

Solano County
Local Workforce Plan PY 2017-21 – Two Year Modifications

Provision of Services to English Language Learners, the Foreign Born, and Refugees

Solano County has less than 15% or more of the population considered as Limited English Proficient (LEP), and therefore, is not required to have a Local Plan provision on English Language Learners, the Foreign Born, and Refugees. However, the Workforce Development Board (WDB) of Solano County recognizes a growing LEP population in the County and considers it important to address the needs of its English Language Learners and Foreign Born.

Braiding Resources and Coordinating Service Delivery

The Solano County Adult Education Consortium has formed an ELL stakeholders group, which consists of local non-profits, faith based organizations, local libraries, Solano County Office of Education (SCOE), Solano Community College, the WDB, and other ELL service providers. Through the ELL stakeholder group, the WDB will be working with the other service providers to enhance service delivery models, leverage bilingual staff resources, and further expand and align ELL programs.

During the stakeholder engagement sessions, it became clear that one foundational step to effectively braiding resources and coordinating service delivery is to have a universal definition of what constitutes an English language learner. The WDB will work with its partners over the next two years to develop a working definition, in order to better leverage services for ELL individuals. Another foundational step determined during stakeholder discussions will be to work with partners to ascertain where the largest concentrations of ELL residents are located geographically. Partners had anecdotal understandings of geographic concentrations; yet, having clear, data-informed knowledge of our county's ELL geographic concentrations will better inform service delivery and how best to braid resources. Over the next two years, the WDB and partners will research and inform stakeholders of areas in the county with the highest concentrations of ELL populations.

The WDB is committed to better serving the ELL population that comes to the America's Job Centers of California (AJCC). Although the WDB has no ELL-specific services, over 600 individuals who had a preferred language other than English utilized the AJCC in Solano County in FY2018. Of those, 503 individuals preferred Spanish and 70 preferred Tagalog. WDB staff will work with the One-Stop Operator, currently California Human Development (CHD), and the One-Stop Partners to identify and implement ways to better serve the ELL population coming to the AJCC. The WDB will work with CHD to identify ways to better support the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker population located around Dixon as part of this implementation.

In addition, 59 out of 433 individuals (14%) who self-identified as ELL were active in Adult, Dislocated Worker, or Youth programs in FY2018. The WDB will work with the local Adult Schools with ELL programs in Benicia, Fairfield, Vacaville, and Vallejo to leverage resources to increase the English skills of individuals enrolled in Solano's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I programs.

The Solano Adult Schools served 1,052 ELL students in FY2018, with the predominant age group being those between the ages of 25 and 44. The WDB began conducting outreach and holding office hours at

the Vallejo and Fairfield-Suisun Adult Schools in FY2019. This new partnership will allow the WDB to better connect with ELL students and enhance employment services for this population.

The WDB will also work closely with the Solano County Adult Education Consortium and Solano Community College to develop integrated education and training programs that will afford participants the benefits of enhanced support services and inter-agency referral systems. The Adult School system and the WDB will braid funding to implement ELL and technical skill cohorts in in-demand industries, thereby increasing access for the ELL population to sector pathway programs. As part of this cohort, the WDB will provide supportive and retention services for participants.

Progression into Livable Wage Careers

The Solano WDB and other ELL service providers will employ an enhanced supportive service delivery model coupled with a community support network to ensure participants avoid gaps in services or barriers to employment. In developing an integrated education and training program, the WDB and Adult Schools will build in communication methods and peer-based learning mechanisms to build retention into the program.

Solano Workforce and Employment Service Plans

Solano County does not meet the LEP threshold to require an Employment Services Plan by the Solano County Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Nor does Solano County meet the threshold to require a Refugee Employment Service Plan. The WDB and Solano Adult School Consortium will be connecting the concepts in their plans to ensure alignment of service strategies. As part of the stakeholder engagement session, however, representatives from HHS were present and provided an understanding of the demographics, employment trends, and other relevant information pertaining to the LEP and foreign-born populations.