SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

CITY COLLEGE • MESA COLLEGE • MIRAMAR COLLEGE • COLLEGE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

Learning-Aligned Employment Program (LAEP) Accomplishments and Planning

The San Diego Community College District (SDCCD) implemented the Learning-Aligned Employment Program (LAEP) in the Fall 2022 semester, with a pilot program starting at San Diego Mesa College. During the Spring 2023 semester, San Diego City and Miramar College joined in onboarding students. Year one requirement of placing at least one student per credit college was met by all three credit colleges.

This document provides an overview of 2022-23 accomplishments and 2023-24 planning and ongoing areas of need. Background and funding details are available on page 5.

Summary of Recommended Actions:
- Support advocacy efforts
- Check in with your LAEP needs to discuss local capacity and process challenges
- Ensure Career Education and Career Services engagement and leadership in LAEP implementation

2022-23 Accomplishments

Districtwide Workgroup
- Starting Summer 2022, a Districtwide Workgroup was created to support districtwide communication, planning, and alignment. This workgroup provided opportunities to share local updates on implementation efforts and make districtwide commitments for aligned implementation (where appropriate)
  - College representation on this workgroup includes Financial Aid, Business Services, Career Education, Career Services, and Job Placement/WBL leads.
  - District representation includes: District Student Services, District HR, District Business & Finance, District Purchasing & Contracts, District Career Education & Workforce Development.
  - Past meeting materials are available on the District LAEP resource page.

Local Workgroups
- Each College formed a local implementation team and met regularly.
- District support was offered to each local team.

LEAP Resource Page
- A District LAEP resource page was developed to document decision making and provide access to districtwide resources.

Districtwide Resources
- New Districtwide LAEP Handbook
- Process flow charts for off campus and on campus placements
- Employer and Student Agreement Templates

Leadership Spotlight – Mesa's Pilot Program
San Diego Mesa College has played a districtwide leadership role in both on-campus and off-campus placements, process and form development, and advocacy. The first to develop a local team and begin placing students, Mesa College staff have identified and worked to resolve many implementation hurdles prior to other campuses beginning. These local efforts have strengthened districtwide and regional understanding of the LAEP program and implementation processes – making it easier for others to begin implementation. Promising practices:
1. Centering implementation within career services and local internship efforts - ensuring a team approach beyond financial aid office
2. Internship Coordinator – centering leadership and coordination with a designated internship coordinator role
3. Engagement of senior leadership – articulation of barriers and advocacy leadership around proposed resolutions

Student Placements
During the 2022-23 program year, sixteen (16) students were supported by the LAEP program.

	Research Centers/ Institutions (100%)	Non-Profit (90%)	For-Profit (50%)	TOTAL
City College	2			2
Mesa College	8	1	1	10
Miramar College	4			3
Districtwide	**14**	**1**	**1**	**16**

Advocacy
Workgroup members identified four areas within current LAEP guidance in need of refinement in order to remove barriers and best support students and employers:
1. Unmet Need (Ed Code)
2. Restrictions to use of Funds (Ed Code and CSAC Handbook)
3. Ties to Expected Family Contributions (EFC) (CSAC Handbook)
4. Restrictions to Funding Distribution Methods (CSAC Handbook)

In February 2023, advocacy for revising these four areas was endorsed by the Chancellor's Cabinet. Click here to see the document that was shared and endorsed.

In September 2023, a fifth area of concern was added August 2023 to address general concerns regarding noncredit student participation:
1. Unmet Need (Ed Code) – exclusion of noncredit students

Review the updated advocacy document here.

LAEP Advocacy leads have presented regionally and statewide. Presentations were made to a number of Regional Consortiums, CSAC, and individual colleges. So far, over fifteen colleges and/or institutions statewide have requested the opportunity to sign and/or have already signed the advocacy document. All CEOs in Orange County have signed the most recent advocacy document.

