C·O·E CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE
FOR LABOR MARKET RESEARCH

Interpreters and Translators

Labor Market Analysis: San Diego County

December 2021

Summary

NEW PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION?	EVIDENCE OF A SUPPLY GAP?	AT OR ABOVE THE LIVING WAGE?	EXPECTED LEVEL OF EDUCATION

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Do Not Proceed with New Program

Evidence of a Supply Gap? ☑ / ❌

At or Above the Living Wage? ☑ / ☐

Expected Level of Education:
- ☑ Bachelor's Degree[+]
- ☐ Associate Degree
- ☐ Some College or Certificate
- ☐ HS Diploma or Equivalent
- ☐ Less than a HS Diploma
- ☐ Apprenticeship

SUPPORT FOR PROGRAM MODIFICATION?	NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS THAT PROVIDE TRAINING	NUMBER OF ANNUAL JOB OPENINGS

Support for Program Modification? ☑ / ☐

Number of Institutions that Provide Training: **MEDIUM**

Number of Annual Job Openings: **MEDIUM**

The San Diego-Imperial Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (COE) developed this brief to assist the region's community colleges with strategic planning and program development. According to available labor market information, *Interpreters and Translators* in San Diego County have a labor market demand of 110 annual job openings (while average demand for a single occupation in San Diego County is 242 annual job openings), and six educational institutions in San Diego County supply 99 awards for this occupation, suggesting that the supply gap is met in the labor market. Entry-level and median wages for this occupation are above the living wage. This brief recommends to not proceed with developing a new program, but supports a program modification because 1) the supply gap is met in the region; 2) entry-level and median earnings for this occupation are above the living wage. The colleges should note that the typical entry-level education is a bachelor's degree. The colleges should also note that the percentage of students who complete a related program and earn a living wage is below the statewide percentage of students who complete Career Education programs in general.

Introduction

This report provides labor market information in San Diego County for the following occupational code in the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)[1] system:
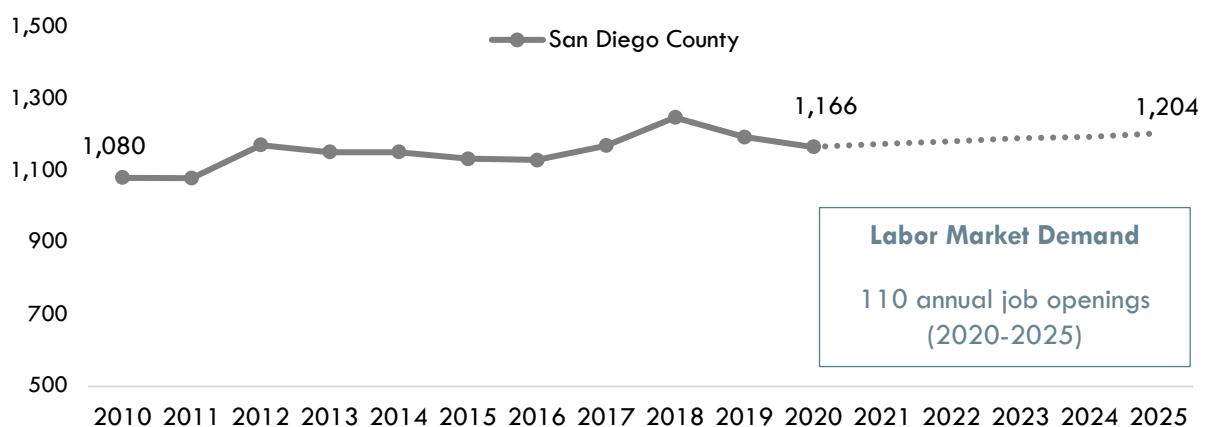
Interpreters and Translators (SOC 27-3091): Interpret oral or sign language, or translate written text from one language into another. Sample reported job titles include:

- American Sign Language Interpreter
- Court Interpreter
- Educational Interpreter
- Linguist

- Medical Interpreter
- Sign Language Interpreter
- Spanish Interpreter
- Spanish Translator

Projected Occupational Demand

Between 2020 and 2025, *Interpreters and Translators* are projected to increase by 38 net jobs or three percent (Exhibit 1). Employers in San Diego County will need to hire 110 workers annually to fill new jobs and backfill jobs due to attrition caused by turnover and retirement, for example.

