



**RIVERSIDE COUNTY
OFFICE OF EDUCATION**

EDWIN GOMEZ, Ed.D. | County Superintendent of Schools

Competitive Edge: Beyond Graduation

Transforming Sustainable Career Pathways Through CTE

CSBA Counties Conference 2026

Dr. Forest DeRenzo, Executive Director, CTE • **Kermit Boyd**, TOSA, Apprenticeships & Pre-Apprenticeships

Riverside County Office of Education

In This Session, You Will Learn...

1

Transform Pathways

How to turn existing CTE pathways into DAS-registered pre-apprenticeships — with a paid Summer Bridge whose \$3,000 student stipends come from COYA funds, while Strong Workforce dollars and state grants cover program costs — no local general funds.

2

Govern & Partner

The governance, policy, and partnership strategies county boards can support: MOUs, apprenticeship linkage agreements, and the scalable two-county IEConnect model.

3

Expand Equitable Access

How these pathways open high-wage, high-demand careers to foster youth and other underserved students — through debt-free career entry.

...and leave with the registration framework, sample agreements, and a step-by-step replication roadmap.

The Regional Gap

The Disconnect

Despite robust CTE programs, the Inland Empire has faced a critical gap in the pipeline of workforce matriculation:

- The IE needs more candidates and businesses for regionally sponsored apprenticeship programs.
- Disconnect between high school career pathways and apprenticeship programs.
- No centralized effort to leverage career pathways.





The Equity Challenge

Barriers to Access

Multiple student subgroups (including but not limited to alternative education, justice-involved, and socioeconomically disadvantaged students) have historically faced disparities:

- Scheduling conflicts between CTE and A–G coursework.
- Lack of paid work-based learning opportunities.
- Disconnected pathways to industry.



The Fuel: Competitive Edge



Dr. Edwin Gomez

Riverside County Superintendent of Schools

Superintendent's Initiative: Competitive Edge

“The Competitive Edge Initiative promotes a higher level of access and opportunity for all students within the public school system.”

Pairing A–G with high-demand CTE pathways and registered pre-apprenticeships drives equitable outcomes. Everything you'll see today — through the new IE Youth Apprenticeship Initiative — runs on this fuel.

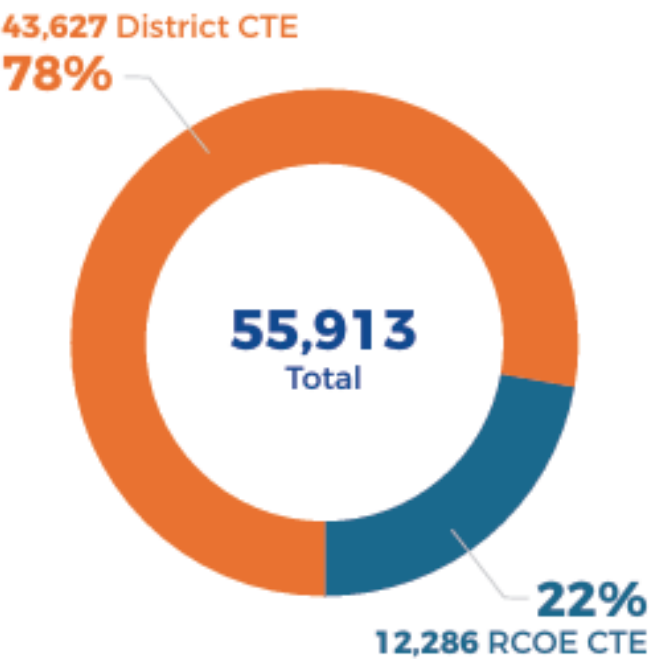
LEARNING OBJECTIVE 1

From CTE Pathway → Pre-Apprenticeship → Paid Summer Bridge → Paid Youth Apprenticeship

