

Golden Sierra Job Training Agency



Golden Sierra

Workforce Innovation
and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Local Plan

2021 - 2024 2 Year Modification



Jason Buckingham
(916) 773-8542 | buckingham@goldensierra.com

Golden Sierra Local PY 2021-2024 Plan 2 year modification

I. Introduction	1
II. The Process	1
A. WIOA Core and Mandatory Partner Coordination	3
i. The One-Stop Operator	3
ii. Partners	4
iii. Referrals and coordination with partners	4
iv. Co-enrollment and/or common case management	4
v. Improving access through the use of technology and other means	5
vi. Coordination of the provision of appropriate supportive services	6
vii. Compliance with WIOA Section 188 and ADA	6
B. State Strategic Partner Coordination	9
i. County Human Services Agencies/CalFresh E&T Services	9
ii. Local Child Support Agencies and Partners Serving Non-custodial Parents	9
iii. Local Partnership Agreement (LPA) partners, established in alignment with the Competitive Integrated Employment Blueprint, and other local partners who serve individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities	10
iv. Coordination with CBOs and partners serving ELLs, foreign born, and/or refugees	10
C. WIOA Title I Coordination	11
i. Training and/or professional development in digital fluency and distance learning	11
ii. Training and/or professional development to ensure cultural competencies and an understanding of the experiences of trauma exposed populations	12
iii. Coordination of statewide rapid response activities	12
iv. Description and assessment of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities including priority of service provisions	13
v. Administration of grant funds and the process to award WIOA Title I activities	15
vi. Fulfilling duties of the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services Provider	16
III. Appendices	17
A. Stakeholder and Community Engagement	17
B. Public Comments received that disagree with the Local Plan	20
C. Signature page	21

I. Introduction

Unprecedented disruption and labor market changes occurred over the past couple of years. Workforce boards across the country have been challenged to provide solutions to our customers (both residents and businesses) while upholding rigid and ever-changing safety protocols. Golden Sierra had fortunately already been investing in its virtual service model, thereby, providing assistance to some of our more vulnerable community members. This includes those with disabilities and those in remote areas. This model provided a foundation on which to rapidly build and scale in order to provide continuous services to our reeling communities. By utilizing lessons learned and exploring innovations we are propelling forward as businesses reopen physical facilities and we all adapt to an ever-changing work environment.

Golden Sierra recognizes the needs of employers and community members extend beyond county lines. As a result, as part of the Capital Region Planning Unit, we collaborate with our regional partners to increase efficiencies and coordination for businesses and training partners in the region. One recent example is the High Road Construction Careers grant, in which we collaborated with two other boards in our planning area to broaden and strengthen the pipeline of workers in construction careers and Registered Apprenticeships. Golden Sierra has an active board of employers, industry, educators, and partners, as well as a dedicated staff team. Their contributions are incalculable. Respondents in a recent survey which was conducted as part of this planning process viewed Golden Sierra's commitment and expertise as one of the region's most valuable asset. Alternatively, the need to further align and coordinate with the diverse and ever-expanding workforce ecosystem partners was identified as an area for opportunity and growth. We continue to see the interdependence of our efforts as the best opportunity to make the greatest impact. We build better systems when we work together to solve complex problems, such as addressing workforce challenges. As a result, Golden Sierra's vision is as follows:

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, it is our hope that the required resources and collaboration be made available to fully align our education, workforce and economic development system.

II. The Process

The Golden Sierra Workforce Development Board (GSWDB), through Golden Sierra Job Training Agency (GSJTA or Golden Sierra), 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 currently active 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 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 Mandatory Partner Coordination

i. The One-Stop Operator

The GSWDB delegated many of the critical functions of system alignment to the One-Stop Operator, who was selected through a competitive bidding process. The One-Stop Operator facilitates value-added, collaborative partner meetings in the Golden Sierra region, directing partners toward key priorities identified in the state plan. The Operator leads quarterly partner meetings, identifies work assignments that occur between meetings, and assists in expanding partnerships with other service providers in the Golden Sierra workforce ecosystem. They are crucial in assisting GSWDB with system alignment and integration. Furthermore, the Operator assists the board in providing oversight to local service providers while monitoring the partners' MOU commitments.

