



BACCC: Apprenticeship Strategic Plan

Advancing Apprenticeships Across the Bay Area Region

Executive Summary

This strategic plan provides a set of priorities for the Bay Area Community College Consortium (BACCC) region to plan, enhance, expand, advance, and implement new and innovative Apprenticeship programs. It reflects the priorities developed through a multi-phase engagement effort that included input from community college faculty, administrators, and staff, as well as workforce boards, K-12 partners, intermediaries, state agencies, and statewide stakeholders. The process was designed to identify core needs, surface shared priorities, and align regional resources. These facilitated sessions produced five actionable priorities to provide a foundation for collaborative execution.

1. *Expand Regional Employer Engagement Systems*

Begin by assessing employer needs and priorities before communicating the value of Apprenticeship. Develop clear messaging and aligned outreach efforts in collaboration with workforce boards and intermediaries. (Industry and state recognized)

2. *Deploy Innovative Funding Models*

Move from short-term grant dependency to braided, long-term funding strategies that blend RSI, apportionment, WIOA, and employer contributions. Equip administrators, faculty, and Apprenticeship coordinators with shared budgeting tools.

3. *Strengthen Institutional Capacity and Leadership*

Establish regional Apprenticeship infrastructure, such as coordinators, champions, and faculty lead. This will stabilize program operations, reduce vulnerability to staffing turnover, and integrate Apprenticeship as a core institutional priority.

4. *Accelerate Systems Alignment and Program Establishment/Expansion*

Cultivate a set of regional Apprenticeship resources to streamline program design, approval, and initiation across multiple systems. Provide specific support for K12 Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship development. Use collaborative acceleration mechanisms to meet fast-moving industry timelines.

5. *Elevate Student Recruitment and Equity*

Coordinate a regional outreach campaign with employers, counselors, and community partners to expand participation across diverse populations and sectors. Leverage training-focused and employer-led messaging to accelerate completion.

Over the next 3–5 years, the BACCC will continue to increase access and build collaboration across Apprenticeship programs, operationalize strategies through coordinated regional action, deploy shared tools and resources, and sustain partnerships with employers, intermediaries,



workforce boards, K-12 partners, and community organizations. Detailed strategies and innovative practices for each priority are outlined in the full plan.

Introduction

The Bay Area Community College Consortium (BACCC) is composed of the 28 colleges surrounding the San Francisco and Monterey Bays, and organized into five subregions. This Apprenticeship strategic plan provides the California Community Colleges (CCCs) in the BACCC region guidance and potential actions to achieve the region's three goals:

- Goal A: Provide pathways that enable all Bay Area students to find employment and advance to family-supporting wages
- Goal B: Meet the needs of employers in the Bay Region for well-qualified candidates for positions that pay livable wages
- Goal C: Ensure equity in participation, completion, and employment

The goal of this strategic plan is to establish a sustainable model of Apprenticeships, delivering meaningful opportunities for students, addressing workforce shortages, and strengthening employer partnerships.. With BACCC's sector priorities established (Advanced Manufacturing, Advanced Transportation, Health, Information Communication Technologies and Digital Media, Public Safety, Education), this strategic plan lays out various approaches to increase the number and range of Apprenticeships within the region as part of a wider workforce development effort. The strategy embeds leadership and innovation as key tenets for pathways to enhancement and expansion of Registered Apprenticeship Programs across campuses.

Working Process

In May 2025, the BACCC region established a process to align priorities across campuses and coalesce Apprenticeship programs in the region. With California's goal of 500,000 apprentices by 2029, the BACCC region is uniquely positioned within California to continue demonstrating their leadership in expanding access to high-quality Apprenticeship programs.

To include the breadth and depth required for an effective strategic plan, the process embeds the collective voice of community college faculty and staff, college and K-12 administrators, intermediaries, workforce boards, and community partners who have been working together to shape a stronger Apprenticeship ecosystem across the Bay Area region. The process included virtual sessions, surveys, and an in-person convening. This document is the result and synthesis of common themes, identifies persistent barriers, and charts a path forward for all entities who want to engage with the BACCC in Apprenticeships. This work is inclusive of, but not limited to, community colleges, workforce development boards, K-12 system partners, intermediaries, employers, and community based organizations.

