

# Memorandum

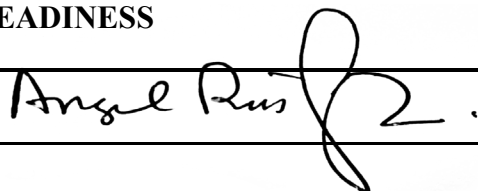
**TO:** NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES  
AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**FROM:** Jill Bourne

**SUBJECT: COLLEGE AND CAREER  
READINESS**

**DATE:** October 26, 2020

Approved



Date

11/5/2020

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. Accept the staff report on the development of College and Career Readiness Quality Standards for all City funded, operated, or endorsed programs and recommend this item for full Council consideration and adoption at the December 1, 2020 City Council meeting.
2. Accept the update on the College and Career Readiness Initiatives being implemented throughout the City of San José, including San José Engage, San José Aspires, Career Online High School, Working Scholars, SJPL Works, and San José Works.

## **OUTCOME**

The Neighborhood Services and Education Committee (NSE) will be informed about progress to date on the following specific initiatives that support College and Career Readiness outcomes for residents:

- College and Career Readiness Quality Standards for all City programs and recommend their adoption to City Council;
- San José Engage, which seeks to inspire social action and local civic engagement of teens within their communities;
- San José Aspires, which seeks to provide San José's students with the skills, knowledge, and resources needed to achieve their academic or career goals;
- Career Online High School, which offers adults the opportunity to earn an accredited high school diploma and a career certificate;
- Working Scholars, which offers Career Online High School graduates an opportunity to earn an online college degree;
- SJPL Works, which provides an extensive network of resources for small business owners, entrepreneurs, and career/employment seekers; and
- San José Works Youth Jobs Initiative, which is a partnership between work2future and the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force (MGPTF) operated by Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services and aims to provide 1,000 youth with employment opportunities.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Education and Digital Literacy Strategy provides a framework for organizing and enhancing City efforts to impact educational outcomes. A timeline of the Education and Digital Literacy Strategy milestones and reporting is provided in Attachment A. In November 2019, staff provided a report to the NSE Committee including information on programs and prior year efforts in the area of College and Career Readiness<sup>1</sup>.

## **ANALYSIS**

Every student should be able to choose a meaningful path upon graduating from high school, whether it be attending a community college or four-year university, launching a small business, or developing valuable trade skills. In support of these community needs, the City employs an iterative approach that utilizes small scale pilots and gradual expansion to assess program impact and ensure that City staff can develop and deliver quality programming at scale.

### **College and Career Readiness Quality Standards**

The adoption of City-wide College and Career Readiness Quality Standards (“Quality Standards”) will ensure that all residents receive high quality programs and services offered by the City and its partners, creating a continuum of education for Pre-K through senior citizen participants. Program quality assessments and experience surveys will provide vital data and drive future decision-making.

### **Ad Hoc Advisory Committee**

Recognizing that currently there are no quality standards in place to assess College and Career Readiness programs offered by the City, the Library led the development of a College and Career Readiness Quality Standards Ad Hoc Advisory Committee (“Committee”) in spring 2020. The Committee (Attachment B), comprised of subject matter experts and key partners, crafted a set of quality standards that would ensure all City funded, operated, or endorsed programs would offer both program staff and participants the tools necessary to increase and improve College and Career Readiness efforts across San José. The members were charged with researching best practices, providing subject matter expertise and community specific knowledge, and ultimately creating a set of quality standards to ensure program efficacy for all College and Career Readiness programs in San José.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://sanjose.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4200463&GUID=42895047-3779-4544-9893-DCF608756C29&Options=&Search=>

The Committee was convened from March 2020 to July 2020 through several full-group, in-depth discussions as well as subcommittee work on individual standard focus areas. Upon completion of a working draft in August 2020, SJPL staff circulated the Quality Standards to additional staff and partners for feedback, edits, and suggestions. These Standards also include recommendations regarding data collection methods and staff will analyze this data to determine program quality and efficacy.

### Quality Standards and Quality Continuum Framework

The Quality Standards and Framework are designed to serve as an overall programmatic guide and continuous quality improvement tool by defining standards and identifying strategies to improve the quality of College and Career Readiness programs. This document is intended for programs that are City funded, operated, or endorsed programs and that promote College and Career Readiness for students. Through the implementation of the Quality Standards, the City will be home to students who are capable of and eager to utilize the many available educational resources.

