



Statewide Strategic Plan for e-Learning in California's Child Welfare Training System

Decision Point Outline
December 14, 2009

Vision

- *CalSWEC, the schools of social work, the regional training academies, and counties of California will develop a shareable web-based library of high-quality, publicly accessible, e-learning curricula for statewide use.*

Purpose

- *The shareable web-based library will enhance California's child welfare training system by providing flexible learning opportunities for child welfare practitioners to augment their knowledge and skills in the pursuit of improved outcomes for children and families.*

Decision Point #1: Structure

Decision Point Question: How shall the statewide e-learning system be structured?

Recommendations:

There are two tiers for the statewide, shareable web-based library:¹

Tier #1: Statewide e-Learning Courses

E-learning courses acquired or developed specifically for statewide use by counties, regions, or CalSWEC (example: courses related to the PIP, the common core, or other state-identified needs)

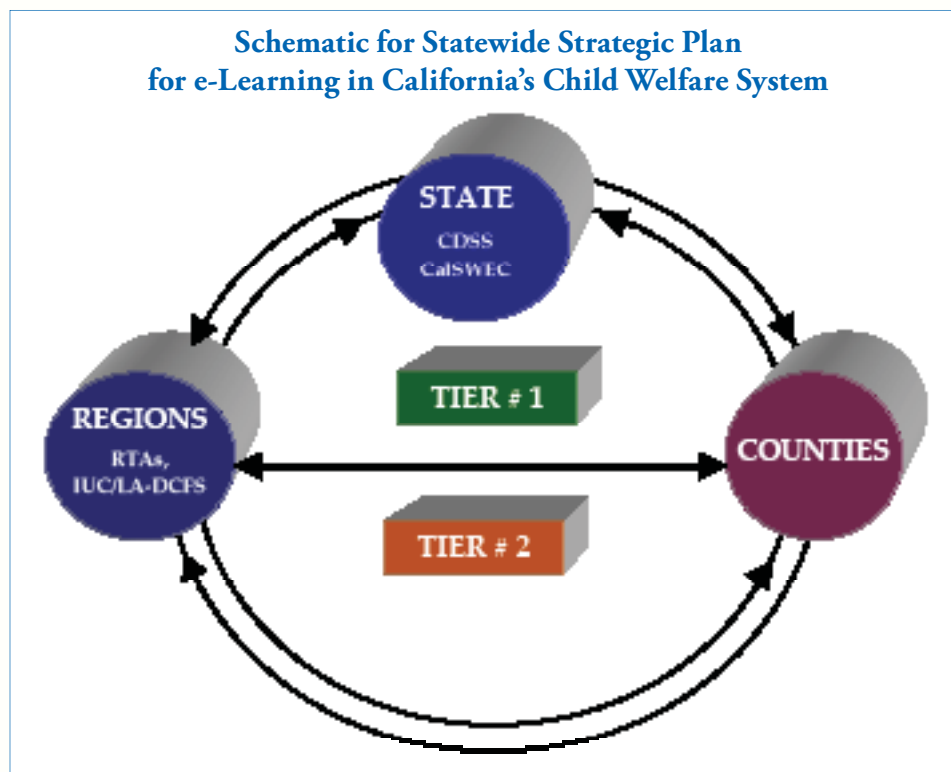
- CalSWEC's website will provide a centralized listing of e-learning courses available for statewide use, and direct users to the county, regional, or state platform where the courses can be accessed.
- Courses acquired or developed for statewide use would meet statewide standards for content and technical requirements (see *Decision Points #5 and #9*; example: STEC-approved competencies and learning objectives, and technical compatibility across platforms).

Tier #2: Regional or County e-Learning Courses

E-learning courses, acquired or developed by counties or regions to address local needs

- These courses will be made available by counties and regions for inter-county, inter-region, or region/county sharing across compatible platforms.
- It is recommended, but not required, that courses acquired or developed for locally-based sharing explicitly address competencies and learning objectives, and meet statewide standards for technical specifications.
- It is recommended, but not required, that Tier #2 e-learning products adhere to the recommendations set forth in this document for Tier #1 products.

