

# LOS ANGELES REGIONAL ADULT EDUCATION CONSORTIUM (LARAEC)

## OPEN MEETING

Friday, September 18, 2015  
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
Burbank Unified School District Offices  
1900 W. Olive Ave., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Board Room  
Burbank, CA 91516

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The following executive committee members were present:

Kathy Brendzal  
Marvin Martinez  
Veronica Montez  
Michael Romero  
Emilio Urioste

Montebello Unified School District (MUSD)  
Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD)  
Culver City Unified School District (CCUSD)  
Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD)  
Burbank Unified School District (BUSD)

### OPENING:

Mr. Emilio Urioste welcomed the committee and attendees to the Burbank Unified School District Offices.

Mr. Marvin Martinez called the first LAREAC Open Meeting to order at 10:13 a.m.

Mr. Marvin Martinez thanked the BUSD for hosting the first LAREAC open meeting. The LAREAC executive committee introduced themselves to the attendees.

Mr. Martinez reported that the purpose of today's meeting was to establish how future meetings will be conducted. The committee will be presenting information on the purpose of the meetings, procedures for conducting meetings, meeting dates and locations. He noted that having multiple K-12 school districts and the LACCD come together is unprecedented and there is a lot of work ahead in order to provide the best possible education for the adult population and preparing adults for the workforce.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mr. Emilio Urioste led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

Ms. Donna Brashear, LASUD Executive Director of Adult Education gave a PowerPoint presentation on the history of LAREAC. She began her presentation noting that in the economic downturn of 2008-09, many districts and community colleges throughout the state took cuts. In June 2013, the governor called for the restructure of adult education, which produced AB86. In December 2013, the planning grant guidelines were released, those guidelines provided a two-year planning grant fund of \$1,751,663, tasked to create a regional

adult education consortium with the goal of improving adult education, addressing gaps, and making seamless transitions throughout the districts. With AB86, LAREAC was formed, which consists of the following five districts, BUSD, CCUSD, LACCD, LAUSD, and MUSD. LAREAC was tasked with developing a 3-year Regional Comprehensive Plan, which they completed in 14-months. The structure of LAREAC is headed by an Executive Team. A Point Person Team, which is a research and advisory team, helped create the plan with the Core Leadership Team providing more expertise to the planning. Also involved in the planning were Subject Matter Experts consisting of teachers from all the areas represented in AB86 who worked with community partners and stakeholders. Teams worked in groups to create the comprehensive plan. In 2015, AB104 established the Adult Education Block Grant to support workforce development. The State is now referring to the grant as the Adult Education Block Grant (AEBG); \$500 million was budgeted for this grant. It will be distributed in two phases. In the first phase, \$92.7 million will be issued for Maintenance of Effort (MOE) for the K-12s. The second phase will be consortium funding of \$28 million, which has yet to be allocated. On October 30, 2015, the following deliverables are due to the state: Consortia Report on Governance Compliance of Rules and Procedures, Distribution Schedule, Budget, Amendments to 3-year plan, and One-year plan. Currently, the executive team will be deliberating governance, bylaws, and allocations with the point person team coordinating the efforts to complete the 3-year plan amendment and the one-year plan template, which will be submitted to the executive committee for approval.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Marvin Martinez gave the audience instructions on making public comments, in regards to time limits and forms to be completed.

The following speakers addressed the committee:

1. Mr. Mathew Kogen, LAUSD ESL Teacher/UTLA adult education teacher representative, speaking on behalf of UTLA, recommended broadening the LAREAC executive team to allow non-voting members. He also noted that the AEBG is a great opportunity for Los Angeles and the communities served; however, is disappointed that it has been put at risk because the LACCD has not yet appointed a representative. The result of that is having to wait for funding. Therefore, at today's meeting instead of allocating funds, the committee is discussing how to run meetings because they cannot vote due to lack of a LACCD representative. He also noted that the spirit of AB86 is collaboration, they are asking these districts to work together but there is room for growth, having witnessed petty squabbles that need to end because they are all here today to help those communities that are still waiting. He hopes resolution will take place quickly.
2. Ms. Michelle Cohen, LAUSD teacher/UTLA Adult Education Steering Committee member/CFT Adult Education Committee member, stated that it is great to be in a room with so many that have the same goal of drastically improving education opportunities for adults in Los Angeles. She wanted to address the committee on having a more represented body working alongside the executive committee. The UTLA proposes a steering committee that would include teachers and students. She also requested future open meetings not take place during normal

business hours so that more teachers and students can attend. She noted that she is glad the process is moving ahead and is hopeful there will be more collaboration as partners to make it even better.