- The One Stop Operator is responsible for coordinating the implementation of negotiated Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and Cost Sharing Agreements (CSA) with all mandated partners in collaboration with Workforce Board and designated administrative staff.
- Convening and facilitating quarterly WIOA partner meetings that focus on system alignment, process improvement, and building value-added collaboration among 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 report on progress at least three times per year.

ii. Partners

WIOA identifies required partners who are included in the local system. These partners have documented their commitments by signing Memorandums of Understanding and completing Infrastructure Funding Agreements, as required by WIOA. Though not all additional partners are mentioned here, the Golden Sierra regional partnership includes:

- 3 community college districts (two of which span regions outside the Golden Sierra boundaries)
- 3 Adult Ed Block Grant Consortia
- 5 Adult Education Providers
- 2 County Economic Development Departments
- 2 City Economic Development Departments
- As well as a number of Chambers of Commerce, and Community Based Organizations that serve a variety of populations such as foster youth, veterans, the homeless, people with disabilities, and the business community.

iii. Referrals and coordination with partners

GSJTA and its partners share information at quarterly partner meetings. These meetings are attended by Career Service providers, as well as other required WIOA partners and system stakeholders. These meetings allow partners to receive up-to-date labor market information as well as share resources and knowledge about what is occurring within the partner systems. This helps to improve our local system's capacity, it maximizes efficiency by reducing duplication, assists with leveraging program funding, and improves cross-system referrals. Additionally, these meetings provide opportunities for staff and partner development on topics such as how to best meet WIOA performance measures, trauma informed care, cultural competency, working with individuals with disabilities, employer engagement, and others. During the pandemic's transition to remote services, Golden Sierra was fortunate to have ADVANCE as one of our service providers. As virtual education leaders, they share tried-and-true strategies improving virtual learning and engagement outcomes.

During these meetings, partner organizations also share what services are available to clients, what clients can expect, and how to make appropriate referrals. Golden Sierra has a partner referral form that can be sent electronically. Its purpose is to improve warm handoffs, accelerate collaboration, and reduce duplication by identifying client needs and forwarding them to the appropriate organization. As new providers join, the organizations receive instruction and training on how to use this form as well as other referral mechanisms.

iv. Co-enrollment and/or common case management

GSWDB uses co-enrollment as a preferred delivery strategy. Strategic co-enrollment benefits both participants and the workforce system by providing additional case management support, leveraging resources, eliminating service duplication, and improving participant experiences and outcomes. Co-enrollment with partners can help to streamline the delivery of intensive services like case management, job search assistance, and follow-up care.

When appropriate, GSJTA collaborates with program partners to co-enroll. Co-enrollment and the braiding of resources and expertise enables partner organizations to leverage the appropriate components of each program, thereby improving outcomes such as certifications, job placement, earnings, and employment retention.

Co-enrollment eligibility is addressed by strategically cross-training GS staff and partner organizations. Staff from partnering organizations attend regular quarterly meetings to learn about program benefits and eligibility requirements. Each partner maintains expertise and responsibility for their respective programs, as well as ongoing information sharing to assist participating organizations in making the appropriate referrals, reducing errors and duplication.

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

The Golden Sierra region is predominantly rural. When attempting to provide services virtually within outlying areas, limited broadband availability presents unique challenges, especially when considering today's high bandwidth virtual tools. The Gold Country Broadband Consortium is currently expanding the majority of the region's broadband access (GCBC). The GCBC is a public-private partnership that aims to increase digital access and use in the counties of Nevada, Placer, El Dorado, Sierra, and eastern Alpine. The GCBC is one of 14 regional consortia funded by the California Advanced Services Fund Rural and Urban Regional Broadband Consortia grant program in the state. The Consortium was formed to pool regional, state, and national resources in order to improve and expand broadband access.