¹ NOTE: The shareable, statewide system does not preclude counties or regions from acquiring or developing e-learning courses that are intended exclusively for local use.



Decision Point #2: Roles of Participating Partners for Tier #1 Statewide e-Learning Courses

Decision Point Question: How do the e-Learning Committee, CDOG, the Macro Evaluation Subcommittee, STEC, CalSWEC, CDSS, CWDA, and other partners interface with respect to the statewide e-learning system?

Recommendations:

E-Learning Committee

- The e-Learning Committee (eLc) is a standing committee of STEC, coordinated by CalSWEC, with representatives from CDSS, California's training regions, county staff development personnel and training partners.
- The e-Learning Committee drafts the strategic plan(s) for statewide e-learning development for consideration and approval by STEC.
- The e-Learning Committee oversees and monitors implementation of the strategic plan as directed by STEC and provides STEC with periodic updates.
- The e-Learning committee interfaces with the CWS/CMS Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) regarding coordination of the technical requirements for the statewide, shareable e-learning system.
- The e-Learning Committee has primary responsibility for identifying statewide priorities for e-learning content areas, supplemented by the priorities identified by STEC.
- At STEC's direction, the e-Learning Committee will be responsible for developing or revising e-learning content for various e-learning delivery methods.
- At STEC's direction, the e-Learning Committee may be required to collaborate with CDOG regarding content development and revision for e-learning products.
- The e-Learning Committee will coordinate the development and implementation of formative evaluations of content and delivery with CDOG and the Macro Evaluation Subcommittee.
- In the absence of specific direction from STEC, the e-Learning Committee vets existing and available e-learning products for inclusion in the statewide library of e-learning resources.
- Decisions regarding routine functions of the e-Learning Committee will not require STEC approval.

CDOG (The Content Development and Oversight Group)

- CDOG has the primary responsibility for matters regarding content standards and values, content criteria for product acquisition, and content development and revision of Common Core Curricula in e-learning formats.
- At STEC's direction, CDOG will be responsible for developing and revising e-learning content for various e-learning delivery methods.
- At STEC's direction, CDOG may be required to collaborate with the e-Learning Committee regarding content development and revision for e-learning products.
- CDOG will coordinate with the e-Learning Committee and the Macro Evaluation Subcommittee regarding the development and implementation of formative evaluations of content and delivery for statewide e-learning curricula.

The Macro Evaluation Subcommittee

- The Macro Evaluation Subcommittee will provide expertise required for the potential development, implementation, and analysis of formative evaluations of content and delivery for statewide e-learning curricula, consistent with its scope of work and strategic plan.

STEC

- STEC oversees the work of the e-Learning Committee.
- STEC identifies training needs for statewide e-learning courses, in conjunction with the e-Learning Committee.
- STEC determines the entity responsible for developing or revising e-learning products from among the e-Learning Committee, CDOG, or a hybrid of these committees.
- STEC approves competencies and learning objectives for the development and revision of statewide e-learning courses.

Decision Point #2: Roles of Participating Partners for Tier #1 Statewide e-Learning Courses (cont'd)

- STEC identifies existing and available e-learning products for inclusion in the statewide library of e-learning resources.
- STEC participates in the development and revision of Common Core Curricula in e-learning formats.
- STEC makes recommendations to CDSS and CWDA regarding the statewide e-learning system.

CalSWEC

- CalSWEC provides coordination among CDSS, STEC, CDOG, the Macro Evaluation Subcommittee, the e-Learning Committee, regional training academies, the IUC, and individual counties.

CDSS and CWDA

- CDSS and CWDA consider/approve STEC's recommendations for the statewide e-learning system.
- CDSS conducts the fiscal analysis and determines fiscal allocations for the strategic plan.

Decision Point #3: Collaborations for Tier #1 Statewide e-Learning Courses

Decision Point Question: What entities can provide collaborative opportunities that will advance the statewide e-learning project?