3. Ms. Julie Carson, LAUSD retired adult education teacher, also served as chair of the CFT Adult Education Commission when talks of consolidation of K-12s with the community colleges began. The consortium is a way to support adult education and the CFT is a supporter of AB86 and the consortium process because it is going to provide better services for students. She requested having real meaningful teacher and student inclusion. She noted that they have had plenty of opportunities to share ideas but since the start of the consortium have been trying to get a seat at the decision-making table. Once the community colleges appoint a representative she is requesting a meeting be scheduled as soon as possible to make a decision for the allocation of funds because the K-12s are struggling. Teachers need to be re-hired and desperately needed services provided to students. The LAUSD used to serve 400,000 through the adult education system and now is serving about 90,000.
4. Ms. Joanne Waddell, Los Angeles County Faculty Guild president/AFT 1521 representative, noted she was excited to be at today's meeting and about the potential of the adult education plan. At the community colleges, employee input at every level of decision-making is not just cultural, shared governance processes are actually the law. She noted that while she is pleased to be here as part of this open and transparent meeting, noting it has been a long time coming. She is looking forward to contributing to the development of input, perhaps a steering committee as has been mentioned, inclusive of employee groups so that skepticism can be reduced and to enhance the transparency, unity, and power of the program.
5. Ms. Armida Ornelas, ELAC faculty member, noted she has been working on the adult education efforts, trying to encourage the curriculum alignment between the systems. While it has been a great start, it has come to a stall, more collaboration is necessary. Speaking as a faculty member, it feels that faculty are marginalized from the process. She would like to see more transparency, noting that she has come across several memos on potential funding formulas, which is contrary to today's meeting. She would hope that those funding discussions would come to the open meetings first and that they are more representative of the different constituents. She stated that she did not consider herself a member of the public but rather an integral part of the discussion, as do many of her colleagues. Rather than having a one-way public comment she would rather be involved, would rather contribute to the discussion. Ms. Armida Ornelas requested that the executive committee consider broadening its committee to include faculty in the decisions.
6. Mr. Don Gauthier, LACCD District Academic Senate president, spoke on the need for faculty inclusion in this process, as they will be doing a lot of the work. Faculty see themselves holding a very vital part in the community college system and it is important to take that spirit of inclusion forward so that everyone feels

that they have a best interest in this, otherwise, there will not be much buy in from faculty. This is something that has never been attempted before and we need to make sure that from the very beginning faculty have input and a voice that is listened to.

## **REPORTS TO CONSORTIUM**

### **▪ ESL Workgroup Update**

Ms. Cindy Diaz and Ms. Lia Lerner gave an update on the ESL workgroup. Ms. Lia Lerner reported that in May 2015, LAREAC clearly stated intentions and goals which were part of phase one in the 3-year plan. One of the goals was to find bridges and pathways. One of the most important tasks for this was the K-12 curriculum alignment. Specifically course outline and figuring out what the common elements were to start aligning the curriculum. The workgroup decided to start with the course outline for ESL beginning low and eventually align the other levels. It was an enormous endeavor, which was broken down into steps. The core leadership team suggested aligning the adult curriculum first. Once the K-12 curriculum for all four districts is aligned it will then be aligned with the community college curriculum. The workgroup followed the structure process that was put in place by the larger LAREAC board and guided by Mr. Lanzi Asturias, LAREAC point people and workgroup members maintained open communication to keep activities transparent. The large group was formed into two smaller teams, in order to accomplish more work. Each team was assigned a few units.

Ms. Cindy Diaz reported that once the workgroup was dividing into smaller teams the working process began and the teams proceeded in a surprisingly similar and parallel manner despite the fact that specific instructions were not given. They were intentionally omitted in order to give members more freedom to explore different methods. The teams recognized member's strengths and used them as an advantage. It was also apparent that each member was very knowledgeable and professional in the ESL field and therefore created a very respectful, helpful and productive working relationship. In the process that emerged the teams took some of this steps, decided on common terms to use in the course outline, compared and contrasted all of the K-12 adult districts beginning low course outlines, came to consensus on topics and competencies. The teams discussed possible formatting for the new the course outline. The teams discussed the inclusion of critical thinking skills and learning skills in college and career readiness standards for ESL. The teams worked on problems to correlate EL Civics and CCRs competencies. Once teams developed their content contributions, the point people held a meeting to reassess the team requirements for completion of the finalized draft. The teams reconvened twice more to share progress and finalize the assigned elements of the course outlines. All members throughout the process were in communication. It was noted that agendas and minutes were taken for each meeting and sent to the project manager.