The CalJOBS (CJ) system is the primary regional tool for providing virtual access to job seekers and employers. The CJ system contains a plethora of useful tools that can be accessed by both audiences via a simple online registration process. This procedure can be carried out at home, at work, at a library, or via a mobile application. The CJ system includes job-seeker tools such as resume builders, career explorers, career assessments, job search listings, alerts, labor market information, and unemployment services, and makes these tools accessible to people with disabilities. Though not all Core partners have direct access to managed services through CJ, all partners have received training on the services available through the CJ system. Partners are also encouraged to register their appropriate clients, students, and consumers. As new partners are developed, ongoing training on CJ is provided.

Even before the pandemic, GSWDB recognized that individuals with significant barriers to employment in rural and urban areas face numerous challenges. To that end, GSWDB partners offer free job readiness workshops through Zoom and YouTube outside of America's Job Center of California (AJCC) locations. These workshops serve as an extension of the AJCCs, reaching far more people than would otherwise be possible. GSWDB also uses Metrix online learning to provide job seekers with free skill building workshops that can be accessed remotely. Furthermore, GSWDB contracts with adult and private schools to provide free workshop series to job seekers across our jurisdiction in order to enhance our virtual offerings and skill building activities. As rural areas limit the ability to meet in physical locations, service providers are encouraged to meet the needs of their constituents through the use of mobile tools such as tablets and laptops, as well as online platforms such as Zoom and Skype.

In addition to serving participants virtually, Golden Sierra has expanded its virtual career fairs since the outbreak of the pandemic. Both employers and job seekers have praised this method of providing career services to the business community. Golden Sierra expects this virtual service to grow and provide a wider range of economic opportunities for our rural regional workforce as telework opportunities increase, allowing employers to recruit job seekers from a larger geographic area.

vi. Coordination of the provision of appropriate supportive services

The onset of the pandemic increased the need for supportive services in our region. Golden Sierra has been successful in receiving additional supportive services funds through various competitive Grant sources. With increased inflation, rising rents and increased cost of living in our region, supportive services are becoming increasingly important for participant success for those in training programs and those entering the labor force. While the intent is understandable, the required training percentage allocation currently inhibits local areas, including Golden Sierra, from providing the robust support services required to guide participants (especially those who are socioeconomically challenged) through training and into self-sufficient careers. The ability to provide more robust support services emerged as the single greatest need to serve job seeker populations in our region, according to staff and partner surveys.

Prior to utilizing WIOA funds, GSWDB partners collaborate with the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Rehabilitation, nonprofit organizations, and other sources of funding. Supportive Services for items such as transportation assistance, required clothing, books, tuition, childcare, and so on are then coordinated by case managers through our local partners to ensure that all available funding sources are exhausted before using WIOA funding for these services. This is required by law and is reflected in our local policies. While the overall need for support services has been increasing, very few support service dollars can be counted toward the state mandated 30% Direct Training Requirement (DTR). This is one example of how the DTR is incompatible with what is required on the front lines. These supports are more important than ever as our community members recover from the pandemic's devastation and rebuild their livelihoods.

vii. Compliance with WIOA Section 188 and ADA

a. Designation of an Equal Opportunity Officer

Consistent with WSD17-01, 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. Alternative formats are provided upon request to people with disabilities or those with limited English proficiency.

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 Limited English Proficiency (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. These agreements are regularly monitored for compliance.

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 WSD17-01 and WSD18-05.

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.

