



Fresno-Madera K-16 Collaborative Executive Steering Committee

Meeting Minutes

February 18, 2026, 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Link to Meeting Materials: https://bit.ly/ESC_Feb18_2026

Meeting called to order by Co-Chair A. Reyna at 3:03pm.

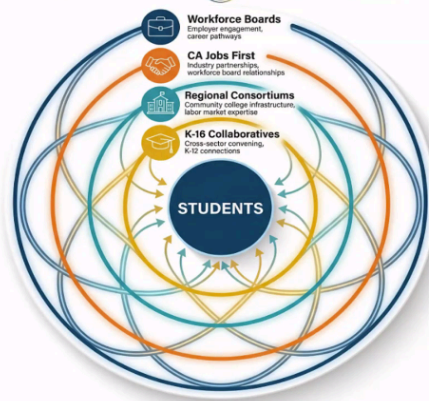
Present: Co-Chair A. Reyna (SCCCD), J. Buckley (RC), M. Copher (FCSS), T. Cox (FLDUSD), M. Delgado (FLDUSD), N. Dodson (CTFF), B. Dooley (EECU), K. Hatch (GVUSD), C. Hebert (Futuro Health), O. Largo (UCM), C. Tweed (CC), M. Vang (Madera WIB), J. Ward (FUSD), J. Gladney (NU), M. Marshall (Central USD), K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C), L. Flores (FMK16C), N. Rico (FMK16C)

ESC Business - Approval of [June 2, 2025](#) (ESC) and [November 13, 2025](#) (ESC+Partnership) meeting minutes (Action:M/S/A to Receive and File): Motion made by C. Tweed (CC). Seconded by M. Delgado (FLDUSD). Motion carried.

Strategic Conversation: K-16 Peer Convening:

- K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C) shared about the January 29-30, 2026, in-person K-16 peer convening in San Diego, CA, organized by the 13 K-16 Collaboratives across the state to discuss unified advocacy, workforce training, and collaboration and leveraging of aligned funds and projects. 12/13 of the K-16 Collaboratives were represented with five (5) individuals from our region attending: J. Bautista (Tulare WIB), B. Davis (TKCCC), L. Flores (FMK16C), K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C), and M. Vang (Madera WIB).
- Guest speakers included Derek Kirk (GO-Biz), who encouraged the K-16 Collaboratives to pursue a unified advocacy strategy since awareness of our organizations and impact is not as strong as it could be, particularly with legislatures and even local communities, as well as Adam Peck (California Workforce Association), Kaina Pereira (California Workforce Development Board), and Michael Wiafe (California Workforce Development Board), who all voiced support for earlier career pathway exposure for students and highlighted the need for education, including the K-16 Collaboratives, to work more closely with Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) within their regions.
- Early efforts to develop collaborative advocacy and shared resources include the below infographics communicating the statewide impact of over 2,000,000 students with the \$250 million investment in the K-16 Collaboratives and a visual of the education-to-workforce ecosystem.





- M. Vang (Madera WIB) expressed appreciation for the opportunity to represent the region and gather in the same room to discuss where there are opportunities to align funding and initiatives. The table talking points provided to participants enabled discussion of what we are already doing, what we should be paying attention to, and emphasized considering how we can better align regionally. Participants were able to hear about best practices from other regions that may be able to adapt and align with new resources, ideas, and potential partnerships from connections made. An important question to consider is how to use workforce development boards to ensure education is responsive to employers and industry needs.
- L. Flores (FMK16C) explained facilitation of the creation of a [summary sheet](#) of all K-16 Collaboratives and summary slides for each organization ([K-16 Collaborative Slide Decks folder](#)) as foundational documents to be referenced moving forward, especially as we seek to amplify the promotion and celebration of the great work being done as it seems the narrative and data reports submitted to the state have not been publicized much unfortunately. With this in mind, the FMK16C team is working with a contractor to create a Partnership data dashboard, similar to the [Central Coast K-16 Regional Collaborative Data Dashboard](#). Each K-16 Collaborative was tasked with including the following standard information for their slides:
 - Region Overview (map and brief description of the region including counties, major cities, key demographics; lead agency and core partners; high-level summary of regional economic and talent priorities)
 - Priority Educational Pathways (choose 1-2 priority pathways selected from Business, Education, Engineering/Computing and Healthcare along with a rationale for prioritization and brief description of pathway design and important elements such as dual enrollment, transfer alignment and work-based learning)
 - Progress to Date (major accomplishments since grant launch including quantitative highlights and notable innovations or practices other may want to adopt)
 - Regional Impact and Early Outcomes (early signs of progress; specific examples of what is working well)
 - Challenges & Barriers (3-5 challenges the region is encountering, particularly if structural or systematic barriers, and where support from peers or the state could be helpful)
 - Opportunities for Collective Learning & Advocacy (key areas where the region seeks shared solutions via cross-Collaborative opportunities and/or policy or systems-level changes that would accelerate progress)
 - Looking Ahead (next steps or goals for the next 6-12 months, including plans for no cost extension or NCE beyond June 30, 2026)
 - Optional: Additional Links (could include website, social media accounts, data dashboard, repository of narrative reports to the state, multimedia resources like research reports, videos, press releases, or any other relevant content)
- K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C) expressed excitement about potential replicable projects. One example is a dual enrollment effort within the Engineering/Computing pathway that involves CSU Long Beach, with whom K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C) has already scheduled a follow-up meeting to learn more about.