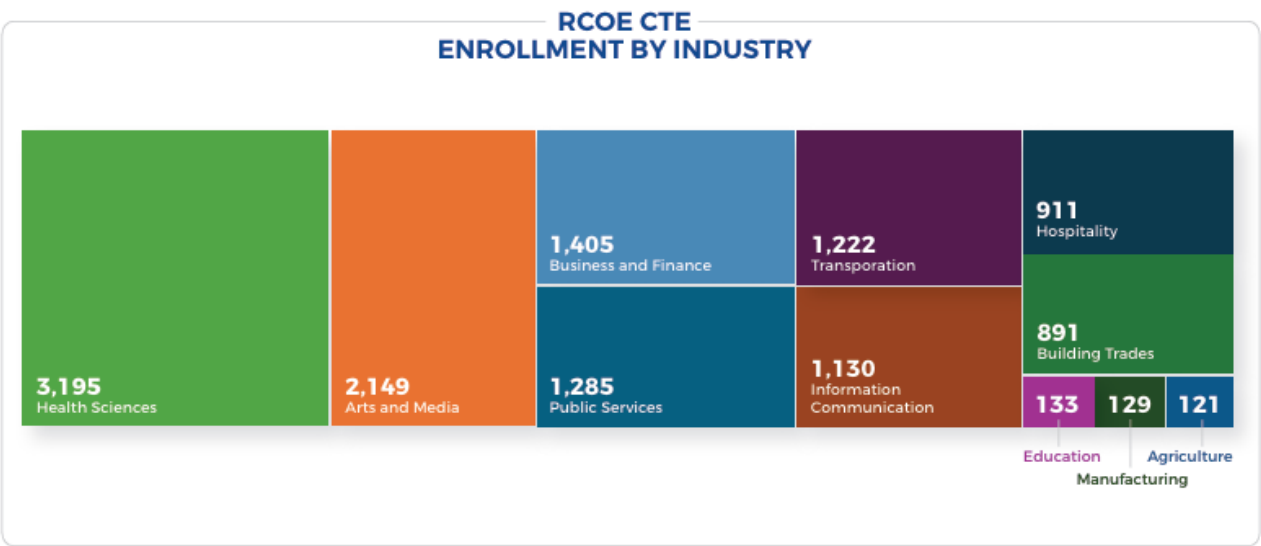
The model — and the funding that makes it sustainable

Riverside County CTE at a Glance (2025–26)

District CTE vs. RCOE CTE



RCOE CTE Enrollment by Industry





The Solution: Building on Strengths

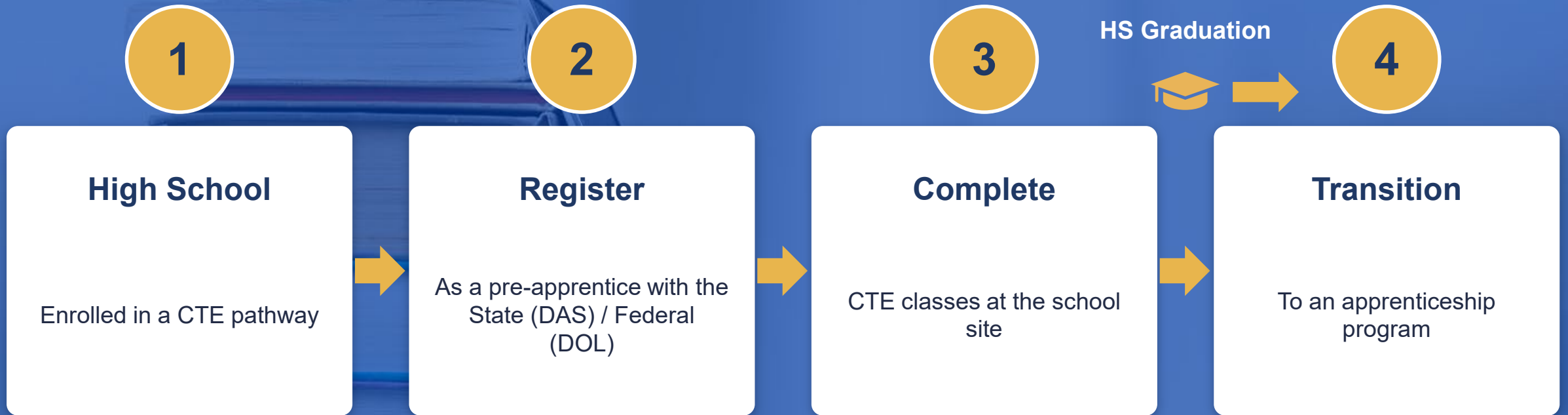
A–G + CTE + Work-Based Learning

We are dismantling the “either/or” choice. Our model ensures students don't have to choose between college readiness and career preparation.

