

# Silicon Valley ALLIES Innovation Initiative Evaluation Report

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# I. Introduction

Silicon Valley is home to an exceptionally diverse population of non-native English speakers. A recent report ranked San Francisco's metropolitan area as having the 7th largest number of working-age limited English proficient residents (Wilson, 2014). Approximately one-fifth of the population in Silicon Valley—which is located in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties—speaks English “less than very well,” according to a 2011 report from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Immigrants and their children comprise a growing segment of the regional workforce. According to one estimate, immigrants and their children are expected to account for all workforce growth in Silicon Valley over the next 20 years (Casner-Lotto, 2011). However, the region lacks sufficient resources to meet growing demand for both adult English as a second language (ESL) training and technical career training. In 2011, the Migration Policy Institute recommended that Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties needed to increase the number of adult ESL classes to meet the estimated ESL instruction needs given the size of the limited English proficient adult immigrant population (Grantmakers, 2011).

Significant reductions to California's state adult education funding in 2010 and a fragmented educational and training system for English learners in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties has, over time, created systemic barriers that prevent English learners from acquiring basic skills they need to transition to higher levels of education. Higher levels of education are increasingly important in a regional economy characterized by occupations that place a premium on communications and customer service. While many employers struggle to hire qualified employees in middle-skilled jobs, job seekers also struggle to access resources that could help them develop skills relevant to rapidly changing employer needs. The Silicon Valley Alliance for Language Learners' Integration, Education, & Success Innovation Initiative (SV ALLIES) was launched to address these challenges when the county of San Mateo was awarded a U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Workforce Innovation Fund Grant in 2012.

The Workforce Innovation Fund aims to transform systems, support innovations in programs, and contribute to the evidence base of best practices. The Fund supports programs that restructure and redesign workforce service delivery strategies as well as improvements in systems that lead to positive outcomes for workforce system customers. DOL's objectives were to fund projects that seeded innovation at the systems level, through policies, organizational structures, planning processes, performance measurement, procurement, investment priorities, and information



management systems to support service delivery strategies that result in better outcomes and lower costs.

DOL awarded grants to three types of projects on a continuum from those proposing new ideas that had never been tried to those implementing well-tested ideas adapted to new contexts. SV ALLIES received an award of approximately \$3 million for a Project Type A to develop new and untested ideas. Type A projects are those that proposed new or emerging structural and/or service delivery reform ideas that had been tried only in limited circumstances (if at all), but were supported by strong logic models and/or preliminary successful outcomes data. By focusing on change at both the service delivery and the systems levels, and by requiring rigorous evaluation of each investment, DOL sought to ensure that WIF investments form the basis for broader change and continuous improvement in the operation of the public workforce system.

The DOL required all projects to include an evaluation by a third party evaluator. WestEd was awarded the contract to evaluate SV ALLIES. The evaluation includes (1) a formative evaluation, (2) an outcome evaluation, and (3) a cost study.

## Summary of Key Evaluation Findings

Some of the key findings presented in this evaluation report include the following:

### **Formative Study: System-Level Findings**

**The SV ALLIES Innovation Initiative led to new relationships between members of the initiative's Steering Committee and created information resources that helped to establish a foundation for change.** While the initiative did not achieve the change in workforce systems serving adult immigrant English learners that was initially envisioned, the stakeholders—who participated in the Steering Committee over the course of the three-year effort and worked together to launch and run pilot projects—credited the project with facilitating changes in their approach to working with other partners in the workforce development system and designing and providing services.

**Establishing the preconditions for implementing Collective Impact (CI) is important to accomplish by the start of launching a CI initiative.** To successfully launch a CI initiative and make sustained progress toward an initiative's goals, it is essential to have a small, stable group of influential leaders, or “champions,” who are in a position to command resources, affect policy, and lead progress through phases of

activity to build conditions of CI, adequate financial resources, and agreement among stakeholders that there is an urgent need for action.