**Exhibit 1: Number of Jobs for *Interpreters and Translators* (2010-2025)[2]**

> **Labor Market Demand**
>
> 110 annual job openings
> (2020-2025)

Earnings

Interpreters and Translators receive entry-level hourly earnings of $27.03; this is more than the living wage for a single adult in San Diego County, which is $18.43 per hour (Exhibit 2).[3]

Exhibit 2: Hourly Earnings[4] for *Interpreters and Translators* in San Diego County[5]
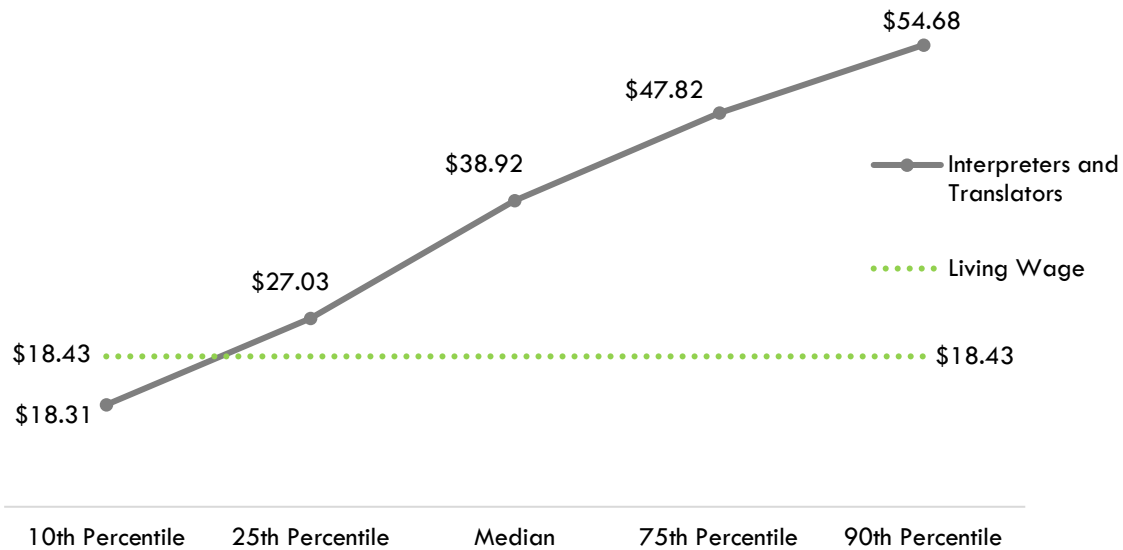
[3] "Family Needs Calculator (formerly the California Family Needs Calculator)," Insight: Center for Community Economic Development, last updated 2021. insightcced.org/family-needs-calculator/.
[4] 10th and 25th percentiles could be considered entry-level wages, and 75th and 90th percentiles could be considered experienced wages for individuals who may have been in the occupation longer, received more training than others, etc.
[5] EMSI 2021.03; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.

Educational Supply

Educational supply for an occupation can be estimated by analyzing the number of awards in related Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) or Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes.[6] There are four TOP codes and five CIP codes related to *Interpreters and Translators* (Exhibit 3).

Exhibit 3: Related TOP and CIP Codes for *Interpreters and Translators*

TOP or CIP Code	TOP or CIP Program Title
TOP 0607.00	Technical Communication
TOP 0610.00	Mass Communications
TOP 0850.10	Sign Language Interpreting
TOP 2140.00	Legal and Community Interpretation
CIP 09.0102	Mass Communication/Media Studies
CIP 10.0105	Communications Technology/Technician
CIP 16.0103	Language Interpretation and Translation
CIP 16.1603	Sign Language Interpretation and Translation
CIP 23.1303	Professional, Technical, Business, and Scientific Writing

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[6] TOP data comes from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart (datamart.cccco.edu) and CIP data comes from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data).

