

Themes and ideas from the SWC Faculty Consortium Summit 2018 Reports

Themes/Ideas:

Faculty appreciated the opportunity to actually learn about AEBG, the consortium and other initiatives/issues related to adult learners, especially since many do not directly work within noncredit or basic skills.

They expressed collective suggestions that communication about AEBG and the Consortium within and across districts be increased and include multiple communication modes and formats.

They expressed a collective emphasis on cross-district faculty gaining a better understanding of the role each district plays in the consortium, about the different district structures and funding, the various instructional programs and student services, and the faculty needs/concerns so that all are better able to work together to improve the experience and transition of adult learners.

They indicated an interest in more meetings that are general information and also meetings that are discipline specific. They would like there to be some shared professional development activities so that there can be more “getting to know each other” and finding the common ground for serving the “students we share”. They would like more face-to-face meeting for faculty across districts (workgroups, classroom visits, planning meetings and shared professional development).

They would like more and regularly updated information about programs and services each district offers (within and across districts), as well as information about other community programs and resources to which students can be referred.

They appreciated hearing from the student panel and being at tables with different district/discipline faculty to get a sense of the ‘big picture’ of who we serve and how we serve them.

Excerpts from the reports:

“The issue that I feel needs to be addressed before work that is beneficial to all the institutions is to dispel the fear that I felt was apparent in the Adult School employees. Much of their discussion seemed to center around job security, opportunity, and uncertainty”.

“The “fact and fiction” exercise was a way to directly deal with rumors and challenges that the consortium faced. I was perplexed at first...I had no idea that there were rumors. I would say that, after listening to the concerns of the other audience members, the biggest concern of the consortium should be communication. People are rightly afraid that their jobs are in jeopardy, but it should be easy to communicate the information that people need to put their minds at ease. I would recommend doing it in more than one format: perhaps electronically as a FAQ on the website, and also have some sort of newsletter of written method as well. “

“Is SBAEC really necessary –and welcomed- in the professional life of teachers?

Does SBAEC truly have the vision (and capacity) to change the course of things and improve the educational chances offered to the adult population of the area it covers?

How can SBAEC free itself of its apparent bureaucratic nature and capture some of that vital energy that only springs up from grass root organizations?”

“It would be good for (cross) district faculty to go on a retreat to share, brainstorm, and plan their work for the Consortium, and also have opportunities to observe classes in settings and programs different from their own.”

“Practical, useful courses should be offered in vocations that offer gainful employment and need workers to improve the economic situation of many struggling students and their families.”

“...for future symposia, it would be nice to have a fact sheet for each district that includes its major acronyms and core facts.”

“In a future AEBG Summit, it might be fun to have a collaboration exercise. Maybe, if it is the space to do so, faculty from both Adult Education and Southwestern College could brainstorm ideas together. I suggest a guided brainstorming session, based on programs and courses that already exist (provide handouts of current programs and their contents). People can discuss combining, mirroring, or supporting each other’s programs. An additional exercise could be an exploration of how students are supported at both types of institution. For instance, the student discussion of the support outside of the classroom they received (in the Adult Education setting) was enlightening for several people at my table.”

“I think moving forward that all stakeholders need to be kept in the loop, doing quarterly informational updates would help greatly... it will be critical to ensure that all stakeholders are kept in the loop and participate in the design of potential course offerings. I did feel like the group was a little big although it was facilitated in a very professional manner.”

“... I think future work on this project should focus first around what skills or abilities our students need to be successful in their careers and in the modern world. It would also be nice if we sprinkled in some attention to the integration of new technologies or student-centered teaching strategies to try to evolve the method of instruction to help support these new world goals. With the English department, we are currently working on the Basic Skills Grant to try to align two of our English classes (115/116) with SDSU expectations. This has been very helpful in terms of trying to think about what the students need to get from us as opposed to just working through the syllabus. “

“Thank you again for this opportunity. Education is changing in many significant ways right now to try to move forward and take advantage of what we know about how people learn, what our world looks like, and the resources that we have at our disposal. It is nice to work on something that, if we are able to collaborate and agree, could produce something to help modernize education across many levels. I’m looking forward to it.”