ABC Adult School

12254 Cuesta Drive, Cerritos, CA 90703
(562) 229-7960

Accounting Clerk Advisory Meeting
October 28, 2022
11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Cuesta, H7

Committee Members Present:
Daisy Aguilar, ABC Unified School District
Natalie Breidenthal, ABC Unified School District
Kanchan Gokhale, Saahas for Cause
Catherine Leichter, Walrath Accountancy Corp.
Shaila Pantankar, MBA Finance
Raji Satish, Saahas for Cause

Committee Members Absent:
Terrance Boone, Accounting Services

In Attendance:
Nancy Amara, **Principal;** Kathy Evans, **Assistant Principal;** Georgia Grissom, **TOSA/Lead Instructor;** Ty Holloway, **Job Developer;** Nivin Ibrahim, **Secretary II;** Melissa Van Aalsburg, **Secretary II**

Teachers: Esther Nguyen

Minute Items

Welcome
By Nancy Amara
Nancy welcomed everyone to today's advisory meeting. ABC Adult School is the 5th largest adult school in the state, and we are also one of the only comprehensive adult schools. We offer Career Training, High School Diploma/Equivalency, English as a Second Language, Community Education, Parent Participation Preschool, and Adults with Disabilities. Our school is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). WASC accredits all high schools and colleges on the West Coast. We have an additional accreditation for our Career Technical Education Department by the Council on Occupational Education (COE). Our COE accreditation allows for us to offer our students Federal Student Aid in the form of a Pell Grant. COE requires us to hold these advisories every year with industry professionals. They want outside input on our classes, materials, reports, etc, so we are offering our students the best possible education. We take all your advice very seriously, and based on the advice of our advisory committee, we make necessary changes to our curriculum. We want to make sure our students are getting the best education to help them obtain an entry level job upon graduation.

Kathy Evans thanked everyone for their attendance today. We recently updated our school's vision statement to "Students will develop confidence and self-reliance as they aspire to reach their full potential in life-long learning. We will cultivate our students' desire for learning, and encourage them to try new and exciting challenges by giving them a solid foundation to build on." Our department's goal is to have 60% of our students complete their program and 70% of our students to get a job in their field of study.

Introductions and Approval of Minutes from the last Meeting

By Kathy Evans
Kathy asked everyone to review the minutes from our last meeting and asked for a motion to approve the minutes as written. Shaila Pantankar, MBA Finance, motioned to approve the minutes, and Catherine Leichter, Walrath Accountancy Corp., seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by the committee.

Completion, Placement and Licensure Report
By Kathy Evans
Kathy informed the group that we will be reviewing the completion and placement rates of our Accounting Clerk Program. Since this program does not offer Licensure, we do not have to report for that information. Our students do have the opportunity to get Quickbooks and Excel certified with our Assessment Center on campus. There is also a certification available for Payroll through the American Association of Payroll website.

Students who are considered completers of the Accounting Clerk program are students who graduate with a Career Technical Diploma or students who obtain a job prior to graduation. Based on the information reported to COE last year, our Accounting Clerk program has a 64% completion rate and a 43% placement rate. It has been difficult coming out of the COVID pandemic, but we are hopeful that these numbers will improve over the next year.

Cosmetology Program Discussion Topics
Program/Pathway Hours and Courses
Learning Activities
Level of Skills and/or Proficiency for Completion
By Kathy Evans
Kathy asked the committee to take a few minutes to look over all the classes we are offering for our Accounting Clerk program. Is there anything that should be added or removed from the classes? Shaila Pantankar, MBA Finance, mentioned how the classes all look evenly spread out, but there should be more time spent on the classes for Accounting vs Keyboarding, Computer Essentials, etc. Natalie Breidenthal, ABC Unified School District, added that there should be a focus on Google Sheets and Docs because there is a lot of movement in that direction. Students should be learning the difference between both programs along with how each of them equate to each other. Georgia mentioned that our Computer Essentials class covers the entire Google Suite including Sheets. Kanchan Gokhale, Saahas for Cause, agreed that Google Sheets is becoming much more important due to the sharing capabilities it offers.