**While it is possible to generate early interest among community leaders and develop a common agenda, data that defines important issues along with opportunities for collaborative action are important for sustaining momentum.** Sequencing activities in early phases of action to ensure data defining the population and issues are available to make the case for action, guide development of the Common Agenda, and inform decisions on strategy and priorities for implementation is critical to maintaining focus and progress.

**A project's scope, organization, and staffing are important factors affecting progress toward building the conditions of Collective Impact.** Keeping the scope of work feasible and focused on quick wins and near-term results while simultaneously working on longer-term objectives is important to maintaining stakeholders' engagement and motivation. Since CI initiatives take time to build, this type of "both-and" approach is necessary.

**The conceptual organization of the Collective Impact approach might be improved by further research.** While Collective Impact is meant to be a flexible, adaptive approach to solving complex problems, not a prescriptive model, close observation of SV ALLIES Initiative activities and review of the literature suggest that activities important to launching a CI effort could be more adequately addressed in the literature that describes the approach and suggests effective practices.

**Collaborative work on concrete projects early in an initiative is important to launching a successful CI initiative.** Supporting implementation of activities related to specific goals of the initiative is a critical component for success in early phases of the initiative, in addition to action that builds conditions of Collective Impact and advances progress through phases of CI implementation.

### **Outcome Study: Pilot Project Findings**

**The SV ALLIES pilot projects provided the opportunity for the partners to innovate.** The pilot projects launched through the initiative enabled partners to collaborate to serve English learners in ways they had not done before. In one case, adult schools partnered with each other and a regional workforce development agency for the first time to provide program services to a shared population. In another case, co-enrolling incumbent workers and adult school students in the same pilot provided a community college with the opportunity to gather data it needed to adapt an incumbent worker workplace curriculum for adult school students.

**The SV ALLIES pilots expanded participants' access to contextualized English language instruction.** Approximately 70% (37/53) of incumbent worker pilot participants reported on the exit survey that they had not previously enrolled in any English language classes. Establishing the incumbent worker pilot programs required a strong commitment from the participating employer(s), and involved a senior manager and/or a labor-management organization that championed the program. The job seeker pilot also served a population (English learners with college degrees) that neither of the participating adult schools reported serving before.

**The majority of completers in each of the four SV ALLIES pilots demonstrated test score gains on their pilot's English pre- and post-assessment test.** A majority of participant survey respondents from each pilot also agreed that participation improved their English language skills.

**All the incumbent worker pilot participants were retained or promoted within 30 or 60 days after the pilot program ended.** In two pilots where promotion and retention were measured for up to six months, all but one participant retained their jobs.

**By 60 days after the job seeker pilot ended, 28% of participants had obtained a new job.** Additionally, the evaluation team found a **positive association between the number of job advising sessions attended and the likelihood of obtaining a new job.**

**The pilot projects increased participants' confidence to succeed in their jobs and advance in their careers.** A majority of SV ALLIES pilot program participants in each of the four pilots reported that participation increased their confidence in applying for jobs with higher pay or jobs higher on the career ladder. Program staff and instructors also reported that participants' general confidence level improved through time spent in the pilot programs. Employers also reported observing an increase in pilot participants' confidence levels.

The remaining sections of this chapter provide a description of the structure and goals of the SV ALLIES Initiative and an overview of the evaluation approach.

## Description of SV ALLIES Innovation Initiative

SV ALLIES is designed to support adult English learners in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties to succeed in family-sustaining careers. The initiative has two primary goals: (1) Build a system to coordinate and align the activities of multiple stakeholders who provide education, training, and employment opportunities to English learners; and

(2) pilot new program services for English learners that blend English instruction and workforce readiness skills. SV ALLIES is a partnership between the region's three federally and state-funded workforce development agencies and ALLIES. The original ALLIES Initiative formed in 2010 with support from the Silicon Valley Community Foundation to bring together adult schools and community colleges to meet the needs of adult English learners in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties, and remained active throughout the term of the WIF grant. The SV ALLIES project was intended to build on and significantly expand the early efforts of ALLIES. The project was guided by a Steering Committee composed of organizations from key sectors in the English learner-serving community: adult schools, community-based organizations (CBOs), community colleges, employers, labor organizations, philanthropic organizations, workforce development agencies, and organizations supporting English learners.