According to TOP data, three community colleges supply the region with awards for these occupations: Palomar College, San Diego Mesa College, and Southwestern College. According to CIP data, three non-community-college institutions supply the region with awards: California State University-San Marcos, Point Loma Nazarene University, and San Diego State University (Exhibit 4).

Exhibit 4: Number of Awards (Certificates and Degrees) Conferred by Postsecondary Institutions (Program Year 2016-17 through PY2019-20 Average)

TOP6 or CIP	TOP6 or CIP Title	3-Yr Annual Average CC Awards (PY17-18 to PY19-20)	Other Educational Institutions 3-Yr Annual Average Awards (PY16-17 to PY18-19)	3-Yr Total Average Supply (PY16-17 to PY19-20)
0610.00	Mass Communications	**2**	**0**	**2**
	• Southwestern	2	0	
0850.10	Sign Language Interpreting	**29**	**0**	**29**
	• Palomar	15	0	
	• San Diego Mesa	14	0	
2140.00	Legal and Community Interpretation	**15**	**0**	**15**
	• Southwestern	15	0	
09.0102	Mass Communication/Media Studies	**0**	**52**	**52**
	• California State University-San Marcos	0	42	
	• Point Loma Nazarene University	0	10	
23.1303	Professional, Technical, Business, and Scientific Writing	**0**	**1**	**1**
	• San Diego State University	0	1	
			Total	**99**

Demand vs. Supply

Comparing labor demand (annual openings) with labor supply[7] suggests that the supply gap is met for this occupation in San Diego County, with 110 annual openings and 99 awards. Comparatively, there are 1,335 annual openings in California and 890 awards, suggesting that there is a supply gap across the state[8] (Exhibit 5).

Exhibit 5: Labor Demand (Annual Openings) Compared with Labor Supply (Average Annual Awards)

	Demand (Annual Openings)	Supply (Total Annual Average Supply)	Supply Gap or Oversupply
San Diego	110	99	**11**
California	1,335	890	**445**