2023-24 Planning and Ongoing Areas of Need

2023-24 planning efforts and ongoing areas of need include:

- Reporting
- Ongoing Advocacy
- Local Collaboration
- Increasing Placements

Reporting

- The California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) has set a deadline of September 29th to report student funds and Administrative Cost Allowance (ACA) used for 2022-23. This is to be reported through WebGrants.
  - Campus and District Financial Aid support
    - City and Mesa Colleges – Lilibeth Rodriguez
    - Miramar College – Vincent Ngo
  - A focus of the fall workgroup meeting will be on the development of processes and best practices for reporting

Ongoing Advocacy

- Advocacy efforts will continue throughout this year. LAEP practitioners are requested increased support from senior leadership through the endorsement and promotion of the LAEP advocacy document.
  - [View June 2023 Advocacy Document here.](#)
  - A fifth advocacy element is being added to address the current exclusion of noncredit students; an updated version will be available soon for signatures.

Recommended Actions:
- Confirm commitment to sign advocacy document
- Engage legislatively

Local Collaboration – Meetings, Participation, and Expectations

- Districtwide and college specific workgroup meetings will continue.
  - The Districtwide Workgroup will move to a term-based meeting schedule. The fall meeting is scheduled for September 28th, 2023.
  - Campus Workgroups
    - City College - will continue to meet biweekly starting Aug. 29th, 2023.
    - Mesa College - will continue to meet monthly starting Sep. 7th, 2023.
    - Miramar College – will begin local meetings in October.
- Diverse Local Teams Needed - LAEP requires a diverse team to manage and implement fully.
  - Continued encouragement and college-specific commitments to ensuring LEAP management and implementation is guided with a diverse team including CTE/career folks is needed.
  - Management of LAEP solely within financial aid office undermines intent of LAEP funding and disconnects opportunity from larger institutional career services goals.

- Expectations Management Needed– The required roles needed to implement LAEP successfully (career and internship services, employer relations liaisons, financial aid, and business services) come from different departments with different time constraints and other competing required tasks often contributing to misunderstandings and frustration.
    - College teams are encouraged to take time to better understand the work and roles of each team member and to help communicate our external and internal constraints to better manage expectations.
    - While not all requests can be met, it is important that all team members understand the motivation and rationale behind the requests and value each team member's perspective, role, and insight.

Recommended Actions:
- Check in with your LAEP leads to discuss local capacity and process challenges
- Ensure local teams are meeting regularly and are engaging essential roles including career services, employer relations liaisons, and career education
- Encourage Career Education and Career Services engagement and leadership in LAEP implementation

Increase Placements
In order to increase the volume of placements, improved processes for on-campus and off-campus placements is needed
- Expansion of Off-campus placements:
    - Increased Business Services collaboration to support expansion of Off-Campus placements is needed – expansion requires business services engagement and collaboration, adjustments of timeframes, and support for reimbursement.
    - Integration and coordination with career services – increased support for career services at each college is needed to help students find meaningful placements.
    - Integration and use of Employer Relations Liaisons and Job Developers is needed – these roles play a critical function in connecting employers to students and ensuring placements are meaningfully tied to the students career goals.
- On-campus Placements – Continued refinement of processes needed
    - Evidence of time – query development to support proof of hours (rather than requiring additional timesheets to be completed)
    - Need to develop and add to handbook

Recommended Actions:
- Connect with local business services to discuss opportunities for process improvements.
    - District Business Services support may be needed.
- Check in with your Career Services leads to discuss capacity challenges and engagement with LAEP implementation.

Background & Funding
The Learning-Aligned Employment Program (LAEP) is a state work-study program established in the 2021-22 State Budget. This 10-year program offers eligible students at public colleges and universities the opportunity to earn money to help cover their educational costs while gaining education-aligned, career-related employment. LAEP is currently managed by the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) which provides guidance regarding eligibility and prioritization including an emphasis on underrepresented student participation. All three SDCCD credit colleges are participating in the program (currently, noncredit students are not eligible).

LAEP funds allocated to institutions were based on their proportion of Pell Grant recipients and were provided in full.

	Student Funds	Administrative Cost Allowance (ACA)* (5% max)	Total
City College	$2,536,613.00	$133,506.00	$2,670,119.00
Mesa College	$2,450,276	$128,962	$2,579,238.00
Miramar College	$1,496,995	$78,790	$1,575,785.00

Institutions may use up to 5% of funds it receives for costs related to administering the program and may include: Outreach and marketing, Hiring a NANCE to assist in program administration, Reporting to WebGrants, Program Reconciliation, and Troubleshooting and Campus Support.