



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ANALYSIS: 2022-2023 GOVERNANCE PLAN REVIEW

Prepared for California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office

December 2023

TABLE PAGE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Key Findings	5
Section 1: Membership and Member Representation	6
Qualifications for Membership	6
Member Representation Practices	6
Figure 1.1: Permissibility of Using Proxies and Alternates	7
Ensuring Equity and Fostering Member Engagement	7
Figure 1.2: Consortia Strategies for Ensuring Member Engagement	7
Rules Governing Voting and Member Representation.....	8
Member Effectiveness	9
Section 2: Funding Allocation Practices.....	10
General Principles and Strategic Planning Alignment.....	10
Direct Funding vs. Fiscal Agent Structures.....	10
Figure 2.1: Direct Funded vs. Fiscal Agent Funding Structures by Geography	11
Figure 2.2: Direct Funded vs. Fiscal Agent Funding Structures by Consortium Member Count	11
Fiscal Reporting, Distribution Schedules, and Changes to Funding Allocations	11
Figure 2.3: Frequency of Financial and Efficacy Reporting and Review of Consortium Members.....	12
Figure 2.4: Frequency of Financial and Efficacy Reporting and Review of Consortium Members.....	13
Monitoring and Administering Carryover Funds	13
Figure 2.5: Interval for Assessing Carryover Funding	14
Figure 2.6: Practices When Carryover Funding Exists.....	14
Section 3: Decision-Making Practices.....	15
Voting Thresholds and Governance Model Histories	15
Voting Thresholds and Practices by Consortium Size	15
Figure 3.1: Decision Approval Practices and Thresholds	16
Figure 3.2: Voting Thresholds by Consortium Member Count	16
Processes for Adding New Members or Terminating Memberships.....	17
Figure 3.3: Processes for Voluntary Dismissal of Members.....	17
Figure 3.4: Processes for Involuntary Dismissal of Members	18
Figure 3.5: Reasons for Involuntary Dismissal of Members	18
Figure 3.6: Processes for Admitting New Members	19
Section 4: Public Participation in Consortium Decision-Making.....	20

Methods for Soliciting and Facilitating Public Comment..... 20

 Figure 4.1: Reported Strategies and Practices for Ensuring Adequate Public Participation in Governance 21

Soliciting Stakeholder Organization Comments 21

 Figure 4.2: Processes for Soliciting Comments from Adult Education and Workforce Development Stakeholder Organizations..... 23

Appendix24

 Methodology..... 24

INTRODUCTION

In this report, Hanover Research analyzes the 2022-2023 Consortium Fiscal Administration Declaration (CFAD)/Governance Purpose from California Adult Education Program (CAEP) consortia members. This document is structured to summarize the various governance structures around the state, identify trends, and provide a narrative summary of the nineteen questions that consortia must respond to as part of the annual governance deliverable.

The CFAD examines bylaws and governance structure of a consortia, giving insight on the decision-making process within each group. CFAD is based on the CAEP preliminary allocations released at the end of February each year and derived from the Governor's Budget. It captures member allocations for each consortium as well as the consortium's chosen disbursement method. The CFAD is a one-time process due once a year on May 2nd. Consortia members are to hold public meetings to discuss CAEP allocations and the results of these discussions are formalized in the CFAD.

The majority of the consortia (83%) report that they have a formal document detailing the work of the consortium outside of the governance review questionnaire. Of the 12 consortia that responded “no” regarding the existence of a formal document, two reference a pending document, two reference inclusion of such a document in their three-year or annual plan, six reference bylaws or other documentation of meetings, and two did not provide further explanation. 57 of 59 (97%) of the consortia that responded “yes” regarding a formal document provided an external link to the referenced document.

KEY FINDINGS

Membership and Member Representation

- Consortia members generally cite board approval as the means by which voting members are elected and require copies of the organization's board meeting minutes to verify the appointment.
- Strategies to ensure full and equitable member representation in consortium decision making fall into five categories: member engagement, equitable scheduling, alternative or proxy voting and representation, required participation, and adherence to governing documents.
- Consortia are most likely to use one of two main voting allocation strategies: a 1 member/1 vote configuration (used by 58 of the 71) and a 1 institution/1 vote option (used by seven), with the remaining six following an alternative allocating method.
- Measures of effective membership within a consortium are consistent and include completion of the annual plan, active participation, fulfillment of stated objectives, ability and capacity to provide services, meeting deadlines, and timely reporting.

Funding Allocation Practices

- There is a nearly even split in funding structure across consortia with 35 consortia reporting that their members are Direct Funded, and 36 reporting using a Fiscal Agent structure.
- Approximately one-fifth of the consortia (14 out of 71) reported making changes to their funding allocations and strategic objectives over the course of their planning and budgeting horizons.
- The most common practice among consortia that provided detailed accounts of their carryover funding strategies is to simply reallocate the excess funds to other consortium members or spending priorities.

Decision Making Practices

- Two-thirds of the consortia make decisions based on a majority vote system - which can be defined as either 51 percent of the vote (used by 20 percent) or 50 percent of the vote plus one vote (used by 46 percent). Meanwhile, another 27 percent of consortia report making decisions by consensus. The consensus method is less common among larger consortia (with eight or more members).
- Policies for involuntary dismissal of members – usually for failure to perform the duties of consortium members or deliver quality adult education services – require a vote of the board as the formal mechanism of expulsion, but generally also mandate that the reasons for the vote be documented.
- Admitting new members requires board approval, which is usually based on a formal written application prepared by the organization seeking to join the consortium.

Public Participation in Consortium Decision Making

- Strategies for soliciting public comments and input are broadly similar across consortia, with most respondents who provided details about their processes noting that meetings are announced online, in the press, and via other outreach channels, with agendas and minutes posted online.
- Stakeholder organizations – which can include workforce development boards, libraries, corrections facilities, social services offices, chambers of commerce, and other organizations – are most commonly engaged via frequent communication and standing invitations to participate in consortium meetings.

SECTION 1: MEMBERSHIP AND MEMBER REPRESENTATION

QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Out of 71 consortia, 70 reported that all community college districts, school districts, county offices of education, or any joint powers authority, located within the boundaries of the adult education region have been allowed to join the consortium as a member. Only one consortium, San Diego Adult Education Regional Consortium, reported that some potentially relevant organizations had not been permitted to join as voting members. The main reason these organizations are affiliated, but not granted voting rights, is that they are not direct providers of adult education services. The full response, edited for clarity, is reproduced below:

See bylaws adopted in 2018 and updated in 2021. All Community Colleges and K-12 Districts that have [Adult Education] programs have been a part of design. [San Diego County Office of Education], to our knowledge does not provide Adult Education Services in our region but does attend SDAERC meetings as non-voting members.

The [Local Workforce Development Board], San Diego Workforce Partnership, is a joint powers authority. Although it attends and is part of the Super Region, it is not a member of the SDAERC. SDWP partners with [San Diego College of Continuing Education] as part of [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act] initiatives but is not a voting member of the SDAERC. READ San Diego through the City Public Library system is invited and attends SDAERC Meetings but is not a voting member.

MEMBER REPRESENTATION PRACTICES

When asked about how they will “assure that each member of the consortium is represented only by an official designated by the governing board of the member” and how that person will be elected, respondents generally cite board approval as the means by which voting members are elected and require copies of the organization’s board meeting minutes to verify the appointment. Eighty percent of members indicated some version of this process of member governing board appointment, and most that elaborated about verification procedures cited member board minutes as their standard. Roughly ten percent of respondents specified that local school district superintendents and community college leaders (most often presidents) are considered voting members involved in the member governing board appointment.