Please note: This is a basic analysis of supply and demand of labor. The data does not include workers currently in the labor force who could fill these positions or workers who are not captured by publicly available data. This data should be used to discuss the potential gaps or oversupply of workers; however, it should not be the only basis for determining whether or not a program should be developed.
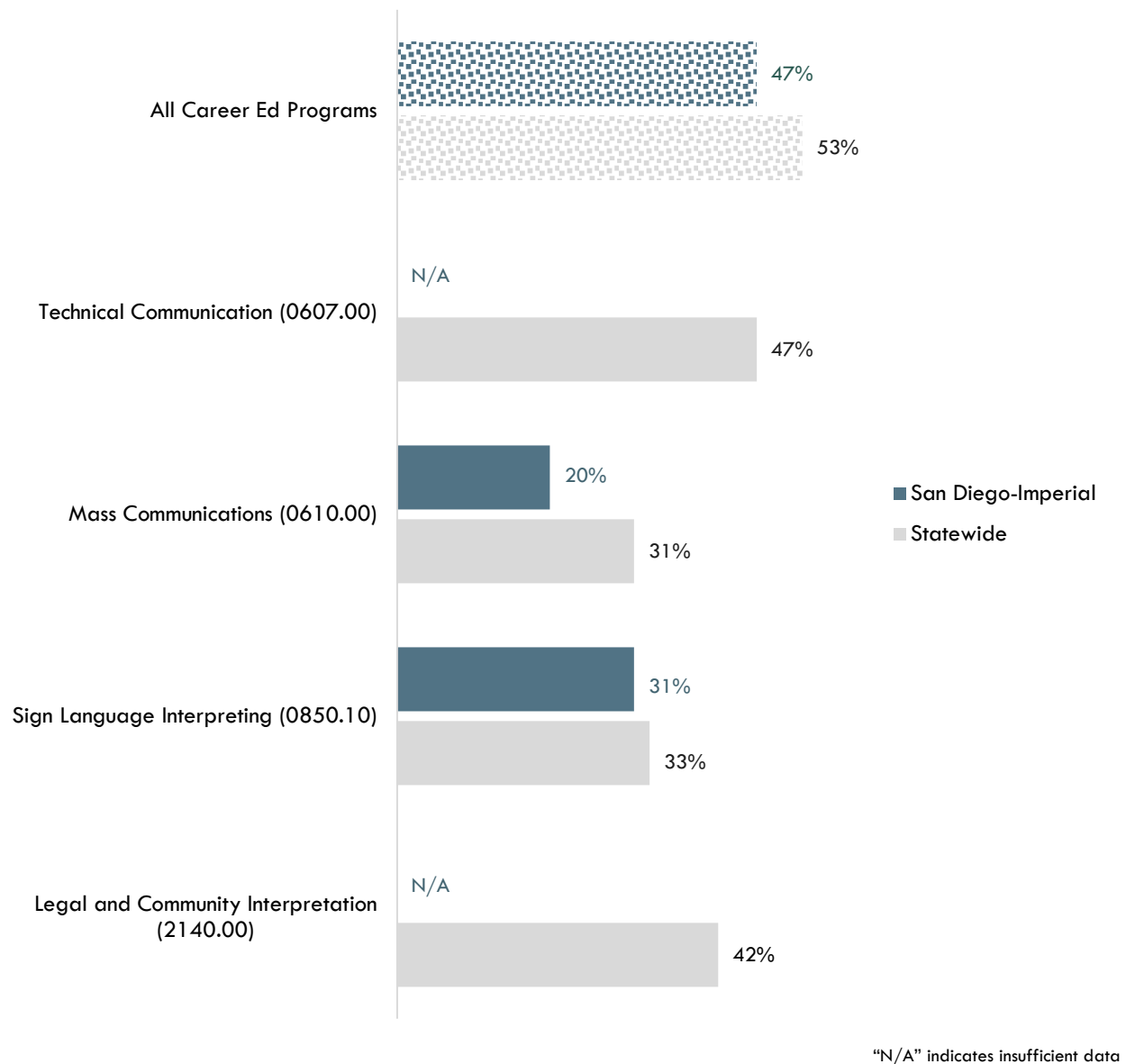
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[7] Labor supply can be found from two different sources: EMSI or the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart. EMSI uses CIP codes while MIS uses TOP codes. Different coding systems result in differences in the supply numbers.
[8] "Supply and Demand," Centers of Excellence Student Outcomes, coeccc.net/Supply-and-Demand.aspx.

Student Outcomes and Regional Comparisons

According to the California Community Colleges LaunchBoard, 20 to 31 percent of students in the San Diego-Imperial region earned a living wage after completing a program related to *Interpreters and Translators*, compared 31 to 47 percent statewide and 53 percent of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 6a).[9]