The Quality Standards are comprised of eight **Program Quality Standard Areas** as shown in Table 1:

<b>TABLE 1: College and Career Readiness Quality Standard Areas</b>
<b>Technology and Access:</b> Program provides access to relevant and functioning technology that is suitable to the conditions of the program. Program will make an effort to provide Internet access that is secure, safe, and stable.
<b>Privacy and Security:</b> Program complies with the City of San José's City-Wide Privacy Principles. Program will provide a minimum experience that allows participants privacy and security according to individual choice.
<b>Safe and Supportive Learning Environments:</b> Program provides a safe and well-maintained environment that supports the needs of all participants.
<b>Skill Building and Learning:</b> Program maintains high-expectations for instructors, facilitators and participants. Learning experiences are purposely aligned to community needs with the intent of promoting lifelong learning.
<b>Curriculum and Teaching Practices:</b> Program provides an appropriate, evidence-based curriculum that is adaptive, outcome-based, and consistent with program goals.
<b>Staffing:</b> Program has appropriate standards for instructors, staff, and volunteers that meet the needs of the program and participants. Qualifications, education, and expertise of staff or volunteers are in line with program outcomes and goals. Training and professional development are considered when making improvements based on program assessments.
<b>Program Leadership and Management:</b> Program implements policies, procedures, and systems that support program outcomes, goals, and/or grant requirements. Program utilizes an assessment and evaluation model for the purposes of enhancing program quality.
<b>Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:</b> Program implements policies, procedures, and systems that support program outcomes, goals, and/or grant requirements. Program utilizes an assessment and evaluation model for the purposes of enhancing program quality.

Each Standard Area is equally important in providing the framework for building strong College and Career Readiness programming. The Quality Standards are organized into three categories (*Beginning, Emerging, and Advanced*) that make up a **Quality Continuum**, measuring progressive levels of program quality. The following guide is provided as an overview for understanding how to use the rating system and to assess the degree to which each quality indicator is evident in the program:

1. *Beginning*: Program is just beginning to work in this area and will continue to work towards a higher level of proficiency.
2. *Emerging*: Program has achieved a level of proficiency in this area and needs additional work to excel at this practice.
3. *Advanced*: This is an area of exemplary practice where the program can serve as an example for others.

A systemic approach to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in programming is essential for achieving positive outcomes in San José. While *Advanced* represents the level of quality to which the City hopes programs will aspire, there is an expectation that programs will meet, at a minimum, strategies contained within the *Beginning* level.

*Emerging* and *Advanced* strategies reflect a pathway for progressive continuous quality improvement that programs may adapt depending on their level of readiness and internal and external allocated resources.

The detailed Quality Standards document with general expectations associated with each Standard Area across the Quality Continuum is provided in full in Attachment C.

### Implementation and Timeline

Once the Quality Standards are approved and adopted, City departments will begin, or continue, efforts to ensure that all City funded, operated, or endorsed programs are in compliance with, at minimum, the Beginning Standard level as identified in the Quality Standards. Program providers and implementers will be required to utilize the proposed Quality Standards to report on their success in meeting Beginning, Emerging, and Advanced Quality strategies, as well as progress in achieving increasingly greater levels of quality through the Quality Continuum.

In Year 1 of implementation, SJPL and PRNS plan to conduct an environmental scan of all existing programs (SJ Works, SJ Aspires, Career Online High School, SJPL Works, and all teen programs) to establish a baseline of data, to better inform a full implementation of the Quality Standards in Year 2. This will include the development of a Quality Standards Assessment tool to help inform future program planning. Additionally, SJPL will pilot full implementation of the Quality Standards through the San José Aspires program impacting 750 students. SJPL will create a replicable assessment model by identifying and resolving issues with implementation such as data privacy and documentation.

## **San José Engage**

To support increased civic participation for San José youth ages 13 to 24, the second iteration of San José (SJ Engage) provided deep learning opportunities through facilitated discussion groups and social action projects within local communities, as well as expanded online courses for civic topics relevant to San José youth including the Census, gun violence, immigration, homelessness and poverty, mental health, and climate change. Teens Reach Coordinators received additional training in SJ Engage curriculum facilitation, provided 25 learning discussions at library branches, and facilitated the development of social action projects and implementation plans by Teens Reach Groups.