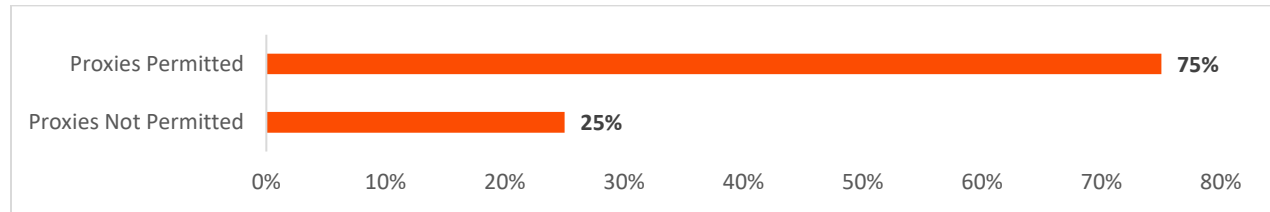
As indicated in Figure 1.1, more than two-thirds of consortia that specified their policies for members using alternates or proxies to vote permit the practice and outlined methods by which proxy votes were to be accepted. Eight respondent consortia specifically do not allow proxy voting.

There was little information among responses about the length of time each consortium allowed its board members to be appointed for, though several respondents specified that changes in their board composition were mainly precipitated by retirements or board members leaving the organizations they represented. West End Corridor and Napa Valley explicitly leave it up to the appointing member organizations to specify the duration of their representative’s appointment. The Sierra Joint Consortium

requires annual verification of representatives’ status, though this does not necessarily preclude longer terms.

Figure 1.1: Permissibility of Using Proxies and Alternates

(n = 24 responding consortia; Includes only consortia for which a definite stance on proxies could be determined)



ENSURING EQUITY AND FOSTERING MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

Strategies to ensure full and equitable member representation in consortium decision-making are broadly similar across the 71 consortia and can be grouped under five headings: member engagement, equitable scheduling, alternative or proxy voting and representation, required participation, and adherence to governing documents. Individual strategies listed below each of these headings in the table below are used by at least one, and usually multiple, consortia. No single consortium reported using all of these strategies, however.

Figure 1.2: Consortia Strategies for Ensuring Member Engagement

Ongoing Member Engagement	Equitable Scheduling	Alternative or Proxy Voting and Representation	Required Participation	Adherence to Governing Documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One-on-one stakeholder meetings ▪ Members evaluate annual student and organizational performance ▪ Efforts to build consensus (defined in one case as 80% majority vote) and/or unanimous decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advanced notice of agenda items provided ▪ Email reminders of meetings ▪ Scheduling to ensure all stakeholders can vote ▪ Zoom meeting attendance permitted in emergencies (post-pandemic) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Voting and deliberation by proxy ▪ When both a member’s representative and designated proxy are absent, a meeting is cancelled and rescheduled ▪ Voting by email, which requires an explanation of the member’s position on the issue at hand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mandatory meetings ▪ Members are all required to participate in planning, budgeting, and reporting efforts and sign each deliverable ▪ "Ineffective Member" designation or interventions for non-participants ▪ Members who fail to participate can be dismissed, either via bylaws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meeting minutes distributed and posted to website ▪ Votes require a quorum, often 51% of members ▪ Votes must be proposed in the meeting <i>before</i> the vote is to occur ▪ Three-year plans govern priorities and should be accounted for in decisions

RULES GOVERNING VOTING AND MEMBER REPRESENTATION

Consortia have two major options when allocating voting power to their member organizations: a 1 member/1 vote configuration and a 1 institution/1 vote option in which a member organization composed of more than one institution (e.g., multiple community colleges or schools) votes once for each component institution. The voting power of larger members is higher under the 1 institution/1 vote configuration.

Of the 71 consortia, 58 use a 1 member/1 vote system. Among the 58 consortia using a 1 member/1 vote system, 24 (41%) are direct funded while 34 (59%) use a fiscal agent. Another seven (five of which are direct funded) use a 1 institution/1 vote system. The remaining six consortia, all of which are direct-funded, use alternative strategies in which some members receive additional votes. These trends suggest that 1 member/1 vote systems are somewhat more common among institutions that use a fiscal agent system, but that funding systems are not a strong predictor of governance structures. The six “other” representation schemes are shown below for each consortium with alternative methods:

- **Contra Costa** – direct funding: one vote from each adult school institution, two votes per college, one vote for the Contra Costa Community College District and one vote for the Contra Costa County Office of Education
- **Kern** – direct funding: each member has one vote, with the exception of Kern High, who has three total votes due to their size in students served and in allocation %
- **Mid Alameda** – direct funding – one vote: one agency (Each member agency shall be allotted one vote) x2
- **San Francisco** – direct funding: City College of San Francisco has two votes: the Chief Instructional Officer and the Chief Student Services Officer, or their designees. Because SFUSD does not operate any adult schools or ROPs, but does provide services to students who are over 18 and fall into one of the AEP service areas, they have one vote: the Director of College and Career Programs, or their designee.
- **Sonoma** – direct funding: each agency with current adult education services would get two votes and each non-service provider member agency would get one vote.
- **South Bay (El Camino)** – direct funding: Each adult school has three votes except El Camino College.

There is no clear relationship between the number of members a consortium has and whether it uses a direct funding or fiscal agent funding model. The 36 direct funded consortia have a median of 5.0 members and a mean of 5.1 members, while the 35 fiscal agent members have a median of 6.0 members and a mean of 6.4.

MEMBER EFFECTIVENESS

According to the 71 consortia, ways in which member effectiveness is commonly defined and measured include:

- Performance as defined by the CAEP Assurances and mandated by Education Code Sections 84900-84920
- Bylaws (see below)
- State Guidelines
- Success measures (Data Integrity Report data, Management Information System data, fiscal expenditures, per pupil spending, and open discussions about student/agency success)

Cited examples of what defines an effective member include:

- Completion of Annual Plan
- Active participation
- Fulfillment of stated objectives
- Ability and capacity to provide services
- Meeting deadlines
- Timely reporting

Just under half of the consortia (34) indicate that they do not currently have bylaws that address member effectiveness, although 11 of those reference that they are planning to develop bylaws related to member effectiveness. Just over half of the consortia (38) report having bylaws that include governance of member effectiveness. Among those 38, three do not elaborate on their member effectiveness process, although provide links to by-laws, 8 do not elaborate on their member effectiveness process beyond stating it's in bylaws, and the remaining 27 provide some elaboration for member effectiveness.

Many of those who outline measurements for member effectiveness in their responses specified measures of member *ineffectiveness*. The most commonly included factors are:

- Not providing services consistent with the adult education plan
- Not providing services that address identified needs
- Being consistently ineffective in providing services that address needs without improvement from reasonable interventions (interventions not defined).

Other measures of member ineffectiveness include not meeting reporting requirements, inappropriate allocation of funds, and failure to actively participate in consortium meetings and efforts.

SECTION 2: FUNDING ALLOCATION PRACTICES

GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND STRATEGIC PLANNING ALIGNMENT

All 71 consortia committed to reporting any available funds to their members that could be used for adult education or workforce services for adults, as well as the uses of those funds. Since these reporting practices are mandatory, it is not surprising that they are widespread and, in many cases, well-developed.

In terms of CFAD alignment with each CAEP Three Year Planning or (Plan) objectives, most of the analyzed plans discuss alignment between their planned resource allocations and goals. While some members simply acknowledged the existence of, or confirmed the approval of, planned allocations without explicitly mentioning the goals towards which they would be spent, around two-thirds of the plans included a recap of goals. Nearly all plans mention that the current funding allocations align with the three-year plan, while some indicate that adjustments to the three-year plan are included in the most recent annual plan.

