHSAs are committed to continuing this value added relationship. The recent onset of the pandemic has increased the overall needs of our joint priority populations. One factor to success for multi-barriered individuals is providing a strong support foundation by working hand in hand with our local partners to coordinate activities targeted on enhancing success. These critical partnerships are an integral part of the GS region's strategy which employs the practice of identifying WIOA recipients who are currently engaged in partner activities such as CalFresh and CalFresh E & T, providing co-enrollment and co-case management when appropriate, enrolling participants into training in in-demand industry clusters (as supported by labor market data), and partnering to support career pathway programs developed throughout the region.

ii. Local Child Support Agencies and Partners Serving Non-custodial parents

The GSWDB has integrated the goals, objectives and strategies from the State plan its own strategy ensuring a comprehensive array of services is provided to non-custodial parents to facilitate successful labor market outcomes and progression into livable wage jobs and careers. GSWDB has been successful at greater coordination of staff development efforts and the expansion of the provision of virtual activities (WIOA Basic, Individualized, and Training). Furthermore, GSWDB and partners have implemented a simplified referral process and program documentation to reduce barriers to co-serving individuals served jointly by the Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) and GSJTA to support employability for non-custodial parents with child support orders.

One example of service integration is a process by which DCSS clients are referred to GSJTA by Family Support judges (commissioners). After being referred, individuals contact GSJTA and the America's Job Center of California (AJCC) to schedule an initial assessment. During this initial assessment, the case manager assists the non custodial parent with identifying their goals and works with DCSS to create an acceptable service strategy. DCSS' participation in this process is critical since a successful strategy may involve lifting restrictions on items such as drivers, or other licenses. Additionally services provided by GSJTA include: job search, resume preparation, interview workshops, skills/interest assessments, career research, vocational training, misdemeanor conviction expungement, and reduction of felony conviction to misdemeanor. During this process the client maintains contact with the case manager to report progress toward attaining their goals and to assist in addressing any unforeseen obstacles. The clients' participation is considered mandatory, and they can be held in contempt of court if they do not comply with the judge's "seek-work" order. GSJTA reports back to DCSS any reporting elements deemed necessary in order to ensure compliance with the court's order.

Partnerships have shown to create support teams that enhance outcomes for all parties with program partners bringing expertise relative to their pertinent fields that would otherwise go lacking. Successful case management involves bringing these partners to the table, co-enrolling as appropriate, and collaborating to braid program funding and services which reduce barriers and create greater employability outcomes.

iii. Local Partnership Agreement partners, established in alignment with the Competitive Integrated Employment Blueprint, and other local partners who serve individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities

GSJTA maintains a full-time Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC) on staff. The DRC serves as a subject matter expert on employment and support programs for Persons with Disabilities (PWD), including individuals with Intellectual or developmental disabilities (ID/DD). This position requires an in-depth knowledge of the target population. GSJTA's DRC has gained their program knowledge by participating in specialized training and certifications such as those offered by Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU).

GSJTA and their partners maintain positive working relationships with the Qualified Rehabilitation Professionals (QRP) in Roseville, Auburn, Placerville, and Lake Tahoe. Referrals between agencies are facilitated by co-location at the AJCCs within the GS Region. Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) holds bi-monthly office hours; encouraging co-enrollment and allowing customers to easily access services from multiple providers. GSWDB partners with Alta Sierra Regional Center to serve ID/DD consumers during and as they complete supported employment experiences. Consumers are encouraged by Alta Regional to utilize GSWDB and AJCCs as a resource for job search, attend workshops to build employability skills, and explore training.

GSWDB participates in our area's Local Partnership Agreement (LPA) which includes DOR, Alta Regional Center and the Workability programs in the local schools. The LPA is a collaboration that provides employment support and opportunities for participants with ID/DD to improve their chances of achieving Competitive Integrated Employment.

iv. Coordination with CBOs and partners serving ELLs, foreign born, and/or refugees

There are three counties in the Capital RPU that have at least a 15 percent limited English proficient population. These counties are Sacramento, Sutter, and Yolo. Specific information about how these counties address the needs of these populations will be included in their respective local plans with Information about how the Capital RPU partners address the regional needs of this population are addressed in our Regional Plan. The Golden Sierra region maintains no counties that contain a 15 percent limited English proficient population. Additionally, none of our counties require a Refugee Services Plan to be certified by the CDSS.

Though the GSWDB and its member counties are not required to comply in these areas, GSJTA and its partner organizations work to provide services to those lacking English proficiency. Partners in these efforts include GSJTA, local adult schools and adult education consortium partners, community colleges, EDD, DCSS, HHSA, California Human Development Corporation as the WIOA 167 provider, local employers, labor, and business intermediaries such as the NSBIA and SVMII.