With the help of library staff, Teens Reach groups applied for mini-grants to enact their social action projects. To date, 11 different Teens Reach groups received money to complete social action projects ranging from letter-writing and button-making campaigns, to mental health fairs, to working on the development and creation of a documentary focusing on the diversity of their neighborhood and community.

Due to COVID-19, a portion of SJ Engage mini-grant funds were reallocated towards an essay contest for a laptop giveaway for teens in need of distance learning support. Students wrote an essay about their love for their San José community, what actions they and their peers can take to make their neighborhoods better, and their need for devices for learning at home. Staff judged the essays using an established personal essay writing rubric that focused on details, organization, voice, and word choice. Mindful that distance learning needs occur throughout the San José, the contest was promoted at various high schools and middle schools throughout the City. The seven winners attend Yerba Buena High School, Lynbrook High School, Piedmont Hills High School, Willow Glen High School, Valley Christian High School, Chaboya Middle School, and Evergreen Valley High School.

Over the past year, SJ Engage achieved the following goals as show in Table 2:

<b>TABLE 2: SJ Engage Goals</b>		
Goal	Target	Actual to Date
Train Teens Reach Coordinators on SJ Engage curriculum facilitation	20	20
Youth participation in SJ Engage online course	100	198
Provide SJ Engage learning discussions at community branch libraries	20	25
Youth participation in SJ Engage learning circle at a community branch library	100	141
SJ Engage participants who respond to the self-completion survey will agree that their knowledge of civic issues increased	75%	77%
Social issues and confidence in their abilities has increased as a result of the program	75%	77%
Teens Reach groups will develop a social action project and implementation plan	7	11

### **San José Aspires**

San José Aspires (SJ Aspires) is an online College and Career Readiness platform designed to support students as they progress through high school and pursue a post-secondary education. Since its inception in 2018, SJ Aspires has been in a pilot phase in which the program allowed students to receive a financial award as they completed six different online learning modules. Students in the pilot version of the program (from Overfelt High School, Alpha: Cindy Avitia Charter School, Silver Creek High School, James Lick High School, and San José Conservation Corps and Charter School) were eligible to receive up to \$500 to support their post-secondary educational goals. Funds earned during the pilot program are distributed to the student after the student has enrolled in a post-secondary institution. A summary of pilot results is included as Attachment D.

For Academic Year 2020-2021, SJ Aspires was able to leverage significant philanthropic support, raised in partnership with the San José Public Library Foundation and the Mayor's Office of Strategic Initiatives, to expand both the reach and scope of SJ Aspires to include Overfelt High School, San José High School, and Opportunity Youth Partnership. Between all three partners, SJ Aspires will serve approximately 800 students in the 2020-2021 school year.

Students currently enrolled in SJ Aspires are members of Overfelt High School's class of 2024, San José High School's class of 2023, and 12<sup>th</sup> graders in Opportunity Youth. Students from Overfelt and San José High may receive up to \$5,000 in financial awards during their high school career. Opportunity Youth students are eligible to receive up to \$1,250 in financial awards during their senior year.

Students will receive awards for academic achievements, participating in extra-curricular activities, and volunteer work or work experience they undertake on their own. A full list of awards students may earn is included in Attachment E and also available on the SJ Aspires webpage [www.sjp.org/sj-aspires-awards](http://www.sjp.org/sj-aspires-awards). Students are awarded their educational funds when they provide proof of enrollment at a post-secondary institution, including community colleges, technical and trade schools, and four-year colleges and universities. To claim their award, students submit either their enrollment confirmation or schedule of classes to a designated Library staff member. Understanding that students may not graduate from high school and immediately enroll in a post-secondary institution, students will have up to three years from the time they graduate to claim their award. Additionally, to provide more flexibility, the post-secondary institution does not have to be in California in order for students to claim their award.

The financial awards are distributed to students when they provide evidence of post-secondary enrollment and the funds can be claimed for up to three years after high school graduation. SJ Aspires and the SJPLF are currently working with a banking partner so that students can login to the bank's account portal and view the funds they have received. SJ Aspires is also building out a student-specific portal where students can upload the evidence for their awards, track their achievements, and see what additional awards they are eligible to earn.