Recommendations:

- The e-Learning Committee will seek opportunities to collaborate with other social service or educational organizations engaged in e-learning to share knowledge and resources about e-learning systems, course content, evaluation methods, trainer development, and other aspects of e-learning.
- The e-Learning Committee will coordinate planning efforts with those of the Rural County Distance Education Program for California county workers pursuing an MSW, a BASW, or an AA degree in Social Work. Collaboration may include:
 - The creation of a coordinated infrastructure to deliver ongoing education/training in e-learning formats;
 - Acquisition, adaptation, development, and evaluation of e-learning courses;
 - Staff development for developers, educators, and trainers of e-learning courses;
 - Joint funding for cost effectiveness and efficiency;
 - Sharing resources through the CalSWEC library at CSU, Long Beach;
 - Additional resource sharing.

Identified Cost Assumptions:

- CalSWEC, the RTAs, the IUC, university partners, and counties will incur costs for staff time devoted to planning and implementing the coordination and sharing of resources.

Actual Cost Estimates (pending fiscal analysis)

Decision Point #4: Organizational Readiness and Technology Assessment for Tier #1 Statewide e-Learning Courses

Decision Point Question: How can statewide readiness and technological capacity be assessed?

Background Information:

CalSWEC, in collaboration with the e-Learning Committee of the Statewide Training and Education Committee (STEC), Regional Training Academies, and the Inter-University Consortium, identified the need for a baseline assessment of the child welfare system's organizational readiness and technological capacity to assist in planning a statewide e-learning partnership. The committee created an organizational readiness and technology assessment survey adapted from questionnaires designed for North Carolina Social Services by The Family and Children's Resource Program of the Jordan Institute for Families at the School of Social Work, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Recommendations:

1. Two statewide surveys will be created to obtain baseline assessments:
 - a. Director Survey to assess organizational readiness; and
 - b. IT Manager Survey to assess technology capacity.
2. Three dissemination methods will be used for survey administration:
 - a. Distribution at CWDA—Children's Committee
 - b. Email to Child Welfare Directors and IT staff
 - c. Online posting through Survey Monkey
3. CalSWEC will administer the survey, collect the data, perform the analysis, and draft the final report. The final report will be distributed statewide to the RTAs/IUC and counties in the child welfare training system, and to other interested parties.
4. If available, prior survey data regarding e-learning obtained by the Northern Training Academy and the Bay Area Academy will also be included in the statewide analysis of technological and organizational readiness.

Identified Cost Assumptions:

- CalSWEC assumes the costs (through onsite staff) to create the survey, administer the surveys, analyze the data, and issue the final report regarding organizational readiness and technological capacity.

Actual Cost Estimates (pending fiscal analysis)

Decision Point #5: Content Development and Revision for Tier #1 Statewide e-Learning Courses

Decision Point Questions: What constitutes e-learning content? What standards and values should be set for e-learning content? What is the process for acquiring, developing or revising e-learning products?

Recommendations:

Content Categories

- Content categories will include:
 - Curricula that satisfy the ongoing training requirements;
 - Curricula that complement and/or supplement the Common Core Curricula;
 - Curricula that respond to the training needs emanating from new federal and state policies, evidence-based research, or promising best practices;
 - Curricula that satisfy CEU training requirements for child welfare professionals;
 - Other curriculum identified by STEC or the e-Learning Committee.

Content Standards & Values

(See also *Technical Standards, Decision Point #10.*)

- CDOG will develop general guidelines that can be used as a reference by content developers for e-learning courses, based on the Content Standards and Content Values indicated below.