Anchored by Work-Based Learning

Real-world experience tied to relevance that validates classroom learning and provides equity.

The High School to Apprenticeship Model



Every step happens inside the student's existing school day — no added cost to families.

The Core: DAS Registered Pre-Apprenticeship

A key building block in work-based learning is Registered Pre-Apprenticeship.

These programs are formally registered with the Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS) and/or the Department of Labor (DOL), ensuring quality, rigor, and a direct pipeline to state-approved apprenticeship programs.

Registration = a portable, state-recognized credential signal for every student.



Streamlining Registration

IECONNECT IN ACTION

RCOE's CTE Unit, through IEConnect, removed the administrative burden from schools — directly registering each high school student with DAS.

1,328

2023–24



2,491

2025–26

- +88% growth in registered pre-apprentices in two years
- IE Region accounts for 68% of registered pre-apprentices in CA

Pre-Apprentice Registration DAS Dashboard

Source: California DAS Registration Dashboard
Program Type: Pre-Apprentice

9,266

TOTAL ACTIVE
REGISTRATIONS - STATEWIDE

6,302

INLAND EMPIRE
REGISTRATIONS

3,721

RIVERSIDE
COUNTY



Aligned CTE Pathways

Specific CTE pathways are mapped to DAS codes, validating registered pre-apprenticeship tracks:

Building & Construction

Code: 10122

Mechatronics

Code: 10139

Automotive

Code: 100890

Culinary Arts

Code: 10314

Early Childhood Educator

Code: 100890

EMS & Public Safety (PSP)

Code: 101462

Funding the Model

\$130M+

STRONG WORKFORCE AWARDS SECURED FOR K-12 SINCE 2019

Strong Workforce (SWP)

Program operations & pathway alignment

CAI Grants

Registration engine & regional expansion

COYA Stipends

\$3,000 educational stipends for Summer Bridge students

Braided funding — no new local general funds required.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 2

Governance, Policy & Partnership

The instruments county boards can champion

Introducing IEConnect

REGIONAL POWERHOUSE

Unemployment doesn't stop at the county line. The Inland Empire — 4.6M residents across two of California's six largest counties — runs 5.3%, above CA (5.2%) and the nation (4.1%). IEConnect is the regional answer: RCOE and SBCSS acting as one.

One system. Two counties. 25 districts.

THE MISSION

Expand access to registered pre-apprenticeships in high schools across the Inland Empire.

IEConnect streamlines and standardizes processes so business and education partners can participate seamlessly across the region.

Systems Made Simple

MOUs

Memorandums of Understanding that guarantee work-based learning placements.

Linkage Agreements

Formal connections from pre-apprenticeship to registered apprenticeships.

Early College Credit

Dual enrollment opportunities for high schoolers.

These are the governance instruments county boards can champion.

TURN & TALK — One lever your county already has. One it's missing.

Transparent Communication

Riverside County Pre-Apprenticeship District Dashboard — 2026–27												
Live roll-up — figures update automatically from each district tab.												
District	Onboarding Date	Time	Sectors	Schools	Teachers	Leaders	Returning / Pending	In Progress	Needs Follow-Up	Complete	Completion	Roster Status
Alvord USD	Not Scheduled	Not Scheduled	3	2	3	1	3	0	0	0	0%	In Onboarding
Alternative Education (RCOE)	Not Scheduled	Not Scheduled	2	3	3	2	3	0	0	0	0%	In Onboarding
Beaumont USD	9/1/2026	3:45-4:45	2	1	3	1	3	0	0	0	0%	In Onboarding
Coachella USD	Not Scheduled	Not Scheduled	2	2	2	1	2	0	0	0	0%	In Onboarding
Corona-Norco USD	8/19/2026	4:15 - 5:15 pm	5	6	14	4	14	0	0	0	0%	In Onboarding
Desert Sands USD	Not Scheduled	Not Scheduled	4	6	6	6	6	0	0	0	0%	In Onboarding
Jurupa USD	9/9/2026	2:15-3:15 pm	3	3	6	5	6	0	0	0	0%	In Onboarding
Hemet USD	Not Scheduled	Not Scheduled	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	Awaiting Roster
Lake Elsinore USD	Not Scheduled	Not Scheduled	4	3	3	5	3	0	0	0	0%	In Onboarding
Moreno Valley USD	9/17/26	3:45 - 4:45	4	4	10	8	10	0	0	0	0%	In Onboarding
Murrieta Valley USD	Not Scheduled	Not Scheduled	7	3	15	2	15	0	0	0	0%	In Onboarding
Palm Springs USD	9/8/2026	2:30-3:45pm	4	4	7	3	7	0	0	0	0%	In Onboarding
Perris Union USD	8/26/26	3:45 - 4:45 pm	2	2	4	2	4	0	0	0	0%	In Onboarding
Riverside USD	9/15/2026	4:00-5:00pm	7	5	12	9	12	0	0	0	0%	In Onboarding
San Jacinto USD	Not Scheduled	Not Scheduled	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0%	Awaiting Roster
Temecula Valley USD	Not Scheduled	Not Scheduled	4	3	4	4	4	0	0	0	0%	In Onboarding
Val Verde USD	Not Scheduled	Not Scheduled	2	2	3	2	3	0	0	0	0%	In Onboarding
COUNTY TOTAL			55	49	95	56	95	0	0	0	0%	