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
 - Mental Health First Aid
 - Disability Benefits 101
 - Reasonable Accommodations

To maintain relevant training and information, AJCC staff attend 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 Human Services Agencies/CalFresh E & T Services

Each of the counties in the Golden Sierra Workforce Development Region (GS region) have CalFresh programs; however, Placer County is the region's only member with a CalFresh Employment and Training (E & T) program at the present time. Regardless, Golden Sierra collaborates with all three counties to achieve the goals of the CalFresh program in general and the CalFresh E & T program in particular. Golden Sierra works specifically on integrating CalFresh E & T with the public workforce system to improve employment outcomes and wages for participants under the CalFresh E & T partnership agreement.

For many years, the workforce system and programs administered by Health and Human Services Agencies (HHSAs) throughout the GS region have collaborated to leverage resources and braid funding in order to provide a full continuum of services to public assistance recipients. This includes those receiving CalFresh. The goal of this collaboration has always been to improve the employment outcomes of our mutual participants. GSJTA and the local HHSAs are committed to maintaining this mutually beneficial relationship. The result of the Pandemic has been an increase in the overall needs of our joint priority populations. Working hand in hand with our local partners to coordinate activities aimed at enhancing success is one factor that contributes to success for multi-barriered individuals. These vital partnerships are an essential component of the GS region's strategy, which includes identifying WIOA recipients who are already participating in partner activities such as CalFresh and CalFresh E & T, providing co-enrollment and co-case management when appropriate, enrolling participants in 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 incorporated the State plan's goals, objectives, and strategies into its own strategy to ensure a comprehensive array of services are provided to non-custodial parents thereby facilitating successful labor market outcomes and progression into livable wage careers. GSWDB has been successful in better coordinating staff development efforts and expanding the availability 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 Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) and GSJTA in an effort to support non-custodial parents with child support orders' employability.

One example of service integration is a process by which DCSS clients are referred to GSJTA by Family Support judges also known as commissioners. Individuals who have been referred contact GSJTA and the America's Job Center of California (AJCC) to schedule an initial assessment. The case manager assists the noncustodial parent in identifying their goals during this initial assessment and collaborates with DCSS to develop an acceptable service strategy. DCSS's involvement in this process is critical because a successful strategy may include lifting restrictions on items such as driver's licenses or other licenses. GSJTA also offers job search, resume preparation, interview workshops, skills/interest assessments, career research, vocational training, misdemeanor conviction expungement, and felony conviction reduction. Throughout this process, the client communicates with the case manager to report progress

toward their goals and to assist in overcoming any unexpected obstacles. Clients' participation is required, and they may be held in contempt of court if they do not comply with the judge's "seek-work" order. Any reporting elements deemed necessary to ensure compliance with the court's order are reported back to DCSS by GSJTA.

Partnerships have demonstrated the ability to form support teams that improve outcomes for all parties, with program partners bringing expertise in their respective fields that would otherwise be lacking. Case management success requires bringing these partners to the table, co-enrolling as needed, and collaborating to weave program funding and services that reduce barriers and increase employability outcomes.

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

GSJTA employs a Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC) who works full-time in the AJCC and with the AJCC partnership. The DRC is a subject matter expert on programs for people with disabilities. Notably the DRC provides valuable assistance to those who have intellectual or developmental impairments (ID/DD). The DRC maintains this knowledge by participating in specialized training and certifications including 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. The co-location at the AJCCs within the GS Region helps with agency referrals. Every two months, the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) hosts office hours to facilitate co-enrollment and give clients easy access to a variety of service providers. The Alta Sierra Regional Center and GSWDB collaborate to provide services to ID/DD clients throughout their supported work experiences. Alta Regional encourages customers to use the GSWDB and AJCCs as resources for job searching, and for programs that develop employability skills, including training.

Furthermore, GSJTA takes part in the Local Partnership Agreement (LPA) for our region, which also involves the Workability programs at the neighborhood schools, Alta Regional Center, and DOR. The LPA is a partnership that gives people with ID/DD employment support and opportunities to increase their prospects of obtaining Competitive Integrated Employment.