In the Golden Sierra region, the Adult Education Block Grant Consortium and WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) partners are critical to these efforts. These partners include Sierra Assets, Advance, and the Capital Adult Education Regional Consortium (CAERC). Each of these partners develop programs for the seven Adult Education Block Grant (AEBG)

program areas which include programs for immigrants eligible for educational services in citizenship, English as a second language, and workforce preparation. Overlapping programs of note are basic skills education, programs for adults with disabilities, programs in career technical education that are short term and have high employment potential, and programs offering pre apprenticeship training activities conducted with programs approved by the Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS).

There are continued expanding efforts to serve the English Language Learners (ELLs) being offered in the Golden Sierra region. These include efforts in the K12 system as well as the local adult schools who offer GED preparation in Spanish as well as Career Technical Education (CTE) opportunities. The local adult schools partner with our region's multiple community college partners as well. These partnerships provide bridge programs intended to match language skills with the appropriate level of instruction. Ultimately, these programs are designed to assist ELLs with preparing for college CTE courses, or continued education. These courses can be found throughout the Golden Sierra community at locations including the AJCCs, county employment service offices, DOR, adult school campuses, libraries, and community colleges.

The local WIOA Section 167 entity serving migrants and seasonal farmworkers (MSFW) is the California Human Development Corporation (CHDC). Staff from CHDC meet regularly with GSJTA staff to coordinate activities. Additionally, CHDC has provided staff to the regional AJCCs in order to provide greater outreach and services to the MSFW community. Furthermore, staff from CHDC actively participate on the Golden Sierra Workforce Development Board and its Executive Committee.

In addition to these efforts, GSJTA meets with program partners in order to review and provide input to the WIOA Title II AEFLA service plan. This process helps to ensure alignment of ELL service efforts with the local plan while helping to move ELLs through school and into living wage occupations more quickly. Retention strategies primarily focus on co-enrollment with partner programs, co-case management, and good communication strategies. By building value added relationships with partner programs, outcomes for all involved are improved. This has been, and will continue to be, a key retention strategy for partners in the Golden Sierra region.

C. WIOA Title I Coordination

i. Training and/or professional development in digital fluency and distance learning

Because of the large and diverse terrain of the geographic region Golden Sierra services, our staff were providing digital services prior to the onset of COVID-19. This positioned us to have an initial response to the contactless service environment immediately following the pandemic onset. Moving into the future, Golden Sierra expects a mix of services in both digital and physical environments. To this end, we are and will be providing training on increasing digital competencies of our staff. This includes the use of various platforms including Zoom, Google Suite, Slack, virtual job fair platforms, Metrix and other shared platforms. Additionally, Golden Sierra works with our partners to provide education to staff and partner agencies on improving learning outcomes through distance learning for job readiness workshops and other activities.

Golden Sierra, as part of the Capital Region Regional Planning Unit (RPU), coordinates to provide training to our region through funds procured through Regional Plan Implementation. This collaboration will include enhanced training on customer and business engagement through virtual platforms, improving the use of the platforms, and adapting to the virtual environment.

ii. Training and/or professional development to ensure cultural competencies and an understanding of the experiences of trauma exposed populations

GSWDB recognizes the need to ensure our workforce ecosystem is as inclusive as possible to remedy the systemic injustices of our nation's past. To this end, we will incorporate race equity training, training in cultural competencies, and trauma informed case management practices. Golden Sierra, as stated above, is part of the Capital Region Regional Planning Unit (RPU) and coordinates to provide training to our region through funds procured through Regional Plan Implementation. Through CART - Capital Area Regional Training - our regional planning unit maximizes training dollars to uplift the staff capacity of our region. This collaboration will include training on cultural competencies, trauma informed care and case management, and equity/inclusion outreach and engagement strategies.

iii. Coordination of statewide rapid response activities

The GSWDB has been refining its strategy for many years through ongoing connection between the business/employer communities and with our region's economic development partners. In terms of Rapid Response activities, since EDD is part of the Rapid Response teams, all closures are assessed to determine if Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) services are appropriate for the affected dislocated workers as well as the appropriateness for Unemployment Insurance (UI). Golden Sierra coordinates with its regional planning unit to provide regional unified employer services strategy whenever possible.