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## The Policy Landscape Surrounding SV ALLIES: A Brief Overview

Around the time that the SV ALLIES grant was being written, California's education system had undergone budget cuts and program reductions totaling \$1.5 billion from 2007/08 to 2011/12, hitting community colleges as well as other institutions (Bohn, Reyes & Johnson, 2013). In a letter to the education community dated April 26, 2011, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson noted that California had been facing "a historic budget crisis." In 2012, Governor Jerry Brown met dissent when he proposed merging adult education into community colleges over a two-year span and instead endorsed a "compromise plan" with Assembly Bill (AB) 86 (Posnick-Goodwin, 2014).

Introduced on January 10, 2013, and signed into law on July 1, 2014 (Open: States, n.d.), AB86 responded to the 2013–2014 State Budget's appropriation of \$25 million to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) in order to provide consortia two-year planning and implementation funding toward developing adult education (CCCCO, 2015b). AB86 regional planning offers opportunities and access to resources for adult education through the collaboration and planning of its Cabinet and Work Group, as well as with the funding it provides (CCCCO, 2015a). In 2015–2016, AB86 will begin to provide consortia "incremental investments" to "expand and improve the provision of adult education" (CCCCO, 2015a). Key goals include a focus on providing grant funding for elementary and secondary basic skills, ESL and workforce classes for eligible immigrants, education programs for adults with disabilities, "short term" CTE programs with "high employment potential," and apprentice programs (CCCCO, 2015a).

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The initiative sought to achieve its goals by implementing the Collective Impact (CI) approach to social innovation to increase cross-sector alignment and learning among

the multiple stakeholders participating in this initiative. Collective Impact outlines five conditions—a common agenda, shared measurement, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and presence of a backbone organization—that are essential to systematizing collaborative strategic planning across multiple stakeholders. The assumption of the CI approach is that organizations working together guided by the five conditions can plan and execute a more effective route to social change than organizations working independently to address problems (Hanleybrown, Kania, & Kramer, 2012). The SV ALLIES Steering Committee was tasked with laying the groundwork to build the five conditions required for a successful CI effort and helping to lead specific project activities to achieve the goals of improving the workforce service delivery system and program services for English learners. The project logic model appears in Appendix A.

### **Issues Addressed by the SV ALLIES Initiative**

In the San Francisco Bay Area, in California, and nationwide, the health of our future economy depends on preparing immigrants and their children for 21st century careers. The problem addressed by this initiative has two major components: (1) Due to high levels of immigration, the need for integrated English language and career technical education (CTE) for adults in the Silicon Valley region far exceeds the available supply. This is critical because the two-county region, like much of the nation, is replacing retiring baby boomers with workers that have much lower levels of educational attainment. Furthermore, existing adult English language acquisition programs are generally not designed to address critical labor market needs. And (2) San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties do not have a systematic, coordinated strategy for developing the critical segment of the workforce that is dependent on recent immigrants.

A basic challenge is that English as a second language (ESL) instruction is delivered by two separate systems—K–12-based adult schools and the California Community College system—that have separate funding, governance, and accountability structures. Immigrants requiring assistance in acquiring English-language and career skills face various hurdles in relation to these two systems: a wide and confusing variety of individual class offerings; no obvious roadmap of classes to take them toward their language and career goals; confusion about progressing through the education system; duplication of curriculum among different classes and education systems; and burdensome, redundant assessments.