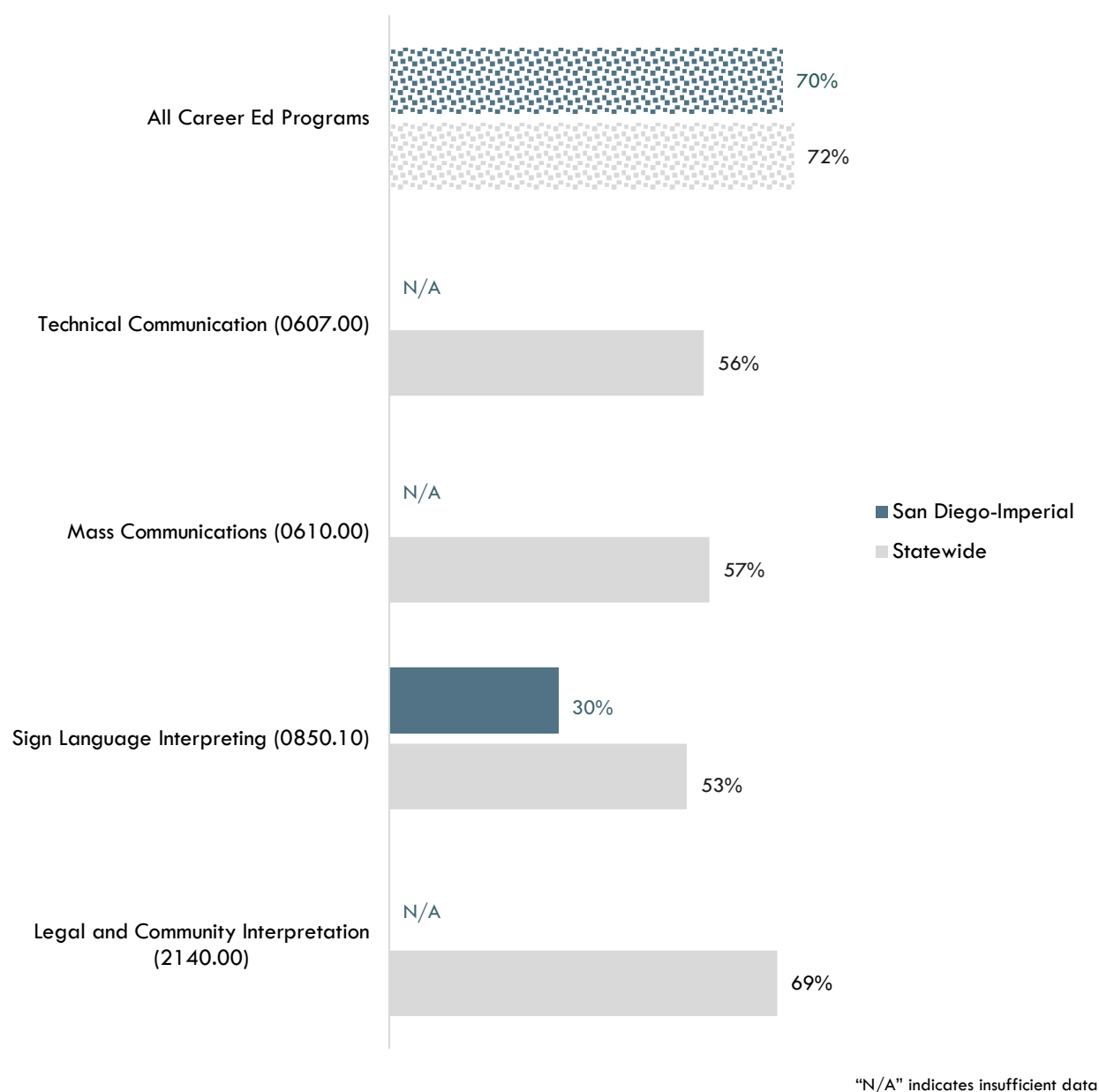**Exhibit 6a: Percentage of Students Who Earned a Living Wage by Program, PY2018-19[10]**

Program	San Diego-Imperial	Statewide
All Career Ed Programs	47%	53%
Technical Communication (0607.00)	N/A	47%
Mass Communications (0610.00)	20%	31%
Sign Language Interpreting (0850.10)	31%	33%
Legal and Community Interpretation (2140.00)	N/A	42%

"N/A" indicates insufficient data

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[9] "California Community Colleges Strong Workforce Program," California Community Colleges, calpassplus.org/LaunchBoard/SWP.aspx.
[10] Among completers and skills builders who exited, the percentage of students who attained a living wage.