DIRECT FUNDING VS. FISCAL AGENT STRUCTURES

Precisely how each consortium funds its member adult education providers varies substantially by region, with 35 reporting that their members are Direct Funded (money is provided directly to the consortium), while 36 report using a Fiscal Agent (another organization acts on behalf of the consortium to perform financial duties) structure. Direct Funding models predominate among the Bay Area, Los Angeles, and the South Central region consortia, while the consortia located in the Far North, Inland Empire, Central Valley, and San Diego regions are more likely to report using a Fiscal Agent model (see Figure 2.1). Fiscal Agent funding models are slightly more common among consortia with nine or more members, while Direct Funding models are somewhat more prevalent among consortia with between two and eight members. The relationship between consortium size and funding model is not especially strong, however (see Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.1: Direct Funded vs. Fiscal Agent Funding Structures by Geography
(n = 71)

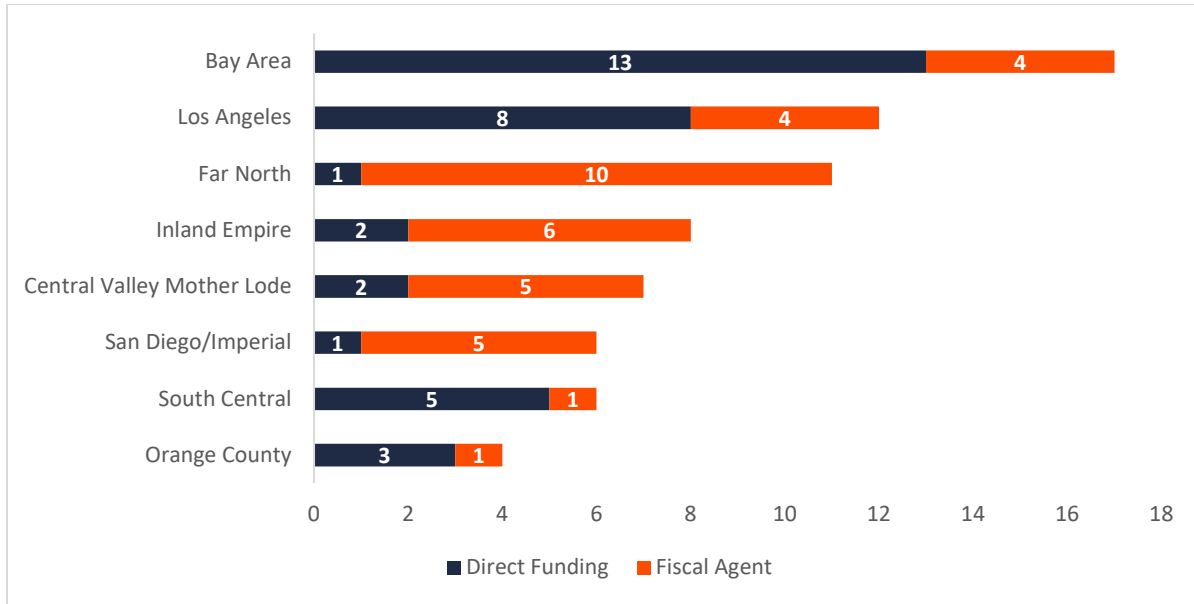
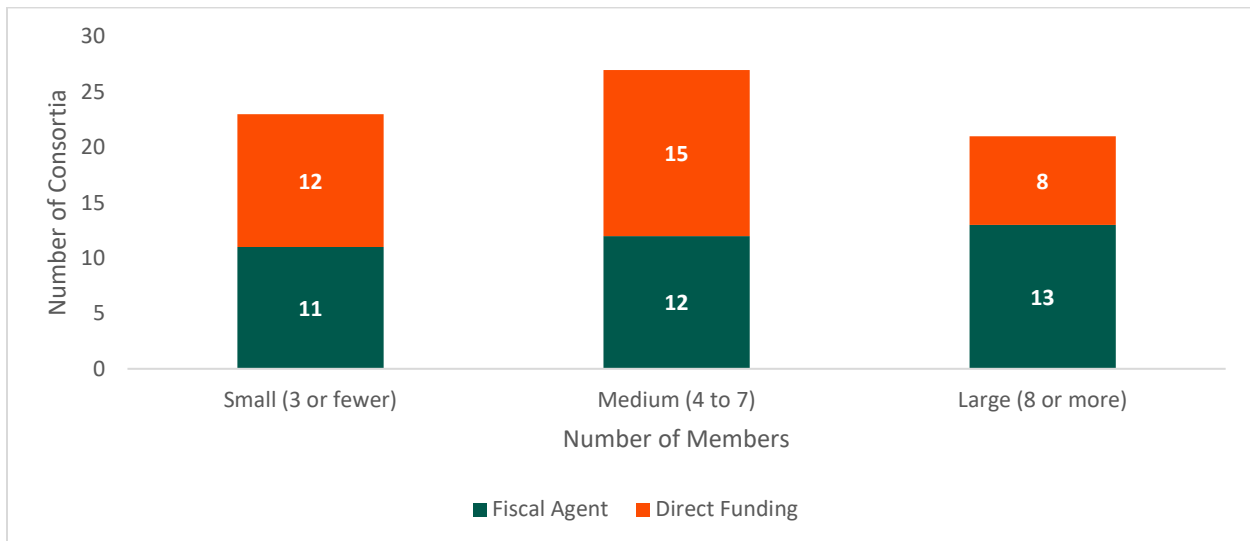


Figure 2.2: Direct Funded vs. Fiscal Agent Funding Structures by Consortium Member Count
(n = 71)



FISCAL REPORTING, DISTRIBUTION SCHEDULES, AND CHANGES TO FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

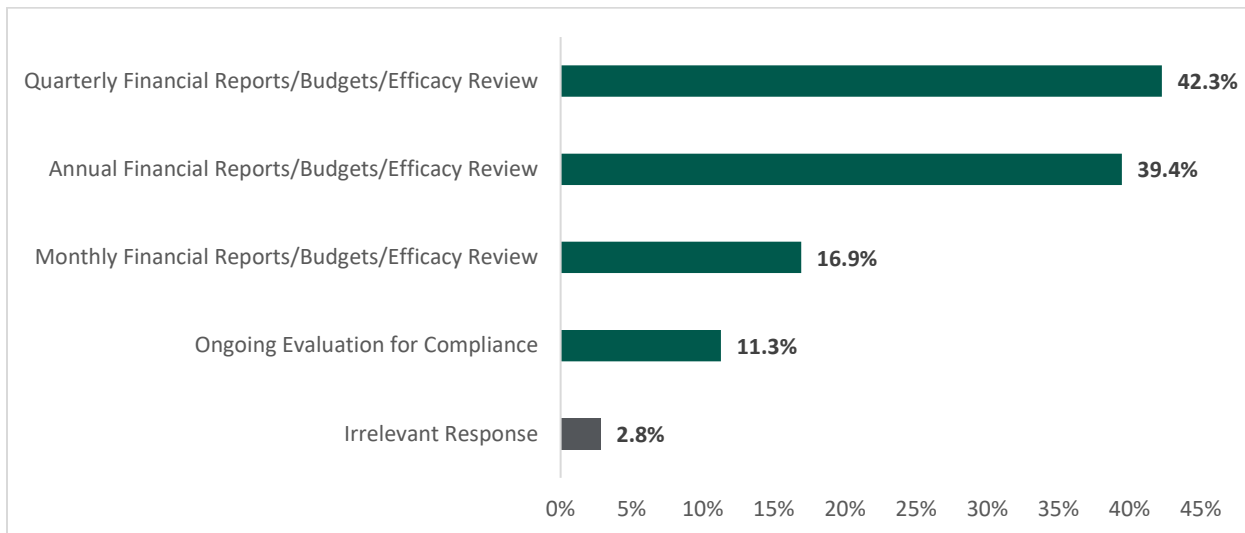
There is substantial variation in how frequently each consortium requires financial and efficacy reporting and reviews from its member organizations, but review occurs at least annually in every case for which a relevant response describing this aspect of governance. Figure 2.3 summarizes the share of consortia that use different reporting intervals and practices. The most common approach, mentioned by 42.3 percent of respondents, is quarterly financial reporting and review of issues or concerns, followed by annual reviews, which are used by 39.4 percent of respondents. Monthly reviews

are substantially less common, with only 16.9 percent reporting such frequent check-ins with their member organizations. A small percentage of respondents (11.3 percent) mentioned that their review processes were “ongoing” without specifying a clear interval at which reviews must occur. Note that in some of these cases, however, ongoing review mechanisms are paired with mandatory quarterly or annual intervals.

Approximately one-fifth of the consortia (14 out of 71) reported making changes to their funding allocations and strategic objectives. Of these 14, nine reported a reallocation of funding, three reported a change of distribution method or fund management/funding formula, two reported closing of a program or multiple programs, two cited new voting or funded members, one reported hiring of new staff, and another one reported a change of receiving additional grant funding.