Adding to these challenges, the delivery system for ESL and CTE is highly fragmented and lacks alignment to regional workforce needs. Structurally, having two separate systems responsible for ESL presents systemic barriers to student transitions to higher

levels of education and training. An assessment conducted by the original ALLIES Initiative documented that in many communities there were no formal or even informal links between ESL programs offered by adult schools and those offered by community colleges. The ALLIES assessment also noted deficiencies in the alignment of assessments and curricula of the two systems, and uneven use of the best practice of aligning curricula to high-need occupations (ALLIES Network, 2011). In addition to gaps within the education sector, the original ALLIES noted a need for improved linkages between education, businesses, and workforce development agencies, which often depend on personal relationships between the sectors, as opposed to cross-sector institutional agreements. Overall, collaborations in the region tend to be an uncoordinated series of bilateral relationships, for example, between an adult school and a local business, as opposed to a systematic cooperative approach between sectors. The SV ALLIES Initiative is designed to address these issues through systemic planning guided by a Steering Committee (representing organizations from the education, business, and workforce sectors) and by piloting new program strategies through cross-sector partnerships.

## Evaluation Overview

In 2012, SV ALLIES awarded WestEd a contract to evaluate the initiative. The evaluation involved three main components. First, WestEd conducted a formative evaluation to understand how the SV ALLIES Initiative used the Collective Impact approach to develop and design improvements to Silicon Valley's workforce service system for English learners. Second, WestEd conducted outcome evaluations of participant-serving pilot interventions generated as a result of the SV ALLIES planning process. Finally, the evaluation included a cost study that examined how grant funds were spent across the grant initiatives.

The goal of this evaluation report is to:

- Describe the trajectory of the initiative's Collective Impact approach to achieving workforce service system improvements for English learners.
- Present employment and retention outcomes, participants' perceptions of the pilot interventions, and ways the pilot projects contributed to improving career pathway opportunities for English learners.
- Situate the findings in the context of existing evidence on career pathways programs, integrated skill-building interventions, and systems change.

WestEd researchers evaluated two types of interventions: those that built the workforce service system for English learners and interventions that piloted new

language and workforce-readiness services for English learners. Early in the initiative's activities to develop and implement the conditions characterizing Collective Impact efforts, stakeholders identified shared priorities for action to build a workforce system infrastructure that would better meet the needs of adult English learners. One priority for action was to engage stakeholders in system-level planning to develop a coordinated assessment and referral process (CARS) to be used by multiple project stakeholders to connect English learners to services offered by organizations connected to the SV ALLIES Initiative. The CARS planning and development process sought to operationalize alignment and coordination by: (1) conducting an inventory of assessment and service planning processes used by organizations that served English learners and (2) designing and developing system improvements to enable better coordinated intake and management of adult English learner clients among participating agencies.

The SV ALLIES strategic planning process also generated priorities for testing new approaches to delivering program services for English learners. Stakeholders achieved early agreement on prioritizing pilot projects that would establish partnerships between workforce development agencies, adult schools, and employers. Pilot program interventions emerged from discussions among project stakeholders and were approved by the project steering committee. The shared purpose of the pilot interventions was to connect English learners to jobs and career pathways through training opportunities that blend job search skills, job skills, and contextualized English language instruction.

WestEd conducted three types of studies: a formative evaluation to understand how the SV ALLIES Initiative developed and designed improvements to the workforce service system, outcomes evaluations of a job seeker pilot and a group of incumbent worker-serving pilot interventions, and a cost study of grant activities. The studies are briefly described here and described in detail in the main body of the report.

### **Formative Study of the Collective Impact Intervention**

WestEd conducted a formative evaluation of the SV ALLIES Collective Impact intervention. The evaluation included gathering and reporting information to help guide ongoing strategic planning, providing feedback on key project milestones and critical junctures in the planning process, and documenting how specific strategies or interventions emerged to enhance training opportunities for English learners.