District Program Profile

Each district receives a Pre-Apprenticeship Program Profile to track progress:

- Identifying gap areas.
- Tracking registration numbers.
- Tailoring employer support.

Employer Engagement Strategy

Direct to Classroom

We bridge the gap between employers and the classroom through targeted video campaigns and student connection resources.

- **October & January:** Employer engagement videos emailed to teachers, with reflection questions.
- **April:** “Getting Into an Apprenticeship” resource blast — every student gets the how-to.
- **QR codes:** Direct student access to the Pre-Apprenticeship team.





Partner Spotlight: Riverside Cook & Pastry

Riverside Cook & Pastry Apprenticeship Program

Results: 3 students accepted into the Culinary Apprenticeship for the 2025–26 school year.

- **Direct linkage** from the Culinary Arts pre-apprenticeship pathway (Code: 10314).
- **Proof the handoff works:** pre-apprentices advancing into a registered apprenticeship program.

Building the Pipeline

A stack of several books is positioned on the left side of the image, with a laptop open to the right. The entire scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The number '227' is prominently displayed in a large, bold, yellow font, centered over the stack of books.

227

EMPLOYER AFFILIATES

Actively engaged in student success — regional employers advise curriculum updates and open placement doors.

The background of the slide features a stack of several books on the left and a laptop on the right, both rendered in a semi-transparent blue overlay. The books are stacked horizontally, with some showing their spines and others their pages. The laptop is open, showing its keyboard and screen area. The overall color scheme is a gradient of blue, with a darker blue band across the middle where the text is located.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE 3

Equitable Systems → Leads to Results

Countywide momentum — 2025–26

Registered Pre-Apprentices

2,491

STUDENTS REGISTERED (2025–26)

Accounts for 40% of state pre-apprentices

with the Division of Apprenticeship Standards (DAS)

2,157

completers — an 87% completion rate

Demand & Transitions — 2025–26

2,491

REGISTERED IN DAS · RIVERSIDE COUNTY

2,157

COMPLETERS · 87% COMPLETION RATE

87%

IE CONNECT
TWO-COUNTY IMPACT

4,508

REGISTERED IN DAS

3,733

COMPLETERS · 83%

25

DISTRICTS · 2 COUNTIES

458

students interested in
registered apprenticeship

IE Connect connects students
to apprenticeship sponsors

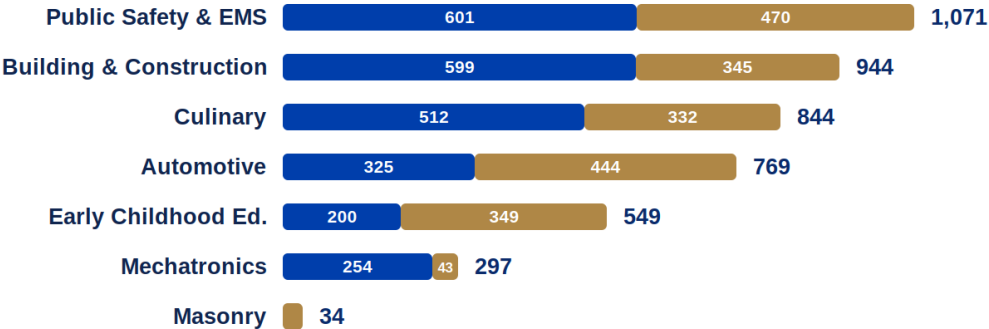
Identified through end-of-year sponsor engagement videos