A core principal from this work is the understanding that Apprenticeship is a bridge: between education and work, between short-term employer needs and long-term talent pipelines, and between individual career aspirations and systemic economic opportunity. To make that bridge strong and lasting, the BACCC region recognizes the immense value in co-designing programs



with industry, collaborating across systems and organizations, leveraging a multitude of funding sources, and utilizing synergistic practices that allow Apprenticeships to flourish.

Employer & Stakeholder Engagement

Context

Employer engagement continues to be a central factor in shaping Apprenticeship development across the region. For campuses, staff capacity influences how outreach occurs, with efforts sometimes fragmented or tied to individual projects. Staff describe interactions with employers as ranging from highly transactional to less aligned with industry priorities, which can make it harder to establish deeper trusted, transformational, and sustainable relationships. This also creates an untenable maintenance situation with campuses asked to shoulder the heavy burden of ongoing management of outreach and relationships. Across BACCC colleges, there is growing recognition of the value of dedicated guides or navigators who can bridge campus programs with industry to help sustain long-term partnerships.

From the employer perspective, interest in Apprenticeships is strong, though often accompanied by questions around administrative requirements, clarity of return on investment, and how the models work in practice across sectors. Colleges frequently take the lead on program design and compliance, which can limit the bandwidth for building, nurturing, and sustaining broader, ongoing relationships. Even with significant state and federal investment in Apprenticeship infrastructure, many colleges are still navigating how to turn employer curiosity into active, sustained participation.

Strategies

To build more sustainable practices and minimize these barriers, BACCC could adopt multiple implementation techniques to advance Apprenticeships.

1. **Understand and Respond to Employer Needs:** One important step in crafting messaging or outreach strategies, the BACCC, college campuses, and partners should deeply understand the needs, goals, and workforce priorities of regional employers. This type of effective engagement starts with conducting targeted listening sessions with employers to surface pain points related to talent gaps, turnover, upskilling needs, or future growth plans. By identifying alignment opportunities between employer needs and campus programs, the region can highlight how Apprenticeship models can offer solutions (e.g. building talent pipelines, reducing recruitment costs, and/or improving retention). This allows employers and region members to co-design solutions where possible, ensuring that programs and communication strategies are responsive to real needs, not assumptions.
2. **Create a regional communication strategy:** Once employer needs are clearly understood, partners can build a cohesive regional communication strategy that frames Apprenticeship as a solution to employer challenges. This allows a shared value proposition across the region highlighting how Apprenticeships address the specific priorities employers have voiced. With clear and consistent language, the examples will



crystallize the tangible benefits relevant to each industry sector. This coordinated messaging across colleges, WDBs, and intermediaries will minimize duplication and “message fatigue” for industry partners. With this sequence, colleges are partnering with employers rather than pitching to them, positioning Apprenticeships as a strategic solution rather than a program to be sold.

3. **Regional sector-based blueprint:** This technique has already been implemented in a few subregions; campuses host industry roundtables and engage employer partners to understand the nuances of the specific sector. Previous success in the culinary and hospitality sectors revealed employers face constant turnover and shallow pipelines, yet remain eager for solutions. Through industry roundtables and partnering with LAUNCH, regional stakeholders began mapping out a chef Apprenticeship program that addresses both immediate hiring needs and long-term workforce stability. This model illustrates how Apprenticeships can transform an industry bottleneck into a higher-road pathway.
4. **Strengthen connections with workforce development boards (WDBs):** Their expertise in providing wrap-around supports and services as well as convening industry leaders can be leveraged to connect businesses directly with colleges. For example, Alameda County’s WDB has utilized WDB staff to lead employer conversations and then conduct a warm-hand off with colleges for program design, wrap-around supports, and career development. This type of relationship ensures both efficiency and trust for the industry partners, while strengthening ties between CCCs and WDBs. Additionally, Foothill College and Mission College have partnered with their local WDB on a highly successful multiemployer Apprenticeship program in the semiconductor industry.
5. **Identify and establish centralized tools:** The BACCC and/or external partners (e.g. Centers of Excellence) develop and centralize various tools that provide guidance and strategic direction for the region. For example, a few potential tools would be, a shared data dashboards on Apprenticeship metrics, a set of strategic playbooks and case studies of successful programs, and employer engagement training for faculty and staff. These types of tools help CCCs move from one-off conversations to structured partnerships, while creating avenues for partnerships across various external partners. Additionally, with an embedded employer communication strategy into a consistent regional system, the region ensures a single, coordinated pathway of engagement, while colleges reduce duplication of effort and build long-term, trust-based relationships.