Kathy asked the committee about the Social Media for Business class. We had a previous advisory committee bring that up as something that would be beneficial for our students to take. Shaila Pantankar, MBA Finance, mentioned that social media has become very important and having these skills is preferable. Natalie Breidenthal, ABC Unified School District, mentioned that business communication and office etiquette is very important. Nancy said that we are constantly hearing that people are needing soft skills, but no one wants to take it because everyone believes they have the necessary skills. We try to build it into our programs by having the teachers teach this information as a part of their class. Daisy Aguilar, ABC Unified School District, added that social media is important, but its relevance very much depends on the industry. Do you teach the students the basics in time management, communication such as how they should be planning their day when it comes to multitasking? Esther went on to say how she provides her students source documents when they are doing their work for class. Depending on what they are working on she will provide a memoranda, receipt, invoice, etc to her students. She then provides her students with a task they have to complete using the provided source documentation and teaches the best ways to get the work done on time. Natalie Breidenthal, ABC Unified School District, mentioned that not only do they have to get their work done, but they need to be taught customer service skills as well. Even though they are working on the finance side of things, they still have to interact with others. Shaila Pantankar, MBA Finance, added that employees who are in a customer based position should be able to multitask by dealing with customers and their work both equally as effectively.

Kathy asked the committee about the other courses we are offering. Are the necessary and relevant courses? Kanchan Gokhale, Saahas for Cause, mentioned that they do a lot of budgeting because they are a non-profit

organization. Do the students learn budgeting in the program? Esther mentioned that in the Quickbooks class they learn budgets and how to export and manipulate them in Excel and Google Sheets in order to get predictions. Catherine Leichter, Walrath Accountancy Corp., asked if we teach Quickbooks Desktop to our students because the vast majority of the industry is using the desktop version. She also mentioned that the versions are completely different from each other, so the skills learned in one cannot be transferred to the other. Esther mentioned that they are phasing out the desktop version for the online version and the publisher we use for our classes is no longer offering desktop as a learning option, so we decided to drop that class and just focus on the online version. Catherine Leichter, Walrath Accountancy Corp., added that the online version is very expensive and most companies are not willing to pay the high costs associated with it. Esther mentioned that we can look into finding a new publisher we can utilize in offering the desktop version of the class. Kanchan Gokhale, Saahas for Cause, mentioned that they use the online version, so it is important for students to learn that version as well.

Kathy asked the committee to take a few minutes to look over the course outlines we have provided and provide any feedback you may have about what the courses are teaching the students. We are looking to see if the course objectives are relevant to what they will need in an entry level accounting position. Shaila Pantankar, MBA Finance, asked if the students learn to read financial statements? If they can't read them, they wouldn't be able to evaluate them. Esther mentioned that in her classes they do get introduced to financial statements and how to evaluate them. Natalie Breidenthal, ABC Unified School District, asked in the Payroll class if students are taught the difference between gross and net wages, where they can find the items on the W2 and paystub. In her experience it is easy for people to process payroll, but the majority don't know how to analyze the paystubs and/or W2 forms. Esther said that in the Payroll class the students learn all of this information. They start from the very beginning where they are given a timecard to process, then they are taught the payroll register, then onto how to calculate all of the different taxes, then how to work with employer deductions, onto the quarterlies (both the 940 and 941), moving into the due dates. The class is very comprehensive, and the students are taught how to process everything manually then electronically at the very end. Catherine Leichter, Walrath Accountancy Corp., mentioned that teaching the students problem solving skills is also very important.