Content Standards

- E-learning content promotes professional development in child welfare practice.
- E-learning content supports the following themes of child welfare practice in California, as applicable to the topic area:
 - Outcomes-informed practice;
 - Evidence-based practice (information regarding promising practices or best practices shall be provided if research is insufficient or not available);
 - Strength-based practice;
 - Family and youth engagement; and
 - Fairness and equity
- Existing curricula will be used as foundations for e-learning products, when possible.
- E-learning content is based on measurable learning objectives that allow for the evaluation of knowledge, skills, and/or values.
 - Models for content standards include:
 - The learning objectives, competencies, and curricula of the Common Core
 - Learning objectives developed by the regional training academies and the IUC/LA-DCFS for ongoing and advanced trainings
- E-learning content aligns with BSW IV-E and MSW IV-E competencies along a continuum of professional education and training.
- E-learning content applies transfer of learning principles and strategies.
- E-learning content includes interactive components to engage the e-learner.
- The e-learning development process draws upon the combined expertise of practitioners, university partners, and technical experts.
- Content standards may be modified in specific cases when such modification is necessary to meet technical requirements for content or delivery.

Content Values

- E-learning content is grounded in social work values and ethics.²
- E-learning supports the application of best practices aimed at improving outcomes for children and families.
- E-learning content builds upon current training resources and existing training structures whenever possible.
- E-learning endorses training strategies that progress from knowledge acquisition to skill-building.
- E-learning encourages flexible design, formats, and delivery to assist counties in meeting identified training needs.

Decision Point #5: Content Development and Revision for Tier #1 Statewide e-Learning Courses (cont'd)

- E-learning standards for in-service training are consistent with educational standards endorsed by California's Title IV-E university programs for the bachelor's and master's degrees in social work.
- Community partners are encouraged to participate in relevant e-learning opportunities whenever possible.

Product Acquisition, Development, and Revision

- Product includes the following:
 - Development of original material for an e-learning format;
 - Classroom curriculum or other curriculum medium that needs to be adapted to an e-learning format (ranging from a simple conversion to a more complex adaptation);
 - E-learning courses developed independently at the county or regional level;
 - E-learning courses acquired from sources external to California's county and regional child welfare training system;
 - Revision of an existing county, regional, or statewide e-learning curriculum.
- Product can be acquired or developed at multiple levels or through private sources (e.g., county, region, state, or federal levels, or through non-profit agencies).
- Product adheres to statewide content standards and values (*above*), and statewide technical standards (*see Decision Point #10*).
- STEC and the e-Learning Committee identify training needs that are best met by e-learning products.

Acquisitions

- STEC identifies existing and available e-learning products for inclusion in the statewide library of e-learning resources.
- In the absence of specific direction from STEC, the e-Learning Committee vets existing and available e-learning products for inclusion in the statewide library of e-learning resources.

Development and Revisions

- STEC delegates responsibility for the development or revision of statewide e-learning products to the e-Learning Committee, CDOG, or a hybrid of these committees.
- STEC approves the competencies and learning objectives for the development and revision of all statewide e-learning courses.

The Common Core Curricula

- Development and revision for Common Core Curricula will be coordinated by CalSWEC and conducted by CDOG through the existing process used for printed Common Core Curricula.
- CDOG approval is required for finalization of Common Core Curricula prior to dissemination.

Identified Cost Assumptions:

- County, regions, and CalSWEC may incur costs for acquiring e-learning curricula.
- County, regions, and CalSWEC may incur costs for developing e-learning curricula.

Actual Cost Estimates (pending fiscal analysis)

² The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics states, "Social work administrators and supervisors should take reasonable steps to provide or arrange for continuing education and staff development for all staff for whom they are responsible. Continuing education and staff development should address current knowledge and emerging developments related to social work practice and ethics." (NASW Code of Ethics, Section 3.08 Continuing Education and Staff Development, <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>, retrieved 8/5/09)

CalSWEC's Standards and Values support the use of ongoing training as a form of best practices: "No standards of practice are final. Standards must be subject to continuous review and revision, in view of the constantly growing knowledge about children, human behavior, and human ills." (CalSWEC Website)

http://calswec.berkeley.edu/CalSWEC/CalSWEC_Values.html and http://calswec.berkeley.edu/CalSWEC/CalSWEC_Standards.html

Decision Point #6: Delivery Methods for Tier #1 Statewide e-Learning Courses

Decision Point Question: What types of delivery methods can be used for statewide e-learning courses, given current technological capacity and projections for future technological upgrades?