Golden Sierra's business engagement staff have built strong relationships with employers, labor organizations, economic development agencies, training institutions, service providers and community-based organizations. These relationships create an early warning system allowing Golden Sierra to be proactive in identifying and initiating services to employers experiencing downsizing or closure. Additionally, Golden Sierra works closely with economic development through City and County officers, Chambers of Commerce and the regional Greater Sacramento Economic Council to maintain accurate information about business growth, contraction, expansion and workforce skill needs.

The RPU presents a regional approach with other Local Boards and other partners to align services to business which include:

1. Determining employer needs;
2. Integrating workforce services through the One-Stop Delivery system;
3. Leveraging and braiding resources.
4. Ongoing staff development

The GSWDB along with approximately five other local areas participates in the Northern California Rapid Response Roundtable. The Roundtable meetings are centered on promoting collaboration to enhance layoff aversion strategies throughout Northern California. Best practices are shared and the collaboration works to coordinate activities when a layoff affects multiple regions. Furthermore, the Roundtable group attempts to create effective early alert systems.

iv. Description and assessment of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities including priority of service provisions

Golden Sierra has a wide range of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities available in our local area including the following:

a. Basic Career Services

Eligibility determination

- Outreach, intake orientation to unemployment insurance (UI) and other services available through the one-stop delivery system
- Initial assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and supportive service needs
- Provision of labor market information and provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations and nontraditional employment
- Provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including those within the one-stop delivery system and, when appropriate, other workforce development programs
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services by program and type of providers and availability of support services
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA

b. Individualized Career Services

- Individual counseling and mentoring
- Assessments including skills, personality and basic skills
- Developing individual employment plans including setting employment goals and determining objectives and services for the participant to achieve his or her employment goals
- Career planning/ case management
- Short-term pre-vocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct
- Internships and work experiences linked to careers.

- Workforce preparation activities including basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills
- Financial literacy services.
- Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance.
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.

c. Training Services

- Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment.
- On-the-job training.
- Incumbent worker training.
- Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs.
- Training programs operated by the private sector.
- Skill upgrading and retraining.
- Entrepreneurial training.
- Transitional jobs.
- Job readiness training provided in combination with another training service.
- Adult education and literacy activities, including activities of English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs, provided concurrently or in combination with another training service.
- Customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training.

Golden Sierra has established and follows priority of service as per state directive and trains all staff and partners to this requirement. Through the intake and assessment process, an individual's priority for service is determined and utilized to provide access to appropriate training, support services and interventions.

d. Youth Activities

Youth activities in the region target out-of-school youth with barriers to employment including low-income, public assistance recipients, foster youth, youth with disabilities and others. The GSWDB, consistent with WIOA, targets WIOA Title I Youth funding toward workplace learning activities. This is directly reflected in the approved budget for these activities as well as being built directly into the youth service policies and procedures.

GSWDB coordinates with relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities to form workforce and education strategies that enhance services and avoid duplication by participating in ongoing planning initiatives locally and regionally. These initiatives include Career Pathways Trust activities, Community College planning, Adult Education Block Grant (AEBG) planning, Align Capital Region, Align Sierra, Project Lead the Way, Linked Learning and various Career Education (CE) Steering committees at both the County and District level. By providing and/or coordinating labor market

information, sector feedback and information regarding the alignment of performance outcomes, these programs work to provide streamlined pathways to success for students, job seekers and the underemployed. Some of these strategies include career pathways development, articulation agreements and dual enrollment between high school CTE programs and local community college systems.

Articulation agreements represent partnerships between high schools and community colleges. Under these agreements CTE students are able to advance more quickly toward college and careers. These agreements reduce duplicative coursework in which students demonstrate mastery. CTE faculty from both partners collaborate to align curriculum with industry input that provides students with relevant career and academic skills providing opportunities for advanced placement in post-secondary courses and the workforce. Dual enrollment takes articulation one step further. These agreements allow the student to gain college credits for courses (approved for dual enrollment) while attending high school. Dual enrollment courses reduce duplication therefore, preparing students more quickly. They also expedite college completion and reduce student and institutional financial burdens.

e. Digital Literacy and Fluency of Youth Including with Disabilities

GSWDB, through the Capital Region Planning Unit, supports and leverages the activities of the Sacramento Coalition for Digital Inclusion to provide resources, advocacy and support to youth and youth serving organizations including those serving individuals with disabilities. This Coalition has recently been funded by the Regional Plan Implementation grant to expand activities throughout the Capital Region. Additionally, GSWDB has contracted with Valley Vision to develop specific implementation plans in the Golden Sierra region related to advancing digital fluency and other skills identified through Future of Work projects.