Responses to the question of how respondent consortia will “determine approval of a distribution schedule pursuant to Section 84913” were varied in terms of their level of detail provided, but generally cite board approval as the means of distributing funds for both Fiscal Agent and Direct Funded consortia. Voting thresholds for approval of a funding distribution schedule align with those shown in the governance discussion below. A small number of responses for both types of consortia mentioned that their bylaws stipulate the share of funds that can go toward administrative costs (as opposed to mission and operations) for the member organizations they fund.

Figure 2.3: Frequency of Financial and Efficacy Reporting and Review of Consortium Members (n = 80; Some consortia indicate that reporting takes place on multiple timeframes, e.g., monthly and quarterly, so the sum of the percentages is presented in the figure)



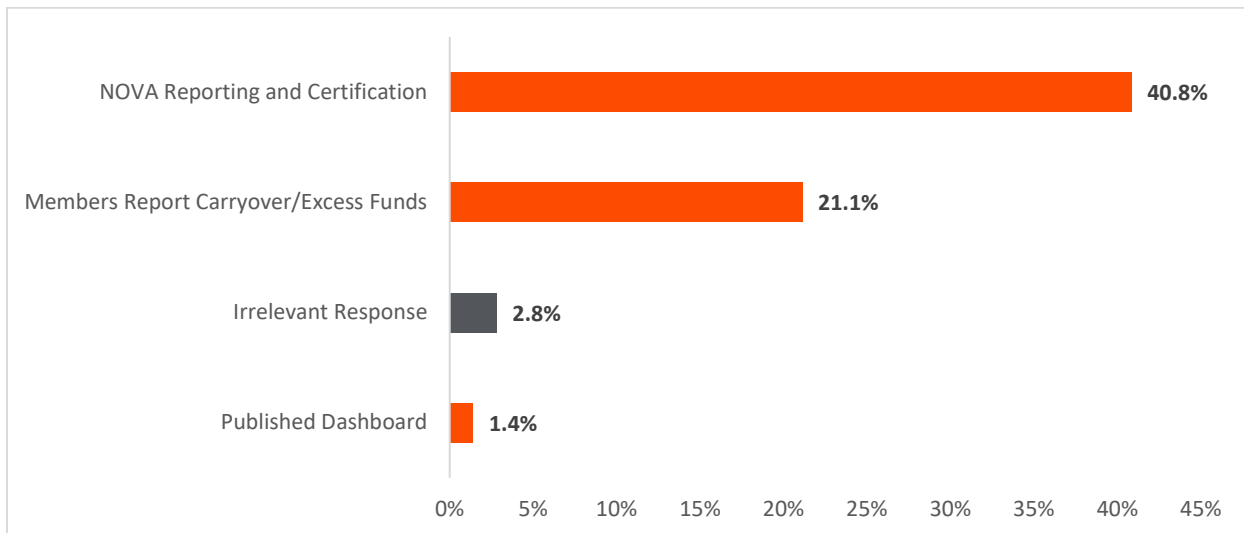
As shown in Figure 2.4, which summarizes respondents’ methodologies and practices for financial and efficacy reporting, 48.8 percent of consortia mentioned using the NOVA reporting and certification platform for their reviews, and more than one-fifth (21.1 percent) explicitly stated that their reviews require members with budget carryover or surplus to report it so that it can be reallocated if necessary. At least some of these consortia also described mechanisms for reallocating such funds. The

Coast consortium has a typically well-developed process for evaluating financial and operational efficiency and monitoring budgets for carryover funds:

Each funded member reports its expenditures in NOVA on a quarterly basis. The Consortium Executive Committee reviews and discusses at least once a year the funds available. In an effort to provide students maximum services funded through the CAEP consortium, funded members will make every effort to expend funds according to the agreed upon plan by the end of each fiscal year. In the case that funds remain for any fiscal year the following process will be followed: Members with unexpended funds will provide a narrative explaining the reason for the carryover and if applicable what part of their respective plan was not carried out. Member carryover funds will be considered in the development of the following year's plan. Members will have first opportunity to expend in the following year any funds they carryover as long as plans to expend such funds are in accordance with the approved plan for that year. If a member is not able to develop a plan for expenditure of carryover funds that is aligned with the approved plan then those funds will be made available for other consortium projects.

One of the 71 consortia, Long Beach Adult Education Council, creates financial dashboards for its members and reviews them periodically. They write that “funded activities and progress on metrics are reviewed at bimonthly public member meetings using data dashboards created for the LBAEC.”

Figure 2.4: Frequency of Financial and Efficacy Reporting and Review of Consortium Members
(n = 47; Some consortia mentioned adhering to more than one practice, or to none of the listed possibilities at all)



MONITORING AND ADMINISTERING CARRYOVER FUNDS

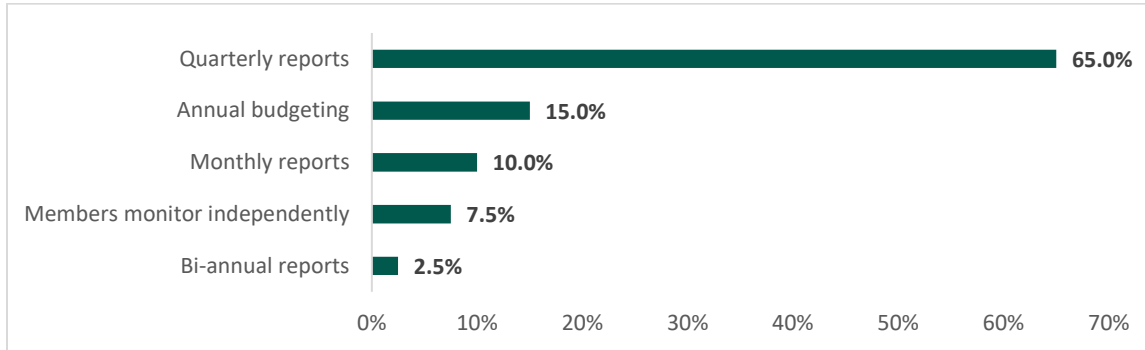
More than half of the consortia (43) indicate that they do not currently have written bylaws that explicitly address the use of carryover funds, although 8 reference the planned development of bylaws related to carryover funds. Among those who do not have bylaws, they commonly reference adhering to the guidance for carryover funds from CAEP as outlined in the Fiscal Management Guide as

well as the use of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The remaining 28 consortia do reference the existing bylaws governing the processes for monitoring and administering carryover funds.

Most consortia that provided a detailed overview of their carryover monitoring practices track it on a quarterly basis (see figure 2.5). Annual and monthly reporting practices also exist but are far less common. Three consortia do not have formal plans for addressing carryover funding.

Figure 2.5: Interval for Assessing Carryover Funding

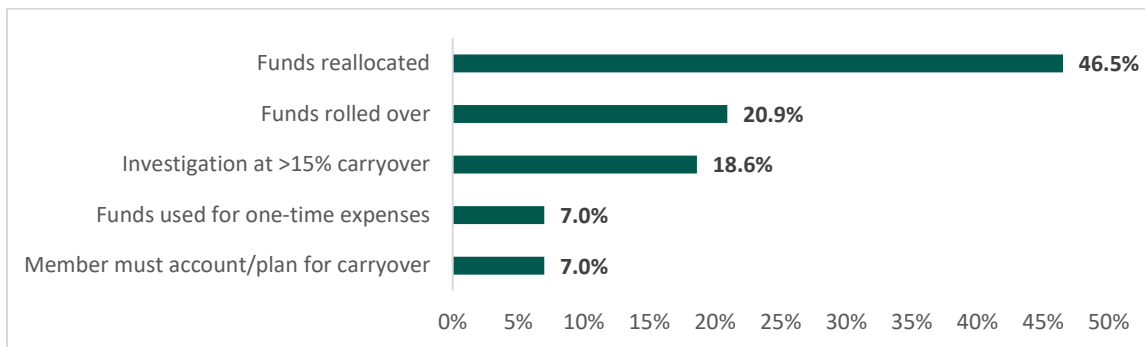
(n = 40; Some consortia mentioned adhering to more than one practice, while others mentioned none of the listed possibilities at all)



As shown in Figure 2.6, the most common practice among consortia that provided detailed accounts of their carryover funding strategies is to simply reallocate the excess funds to other consortium members or spending priorities. This practice was identified by 20 respondent consortia. In other cases, consortium policies allow carryover funds to be rolled over by the member for use in the next year’s budget. That practice assumes that nothing about the member’s financial management or service provision raises concerns about ineffective services or misuse of funds, however. Several consortia noted that they investigate members with carryover funds of more than 15 percent of their annual budget.