As described earlier, SV ALLIES applied a CI approach to building a sustainable infrastructure to improve the workforce development system and workforce services and programs for English learners in Silicon Valley. Collective Impact holds that, as no



single organization is responsible for any major social problem, no single organization can solve it. Also fundamental to Collective Impact is the idea that convening multiple stakeholders with vested interests in a pressing social issue will create opportunities for innovative solutions to emerge.

The formative evaluation examined the development and progress of the SV ALLIES Initiative. It explored two dimensions of SV ALLIES activity. The first dimension focused on fostering the five key conditions of the CI approach to social innovation:

- Common agenda
- Shared measurement
- Mutually reinforcing activities
- Continuous communication
- Backbone organization

The second dimension of activity was focused on planning that supported building the workforce development service system infrastructure for English learners in Silicon Valley. Accordingly, WestEd gathered data to document and assess evidence of the five CI conditions underpinning a successful initiative and to document and assess the design and development of a coordinated assessment and referral process to connect English learners with services. Findings were provided to project leaders and stakeholders in regularly scheduled feedback sessions, to help guide strategic planning and continuous improvement as project activities unfolded.

The research questions guiding the formative evaluation were:

- 1) To what extent are SV ALLIES Collective Impact strategies evolving as planned?
- 2) How do stakeholders perceive the Collective Impact approach adds value to (or extends) existing workforce system change strategies?
- 3) To what extent is the SV ALLIES Initiative creating a more organized education, training, and support-services system to help English learners transition to career pathways?
- 4) What lessons have been learned that could inform similar efforts in other communities or workforce systems?

### ***Data Sources***

To answer the research questions for the formative study, WestEd researchers used a variety of methods to collect and analyze the data and develop the findings:

- **Observations and ongoing interpretive findings:** WestEd researchers observed and participated in project planning meetings and observed



Steering Committee meetings. WestEd also participated in a debriefing call after each Steering Committee meeting to review successes and areas for improvement, and provided a summary of observations for each meeting.

- **Interviews:** WestEd researchers conducted one-on-one in-person and telephone interviews with key project leaders about the phases and conditions of Collective Impact, as well as the challenges and factors that facilitated progress in implementing Collective Impact—both generally and specifically in the context of the SV ALLIES Initiative.
- **Surveys:** WestEd collected participant feedback forms at Steering Committee meetings. In August 2013, the 22 Steering Committee members were invited to participate in an online survey designed to capture their understanding of key components of the SV ALLIES Initiative. The responses provided baseline information on how Steering Committee members perceived the Collective Impact approach and the service offerings for adult English learners at the end of Year 1. Steering Committee members were surveyed on these same topics again in Year 3 to see if and how their perceptions changed over time as the initiative progressed.
- **Document review:** WestEd researchers reviewed documents and minutes from project team meetings; Steering Committee meeting agendas, meeting minutes, sign-in sheets, PowerPoint presentations, and handouts; and materials from selected subcommittee meetings, including meetings with CBOs and the SV ALLIES Core Leadership Group.

### Outcome Evaluations: Job Seeker and Incumbent Worker Pilots

WestEd also conducted outcome evaluations of the four pilot projects approved by the Steering Committee. One pilot project, the English Learners' Ladders to Success, served job seekers enrolled at adult schools. The other three pilot projects provided contextualized English language instruction to incumbent workers. The outcome evaluations assessed whether intensity of participation (as measured by attendance) in the projects correlated with an improvement in employment outcomes (e.g., positive change in job status), English literacy, and/or digital job search gains (e.g., perceived gains in ability to use a computer). Outcome analyses were supplemented with participant satisfaction surveys and project staff interviews to help contextualize and elaborate the outcome findings and to help guide the growth of the new pilot projects. A brief description of each pilot project is provided below (full descriptions can be found in the Outcome Evaluation chapter).

- The **English Learners' Ladders to Success (ELLS)** pilot program was a partnership between Palo Alto Adult School, Sequoia Adult School, the San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department, and SV ALLIES. The goal of this pilot was to help participants improve their English language skills, learn job search strategies, and find a new job.