In addition to supporting and leveraging the work of the Coalition, Golden Sierra partners with our secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to build upon the digital literacy and fluency skill building activities needed for our region's youth and adult populations. Our adult education partners, public libraries, non profit and private educational institutions have brought many programs online to support the burgeoning need for digital literacy activities in our region. Golden Sierra has contracted with some of these entities to provide free workshops to our constituents as well as improve the skills of Golden Sierra staff. Additionally, as part of the Capital Region Planning Unit, Golden Sierra purchases Metrix licenses to provide digital fluency, literacy, and skill building activities to youth and adults in our region. Community members can take part in these skill building activities virtually or in a Job Center environment.

v. Administration of grant funds and the process to award WIOA Title I activities

Golden Sierra Job Training Agency (GSJTA) serves as the local grant recipient and is responsible for the disbursement of grant funds. GSJTA follows Procurement Policies and Procedures to award contracts for services and activities carried out under this plan. The goal of these policies and procedures is to ensure that all GSJTA procurements are conducted in a manner which provides for full and open competition consistent with standards set forth in applicable local, state and federal regulations. Effective internal controls have been established and include controls over compliance for evaluating and monitoring ongoing activities to ensure that appropriate goals and objectives are met.

GSJTA management provides reasonable assurances that government programs are administered timely and within compliance requirements of the grant award. The process begins with the publishing of Public Notices informing the public of the releases of Requests for Qualifications (RFQs)/Proposals (RFPs). Bidder's Conferences are held when appropriate or necessary to provide potential respondents an opportunity to ask questions or obtain clarification. GSJTA forms a rating team to review and score proposals consistent with criteria outlined in the RFQs/RFPs. Recommendations for approval are prepared by the Executive Director and presented to GSWDB when applicable.

GSJTA makes awards and enters into contracts with contractors possessing the ability to perform successfully. Consideration when entering into a contract is given to such matters as contractor integrity, compliance with public policy, record of past performance, financial stability and technical resources.

Procurement records detailing each procurement are maintained for a period of three years from the date of final payment. These records include, but are not limited to, the following: 1) rationale for the method of procurement; 2) solicitation documents; 3) the basis for awards; 4) selection of contract type; 5) contractor selections or rejections; and 6) the basis for contract price.

vi. Fulfilling duties of the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services Provider

The GSWDB plan assigns many of the critical functions of systems alignment to the One-Stop Operator secured through a procurement process. The One Stop operator in our region is Micheal Indiveri. In the Golden Sierra region the one-stop operator facilitates value added, collaborative partner meetings directing the partners toward key priorities identified in the state plan. The Operator takes a leadership role in the quarterly partner meetings while identifying work assignments that occur between the quarterly meetings, and assisting with expanding partnerships with other service providers in the Golden Sierra workforce ecosystem. They play an integral role in assisting GSWDB with systems alignment and integration. Furthermore, the Operator assists the board in providing oversight to the local service providers while monitoring the partners' commitments as identified in the MOUs.

The One Stop Operator is responsible for:

- In conjunction with Workforce Board oversight and designated administrative staff, coordinating the implementation of negotiated Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and Cost Sharing Agreements (CSA) with all mandated partners.
- The convening and facilitation of quarterly WIOA partner meetings that focus on systems alignment, process improvement and building value added collaboration amongst system partners.
- Acting as a liaison between the workforce board and the system partners including attending meetings of the workforce board and/or its Executive Committee to receive direction and to report on progress no less than three times annually.

Golden Sierra Workforce Board's model includes a contract with Advance to provide career services in the South Lake Tahoe Basin and Alpine county communities. This community partner is aligned with adult education services in these communities, is well versed in the needs of the diverse residents in these areas, and has long standing trust established with community partners and residents. This partnership brings expertise and coordination on the customer service side including local and remote access points. They also bring education expertise and have been instrumental in preparing the Golden Sierra workforce systemwide to provide high quality virtual services. Additionally, Advance hosts quarterly partner meetings with customer serving agencies to educate, foster alignment, and innovate together.

III. Stakeholder and Community Engagement

The Golden Sierra Workforce Development Board (GSWDB), through Golden Sierra Job Training Agency (GSJTA), has prepared this four year workforce development plan by engaging public input sessions, stakeholder interviews, and surveys. In preparation for this local plan, GSWDB engaged regional organizer Valley Vision to conduct board and stakeholder interviews, in addition to Golden Sierra holding public input sessions. These interviews provided a wealth of information and recurrent themes that influenced the priorities and strategies identified in this plan. Documentation for public meetings, public comment, accessibility and inclusivity provisions are attached in the [Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary](#) (Exhibit E).