Figure 2.6: Practices When Carryover Funding Exists

(n = 43; Some consortia mentioned adhering to more than one practice, or to none of the listed possibilities at all. These practices assume that a member has carryover funding but that it is not under investigation for ineffective service provision)



SECTION 3: DECISION-MAKING PRACTICES

VOTING THRESHOLDS AND GOVERNANCE MODEL HISTORIES

Two-thirds (66 percent) of the consortia make decisions based on a majority vote system, which can be defined as 51 percent of the vote (used by 20 percent) or 50 percent of the vote plus one vote (used by 46 percent, see Figure 3.1). Another 27 percent of consortia report making decisions by consensus. Among the five consortia that described their practices under an “other” heading, Capital defines a majority as two-thirds of the votes and operates by that standard while Coast and Los Angeles specify who must be present for a vote to be conducted (all present and quorum, respectively) in order to reach majority.

When asked how they arrived at their chosen decision-making model, respondent consortia generally cite some combination of deference to longstanding operating procedures, founding documents or bylaws, and the necessity of selecting their chosen system of governance based on their membership numbers and composition. For instance, the Long Beach Adult Education Consortium cites the fact that it has only two members as the reason for selecting a consensus-based approach to governance:

The LBAEC is one of the smallest CAEP consortia, made up of only two members. LBCC and LBSA have worked closely for a number of years and operate within the same region which has a history of collaboration such as with the Long Beach College Promise. The members have determined that consensus is the best decision making process given the close relationship, need to work collaboratively, and small number.

Similarly, the San Luis Obispo Consortium, which has only four members, opted for a consensus framework based on its size:

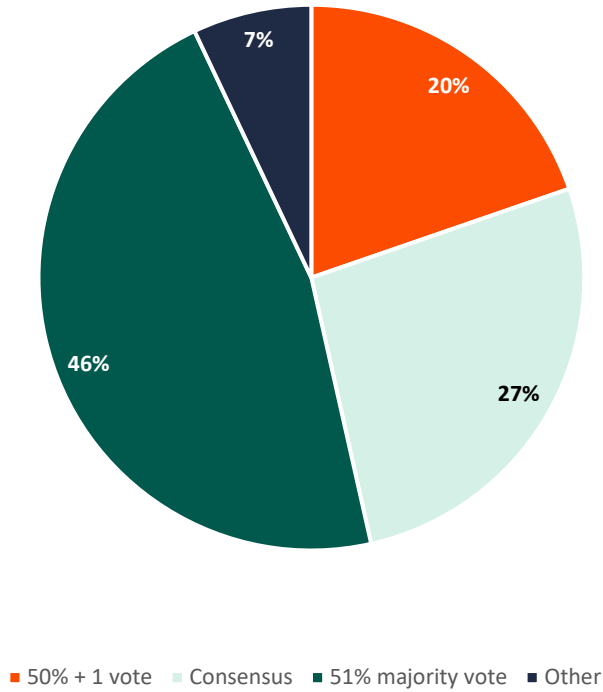
The Executive team met to review the bylaws in 2019 and decided consensus was the best model for the size of our consortium. The SLOCAEC also reviewed feedback from partners to help determine the best model to implement.

VOTING THRESHOLDS AND PRACTICES BY CONSORTIUM SIZE

Consensus governance is less common among consortia with eight or more members, though there are still examples of large consortia that operate by consensus (Figure 3.2). For the purpose of this analysis, the consortia were divided approximately in thirds and defined as small (three or fewer members), medium (four to seven members), and large (8 or more members).

Larger consortia such as Mendocino, which has nine members, also operate by consensus, so the model is not unique to smaller organizations. Nevertheless, many larger consortia have majority-based voting systems in place even if they strive for consensus. Contra Costa notes that because their nine-member consortium maintains task forces to study issues and decisions, “most voting items at the Steering Committee level move forward with nearly unanimous approval.” They still acknowledge that “understanding that this level of consensus is not always achievable, the CCCAEC will accept a simple majority vote (50% +1) as approval.”

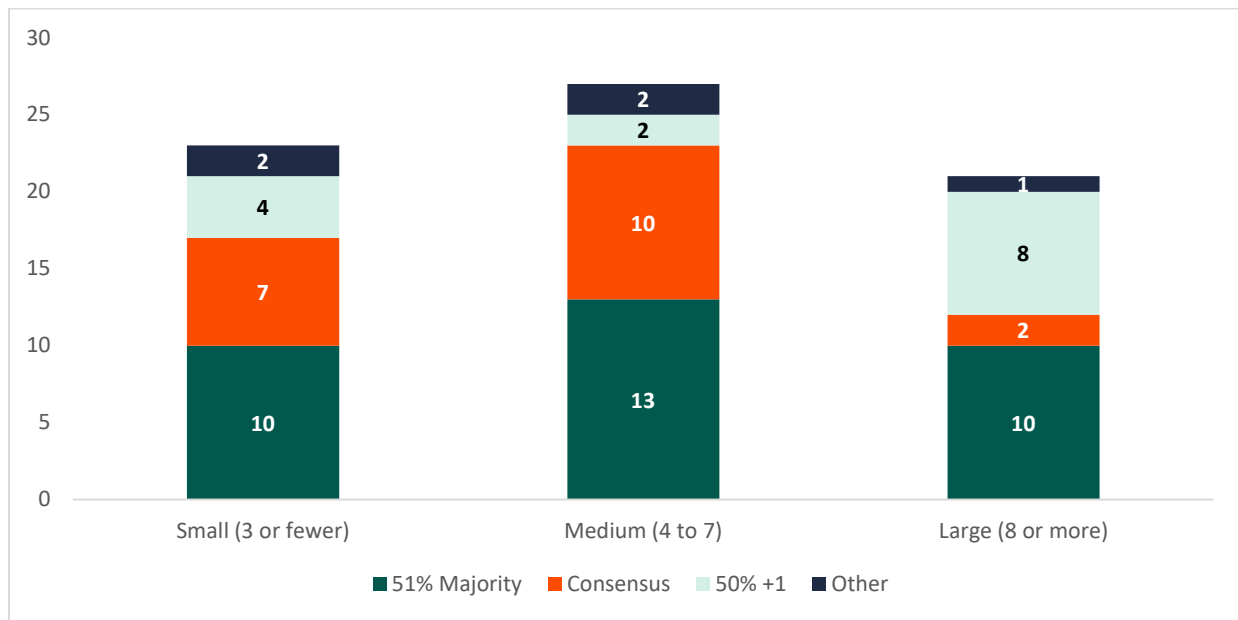
Figure 3.1: Decision Approval Practices and Thresholds
(n = 71)



“Other” Decision Approval Practices

- **Coast** - By majority vote of 51% but each funded member needs to be present.
- **Capital (Los Rios)** - Two-thirds of the Consortium constitute a quorum and a majority
- **Lake Tahoe** - Consensus voting on allocations and simple majority on all others
- **Los Angeles** - Majority of present members as long as quorum is established...no proxies
- **Victor Valley** - First by consensus, if a consensus cannot be reached, a minimum of two-thirds vote will be

Figure 3.2: Voting Thresholds by Consortium Member Count
(n = 71)