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

Three counties in the Capital RPU have a population that is at least 15% limited English proficient. These counties are Yolo, Sutter, and Sacramento. Each area's local plan will include specific information about how it will meet the needs of these populations. The Regional Plan includes details on how the Capital RPU partners handle the regional needs of this population. The Golden Sierra region (Placer, El Dorado, and Alpine counties) currently has no counties that contain a 15 percent limited English proficient population. Furthermore, none of our counties demand a California Department of Social Services (CDSS)-certified refugee services plan.

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, HHS, California Human Development Corporation as the WIOA 167 provider, local employers, labor, and business intermediaries such as the north State Building Industry Association (NSBIA) and the Sacramento Valley Manufacturer's Association (SVMA).

The Adult Education Block Grant Consortium and WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) partners are essential to these initiatives in the Golden Sierra area. Sierra Assets, Advance, and the Capital Adult Education Regional Consortium (CAERC) are some of these collaborators. Each of these partners creates programs for the seven Adult Education Block Grant (AEBG) program areas, including those for immigrants qualified for citizenship, ESL, and workforce preparation programs. Basic skill education, adult disability programs, short-term career technical education programs with strong job prospects, and pre-apprenticeship training activities carried out with programs certified by the Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS) are noteworthy overlapping programs.

There are continued and 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

GSJTA was offering digital services prior to the start of COVID-19. This was due, in part, to the vast and varied topography of the geographic area Golden Sierra serves. This positioned us to respond quickly to the contactless service environment after the pandemic started.

Golden Sierra is preparing for a variety of services in both digital and physical contexts in the future. To this aim, we have been training, and will continue to train our team to increase their digital proficiency. This includes utilizing a variety of technologies, such as Metrix Learning, Zoom, Northstar Digital Literacy, Google Suite, Skype, virtual job fair technologies, and other platforms that allow us to better serve our communities. In addition, Golden Sierra collaborates with our partners to train employees and partner organizations on how to improve learning outcomes through distant learning for workshops on job preparedness and other activities.

Golden Sierra, as part of the Capital Region Regional Planning Unit (RPU), collaborates with the [Capital Region Coalition for Digital Inclusion](#), and coordinates to provide training to our region through funds procured through Regional Plan Implementation. Enhanced training on customer and business involvement through virtual platforms, better platform utilization, and virtual environment adaptation are all part of this collaboration.

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

To address the systemic inequalities of our country's past, GSWDB is aware of the need to make sure our workforce ecosystem is as inclusive as feasible. To do this, we have implemented techniques like race equity training, cultural competency training, and trauma-informed case management.

As previously mentioned, Golden Sierra collaborates to coordinate training for our region using monies obtained through Regional Plan Implementation. Golden Sierra is a part of the Capital Region Regional Planning Unit (RPU).

Our regional planning unit makes the most of training funds through CART, or Capital Area Regional Training, to improve the staff capacity of our region. Training in cultural competence, trauma-informed care and case management, as well as equity/inclusion outreach and engagement tactics will all continue to be a part of this collaboration.

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, and 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 offers a variety of adult and dislocated worker employment and training opportunities, including the following:

a. Basic Career Services

A preliminary 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 Outreach, intake orientation to unemployment insurance (UI) and other services available through the one-stop delivery system.

Provision of performance data, program cost details, eligible training service providers by program, provider type, and availability of support services.

Support in determining eligibility for financial aid programs assistance for training and educational initiatives not covered by WIOA.

b. Individualized Career Services

Individual counseling and mentoring; assessments of skills, personality, and fundamental skills; development of individual employment plans, including setting employment goals and identifying objectives and services for the participant to achieve those goals; career planning/case management; and short-term pre-vocational services, such as development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, and personal maintenance skills.

c. Training Services

Training in occupational skills, including training for unconventional jobs, on-the-job training opportunities including apprenticeships, training for incumbent workers, programs that combine related classroom and in-the-workplace training, such as cooperative education initiatives, retraining and upgrading of skills, job preparedness instruction combined with another training program, activities for adult education and literacy, such as programs for learning English and integrated education and training, offered concurrently or in conjunction with another training service, on-the-job training that is specifically tailored to an individual with a promise made by an employer or group of employers to hire that person after successful completion of the training.