- The **Santa Clara Kaiser Permanente Workplace English (KPWE)** pilot project was a partnership between Kaiser Permanente Santa Clara, the Service Employees International Union-United Healthcare Workers-West (SEIU-UHW-WEST) & Joint Employer Fund (Education Fund), Santa Clara Adult School, Building Skill Partnerships, and SV ALLIES. The project provided incumbent employees with paid release time to attend a class designed to improve English language skills, digital literacy, and customer service skills.
- The **Skyline English Language Development Training (ELDT)** pilot is a collaboration between Skyline College, two hotels in San Mateo County, and SV ALLIES. The pilot aimed to improve participants' English language skills, customer service skills, and increase employee confidence and success.
- The **Hospitality 360 Banquet Service Class (H360)** was created by the South Bay Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE) Training Trust Fund and a team of hotel employees who had participated in a similar class, with support from a Mission College ESL instructor and SV ALLIES. The goal of the program was to provide contextualized instruction to current hotel employees to teach them how to be banquet support-servers, improve their English skills, and expand their customer service skills.

The outcome evaluation of these pilot interventions addressed the following research questions:

- 1) Is participation in the pilot intervention (as measured by intensity of participation, such as attendance) associated with a higher likelihood of job retention and/or obtaining a new job or higher wage?
- 2) What are the gains in English skills and/or digital job search skills for project participants?
- 3) What were participants' satisfaction levels with the pilot projects and how did they perceive the projects' influence on their career plans?
- 4) What lessons have been learned that could inform similar efforts in other communities or workforce systems?

### ***Data Sources***

Data sources for the outcome evaluation of the four pilot projects included the following:

- **Administrative data:** Project data, attendance data, teacher assessment data (i.e., pre- and post-test data), post-project data about employment status, and retention data supplied by project managers.
- **Survey data:** WestEd surveyed participants at the end of each pilot project. The survey asked participants to rate and/or describe their satisfaction and perceived program benefits, such as the degree to which participation

influenced their English language ability, confidence to attend additional training, and/or apply to jobs higher on the career ladder. The survey also included questions about potential barriers to employment and reasons why students enrolled in the pilots.

- **Teacher/project manager interviews:** The interviews explored topics related to English literacy and digital literacy (when applicable), perceived benefits, challenges experienced by staff and students, and implementation-related topics (e.g., barriers, processes for ensuring consistency in instruction).

## Cost Study

WestEd's cost study examined how grant funds were distributed across the grant activities and, where applicable, examined non-grant funds that contributed to supporting grant activities. A cost per participant was estimated for the participant-serving interventions.

The cost study addressed the following two research questions:

- 1) What are the costs of the SV ALLIES Initiative?
- 2) What is the cost per participant served?

## Data Sources

Data sources for the cost study were the following:

**Expenditure data:** WestEd obtained cost data from SV ALLIES. The costs were broken down by initiatives and included in-kind and leveraged funds that contributed to grant activities, as applicable.

**Initiative administrative data:** WestEd obtained data on the number of participants from each initiative. Participants included individuals who enrolled in pilot initiatives and those that attend Steering Committee and related meetings.

The complete evaluation methodology appears in Appendix C.

## Limitations of the Evaluation

The SV ALLIES project was intended to innovate and break new ground based on promising practices. The evaluation design and methods selected were intended to be flexible and appropriate to the initiative's activities and available data as the interventions developed over time. The design and methods selected for this evaluation limit the ability to generalize findings presented in this report to other contexts or populations, as they are specific to this particular initiative. However, the findings can serve as a source of information for stakeholders in the workforce development field who may be interested in adopting similar practices and the

findings can suggest areas for future research to continue to build the body of evidence on the type of interventions evaluated by this study.

## Structure of the Report

This report presents evaluation findings based on WestEd's analysis of the data, along with summaries that offer interpretations of the findings and lessons learned. The report concludes with a summary of the key findings and a discussion of lessons learned. While the research team consulted project leaders, staff, and stakeholders in the process of developing the data and drafts of this report, the interpretations and conclusions in the report represent the perspective of the research team.

