Selecting Priority and Emergent Sectors

I. Identifying Priority Sectors

In order to establish a framework for targeting investment of incentive funds as well as to ensure alignment of career pathways against regional economies, each economic region is being asked to identify its priority and emergent sector(s) and/or cluster(s) to the CCCCO. For simplicity, this document shall use the term ‘sector’ to refer to both industry sectors and clusters.

As a general rule of thumb, priority and emergent sectors surface through the collective discussion amongst workforce and economic development networks – that may include industry, economic development entities, education, workforce investment boards, organized labor, etc. -- and not done through the siloed lens of any one institution or player. Only through the collective momentum and braiding of resources can the region have sufficient momentum to advance these sectors.

The submission template can be found at doingwhatmatters.cccco.edu.

II. SB 1402 Definitions

“Industry sector” means those firms that produce similar products or services using somewhat similar business procedures.

“Industry cluster” means a geographic concentration or emerging concentration of employers or interdependent industries that share common products or services, similar workforce needs, similar technologies, and supply chains in a given regional economy or labor market. For example, a healthcare cluster might include pharmaceutical firms, medical equipment firms, and hazardous waste disposal firms.

“High priority occupation” is defined as “occupation (s) that have a significant presence in a targeted industry sector or cluster, is in demand by employers, and pays or leads to high wages.

For the purpose of this document, ‘sector’ will be used to refer to both industry sectors and/or industry clusters.

III. Suggested Approaches for Selection of Priority and Emergent Sectors

The following approach is suggested as steps to take in identifying priority sectors or clusters:
1. Identify and engage other workforce and economic development entities.

There may be existing conversations to plug into rather than start something anew.

2. Review secondary sources of information—sector strategy reports, labor market information, economic forecasts, industry-originated research, and funder perspectives.

3. Validate the information with employers, trade associations, and/or organizations with insights into workforce needs.

4. As needed, obtain technical assistance from the Centers of Excellence (www.coeccc.net), EWD Sector Navigators (www.cccewed.net), regional EWD-funded Centers (www.cccewed.net), or Chancellors Office-supported industry collaboratives and/or advisory bodies (www.doingwhatmatters.cccco.edu).

5. Identify where there are shared priorities and potential interest in participation from industry and workforce organizations.

6. Apply a community college contextual lens, using the criteria in Section IV below.

7. Provide rationale for selection.

IV. Applying the Community College Lens

The following criteria should be used to guide selection. It is not necessary to address all ten of the criteria; simply state which criteria are being used and what is known for each of the chosen criteria.

- How many and what size employers are the employers that comprise the sector?
- How many new and replacement job openings exist for this sector over the next five years?
- Is there enough occupational demand to sustain a community college program?
- Will community college training provide the student a competitive advantage in retaining or securing employment?
- Do the jobs provide a living wage? (Living wage is defined by county and can be accessed at www.labomarkinfo.ca.gov)
- Is there a career pathway with potential for advancement?
- Can workers with related skillsets transition into occupations in this industry?
- Is the sector economically critical to the region? Consider jobs multiplier, wealth creation, and innovation as ways to offer a competitive advantage.
- Can the colleges leverage with other partners to address this sector?
- Are others willing to work on this project? What tangible assets will they bring to the project (in-kind donations, equipment, services, etc.)?
- How does this project build on current strengths and assets?