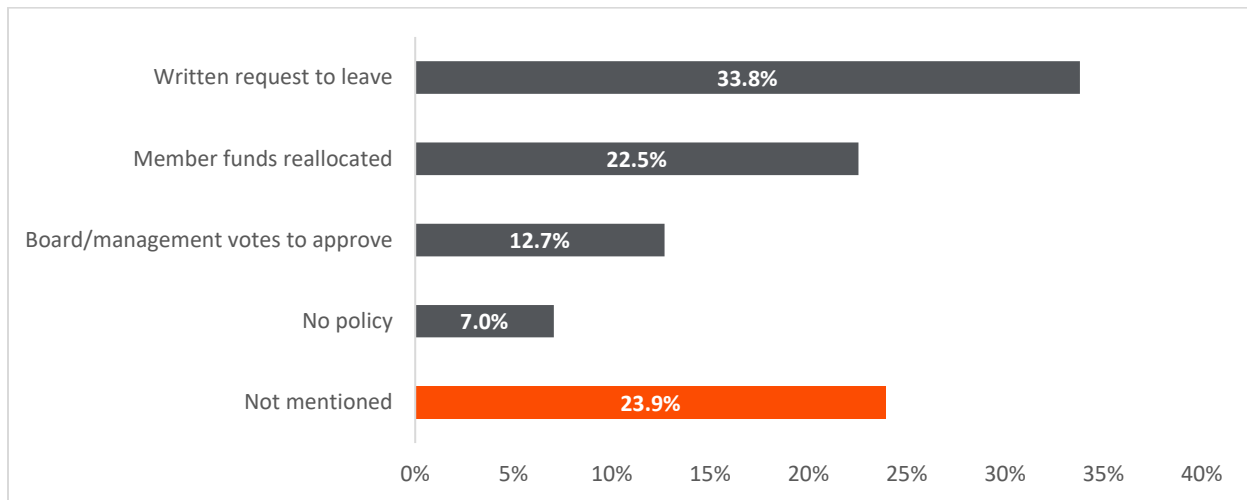


PROCESSES FOR ADDING NEW MEMBERS OR TERMINATING MEMBERSHIPS

When asked about their processes for allowing members to join, leave, or be dismissed from the consortium, respondents gave varying levels of detail and specificity. The findings below are rendered percentages of the total number of respondents although in some cases consortia did not mention a detailed policy (process for voluntary and involuntary dismissal and process for admitting new members), while in others a single consortium provided multiple responses (reasons for involuntary dismissal). They are likely illustrative of the prevalence of policies and reasons for dismissal among the responding consortia, but because many consortia provided more complete information about one aspect of this question than the others, or provided information that was so general as to be unclassifiable, the exact number of consortia adapting a particular policy cannot be determined.

As shown in Figure 3.3, most consortia with clearly outlined policies mandate that a member who wishes to leave submit a written request to do so, usually at least 15 days in advance of their planned departure. In most cases for which subsequent processes could be determined, this then triggers a review of activities and funding to be recouped from the departing member so that the board can reallocate it to other members as needed. Formal board approval for a member’s departure is needed in about a third of cases (nine of 24).

Figure 3.3: Processes for Voluntary Dismissal of Members
(n = 71; Not all respondents outlined detailed policies for voluntary dismissal)



Policies for involuntary dismissal of members – usually for failure to perform the duties of consortium members or deliver quality adult education services – require a vote of the board as the formal mechanism of expulsion, and generally also mandate that the reasons for the vote be documented (Figure 3.4). The major reasons a dismissal vote would be triggered include the failure of the member organization to deliver effective adult education even after remediation and performance improvement efforts, which is cited by 27 consortia as grounds for dismissal. Changes in organizational goals and capabilities that render a member incompatible with the consortium’s goals and funding requirements may also trigger dismissal even in the absence of clear performance deficits. Failures of governance, such as lapsed board meeting attendance or failure to submit financial or program efficacy reporting documentation as required by law, are also commonly cited as grounds for involuntary dismissal.

Figure 3.4: Processes for Involuntary Dismissal of Members
 (n = 71; Not all respondents outlined detailed policies for involuntary dismissal)

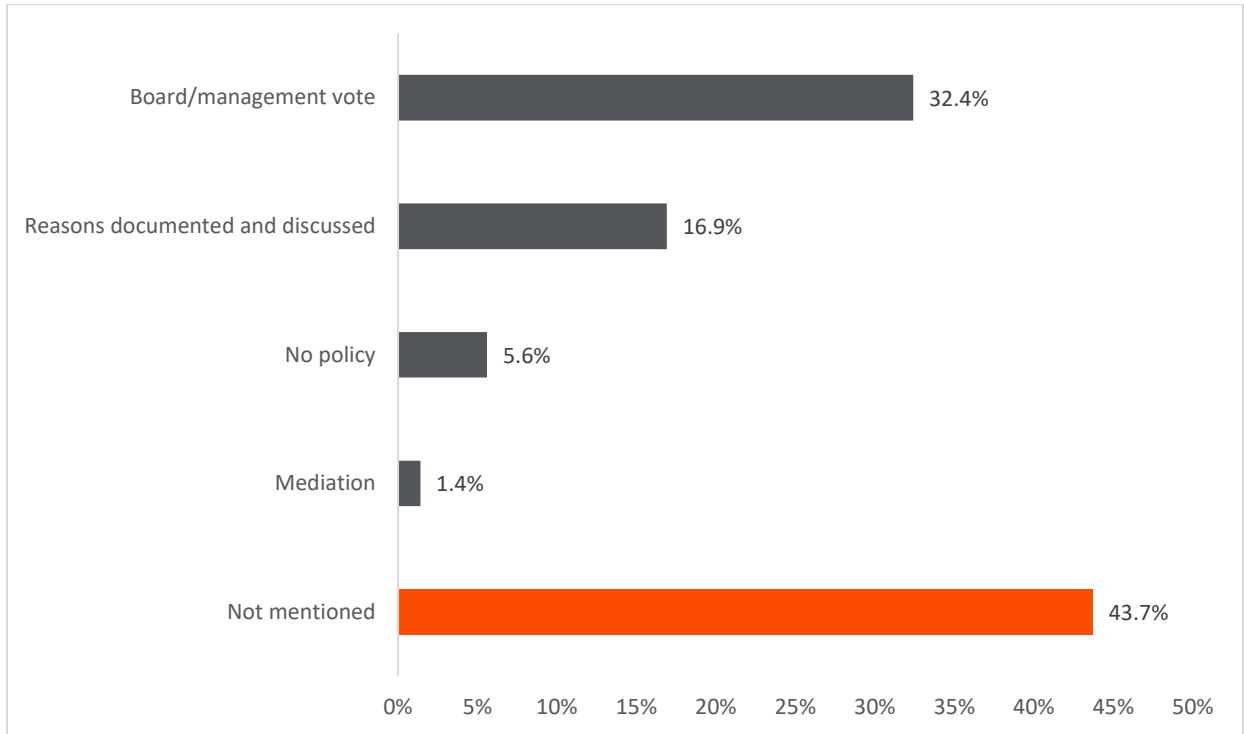
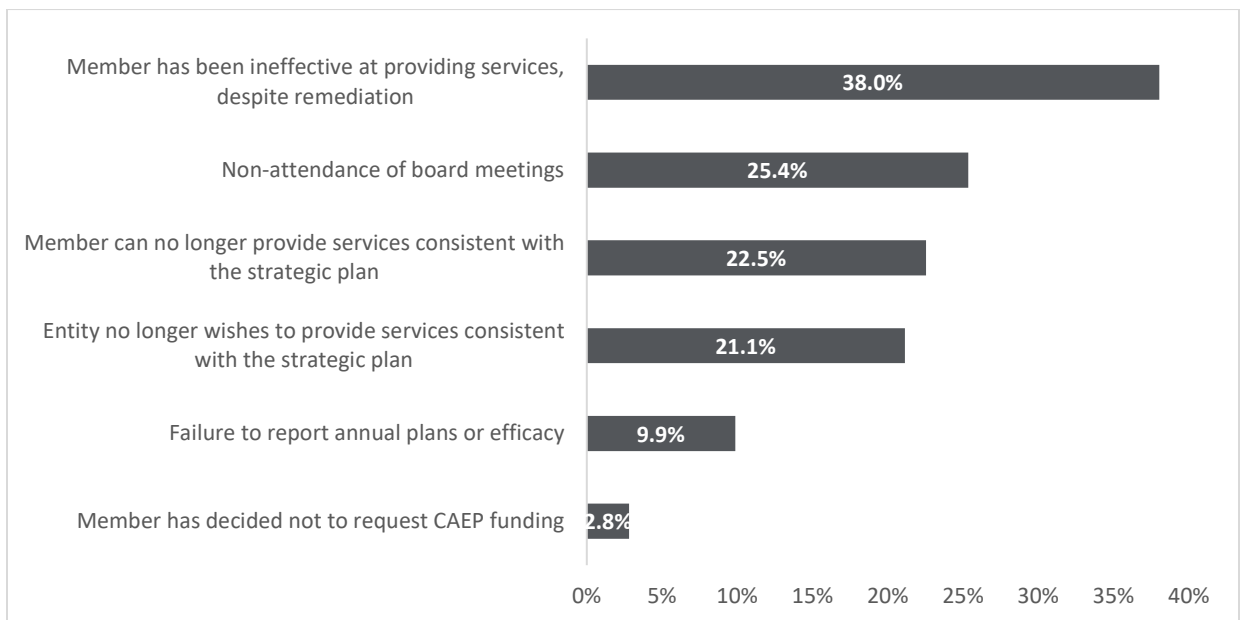
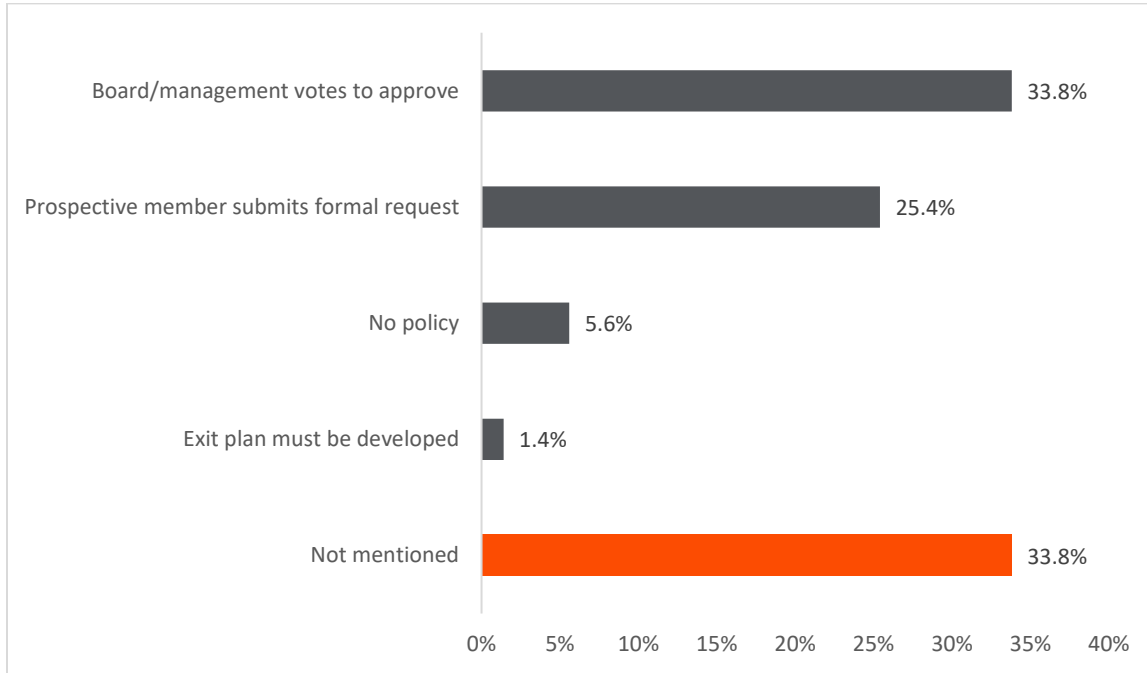