### **Career Online High School**

Career Online High School (COHS) began as an SJPL and California State Library pilot program administered by the Library's Partners in Reading unit on February 1, 2016. COHS is a nationally accredited program that enables adults 19 and older who live in San José to earn a high school diploma and career certificate in one of ten high-demand career fields. SJPL maintains a steady 72% success rate for the program, about 10% higher than the average for peer California library programs. The California State Library, SJPL, and SJPL Foundation (SJPLF) offer fully paid scholarships to COHS students.

Students complete this online program within 18 months (SJPL completion average is one year) on their own schedule, in their own homes with family support, and anywhere that Internet access is available. Students receive mentoring from the Library's Partners in Reading staff, coursework support from an academic coach, guidance on job search and preparation from SJPL Works, and access to transition specialists from community colleges.

Since 2016, 97 adults have graduated from COHS. Fifteen 15 members of the current cohort of 48 students are expected to graduate in winter 2021. With the support of SJPLF, the Library has conducted four in-person graduation ceremonies, and in July 2020, a virtual ceremony for 18 graduates and their supporters. The next virtual graduation is planned for February 2021.

## **Working Scholars**

As the non-profit arm of the online learning portal Study.com, Working Scholars partners with cities and other institutions to provide a low-cost, online college education to its students. Participants in the Working Scholars program can earn up to six units of college credit per month. Once a Working Scholars student completes 90 units through the platform, they can transfer those credits to a fully accredited, non-profit, four-year University to complete their degree in either Liberal Studies or Business Administration. Upon transfer, students will then have one year to complete their degree and graduate from college.

The first SJPL Working Scholars cohort is comprised of six students who are graduates from the Library's COHS program. The first 90 units of coursework is fully funded by the California State Library. The students' final 30 units and capstone project have a separate cost which will be supported through the SJPL Foundation's philanthropic efforts. Based on current progress, two of the students are anticipated to complete the first 90 units and be ready for enrollment at a partner university as soon as 2021.

## **SJPL Works**

SJPL Works provides free career and business development resources, including programs and access to print and e-book collections, workspaces, conference rooms, and technology. In Fiscal Year 2019-2020, SJPL Works offered a total of 313 programs.

Business programs, comprising 46% of SJPL Works programs, support small business growth and development and are typically provided by expert partners. These programs cover aspects of starting and/or developing a business including business planning, business ownership, finance/funding, marketing/branding, sales, and business legal advice. SJPL Works collaborated with 26 industry and nonprofit partners to offer programs addressing a wide range of business development needs including:

- The San José Basic and Advanced Entrepreneurship Programs (offered in both English and Spanish);
- Teen Entrepreneur Club (six week series introducing middle and high school students to practical business skills);
- Design and Marketing Advice;
- Simple Steps to Starting Your Business;
- CalSavers: Retirement Made Easy for CA Small Businesses; and
- Legal Essentials of Doing Business Online in the COVID-19 Pandemic.

SJPL Works career programs address various aspects of personal career exploration and development. Several partners, including Women Back to Work, TiE Silicon Valley, and Mom Relaunch, collaborated to offer a successful pilot monthly networking program for women seeking re-entry into the workforce. Weekly core career programs (Resume and Cover Letters,



Resume Review, Interview and Networking Skills, and Virtual Mock Interviews) led by SJPL Works business and career librarians have transitioned to virtual formats since March 2020.

A total of 3,542 participants attended SJPL Works career and business programs; 221 customers received direct career or business-related reference assistance; 150 customers benefited from one-on-one, hour long career or business consultations. Customers report a high degree of satisfaction with SJPL Works programs and services. 96% of all surveyed participants stated that they “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” with the statement “I learned something new that is helpful to establish a business/advance my career.”

Goals for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 include adapting programs and services in response to the changing economic climate and the need for contactless methods of program and service delivery:

- Addition of online tools, such as Brainfuse’s JobNow and VetNow, to assist customers with job searches;
- Expand capacity to provide virtual individualized career services;
- Host in person training and networking and networking opportunities at branch locations when physically possible;
- Collaborate with SJPL’s Family Learning Center literacy specialists to reach San José’s most vulnerable customers through the hotspot referral program;
- Identify additional partnerships and services based on equity data and community needs; and
- Continue to transition the delivery of established programs to those who cannot easily pivot to virtual platforms through partnership with the Tech Bridge at the Boccardo Reception Center, Villa Life Moves, and monthly Parole and Community Team meetings.