The teams worked their way through this steps methodically and systematically to arrive at the current state, which is combining both teams into one ESL beginning low course outline draft using an agreed upon format.

Future plans include working on the draft, which is in progress, and then it will be distributed to the adult ESL beginning low teachers throughout the four districts for their review and input. The tentative completion date for the document is Sept 30, 2015. The teams will continue this curriculum alignment process and start on the next two levels. The goal is to have all six ESL's levels aligned by end of school year.

#### Questions/Comments:

- Mr. Don Gauthier asked when the community college faculty would be involved in the curriculum alignment process. Ms. Cindy Diaz responded that they are just on the first course of combining the four K-12 districts before alignment with the community colleges and it should be shortly. Mr. Marvin Martinez noted that as soon as funding is settled, curriculum alignment meetings would be scheduled. Mr. Emilio Urioste clarified that the point of having the K-12s come together was that we would not be in a position to have any sort of articulation or discussion with community colleges approaching them from four different perspectives. The K-12s would come together and agree on a template from all districts before approaching the community colleges. By no means has a final curriculum been determined yet.
- Mr. Emilio Urioste asked that apart from the work what benefit has this brought to the teachers working on this project. Ms. Cindy Diaz responded that it was a tremendous opportunity and felt privileged to be part of it. As much as it is exciting to be part of LAREAC as a whole this was in particular a way to be involved and a way to meet many new people from the various districts. Each group developed their own way to work together. As stated previously, the members used their best characteristics and it brought out a lot of leadership and collaboration. It was very exciting work. Ms. Lia Learner noted that it also validates the work that has been done and how the members learned from each other. It has been a long and fun process.
- Mr. Mathew Kogen asked if the nine community colleges are coming together to work on curriculum. Mr. Don Gauthier responded that yes the LACCD is working on a curriculum.

#### DISCUSSION ITEMS

- **Proposed Meeting Schedule**

Ms. Kathy Brendzal reported that the committee is purposing having regularly scheduled public meetings the third Friday of every month. The meetings will be guided by the proposed meeting protocols of being open and properly noticed. She referred to a handout that was made available for the public titled, "*LAREAC Open Meeting Procedures*". The next public meeting is scheduled for October 16, 2015, at Montebello Unified School District. Notification of the meeting will be disseminated through various outlets. A vote on the proposed procedures will take place once all members are board approved. Ms. Veronica Montes noted that the executive committee may hold special meetings that may require immediate attention between the scheduled open meetings.

- **Consortia Report on Governance Compliance Rules and Procedures, First Reading**

Mr. Emilio Urioste made reference to a handout that was made available to the public titled, *Consortia Report on Governance Compliance of Rules and Procedures*. The state is requesting that the report be completed and returned in order to satisfy the AEBG governance requirement, it will also aid in developing a decision-making structure/process. The draft template is due October 31, 2015. It was noted that it is a work in progress and that the consortium has been working on it for over a year and that any input is welcomed. It will be on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting.

- **Funding Considerations**

Ms. Veronica Montez reported that the committee must determine an allocation schedule and submit it to the state. It has to be aligned to the Regional Comprehensive Plan, which addresses improving the delivery of adult education, addressing existing gaps, and creating seamless transitions. She noted that the committee does understand the sense of urgency around the allocation.

Questions/Comments:

- Mr. Emilio Urioste reported that at BUSD, they have a strong ESL program; they do not see a reason to recreate the program, just need to strengthen it. They are having discussions with faculty on how to improve the program. Six professional development workshops have been scheduled to look at curriculum alignment to CTE programs in terms of entry and transition for ESL students along with other programs. The BUSD is looking at developing new CTE pathways, developing new ESL vocational courses, and is meeting with local community colleges to determine how to prepare students for community colleges, improving counseling services at BUSD and counseling articulation with the community colleges, and technology upgrades to meet student needs. He also noted that professional development for adult education needs to continue with AB104.
- Ms. Veronica Montez noted that it has to be taken into account that the \$28 million from the AEBG that the K-12 MOEs were based on were from 2013. That has to be taken that into consideration as the K-12s expand to collaborate with the community colleges and expand the services offered. Changes in benefit packages over the next few years need to be taken into consideration. She noted that the districts have to disclose all funds and resources that can contribute to offering the programs and services.
- Ms. Kathy Brendzal reported that the MUSD is working with the same issues. They are looking at expanding CTE programs. They are looking into how to better prepare students for greater success at the community colleges. The MUSD has been working with teachers, staff, and community from the beginning towards these goals. She agreed that support services and technology are important. For example, the community colleges are moving into doing IEPs, for every student. That would be great for adult education as well. As talks about funding each district take place the consortium also needs to look at, what are we going to do as a consortium? Is there going to be a clearinghouse where