According to the California Community Colleges LaunchBoard, 30 percent of students in the San Diego-Imperial region obtained a job closely related to their field of study after completing a program related to *Interpreters and Translators*, compared to 53 to 69 percent statewide and 72 percent of students in Career Education programs in general across the state (Exhibit 6b).[11]

Exhibit 6b: Percentage of Students in a Job Closely Related to Field of Study by Program, PY2017-18[12]

Program	San Diego-Imperial	Statewide
All Career Ed Programs	70%	72%
Technical Communication (0607.00)	N/A	56%
Mass Communications (0610.00)	N/A	57%
Sign Language Interpreting (0850.10)	30%	53%
Legal and Community Interpretation (2140.00)	N/A	69%

"N/A" indicates insufficient data

Online Job Postings

This report analyzes not only historical and projected (traditional LMI) data, but also recent data from online job postings (real-time LMI). Online job postings may provide additional insight about recent changes in the labor market that are not captured by historical data. Between 2010 and 2020, there was an average of 232 online job postings per year for *Interpreters and Translators* in San Diego County (Exhibit 7). Please note that online job postings do **not** equal labor market demand; demand is represented by annual job openings (see Exhibit 1). Employers may post a position multiple times for various reasons, such as increasing the pool of applicants, for example.

Exhibit 7: Number of Online Job Postings for *Interpreters and Translators*
in San Diego County (2010-2020)[13]
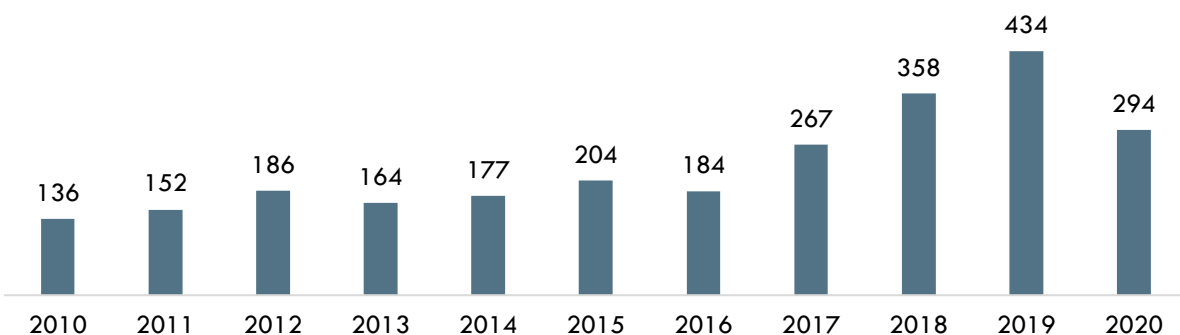
Top Employers

Between January 1, 2018 and December 31, 2020, the top five employers in San Diego County for *Interpreters and Translators* were SOS International, Interpreters Unlimited, Metlang, Hanna Interpreting Services LLC, and Sorenson Communications based on online job postings (Exhibit 8).

Exhibit 8: Top Employers for *Interpreters and Translators* in San Diego County[14]

Top Employers	
• SOS International	• MVM, Inc.
• Interpreters Unlimited	• Language Link
• Metlang	• San Diego Unified School District
• Hanna Interpreting Services LLC	• Rady Children's Hospital
• Sorenson Communications	• STC Interpreting & Translation

[13] Burning Glass Technologies, "Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool." 2010-2020.
[14] Burning Glass Technologies, "Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool." 2018-2020.