Executive Director Report - K-16 Grant Site Visit:

- State has requested participation in a [site visit](#) preassigned to occur on March 19-20, 2026. There is a strong preference for in-person (Fresno State Library) but a hybrid option will be available based on need. K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C) requests that all CSJVK16P Advisory Council members mark their schedules for the 1:00-2:30PM session on March 19, 2026. If the ESC member cannot participate either in-person or by Zoom, communicate proxy designation to K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C) ahead of time.
- Additional representatives from organizations have been requested to attend other sessions (i.e., 4-year, community college, K-12, industry/business, and new this year - pathway students) across the two-day experience. Some of our K-12 partners are arranging to bring Education pathway students, who will be compensated for their participation with a \$50 Kennel Bookstore gift card, food through either catering or a voucher, and likely a campus tour.
- [Questions](#) were shared and additional talking points will be provided to participants by the FMK16C team by March 6, 2026, along with invitation to optional office hour sessions the following week. The Leadership session questions that were shared included:
 - If not already, what is your plan to make this pathway a regional pathway?
 - What unexpected challenges emerged during implementation? If you were starting this pathway development today, knowing what you know now, what would you do different?
 - How has the partnership between educational sectors evolved over these four years?
- Planning to focus on the Education pathway while showcasing our Recovery With Equity (RWE) goals:
 - Improve faculty, staff and administrator diversity
 - Cultivate inclusive, engaging and equity-oriented learning environments
 - Retain students through inclusive support
 - Provide high-tech, high-touch advising
 - Support college preparation and early credit
 - Improve college affordability

Executive Director Report - No Cost Extension (NCE) Update:

- Project teams were instructed to email K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C) by October 15, 2025, to indicate their interest in requesting a no cost extension (NCE) beyond the current period of performance end date of June 30, 2026. A digital questionnaire was provided that also included a scheduling link for a 30-minute meeting to occur November 2025 - January 2026, however, the FMK16C team will continue to consider NCE requests by request. NCE meetings have continued.
- FMK16C team is internally reviewing documented progress of projects based on submitted narrative reports as well as invoicing completion and cadence. Any concerns related to prior performance and feasibility for NCE will be discussed during the meeting with K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C) and L. Flores (FMK16C). 12-month NCEs (to June 2027) with a possibility of additional year pending improved performance in area(s) of concern will be offered along with the full 24-month NCE (to June 2028).
- Project teams may expect a fairly instantaneous response regarding their NCE request although formal contract amendments may take time due to upcoming holidays and expected processing timelines. Questions and/or additional NCE requests may be directed to K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C).
- Across the 23 K-16 grant supported projects there are 47 contracts with institutions that are receiving funding. To-date, 35 NCE requests have been received. Only one (1) NCE request has been denied due to lack of funding available to extend as the project is projected to spend out all funds by June 2026. As some projects remain on track to end by the original June 30, 2026, end date, and may not be fully expended, K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C) anticipates \$500,000-700,000 total may be available to dedicate towards regional initiative(s).

Executive Director Report - Other Grants:

- K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C) is looking to strengthen Regional Investment Initiative (RII, Jobs First), Round 2 application based on [Education and Skills Manufacturing Anchor Proposal](#), RII Round 1 submission, to upskill high

school manufacturing/welding instructors and provide externships with stipends for high school and community colleges.

- K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C) is working with Tulare and Madera WIB to use Heritage Funds (non-K-16) to establish a targeted workforce regional training program for sector partnerships among workforce boards, education and training institutions and industry representatives to help build the muscle memory of other WDB in region to engage partners in next sector partnerships and talent pipeline development. Additionally, paid work-based learning (WBL) opportunities will be provided for adult learners - including Good Jobs Challenge (GJC) certificate completers from partner Fresno City College (FCC) programs - and college students as part of the MG4 - Work-Based Learning: A Reimagined Industry and K-16 Education Ecosystem for Talent Pipelines project.

Executive Director Report - Other Items:

- K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C) anticipates needing additional time for specific FMK16C items, including nominations for outgoing co-chair, and proposed ESC meeting from 9:30am - 10:45am prior to May 27, 2026, Partnership meeting.
- N. Rico (FMK16C) shared that [Job Shadow Week](#) took place the week of February 3, 2026. Gratitude expressed to participating districts, including CUSD, FLDUSD, FUSD and SUSD. Certificates of appreciation for school districts and business partners will be created and distributed.
- K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C) informed ESC members of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) Candidate Forum to take place in Fresno on May 14, 2026 @ 6pm ([RSVP](#)). The exact location will be shared with those who register. The organizers intend to have at least three (3) candidates present and this is one (1) of three (3) events statewide.
- K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C) shared that nominations to replace outgoing Co-Chair will be accepted prior to and at the May 27, 2026 meeting. Self-nominations are acceptable. Proposed 2026-2027 meeting dates are expected to be shared at the same meeting. If there are any known events, conferences, travel, standing meetings, etc. for the next annual year, please share with FMK16C as soon as possible.