everyone can go see if they can get the services and classes needed, communication, a sub-clearing house for partners. Someone to help with the open meetings is needed as well. The consortium really could benefit from funding some of these things. We are all concerned about funding coming to us quickly but beyond that, success will have to be shown. Funding for 2016-17, will have to have data. Keep in mind that the next funding will be based on the success of the program.

- Mr. Michael Romero reported that executive committee has two scheduled planning meetings on September 21, 2015, and September 30, 2015. The committee will be meeting to share the needs of each district, rationale behind needs, and a well-vetted plan around those needs, so that we can move quickly in making decisions on the allocation of the funds. He noted there is a huge waiting list at LAUSD and sense of urgency. There is a fundamental need of getting students placed now. LAUSD has very strong ESL program across the district but with a huge waiting of 14,000 students, so decisions have to be made now. There is a waiting list of students trying to build their skills to get a chance of getting a high school diploma. Having stated that, LAUSD is working and reflecting all the time but is nowhere near, where it needs to be. Right now, LASUD has some strong programs and students that we need to get into them. The LAUSD plan that will be presented at the September 21, 2015, meeting will include counseling, curriculum, pedagogy, blended teaching, technology, and professional development. LAUSD has an innovative piece that it feels comfortable with but needs to close the existing gaps in programs and services. Hopefully, when the consortium meets there will be consensus and a vote can take place at the next public meeting.
- Mr. Marvin Martinez acknowledged that Mr. Emilio Urioste did a fine job of outlining how the funds need to be utilized. Curriculum development needs to improve and expand. Alignment of curriculum is huge; in terms of who will be doing the work, faculty/teachers have begun some of the work. Professional development needs to be a major focus as well. Another focus area is student services, having appropriate counseling and other support services. Finally yet importantly, what are the State's expectations? Are we expected to grow? The state also stated that we could not put the entire burden on the adult education funds to fund the program. The districts must look into all their funds and resources. The consortium is entering a new phase, the negotiations phase. Over the next few weeks, each district will have to make their case for funds.
- Ms. Veronica Montez asked the public if there were any funding questions or recommendations. None were made.

#### Questions/Comments:

- Comment from public member on the committee taking into consideration rewarding successful teachers that provide successful results.

- Question from public member on where is the benchmark for growth. Is it growth from where we were in 2010-2012 or growth from the devastation that has occurred since then, because when you speak of growth we are not close to where we were before? Mr. Marvin Martinez responded that he believes it to be growth from where we are now, noting that the legislation has been silent in regards to what that benchmark should be. Mr. Marvin Martinez agreed that a benchmark needs to be established so that there is a starting point; otherwise, it is just a moving target. Ms. Kathy Brendzal noted that even at their strongest the K-12s still have a great need. So when the state says look for unmet needs, that is one thing, but funding to meet those needs is another.
  
- Comment from public member who stated concern in trying to find a balance between each institution, specifically now. Having just represented LAUSD teachers at the layoff hearings, there is desperation to get these teachers back to work to serve students. The money is needed now, but also part of the mandate is to learn how to collaborate the two systems because if that can be done we get the support from legislature that we are desperate for, which was lost in the recession. There is a tug of war between maintaining the status quo and getting the money into the school districts that are serving the students through the current adult education programs while, at the same time trying to forge this new alliance between the community colleges and the K-12 districts. She stated that it is her hope negotiations are not stuck trying to protect turf. What it is really about is the students. If the focus is on them then it will work and schools will have the stability in their programs that is so desperately needed.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

- **No Action Items**

#### **CLOSING**

There being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 11:37 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 16, 2015, at Montebello Unified School District.

Mr. Marvin Martinez invited all to visit the LARAEC website at <http://laraec.net/>.

Mr. Marvin Martinez thanked the committee, the public, and the LACCD staff in attendance for participating in the meeting.

Mr. Michael Romero thanked the committee, the public, and the LAUSD staff in attendance for participating in the meeting.