Background Information:

It is anticipated that the organizational readiness and technological capacity surveys will provide information that will inform the description of delivery methods for statewide-level e-learning courses. For the purpose of STEC, delivery method is defined as a way of presenting e-learning courses, modules, and materials. E-learning courses, modules, and materials may be presented using various mediums, formats and styles.

Recommendations:

1. Statewide e-learning courses may be delivered in the following ways:
 - a. Stand alone (self paced) e-learning
Learners access all course materials on their own over the Internet. There is no instructor or trainer.
 - b. Group Facilitated (synchronous or asynchronous)
Group learning is facilitated by an online instructor or trainer. The instructor interacts with the students to facilitate learning.
 - c. Blended (classroom + online)
Learning takes place partly online and partly in a classroom.
 - d. Video Conferencing
Learning takes place in real time, facilitated by an instructor, using video to connect classrooms and/or students at different locations.
 - e. Teleconferencing
Learning takes place in real time, using the telephone to connect classes at different locations.
 - f. Web Conferencing (combines teleconferencing with computer technology)
Learning takes place in real time, facilitated by an instructor. Trainees are connected through telephone conferencing and computer technology.
 - g. CD/DVD
Learners access all course materials on a CD/DVD that is sent or distributed to staff. There is no instructor or trainer.

Identified Cost Assumptions:

1. Costs to CalSWEC, RTAs, the IUC, and counties could include:
 - a. posting e-learning courses to a SCORM-compliant platform³
 - b. purchase of a SCORM-compliant system if not currently available
 - c. monthly dues to maintain e-learning in counties (based on predetermined staff usage)
 - d. payment for course facilitator(s)

Actual Cost Estimates (pending fiscal analysis)

³ SCORM (Shareable Content Object Reference Model) is the industry standard for packaging e-learning content and exchanging and sharing data. Content can be created once and used in many different systems and situations without modifications. This shareable model is used widely in the industry to share e-learning content. As of October 2005, SCORM 1.2 is supported by every major Learning Management System (LMS). The e-learning organizational readiness and technology assessment survey asks counties to specify their LMS. Survey responses will provide information helpful for developing courses that can be shared across counties and regional training academies.

Decision Point #7: Evaluation Framework for Tier #1 Statewide e-Learning Courses

Decision Point Question: How shall e-learning and curriculum products be evaluated?

Background Information:

Course evaluation is an important factor in successful teaching and training. Evaluation helps to determine and improve course content. It is proposed that the e-learning evaluation framework be based on the existing Evaluation Framework for the Common Core Curricula. It may include pre- and post-tests, knowledge evaluations and applied skill evaluations, modified for an e-learning environment.

Recommendations:

1. Pursuit of rigorous e-learning course evaluations must be approved by and coordinated with the Macro Evaluation Subcommittee of STEC, and be consistent with California's statewide Framework for Training Evaluation.
2. Evaluation modified for e-learning modalities may include:
 - a. Online pre- and post-tests to assess trainee knowledge before and after course completion.
 - b. Knowledge evaluations (other than pre- and post-tests) that evaluate knowledge acquisition that may be in the form of activities, exercises, interaction with other trainees, or interaction with an instructor or course facilitator.
 - c. Applied skill evaluations consisting in activities and exercises that provide opportunities for practice and skill evaluations through the completion of online or offline tasks.

Identified Cost Assumptions:

- CalSWEC will incur costs for development of online pre- and post-knowledge tests and applied skill evaluation developed within the existing Evaluation Framework.
- RTAs/IUC will incur costs for the development of knowledge and applied skill evaluations that are not within the purview of the Evaluation Framework
 - Costs can include: in-house or contract-based development, services of an e-trainer, curriculum writer, and/or instructional designer

Actual Cost Estimates (pending fiscal analysis)

Decision Point #8: Requirements for Completion for Tier #1 Statewide e-Learning Courses

Decision Point Question: What methods can be used for determining course completion for an e-learning course?