Golden Sierra maintains priority of service. Therefore, an individual's priority for service is established during the intake and assessment process, and it is then used to offer access to the proper training, support services, and interventions as directed.

d. Youth Activities

Golden Sierra's youth programs focus toward out-of-school youth who face challenges to employment. These challenges include lower economic status, youth receiving public assistance, foster youth, youth with disabilities, and others. The GSWDB directs Youth funds into workplace learning initiatives in accordance with WIOA. This is outlined in the approved budget for these activities as well as in the policies and procedures for youth service.

GSWDB collaborates with pertinent secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities to create workforce and education strategies that improve services and prevent duplication. 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.

Partnerships between community colleges and high schools are represented via articulation agreements. These partnerships allow CTE students to move closer to college and careers more quickly. These agreements lessen redundant coursework where students show competency. The CTE teachers from both partners work together to connect the curriculum with suggestions from industry, giving students chances for advanced placement in post-secondary coursework and the workforce while also preparing them for relevant professional and academic skills.

A further step beyond articulation is dual enrollment. These agreements enable the student to earn college credits for courses taken while enrolled in high school that have been approved for dual enrollment. Dual enrollment programs lessen duplication, which helps students get ready more rapidly. Additionally, they speed up college completion and lessen the financial load on students and institutions.

e. Digital Literacy and Fluency of Youth Including with Disabilities

GSWDB, through the Capital Region Planning Unit, supports and leverages the activities of the Capital Region 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, nonprofit 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 as well as take digital literacy assessments the Northstar Digital Literacy tool which also includes access to relevant digital literacy education modules.

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 Michael 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 system wide to provide high quality virtual services. Additionally, Advance hosts quarterly partner meetings with customer serving agencies to educate, foster alignment, and innovate together.

III. Appendices

A. Stakeholder and Community Engagement

The Golden Sierra Workforce Development Board (GSWDB), through Golden Sierra Job Training Agency (GSJTA), has prepared this modification to its four year workforce development plan by engaging in public input sessions, stakeholder interviews, and surveys. In preparation for this local plan, GSWDB participated in public input sessions with the Capital Area Regional Planning Unit and engaged regional organizer Valley Vision to conduct additional board, partner and stakeholder interviews. 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 required for **Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary** are detailed below.

Due to COVID-19, the Public Input Meetings were facilitated via zoom and were held on the dates and times as follows:

- Thursday, January 14, 2021 (9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.)
- Wednesday, January 20, 2021 (9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.)

Public Notices were posted in local and regional publications, including the Business Journal, on Golden Sierra's website and in local publications. In addition, an email notification was widely disseminated to local area stakeholders, including the required list as mandated by the state's policy guidance, and other representatives from the business and organized labor communities, the K-12 system, the community college system, adult education, private postsecondary institutions, and community-based organizations. Special care was taken to ensure that organizations representing traditionally disinvested populations, such as the Department of Human Assistance, the California Human Development, Department of Rehabilitation, Alta Regional, Pride Industries to name a few, received a notification of the postings. Partners were also invited to submit written comments via email regarding the Public Input Meeting Questions.

Attendees included stakeholders and partners from education, labor, business, economic development and community-based organizations, including those serving specialized populations such as the Department of Human Assistance, Community Action Agencies, and Behavioral Health Services. The overarching input indicated a need for increased and ongoing communication among service partners and improved alignment of services to meet the needs of all customers. Recurring issues expressed by attendees included transportation, the need for wrap-around supports, mitigating lengthy/cumbersome processes and paperwork to access services, increasing access to job readiness and career pathway programs for vulnerable populations.