Innovative Practices

Establish a coordinated regional employer engagement hub jointly staffed by WDBs, faculty liaisons, and intermediaries (e.g. FCCC, ECEPTS and LAUNCH) with funding coming from state and federal initiatives. This hub could act as a “front door” for employers, streamlining intake, highlighting employer return on investment, and ensuring follow-up is managed consistently. At the CCCs, faculty champions could be incentivized through release time or adjunct assignments to participate in these efforts, blending their direct connection to students with employer-facing expertise.



Funding & Sustainability

Context

Apprenticeships in California benefited from significant startup funding through initiatives like the California Apprenticeship Initiative (CAI), yet questions about long-term sustainability remain part of the broader context. Colleges are navigating decisions around which funding streams to leverage, such as RSI, apportionment or Employment Training Panel (ETP), and how to sustain pre-apprenticeship programs. For small and mid-size employers in sectors like healthcare, IT, and culinary, the ability to co-invest often depends on clear incentives or cost-sharing structures with colleges.

Institutional budgeting practices also shape this landscape. Coding approaches differ across campuses, and clarity is still emerging around how Apprenticeship dollars can be braided with other funding streams. In response, colleges are increasingly exploring strategies to integrate Apprenticeship into institutional financial planning while also leveraging external resources to maintain program growth and stability.

Strategies

To move from short-term grants to sustainable systems, colleges can take several concrete steps:

1. **Educate Senior Leadership on ROI.** High-quality Apprenticeship programs strengthen student completion outcomes and positions the college as a key workforce development partner in the ecosystem. Communicating this return on investment—through clear data on enrollments, job placements, and wage gains—can help presidents, vice presidents, and boards of trustees prioritize Apprenticeship within ongoing budgets rather than treating it as a grant-dependent initiative.
2. **Integrate Apprenticeship with Workforce Systems.** Ensuring Apprenticeship programs are registered, colleges can unlock WIOA funding for both tuition and supportive services. Partnering closely with workforce development boards positions colleges to access additional funds earmarked for employer engagement and participant support, while also aligning Apprenticeship with broader regional workforce priorities.
3. **Leverage Union and Industry Partnerships.** In the building trades, unions have long co-invested in Apprenticeship through joint training funds. Similar models can be adapted in other sectors by negotiating shared contributions—whether in equipment, instructional time, or student supports—that reduce the reliance on public funding alone. These partnerships (Labor/Management and employer only) also help employers see themselves as co-owners of Apprenticeship rather than passive beneficiaries.
4. **Standardize Budgeting Practices Across Colleges.** Many Apprenticeship staff noted challenges in navigating apportionment versus RSI and tracking costs consistently. Developing regional guidance and training for CFOs, deans, and Apprenticeship coordinators can help normalize these practices, ensuring colleges are able to capture revenue fully and plan more strategically for sustainability.



Innovative Practices

Create a regional Apprenticeship funding sustainability toolkit that includes sample budget codes, case studies of colleges blending RSI and apportionment, and examples of WIOA-funded Apprenticeships. Examples of these techniques would provide the region with successful strategies and could continue to add new approaches as these approaches evolve. This toolkit could be paired with regional training sessions where CFOs, deans, and Apprenticeship coordinators work together to problem-solve funding scenarios in real time.

Staffing & Institutional Capacity

Context

Building and sustaining Apprenticeship programs requires more than funding, it relies on people to create the institutional capacity. Across the region, colleges are navigating staffing gaps that shape how Apprenticeship can be supported and expanded. In many cases, Apprenticeship efforts depend on a single champion, leaving programs vulnerable to turnover or burnout.