Figure 3.5: Reasons for Involuntary Dismissal of Members
 (n = 71; Respondents may have included multiple detailed reasons for dismissing members, so the total is greater than 100%)



Admitting new members requires board approval, which is usually based on a formal written application prepared by the organization seeking to join the consortium. In one instance, new members could only join if they also had a clearly defined plan for exiting the consortium as well.

Figure 3.6: Processes for Admitting New Members
(n = 71; Not all respondents outlined detailed policies for admitting new members)



SECTION 4: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN CONSORTIUM DECISION-MAKING

METHODS FOR SOLICITING AND FACILITATING PUBLIC COMMENT

Consortia strategies for soliciting public comments and input are broadly similar, with most respondents who provided details about their processes noting that meetings are announced online, in the press, and via other outreach channels, with agendas and minutes posted online. Meetings typically have time reserved for public comments, and smaller numbers of consortia also noted that their meetings support comments and participation over Zoom. Among a small number of consortia, written comments are also solicited for board consideration.

Note that well over half of respondents (61.6%) cited compliance with the provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act as the main consideration when planning meetings and ensuring that the public has a right to participate. Sixteen respondents provided short answers simply stating that they adhere to the Brown Act in scheduling and administering their meetings and offering few, if any, additional details about what their specific policies and processes were. With this in mind, the total share of consortia engaging in various strategies, such as ample public announcements of meetings and dissemination of minutes and agendas, as well as offering remote or in-person public comment opportunities, is likely to be higher than the percentages shown.

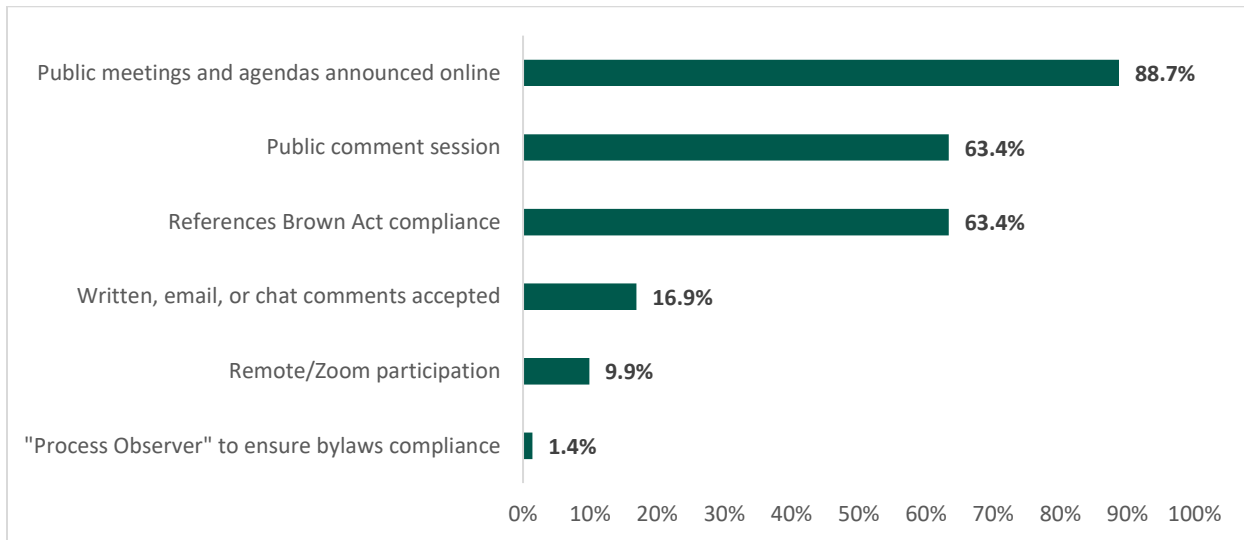
The Contra Costa consortium is unique in providing a “process observer” who ensures that meetings comply with Robert’s Rules of Order:

To ensure compliance and ongoing improvement, each meeting includes a report out from a “Process Observer” who evaluates and provides feedback on adherence to established meeting procedures.

Responses to the request that consortia elaborate on how they will “provide the public with adequate notice of a proposed decision and consider any comments submitted by members of the public” largely cite the concerns from the previous question and reiterate the themes shown in Figure 4.1. For instance, 33 respondents again cite the Brown Act’s requirement that the agenda and meeting packet for a board meeting be publicized before the meeting takes place. Another 33 (which overlap partially with the 33 examples described above) cite the specific Brown Act requirement that this information be published at least 72 hours before the meeting occurs.