Education, Skills, and Certifications

Exhibit 9 indicates the educational attainment for the occupation found currently in the national labor force. The typical entry-level education is a bachelor's degree.[15]

Exhibit 9: National Educational Attainment of *Interpreters and Translators*[16]

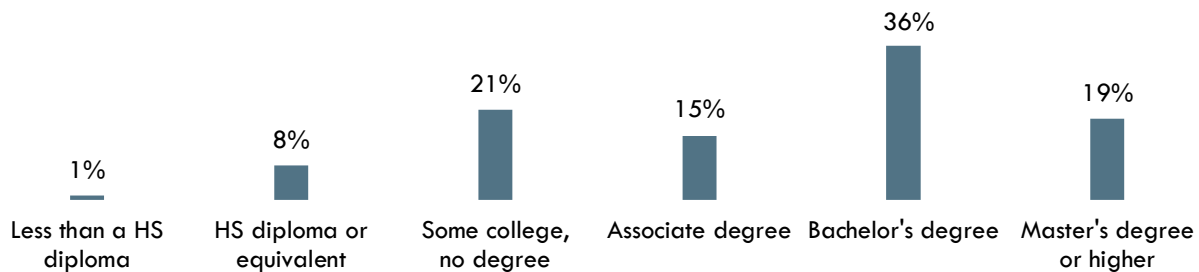| Less than a HS diploma	HS diploma or equivalent	Some college, no degree	Associate degree	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree or higher
1%	8%	21%	15%	36%	19%

Exhibit 10 lists the top specialized, soft, and software skills that appeared in online job postings between January 1, 2018 and December 31, 2020.

Exhibit 10: Top Skills for *Interpreters and Translators* in San Diego County[17]

Specialized Skills	Soft Skills	Software Skills
• Customer Service	• English	• Microsoft Excel
• Scheduling	• Bilingual	• Microsoft Word
• Quality Assurance and Control	• Communication Skills	• Microsoft PowerPoint
• Customer Contact	• Spanish	• Software Development
• Transcription	• Writing	• Word Processing
• Criminal Justice	• American Sign Language	• SQL
• Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act	• Teamwork / Collaboration	• Yardi Software
• Teaching	• Arabic	• Microsoft Outlook
• Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	• Detail-Oriented	• Linux
• Customer Billing	• Organizational Skills	• Software Engineering
• Multilingual	• Typing	• Voice over IP
• Social Media	• Listening	• C++
• HIPAA Compliance	• Sign Language	• Citrix
• Appointment Setting	• Mentoring	• Facebook
• Proofreading	• Chinese	• Java

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[15] EMSI 2021.03; QCEW, Non-QCEW, Self-Employed.
[16] "Educational Attainment for Workers 25 Years and Older by Detailed Occupation," Bureau of Labor Statistics, last modified September 4, 2019. bls.gov/emp/tables/educational-attainment.htm.
[17] Burning Glass Technologies, "Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool." 2018-2020.

Exhibit 11 lists the top certifications that appeared in online job postings between January 1, 2018 and December 31, 2020.

Exhibit 11: Top Certifications for *Interpreters and Translators* in San Diego County[18]

Top Certifications in Online Job Postings
1. Certified Interpreter
2. Security Clearance
3. Certified Interpreter For The Deaf
4. Sign Language Certification
5. First Aid CPR AED
6. Multimedia Certification
7. Basic Life Saving (BLS)
8. Medical Terminology Certification
9. Microsoft Certified Technology Specialist (MCTS)
10. CompTIA Security+
11. Food Handler Certification
12. Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate (MCSA)
13. Microsoft Technology Associate (MTA)
14. Administrative Office Certificate
15. Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)

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[18] Burning Glass Technologies, "Labor Insight Real-Time Labor Market Information Tool." 2018-2020.

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Important Disclaimers

All representations included in this report have been produced from primary research and/or secondary review of publicly and/or privately available data and/or research reports. This study examines the most recent data available at the time of the analysis; however, data sets are updated regularly and may not be consistent with previous reports. Efforts have been made to qualify and validate the accuracy of the data and the report findings; however, neither the Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research (COE), COE host district, nor California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office are responsible for the applications or decisions made by individuals and/or organizations based on this study or its recommendations.

This workforce demand report uses state and federal job projection data that was developed before the economic impact of COVID-19. The COE is monitoring the situation and will provide more information as it becomes available. Please consult with local employers to understand their current employment needs.