Dedicated positions focused solely on Apprenticeship remain limited, with responsibilities often added to already full faculty and staff workloads. In some cases, there are multiple points of contact on a college campus, all working on separate grants or programs. This structure makes it harder to maintain continuity and momentum over time. Colleges also describe the difficulty of finding instructors who can balance teaching responsibilities with the need to engage employers and support program development, which limits the pool of individuals able to take on these dual roles.

Lastly, colleges typically have a cumbersome curriculum process, which requires an extended timeline to establish new and innovative programs. With approval timelines that require more time than industry needs, this often results in bottlenecks to program development, especially when industries are moving quickly and require timely program design.

Strategies

Some colleges have begun experimenting with shared staffing models, expanding faculty roles, and creating buy-in from campus leadership. These models, while not systemic, are potential avenues for regional coordination and collaboration:

1. **Shared Staffing Models:** Regionally and/or state funded Apprenticeship coordinators can take on cross-campus functions such as DAS paperwork, employer recruitment, faculty coordination, and compliance reporting. This reduces duplication and frees up local staff for program development and design.
2. **Incentivizing Faculty Roles:** Colleges can create structured opportunities for full-time and adjunct faculty to assist with industry outreach, sustainable employer engagement, and maintenance of existing relationships with partners. This taps into faculty's lived



experiences and connections with industry and provides a richer experience for students.

3. **Leadership Buy-In:** Presidents, vice presidents, and deans need to recognize Apprenticeship as a strategic lever for student success, enrollment growth, and employer partnerships.. Explaining the ROI of Apprenticeships to leadership, through highlighting key benchmarks, Student Centered Funding Formula (SCFF) metrics, demonstrating costs to outcomes, and leveraging existing resources, provides clear snapshots that align with college goals. Utilize local, regional, and [national data systems](#) to provide further context for Apprenticeship outcomes.

Innovative Practices

Pilot a regional role-network of Apprenticeship coordinators and faculty leads. This group would meet regularly to share strategies, provide peer training, and coordinate on regional employer outreach and engagement. The funding would be flexible and responsive to the needs of the Apprenticeship programs, and would provide clear metrics for the region to accomplish. Over time, this network could serve as the backbone of institutional capacity, ensuring that Apprenticeship knowledge and practice survive leadership transitions and staffing turnover.

Systems & Regional Alignment

Context

Apprenticeship development exists across a broad landscape of intersecting systems. Community Colleges, K-12 institutions, WDBs, Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS), and industry/employer partners all play critically important roles. The reality is that these various systems operate on different timelines, processes, and requirements. This dynamic can extend the time needed to launch new programs. For industries experiencing rapid change (e.g. information technology and green energy), a two-year design cycle is mismatched with market needs. This environment to sustain employer interest requires proactive relationship-building and intentional coordination.

Strategies

To minimize these barriers, CCCs and employer partners can pursue structured approaches that bring clarity and predictability to the system:

1. **Regional Apprenticeship Playbook:** A standardized guide (web based, BACCC branded and printable) that maps out every step of the approval and process initiation, allowing new staff to understand the full scope of the programmatic design. In this phase of the process, it is helpful to leverage existing resources (e.g. Grow Apprenticeship California or LAUNCH). This regional resource would include timelines, best practices, and templates for employer agreements. With various statewide entities and intermediaries providing support across the state, this playbook could be updated regularly as policies shift through their expertise and knowledge, while also providing an onboard and training process for new staff. Include a specific K12 section that addresses the K12



partner needs and how K12 LEAs can increase pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship participation.

2. **Intermediary Support Models:** BACCC has previous success with various models and partnerships (e.g. ECEPTS and LAUNCH). In some cases, the intermediary takes on employer coordination, compliance, and/or standards, and allows CCCs to focus on instruction and student support. Expanding this division of labor across sectors, BACCC could accelerate program development and reduce redundancy. BACCC will provide support for the region to prepare for and “braid” intermediaries into the apprenticeship space.
3. **Professional Development Opportunities:** Provide regional and local PD opportunities to colleges, K12 LEAs, employers, and WDBs to provide consistent messaging and access to the various strategies called for across this Regional Plan.
4. **Rebuilding the established BACCC website for regional coordination and data sharing:** The existing BACCC website could be redesigned to serve as a centralized regional resource hub for Apprenticeship coordination, data transparency, and resource sharing. This modernization will enhance accessibility, streamline information flow, and strengthen collaboration among colleges, workforce boards, employers, and state partners. By building a robust back-end dataset with an intuitive interface, the region will enable colleges and partners to make data-informed decisions, identify gaps, and accelerate Apprenticeship growth. This platform will also support annual planning cycles by ensuring that critical data and resources are both visible and actionable.