Background Information:

Trackable evidence is needed to determine that a trainee has completed an e-learning course. With regard to CEUs, The Board of Behavioral Sciences requires that CEU courses must contain a post-test, and that a trainee must pass the post-test to receive course credit.

Recommendations:

- Evidence of satisfactory completion of an e-learning course will be provided through:
 - Embedded ‘completion items’ within the course structure that require periodic user responses that can be tracked; and/or
 - A trackable post-test.
 - For CEU credits, a post-test with a cut-off score is required.

Identified Cost Assumptions:

- CalSWEC, the RTAs, the IUC, university partners, and counties may incur costs for staff time and other expenses related to the development and tracking of completion items, post-tests, and cut-off scores.

Actual Cost Estimates (pending fiscal analysis)

Decision Point #9: Tracking Training for Tier #1 Statewide e-Learning Courses

Decision Point Question: How shall counties and training academies track training received through e-learning courses?

Background Information:

Tracking Training refers to collecting and managing data about completion of e-learning courses by child welfare staff. Statewide e-learning courses will be shared across several different county, regional, or state platforms. Counties and regions will be able to use their learning management systems to track training after uploading e-learning courses to their respective platforms. Provision for tracking training will be made for counties that do not have a learning management system.

Recommendations:

- Counties or regions can use the tracking methods for e-learning courses provided by their respective learning management systems.
- Counties that do not have a learning management system will rely on their respective regional training academy to track completion of e-learning courses mounted on their region's platform.
- Counties that do not have a learning management system will rely on CalSWEC to track completion of e-learning courses mounted on CalSWEC's platform.

Identified Cost Assumptions:

- County/RTA/IUC/CalSWEC staff to input training data into an online tracking system.

Actual Cost Estimates (pending fiscal analysis)

Decision Point #10: Technology Standards for Tier #1 Statewide e-Learning Courses

Decision Point Question: What technological standards should be set for statewide e-learning courses?

Background Information:

The organizational readiness and technology assessment survey will provide information about current technology, hardware, software, ancillary equipment, and computer specifications related to e-learning. The e-Learning Committee will consult with the CWS/CMS Technical Advisory Committee regarding statewide technology standards and specifications (provisional; pending response from the TAC). Technological capacity upgrades can be phased in as resources permit, and statewide standards can be aligned accordingly.

Recommendations:

- The e-Learning Committee will collaborate and coordinate with the CWS/CMS Technical Advisory Committee regarding hardware and software needs of counties and regions, and the development of technological standards and values for e-learning.
- SCORM compliance is necessary for sharing across platforms. This compliance may extend to specific versions of SCORM to maximize cross-platform compatibility.
- Other, now unknown, technical standards may also be necessary to maximize the cross-platform compatibility of statewide e-learning courses.
- An addendum to this strategic plan will indicate the technical standards required for statewide shareable e-learning courses. The addendum will be accessible on the CalSWEC website and updated periodically by the e-Learning Committee to reflect the changing technological standards of the e-learning industry.

Identified Cost Assumptions:

- CalSWEC/RTA/IUC and counties may need:
 - to purchase/update computer equipment (e.g., computers, monitors, printers, and other hardware devices)
 - to purchase/update or download software (e.g., audio, video, or animation)
- CalSWEC/RTA/IUC/county staff time needed to provide technical assistance and consultation.

Actual Cost Estimates (pending fiscal analysis)

Decision Point #11: Quality Assurance and Improvement for Tier #1 Statewide e-Learning Courses

Decision Point Question: What are the components of quality assurance for a statewide e-learning system?

Recommendations:

- Quality Assurance and Improvement efforts shall address:
 - Quality of content (i.e., using the Content Standards and Values as developed by CDOG as a baseline)
 - Fidelity to content and delivery
 - Adequacy of trainer support
 - Adequacy of technical support
 - Assessment of user feedback
 - Utilization of the evaluation framework to improve content quality

Identified Cost Assumptions:

- CalSWEC, the RTAs, the IUC, university partners, and counties may incur costs for staff time and other expenses related to the development and implementation of a quality assurance system.