BY SPONSOR

SW Carpenters	299
Summer Bridge	100
Culinary	26
LAUNCH	24
AMR	9

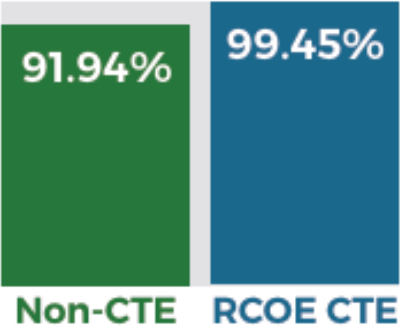
Pre-Apprenticeship Candidates by Pathway

Riverside San Bernardino



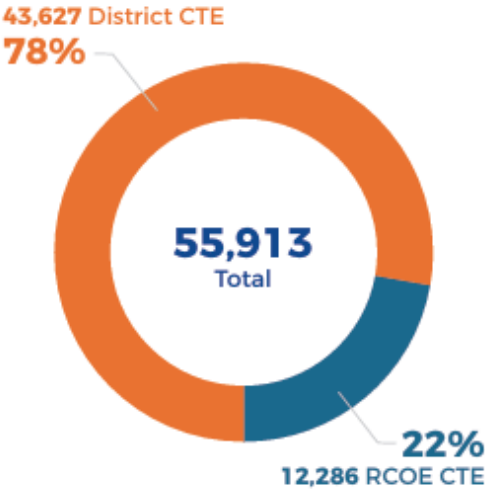
Achievement Outcomes

12th Grade 1-Year Graduation by
CTE PROGRAM



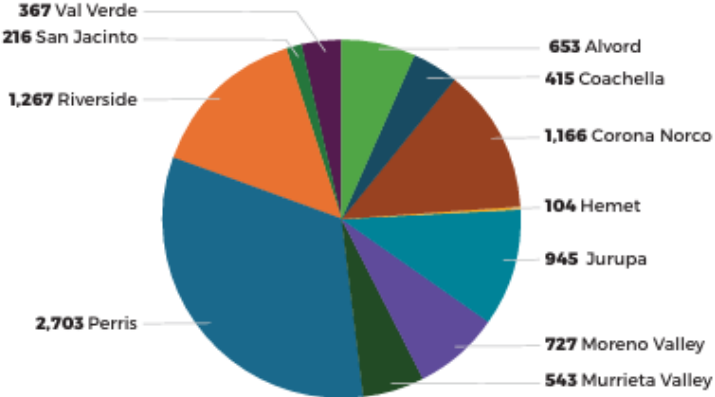
12th grade 1-year graduation rate

District CTE vs. RCOE CTE



RCOE CTE enrollment: 12,286 total

UC A-G 9,106



UC A–G completions across districts: 9,106

Realizing the Dream

When we provide students equitable access to A–G and CTE, we empower students of color to enter the workforce with a competitive edge.

Ready to lead. Ready to innovate. Ready to succeed.



The background of the entire slide is a blue-tinted photograph. On the left side, there is a stack of several thick books. To the right of the books, a laptop is open, with its screen tilted back. The books and laptop are positioned in the lower half of the frame. A dark blue horizontal band spans the width of the image, serving as a backdrop for the text.

WHERE IT'S HEADED

From Bridge to Apprenticeship

Two summers of proof — and the initiative they ignited

Summer Apprenticeship Bridge: Two Cohorts of Proof

2024–2025 SUMMER COHORT

25

students

3½ weeks in person · 30 hours of hands-on training
Stipends up to \$3,000
Placed into full-time employment and community college training

2025–2026 SUMMER COHORT

23

students

Interviewed for registered apprenticeships
Four-week transition program (June 27 – July 23, 2026) ·
stipends up to \$3,000 (COYA, awarded by LAUNCH)
Speed interviewing with employers via Network Kinection



Speed Interviewing with Employers — Summer 2026

Coordinated by Network Kinection for the 2026 Summer Apprenticeship Bridge cohort

446

Employers reached

Healthcare 257 · Auto 100 · EDU/ECE 59 · Mfg
30

11

Employers participated

Auto 5 · Healthcare 4 · ECE 2

6

Employers advancing candidates

to further interviews — Auto, Healthcare &
Manufacturing

1 student hired on the spot — into an automotive Sales Porter position — with additional candidates in active interview processes across three industries.