### **San José Works Youth Jobs Initiative**

In Fiscal Year 2019-2020, the San José Works (SJ Works) 5.0 Youth Jobs Initiative provided subsidized and unsubsidized employment opportunities to 865 eligible youth.

The subsidized program is a paid internship for youth between the ages of 14 to 18 in San José who meet one of the following eligibility requirements: living in an area with an identified gang presence or hot spot, CALWorks/CalFresh recipients, foster or former foster youth, justice engaged, receive free/reduce lunch, homeless, or at risk of homelessness. Subsidized employment opportunities included the direct placement of 145 youth in high growth sectors such as advanced manufacturing, business/financial services, construction, health care and social assistance, and information and communications technology. Another 177 youth were assigned to in-demand occupations including community centers, libraries, City departments, and non-profit organizations including Boys & Girls Clubs, ConXion, PEER Foundation, CreaTV, and Catholic Charities.

The unsubsidized program is open to San José residents between the ages of 16 and 29; clients in search of employment or employment services are directly paid by the employer when hired. Clients enrolled in the unsubsidized program receive employment services such as resume building, mock interview practice, job search, access to job fairs and job leads, and Metrix learning certification. Full-time or part-time employment is obtained either independently or with the help of a San José Works job coach. Examples of placements include retail and food services (Shoe Palace, Forever21, Safeway, Jamba Juice), stadium events (SAP and Levi Stadium), medical offices (Kaiser and other private medical practices), manufacturing companies (Bentek, Tesla, ROSE Electronics), delivery services (Door Dash), and afterschool programs (Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Corral, YMCA).

Due to COVID-19 and the shelter in place order, the program was suspended. Placement goals for youth in employment opportunities are shown below in Table 3:

<b>TABLE 3: SJ Works 5.0 Goals (2019-2020)</b>		
<b>Goal</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual to date</b>
Subsidized (Paid Internship)	375	322
Unsubsidized (Employer-paid)	625	543

For Fiscal Year 2020-2021, in addition to continuing to pair youth in high growth sectors and in-demand occupations, SJ Works has launched a mentoring program for youth who participate in the subsidized program. Older adults, preferably working professionals, can become a mentor to a high school student. Upon completion of the first cohort of 15mentees and 14mentors, a celebration event was held on September 18, 2020, with Mayor Liccardo in attendance.

The second group of SJ Works mentors and mentees are expected to start the week of November 30, 2020. Current retention rate for youth placed in subsidized positions is 93.02%. Goals for youth placement in subsidized and unsubsidized employment opportunities for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 are shown below in Table 4:

<b>TABLE 4: SJ Works 6.0 Goals (2020-2021)</b>		
<b>Goal</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual to date</b>
Subsidized (Paid Internship)	375	160
Unsubsidized (Employer-paid)	625	42

## **EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

In accordance with the Education and Digital Literacy Strategy, staff will continue to track the progress, implementation, and expansion of College and Career Readiness Quality Standards, SJ Engage, SJ Aspires, Career Online High School, Working Scholars, SJ Works, and SJPL Works initiatives and will report back to the Library and Education Commission and the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee on an annual basis.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

This memorandum will be posted on the City's Neighborhood Services and Education Committee agenda website for the November 12, 2020 meeting.

## **COORDINATION**

This report has been coordinated with Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services, San José Works Youth Jobs Initiative.

## **COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION/INPUT**

The Library and Education Commission has reviewed updates to various programs as part of the Education and Digital Literacy Strategy Initiative. The Commission recommends their approval to the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee and City Council.

## **CEQA**

Not a Project, File No. PP17-009, Staff Reports, Assessments, Annual Reports, and Informational Memos that involve no approvals of any City action.

/s/

JILL BOURNE

Director, Library Department

For questions, please contact Vidya Kilambi, Division Manager (Library) at [vidya.kilambi@sjlibrary.org](mailto:vidya.kilambi@sjlibrary.org) or at (408) 808-2151.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: Timeline for Key Education and Digital Literacy Milestones

Attachment B: Members of the College and Career Readiness Quality Standards Ad Hoc Committee

Attachment C: College and Career Readiness Quality Standards

Attachment D: SJ Aspires Data

Attachment E: SJ Aspires Award