Actual Cost Estimates (pending fiscal analysis)

Decision Point #12: Staffing for Tier #1 Statewide e-Learning Courses

Decision Point Question: What are the staffing needs for a statewide e-learning system?

Background Information:

The statewide e-learning project will need staff in various capacities to support e-learning functions.

Recommendations:

1. CalSWEC staff
 - a. CalSWEC staff will facilitate the e-learning project (chair e-Learning Committee meetings, present results and recommendations to STEC, work with counties/RTAs to provide quality courses, develop/edit/revise/evaluate courses and course materials as necessary, coordinate with partners and external agencies, and perform specific tasks as needed).

Note: CalSWEC staff may serve one or more staff functions described in this section.
2. Writer/content experts
 - a. The writer and content expert may or may not be the same person.
3. Evaluators
 - a. Evaluators design and analyze knowledge and skill tests, and provide consultation regarding the assessment of knowledge and skill acquisition.
4. Instructional designers
 - a. Instructional designers analyze learning goals and needs, create instructional materials and interactive activities, and obtain evaluative feedback through online activities.
 - b. Instructional designers may also be familiar with online course creation, development, and posting.
5. Graphic designers
 - a. Graphic designers are familiar with organizing courses so that they are informative and attention-grabbing. Graphic designers have expertise in course layout, style, use of color, graphics, fonts, animation, sound, and video.
6. Programmers
 - a. Course programmers are LMS staff persons in charge of the background programming which allows users to take e-learning courses through county, regional, or state platforms.
7. Information Technologists (IT)
 - a. Information technologists are experienced with the technical aspects of delivering e-learning. IT staff persons may be familiar with e-learning authoring tools and learning management systems. IT staff persons are able to troubleshoot and resolve e-learning technical problems.
8. E-Trainers
 - a. E-trainers may be identified as CalSWEC staff, RTA/IUC staff, county staff, and contractors.
9. Other staff support at RTA and county levels (administrative, pedagogical, etc.)
 - a. It may become necessary to include staff in additional capacities to help with the successful maintenance of the e-learning project.

Identified Cost Assumptions:

- CalSWEC staff at .5 or .75 time
- CalSWEC/RTAs/IUC/counties may incur costs for:
 - course curriculum writers and/or content experts
 - e-trainers for course facilitation
 - instructional designers
 - programming services
 - other staff support

Actual Cost Estimates (pending fiscal analysis)

Decision Point #13: Trainer Development for Tier #1 Statewide e-learning Courses

Decision Point Question: What competencies are needed for e-trainers and facilitators, and how should trainer development be supported?

Background Information:

Competencies for developing and delivering e-learning courses can be customized for various e-learning modalities and can differ significantly from competencies related to classroom curriculum and classroom training.

Recommendations:

- CalSWEC coordinates a sequence of statewide trainer development activities, in accordance with the present and future priorities of the RTAs/LA-IUC and interested counties, to:
 - Gauge trainers' interest in acquiring course development and training skills for various e-learning modalities (*see also Delivery Methods, Decision Point #6*);
 - Conduct forums and workgroups or provide other learning opportunities to enhance skills for developing/adapting curriculum for e-learning, and for delivering e-trainings in selected modalities;
 - Establish competencies and learning objectives for developers and trainers of e-learning, customized for selected delivery methods;
 - Prepare an addendum to the Strategic Plan that addresses general competencies for developers and trainers of e-learning, and specific competencies and/or learning objectives for selected e-learning modalities;
 - Assess course development and training skills per the established competencies and learning objectives. The assessment should allow for possible use as one of the criteria for recruitment of developers and trainers for e-learning.

Identified Cost Assumptions:

- CalSWEC may incur costs related to trainer development events.
- CalSWEC may incur costs for staff time related to the development and implementation of a competency assessment.

Actual Cost Estimates (pending fiscal analysis)