What Employers Said

"I would definitely do the event again; this was a great experience."

Michael — Najjar Jiffy Lube

"The pre-apprentices were very well prepared and I would do this event again."

Kyle — Fritts Ford

"They were prepped amazingly... Really great job to everyone involved."

Kho Le — Renewing Hope

"I would be happy to attend an event like this in the future!"

Alexis Doudar — HumanGood

Employer demand is validated — and repeatable.

The Next Chapter: IE Youth Apprenticeship



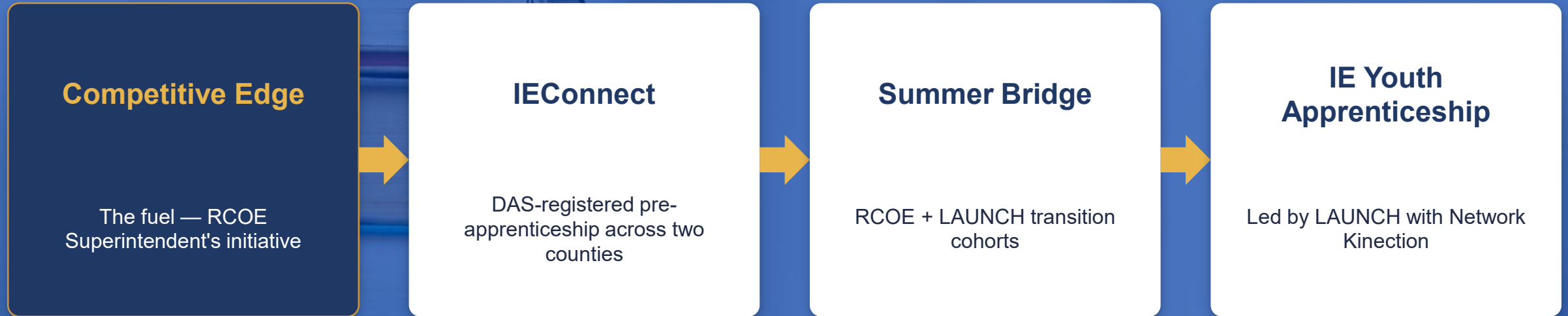
Led by LAUNCH with Network Kinection — built directly on the Summer Apprenticeship Bridge.

40–50 graduating seniors from Riverside & San Bernardino Counties — each holding a DAS-recognized pre-apprenticeship certificate — across Automotive, Early Childhood Education, Advanced Manufacturing, and Healthcare.

The Pilot: Four Phases

- 1** Recruit & Select (May–June) — eligible seniors identified with RCOE & SBCSS.
- 2** Summer Bridge (June 27–July 23) — four-week transition program; stipends up to \$3,000.
- 3** Employer Matching & “Draft Day” — job fair, interviews, employers select candidates.
- 4** Youth Apprenticeship Launch (Aug–Oct) — community college enrollment, paid on-the-job training, LAUNCH mentor, case management.

One Pipeline, Powered by Competitive Edge



The partner ecosystem: LAUNCH · Network Kinection · SBCSS · California Family Life Center (CFLC) · Chaffey College · Riverside City College — with committed employers already on board, including a major advanced-manufacturing employer.

Takeaways for County Boards



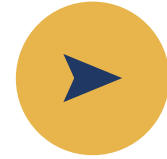
Sample Agreements

Sample MOU and linkage-agreement language to bring to your board.



Framework Overview

The DAS registration framework — what it takes, at a glance.



Replication Roadmap

The sequence to launch this in your county — and Step 1 starts with a conversation with IEConnect.

Leave with the registration framework, sample agreements, and a roadmap — tell us what your county needs, and we'll send the right tools.

RCOE CTE



Dr. Forest DeRenzo

Executive Director



Kermit R. Boyd

TOSA



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Questions?

When your students walk the stage, do they walk toward something — or just away from high school?

Riverside County Office of Education
CTE Unit & Pre-Apprenticeship Services



Scan — tell us one thing your county would need to start