One of the committee members asked about the Job Preparation and what that includes. Ty mentioned that she uses that time with the students to help them build their resume, look for jobs, and anything else a student may need with job preparation. Shaila Pantankar, MBA Finance, asked if they get interview preparation as well. Ty responded with prior to COVID there were workshops that students would attend and each one would focus on a different area of the job search. At this time, we have not brought back those workshops and are mainly meeting with students one-on-one. We are hoping to start these workshops back up again, but in the meantime, she is helping students with any items that they come into the appointment needing help with. Most of the time, the students are just coming in for resume help, and not so much for interview help. Kanchan Gokhale, Saahas for Cause, asked if she utilizes any design making software for helping students build their resume. Ty mentioned that she helps students to build their own resume. Shaila Pantankar, MBA Finance, added that students need to make sure they are using the necessary keywords when creating their resume. Natalie Breidenthal, ABC Unified School District, mentioned that we should also be informing students about the importance of properly completing the application for a job. She has found that many people don't put any effort into completing their application, but instead just put the main focus on the resume. The application itself needs to be completed properly, thoroughly answered, free from grammatical errors. Daisy Aguilar, ABC Unified School District, added that maybe job preparation should be added to each course and program so they can tailor the job preparation to what they are learning versus just focusing on the basics in a one-on-one setting. Esther noted that when students complete a topic in class, she recommends all the students to add it as a skill on their resume. Ty agreed that she recommends students to include the information they have learned in class because it may be something that they have learned and know that can help them stand out from the crowd.

Kathy asked Esther to explain how they are evaluated on the competency levels in the classes. Esther mentioned that she lectures to the students everyday, she puts notes on the tvs for students who may be visual learners. They do hands-on learning, lots of practice of the skills they are learning in class, quizzes after every chapter, and projects. Natalie Breidenthal, ABC Unified School District, mentioned that project based learning may be most suitable for this

program because some students may be good test takers, but they cannot do the work on their own. Esther added that the quizzes they receive are basically projects and tasks they have to complete. The quizzes are not simple multiple choice questions but instead work based assessments.

Kathy went over all the instructional material used in class including whiteboards, tvs, software, and much more. She asked the group if they felt there was anything missing. Natalie Breidenthal, ABC Unified School District, asked if students in the Data Entry class are taught how to complete data entry using 10-key. Georgia responded that they are learning and tested on both 10-key and alphanumeric data entry. Kathy asked if anyone had any concerns regarding the equipment used in class, and no one on the committee had any questions or concerns.

Kathy asked the group if they have any concerns about our evaluation methods. Esther mentioned that a lot of it is project based and if a student wanted to they can use the projects as a portfolio for what they have learned. Natalie Breidenthal, ABC Unified School District, mentioned that if students are asked if they are knowledgeable of the skills, they can utilize their use of the skills in class when responding to those questions. Kanchan Gokhale, Saahas for Cause, mentioned that some schools offer their students internships, and she would like to know if we offer that for our students as well. Esther said that prior to COVID we did have internships that students can do for her company to get the experience and skills necessary for employment. We also worked with outside companies as well, but Georgia mentioned that it has been difficult to find internship locations for our Accounting Clerk students because many people don't want interns touching their numbers. Daisy Aguilar, ABC Unified School District, mentioned that they have a hard time finding substitutes who understand the technical side of accounting and recommended that our students apply for substitute clerical positions, so when they do need substitutes in their department they can get knowledgeable people.

Kathy closed by asking the committee if they have any further recommendations for us with regards to our Accounting Clerk program. Kanchan Gokhale, Saahas for Cause, asked if they are taught Adobe along with the management of .pdf files. Esther mentioned that in the Quickbooks class they are taught how to export and save information to a .pdf file. They also learn how to fill in .pdf forms, but they are not taught the advanced settings that Adobe Acrobat includes. Kanchan Gokhale, Saahas for Cause, mentioned that non-profit accounting is substantially different from other forms of accounting, and it is very difficult to find people who are knowledgeable. It may be beneficial to teach non-profit accounting as well. Shaila Pantankar, MBA Finance, added that when students are completing a resume, they should be tailoring the resume to the industry they are applying for such as non-profit, corporation, schools, etc. Each of these utilize accounting differently, and they are all looking for different candidates, so their resume should be tailored to the field in which they are applying. Ty mentioned that when she does meet with students for resume help, they should be looking at the job description they are applying for and adjust their resume to fit the job description. Shaila Pantankar, MBA Finance, mentioned it is very important for them to put the practical skills they know on their resume because most resumes are lacking in the inclusion of practical skills.

Adjournment
Kathy thanked everyone for coming and contributing to today's Accounting Clerk Advisory Meeting.

Transcribed by: Melissa Van Aalsburg

Signature: _____ Date: _____