Additional input included the need to:

- Build/cultivate trust within the communities being served
- Create equitable access to programs and services for all communities
- Offer transitional employment programs
- Build partnerships through "silo busting"
- Promote entry-level, career pathways with advancement opportunities
- Establish "trauma-informed" workforce practitioners through cultural competency training
- Continue and expand virtual services to ensure access to programs and services for all, and to promote and support remote learning

For the two year modification process the region set forth to gain greater insight into five principle areas. In order to achieve this we held additional public input sessions. Due to high transmission rates of COVID-19 within the region these additional meetings were held virtually in order to allow the community to participate. The meetings were [publicly noticed](#) on local workforce board websites, local and regional publications, and widely disseminated through email distribution and social media. The meeting dates and times were as follows:

- Wednesday, November 16, 2022 (6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.)
- Wednesday, December 7, 2022 (9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.)

The prompting questions and their most highlighted answers are below:

1. How can we increase awareness of services to job seekers and the underemployed? What are the best tools and/or locations we can use to increase awareness of the services available?

- i. Utilization of community navigators, or ambassadors was mentioned twice.

2. How can we better serve vulnerable, minority, and underserved job seekers? What Services are the most effective in lifting communities out of poverty?

- i. Transportation and transportation assistance mentioned four times
- ii. Supporting youth to sustain employment was stated three times
- iii. Incentives were mentioned twice
- iv. Applying Human Centered Design was also mentioned twice
- v. Short-term training
- vi. Mental health supports

3. How can we increase awareness of services to employers and better meet employer needs

- i. Continue to ensure that employers are a part of program design
- ii. Highlight success stories more visibly

4. Do we currently offer the right mix of services? Are additional services needed?

- i. Transportation
- ii. Mental Health services

5. What characteristics of quality jobs should be focused on?

- i. Paid internships, wages and benefits (Internships was mentioned twice, once was in regards to youth internships)
- ii. Alternative benefits - like paid training (This was mentioned three times).
- iii. On-site, hybrid or remote status. Internships with opportunities for remote work or hybrid work. Remote work was mentioned three times.
- iv. Employee retention (i.e. promotions, work/life balance upskilling, workplace culture) Upskilling was mentioned twice.
- v. Communication of value and opportunity for upward mobility opportunities was mentioned three times.

Additional Input or Comments Included:

- Recognizing the public sector as an economic driver with life changing opportunities for underinvested communities.
- Share information about the workforce boards with all partners that communicate services and opportunities appropriately for each audience.
- Improve alignment across the workforce and education systems.
- Position workforce boards and partners as leaders in this area.
- Build a greater workforce coalition- communicate the benefits of partnering with workforce boards and or service providers so that people would want to partner with the workforce boards.
- Better information sharing with all partners and workforce providers, quarterly at least.
- Continue to engage Valley Vision.

Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary

Details provided above

Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments

B. Public Comments received that disagree with the Local Plan

Local Board Record of Comments

Section 108 of the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* requires the Local Boards to publish the local plan for public comment. The Local Workforce Development Board (Local Board) should include with their local plan submittal, all comments that have been received that disagree with the local plan, how the Local Board considered that input and its impact on the narrative in the local plan.

Please provide these comments in the following format:

Local Plan Section	Comment/Response
Section:	Comment:
	Local Board Response:
Section:	Comment:
	Local Board Response:
Section:	Comment:
	Local Board Response:
Section:	Comment:
	Local Board Response:

C. Signature page

LOCAL PLAN SIGNATURES

This local plan represents the Golden Sierra Workforce Development Board's efforts to maximize and coordinate resources available under Title I of the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)*.

This local plan 2 year modification is submitted for the period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2025 in accordance with the provisions of the WIOA.

Local Workforce Development Board Chair	Chief Elected Official
_____	_____
Signature	Signature
_____	_____
Name	Name
Workforce Board Chair	Governing Body Chair
_____	_____
Title	Title
_____	_____
Date	Date