Innovative Practices

Rather than waiting on state-level streamlining, BACCC campuses could build their own acceleration mechanisms by leveraging workforce partners. For example, WDBs, intermediaries, and economic development agencies could establish sector-based Apprenticeship readiness consortia. These groups would:

- Pre-vet curriculum and competencies with employers and colleges; by the time standards reach DAS, they are industry-approved and regionally aligned.
- Braided funding for pre-implementation activities, using WIOA or regional discretionary funds to support early employer convenings, standards drafting, and student recruitment.
- Maintain a rolling employer pipeline, where WDB business service teams continually engage local industries, identify Apprenticeship-ready firms, and match them with colleges or intermediaries.

By embedding intermediaries, WDBs and workforce partners in the early design phase, the region creates a “front-end accelerator” that reduces delays once formal approval processes begin. Over time, this practice could evolve into a standing cross-system body that ensures Apprenticeship development keeps pace with shifting industry demand.



Student Recruitment & Success Practices

Context

Student recruitment plays a central role in the success of Apprenticeship programs, with wide variation in participation across the region. Among the general public and through historical perception, Apprenticeship is still often associated primarily with the building trades (though it is clear this is changing). This perception can overshadow growth for Apprenticeships that align with students' interests in fields such as IT, healthcare, and hospitality. Students and parents may be less familiar with Apprenticeship as a pathway to stable careers and economic mobility in new and innovative sectors, while some career counseling practices continue to carry stigma around the building and trades models. In addition, concerns about wages in certain sectors shape how prospective students weigh the value of participation.

Strategies

The student journey requires adaptability by the college more so than ever. By creating a responsive campus culture, CCCs can strengthen recruitment by aligning messaging and outreach across the academic spectrum:

1. **Counselor Training & Engagement:** It is clear that counselors are critical messengers to students and the broader community. A key support in the ecosystem would be to equip high school and college counselors with resources and training about the ROI of Apprenticeships. Moreover, Apprenticeship programs and requirements could be embedded into the existing career planning curriculum for colleges and dual enrollment programs. This type of training for their counselor roles will provide them with current Apprenticeship knowledge and a positive view of Apprenticeships, as a high-value option for their career. For the high school counselors, the CCCs can make connections to broadcast dual enrollment and Apprenticeship opportunities that are embedded into K-12 work-based learning.
2. **Employer-Led Recruitment:** Since employers ultimately hire apprentices, their voice in marketing is critical. BACCC should reach out to employers and industry leaders to facilitate co-branded recruitment materials to provide the best possible representation of the career trajectories. Part of this effort could be to include incumbent workers, in particular those who have trained through programs in the region, to bring a more diverse representation to the strategy. Additionally, the region could provide joint outreach events and career fairs with employer partners to build credibility in the program design and model.
3. **Regional Messaging Campaigns:** A key point for the BACCC region is for a unified and coordinated outreach campaign that spans multiple colleges and multiple sectors. Through this regional message, the region can emphasize wage outcomes, advancement opportunities, and share student success stories that highlight the pathways to economic mobility with an Apprenticeship program. Additionally, a unified message allowed the employers and industry partners to invest into their pipelines, while also reducing confusion and raising visibility.



4. **Using Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) in Apprenticeship Programs:** Another strategy is to leverage CPL as a means to deepen engagement with employers and strengthen Apprenticeships. By recognizing the skills and experiences students bring from their work, colleges can streamline pathways to completion, reduce barriers to entry, and enhance the overall value of their programs. This approach encourages more students to participate in Apprenticeships by providing tangible college credits for their prior learning, saving them time and money, and accelerating their career readiness. Additionally, integrating CPL into Apprenticeship pathways positions community colleges as vital partners in workforce development, strengthening industry relationships and increasing program relevance to regional economic needs.