ESC Business - Volunteers for Strategic Planning Committee:

- K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C) requested volunteers for the Strategic Planning Committee to identify new project opportunities and expressed particular interest in a region-wide pathway implementation. Noted it would be possible to seek other funding opportunities beyond K-16 Collaborative to support. Opened for discussion of any potential ideas within the group present.
- A. Reyna (MCC) affirmed the goal of seeking volunteers to serve on this committee to generate ideas and provide recommendations to the larger group in order to effectively utilize these expected funds. Expressed interest in AI, especially as it is expected to impact the future of work in all sectors. Volunteered to serve on subcommittee if needed.
- J. Buckley (RC) shared that CVHEC is likely applying for a short-term grant on AI in the workplace. Noted there seems to be a lot of money being invested in AI and volunteered to serve on the subcommittee.
- M. Delgado (FLDUSD) expressed willingness to serve on the subcommittee.
- K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C) shared that we could take the next year to plan to implement in annual year (AY) 2027-2828. Noted adult education consortiums are seeking to do more regional work in career pathways so that could be another potential pathway partnership. Expressed gratitude for early volunteers and affirmed opportunity would be shared out digitally. Noted meetings could be flexible with Zoom or in-person meetings with food depending on preferences.
- B. Dooley (EECU) shared that despite direct technical expertise, lots of businesses seem to be using AI from a productivity perspective for tasks like scheduling and doing research. Encouraged a focus on actual applicable skills on a day-to-day basis as well as continued development of necessary soft skills still needed such as commitment, work ethic, professionalism, etc. as it seems like a realistic understanding of what it takes to receive higher skills, more important tasks, and promotions is continuing to be lacking.
- J. Ward (FUSD) expressed interest in finding opportunities to expand meaningful work-based learning (WBL) and access to college credit given the remarkable amount of logistics required.

- C. Tweed (CC) shared that more people with masters degrees in their fields (math, English, history, etc.) are needed generally but even more so in rural areas. K-12 folk tend to have a Master's in Education but that does not meet minimum requirements for faculty at community colleges.
- K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C) noted the prior pilot project focused on upskilling 100+ teachers with masters degrees in English and Math. Creation of an 18-month type program would be ideal.
- M. Vang (Madera WDB) expressed similar challenges as they continue to struggle to bring training opportunities into Madera without enough instructors. There are industry partners that are interested in teaching but do not have educational credentials that are required by community colleges. Medical Assisting (MA) and Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) instructors needed in adult school for almost 2 years. The job market continues to see strong demands in healthcare, particularly with in-home support like a home health aid worker. Currently working with MCC on Operating Room (OR) Surgical Technologists. Also interested in AI assessments to measure an individual's soft skills; working with Imago on this for MUSD students and WDB participants (e.g., pre- and post- soft skills workshops).
- A. Reyna (MCC) inquired whether Fresno State could use competency-based education to fast-track a master's degree in previously mentioned areas of need.
- J. Gladney (NU) shared that NU has been involved in several other K-16 regions and the accelerated English masters from the aforementioned pilot program is still offered. Requested the group share areas of interest (History, Early Childhood Education, Psychology). Affirmed NU is very open to partnerships and is averaging 11-month completion rate (online, asynchronous). Prior learning credit is under purview of another colleague but willing to coordinate a meeting to explore opportunities.
- M. Delgado (FLDUSD) noted if there could be X years of service in the school district in certain core content that could be considered, that would certainly be more intriguing to classroom teachers.
- J. Gladney (NU) clarified programs are generally composed of 4- or 8-week online asynchronous courses. It could be reasonable to expect a 10 course program to be lessened by 1-3 courses with experience but it would need to be reviewed.
- A. Reyna (MCC) posed the questions "How can we use current work experience to be part of the educational experience? Could we survey high school instructors to see what they would want/need in the program to see if they would be interested in it?"
- K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C): asked the group where they are seeing demands for trainers, DE courses, etc.?
- C. Tweed (CC) shared there's a shortage in every area, even Psychology, Sociology and Ethnic Studies. CC recently had to cancel 3 dual enrollment courses due to lack of instructors.
- J. Ward (FUSD) indicated English, Math, Social Science, and Science.
- M. Delgado (FLDUSD) indicated English, Science, and Social Science.
- A. Reyna (MCC) expressed gratitude for input and encouraged everyone to reach out to K. Hammerstrom (FMK16C) with any other ideas and/or willingness to serve on the committee.

Announcements & Adjournment:

- March 19, 2026, 1:00-2:30 PM Regional K-16 Site Visit: OPSC Requested Participation of all CSJVK16P Advisory Council Members (FMK16C and TKCCC)
- May 27, 2026, 9:30-10:45am FMK16C ESC (proposed)
- May 27, 2026, 11:00-1:00 PM CSJVK16P Advisory Council Meeting: In Person Madera TBD
- Meeting adjourned at 3:59pm.