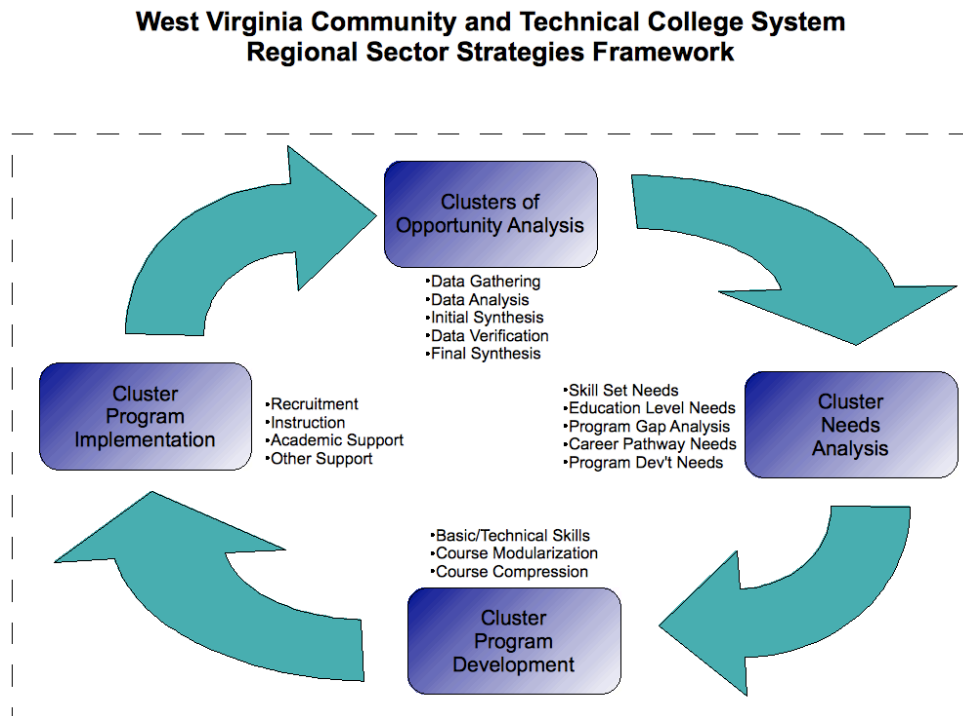


REGIONAL SECTOR STRATEGIES

At the regional level, the RSS framework involves four key steps: (1) identifying clusters of opportunity; (2) analyzing the needs of each cluster; (3) developing and modifying programs and curricula to meet industry needs; and (4) implementing new programs and curricula. A visual model of the regional sector strategies approach appears below:



The cluster of opportunity analysis step is a data-intensive activity in which key regional stakeholders determine where workforce and economic development opportunities exist. The cluster needs analysis step brings together various groups from a particular industry cluster to identify what needs to be done to support that cluster. In the context of education, this means determining the type and extent of education (career pathways) that needs to be provided, the general content of that education and estimated numbers of students needed to provide a sufficient educational pipeline for employers. (California Regional Economies Project, 2008). In the cluster program development step, the community college develops new and modifies existing programs to meet industry needs. Finally, in the cluster program implementation step, the community college recruits students and implements programs.

Importantly, the RSS framework is an ongoing process involving constant evaluation to determine whether community college programs are meeting workforce needs. Additionally and because of its ongoing nature, the RSS framework must incorporate business and industry at every stage in the process.