Innovative Practices

Collectively initiate a regional student success campaign featuring digital storytelling from current apprentices. Short videos, one-pagers, and testimonials could be tailored for different audiences: students (value and opportunity), parents (security and growth), and counselors (legitimacy and process). This campaign could be distributed through social media, employers, WDBs, community-based organizations, and high schools, ensuring a consistent message across the ecosystem.

Policy & Data Alignment

Context

Based on the variety of approaches that colleges, workforce development boards, and employer partners take when implementing policy and data practices, Apprenticeship programs often operate within a complex ecosystem. Coding, funding rules, and reporting requirements can vary across systems, creating different interpretations of program design and structure as well as how dollars should be claimed.

These variations also shape how Apprenticeship is perceived more broadly. Policymakers often lack consistent outcome data, which makes it harder to tell a cohesive story about ROI and long-term value of Apprenticeship programs. At the same time, youth Apprenticeship introduces additional layers, where liability questions and evolving definitions influence how colleges and employers design and launch programs. Navigating these policy and data considerations is most effective when colleges, K-12 institutions, WDBs, industry partners, and intermediaries collaborate.

Strategies

With any attempted policy shift, the timeline for change is long and arduous. Despite this difficult road, the BACCC region has the opportunity to address these challenges by utilizing technical resources and regional coordination:

1. **Policy Education & Technical Assistance:** Education and training around policy are essential, while also highly nuanced in practice. The BACCC region could develop a regional RSI/apportionment workbook, paired with hands-on training, to demystify



funding processes and reduce institutional confusion. These technical assistance workshops could provide faculty and staff with the ability to retain institutional knowledge required to maintain a high-quality Apprenticeship program. Additionally, this could be coupled with the Chancellor's Office and Grow Apprenticeship California technical assistance workshops to deepen the impact of these efforts.

2. **Improved Outcome Data:** Currently, outcome data across agencies is fragmented and lacks a centralized, user-friendly system. To effectively demonstrate the impact of Apprenticeship programs, the BACCC region and Center of Excellence needs greater access to regional wage studies, completion rates, and employer ROI metrics, beyond what they are currently able to produce. These data points are essential for informing decision-makers, including college boards, presidents, and policymakers, and for supporting continued investment and expansion of Apprenticeship initiatives.
3. **Workforce System Integration:** Aligning Apprenticeship with WIOA and workforce board priorities ensures programs can access additional funding streams and fit within broader state initiatives. Youth Apprenticeship also presents both opportunities and policy questions. Liability concerns and unclear definitions remain barriers, but employer-of-record models could provide a pathway forward.
4. **Definitions Dictionary:** The BACCC region could develop a living data dictionary tool, in alignment with industry, to standardize the way Apprenticeships are defined and to ensure accuracy of conversations. This promotes trust with employers and industry and provides effective data sharing and governance across various agencies and departments. This would act as a central repository for metadata, providing a common language that reduces ambiguity and miscommunication between different data users.

Innovative Practices

Establish a regional Apprenticeship ROI dashboard that brings together CCCs, COE, K-12 institutions, WDBs, intermediaries, and state agencies to track outcomes, align coding, and share reports. This could also include a steering committee that produces annual regional Apprenticeship reports, ensuring policymakers, employers, and educational leaders have a clear picture of impact and ROI for the Apprenticeships in the BACCC region.

Conclusion

This strategic plan provides a roadmap for strengthening and scaling Apprenticeship across the Bay Area by focusing on employer engagement, sustainable funding, staffing and institutional capacity, systems alignment, student recruitment, and policy clarity. Each theme reflects both the context and landscape across the region, provides clear strategies, and highlights innovative practices that can move Apprenticeship forward.

Apprenticeship is not a one-size-fits-all model. It requires ongoing adaptation, collaboration, and communication tailored to different audiences: students seeking value, college leaders seeking ROI, and employers seeking long-term relationships. Moreover, Apprenticeships are not a new or untested concept, but rather a model that continues to be a vital component of the workforce



development ecosystem. To meet evolving economic and industry needs, these programs must be scaled and expanded thoughtfully and strategically, through strengthening programs, deliberate expansion, shared playbooks, coordinated campaigns, and innovative pilots. It is clear, the BACCC region can ensure that Apprenticeship remains a sustainable, accessible, and valuable option for generations of students and industries alike.