Answers to the survey’s request to “Describe how comments submitted by members of the public will be distributed publicly” overwhelmingly state that public comments are included in the meeting minutes, which are then published to the consortium website or otherwise publicized. As previously mentioned, numerous respondents cite Brown Act compliance as their overarching objective when it comes to managing public comments. Across 71 responses to this question there are 98 references to meeting minutes.

Figure 4.1: Reported Strategies and Practices for Ensuring Adequate Public Participation in Governance
(n = 71)



SOLICITING STAKEHOLDER ORGANIZATION COMMENTS

When asked how stakeholder groups that are also involved in adult education within their service regions are consulted on consortium decisions, most consortia outlined a more extensive process for soliciting comments and feedback than what they use to engage the general public. As shown in Figure 4.2, these stakeholder organizations – which can include workforce development boards, libraries, corrections facilities, social services offices, chambers of commerce, and other organizations – are most commonly engaged via frequent communication and standing invitations to participate in consortium meetings.

In a few cases of smaller consortia, most relevant organizations are already consortium members or are granted non-voting status on the consortia boards. This response from the Lake Tahoe consortium, which includes two members, is typical:

In part, our unique structure means that a number of these organizations are already at a larger, umbrella input committee structure. While they do not receive direct allocations and do not have a ‘vote’ on consortium fiscal matters (including allocations) they do have a dedicated voice at the table. This currently includes workforce development agency, local Chamber, community, employer, and student/client representation. In addition, through the referenced partnerships and relationship building, we are able to seek input from most agencies/organizations at various Board meetings and convenings.

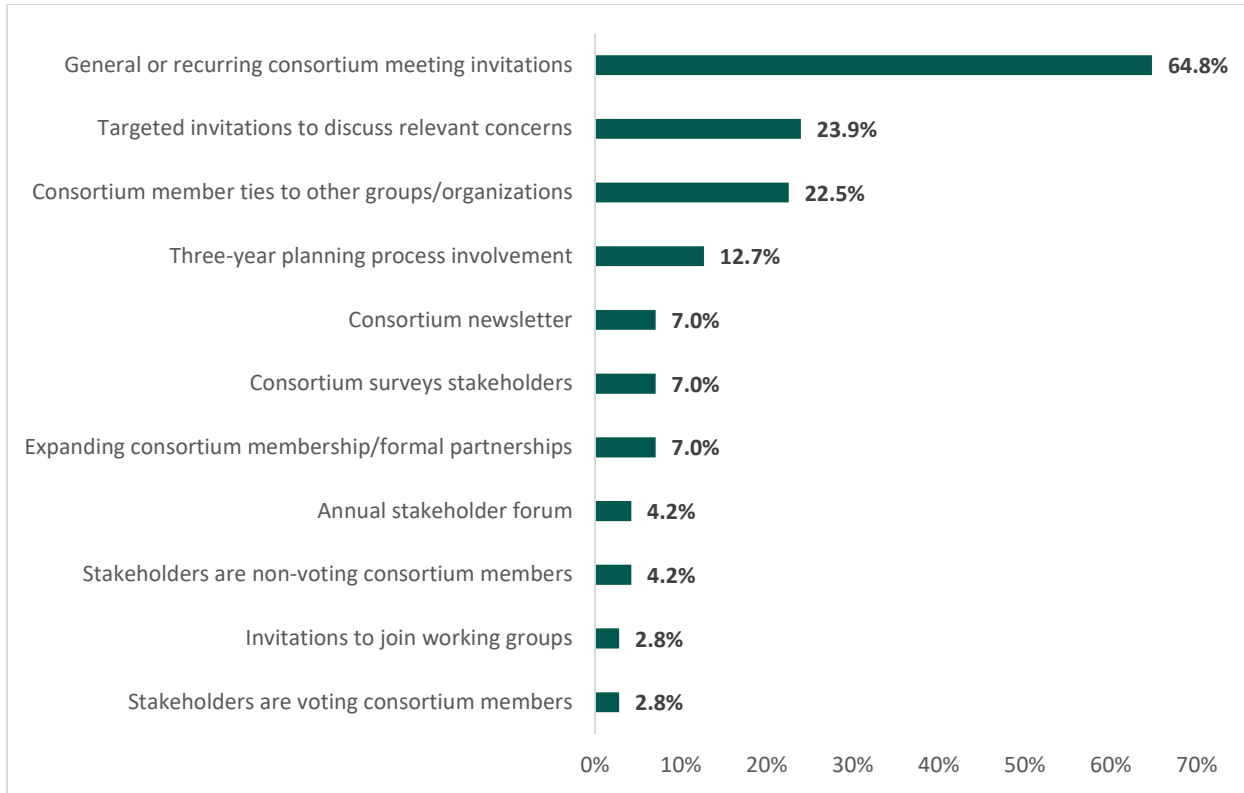
Larger consortia maintain this level of connectivity with their (often larger numbers of) relevant partner organizations by several types of communication:

- **Targeted invitations to discuss relevant concerns:** Rather than rely on recurring or blanket invitations to stakeholders, consortia reach out directly to relevant entities for comments or input on matters that directly concern them or when the consortium would benefit from their perspective and expertise. Examples include invitations to speak at length at meetings and join board retreats.
- **Consortium member ties to other groups/organizations:** Consortium board members often join other adult education-related organizations as advisors or board members, or simply attend their public meetings. These relationships allow the consortium board to remain well-informed of the needs, concerns, and areas of potential partnership with other local adult education providers and workforce development agencies.
- **Three-year strategic planning involvement:** Stakeholder organizations that are not already members of the consortium, but which have a collaborative relationship with it are invited to join strategic planning sessions and offer their input on the future priorities of the consortium.
- **Consortium newsletters:** Monthly or quarterly newsletters outlining the consortium's activities and priorities are sent to relevant stakeholder organizations to help keep them informed of developments.
- **Stakeholder surveys:** Direct surveys of stakeholder organizations or groups (e.g., educators) are used to inform consortium priorities, activities, and planning efforts.
- **Expanding consortium membership/formal partnerships:** This can include actively seeking to bring a related entity into the consortium as a full voting member or formalizing partnerships and close working relationships, perhaps to be maintained via mutual service on each other's boards of directors. This example from the Contra Costa County Adult Education Consortium (CCCAEC) is particularly well-developed:

Members of the CCCAEC maintain robust networks of organizations and individual stakeholders across the continuum of adult education, social service, workforce, justice, industry, and healthcare domains. When appropriate and relevant to proposed decision-making and/or Committee learning, the Committee will draw upon the expertise and perspectives of its stakeholder network through a) the individual perspectives and recommendations shared during public comment by non-voting members of the Steering Committee; and/or b) through agendized informational report-outs/trainings/presentations conducted by outside stakeholders and subject matter experts at the invitation of the Committee. **The CCCAEC, as part of its Three-Year plan has adopted a strategy of strengthening internal and external partnerships and will explore opportunities to increase engagement and input from outside entities during Steering Committee Meetings.**

Figure 4.2: Processes for Soliciting Comments from Adult Education and Workforce Development Stakeholder Organizations

(n = 71, Note that only activities confirmed to take place by the responses are included, so these figures are likely to be an undercount)



APPENDIX

METHODOLOGY

- **Coding:** For questions with an open-ended narrative response, the plan was analyzed for themes and assigned to categories that best summarized the response. This was a manual categorization process because of variability in how consortium members adhered to the planning guidance.
- **Presentation:** The majority of the charts included in this report present the coded responses by the percentage or count of consortia (n=71) that recorded a response related to that category. In certain cases where not all consortia included a relevant response or a consortium indicated more than one response, the n count is indicated and explained within the figure.
- **Consortium Size:** Consortium size is defined by the number of members indicated. For analysis, the groups were divided approximately in thirds and defined as small (three or fewer members) – n=23, medium (four to seven members) - n=27, and large (8 or more members) - n=21.