The remaining sections of this report are organized as follows:

- Chapter 2 presents a **literature review** to frame the evaluation findings on the SV ALLIES Initiative within the broader context of research on cross-sector and career-pathways initiatives.
- Chapter 3 presents the **formative evaluation** of the SV ALLIES Collective Impact effort, describing the phases of work associated with developing the Steering Committee and the Collective Impact approach, and reporting successes and challenges with respect to achieving systems change and developing and launching pilots.
- Chapter 4 presents the findings of the **outcome evaluation** that WestEd conducted of the initiative's four pilot projects that offered contextualized language and workforce-readiness services to adult English learners.
- Chapter 5 presents the **cost study** findings.
- The sixth and final chapter presents **conclusions and lessons learned** drawn from careful review and analysis of the findings and discussion with project leaders.

## II. Literature Review: Evidence Supporting Project Interventions

This literature review aims to establish a context that will help to frame the evaluation findings on the SV ALLIES Initiative within the broader body of research on cross-sector and career-pathways initiatives. The evaluation of the SV ALLIES Initiative adds to an existing body of knowledge on efforts to implement the Collective Impact (CI) model, as well as efforts to effect change in workforce development systems geared toward the needs of English learners. This chapter of the report provides (1) an overview of the essential elements and drivers of Collective Impact, including a discussion of Collective Impact and systems change; (2) a summary of lessons learned from cross-sector collaborations using Collective Impact; and (3) a review of the literature presenting results of evaluations of career pathways models, sector strategies, and state-funded incumbent worker programs related to ESL. The literature review concludes with a brief overview of SV ALLIES's contribution to the evidence base.

### Collective Impact

The Collective Impact (CI) approach to social innovation provided the framework for the SV ALLIES Initiative. CI aims to move away from isolated instances of change toward cross-sector, large-scale impact (Kania & Kramer, 2011). The CI approach includes five success factors that rely on multiple stakeholders working together toward a common goal (Kania & Kramer, 2011; Garringer & Nagel, 2014):

- **Common agenda:** All participants have a shared vision for change including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed-upon actions.
- **Shared measurement:** Stakeholders collect data and measure results consistently to ensure efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable.
- **Mutually reinforcing activities:** Participant activities are differentiated while still being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.
- **Continuous communication:** Mechanisms are built to ensure consistent and open communication across many stakeholders, to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and foster appreciation of common motivation.

- **Backbone organization:** Creating and managing Collective Impact requires a separate organization with staff and a specific set of skills to serve as the backbone (Kania & Kramer, 2011).

Collective Impact has drawn the attention of those involved in cross-sector initiatives because it emphasizes a high level of coordination among multiple stakeholders, focuses on data-driven strategies and solutions, and prioritizes communication and shared measurement (Garringer & Nagel, 2014). Theoretical perspectives on systems change and systems thinking echo this emphasis on “patterns of interrelationships between parts of the whole [e.g., within an organization] rather than the parts in isolation” (Hargreaves, 2010, p. 5). Communication and collaboration are driving forces in the process of systems change and research shows that “a connected web of services and programs will result in better outcomes for individuals than if those services and programs are not connected” (Coffman, 2007, p. 4).

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## The Preconditions for Collective Impact

The most critical factor by far is an *influential champion* (or small group of champions) who commands the respect necessary to bring CEO-level cross-sector leaders together and keep their active engagement over time. Dynamic leadership is important in catalyzing and sustaining Collective Impact efforts. It requires a very special type of leader—one who is passionately focused on solving a problem but willing to let the participants figure out the answers for themselves, rather than promoting his or her particular point of view.

Second, there must be adequate *financial resources* to last for at least two to three years, generally in the form of at least one anchor funder who is engaged from the beginning and can support and mobilize other resources to pay for the needed infrastructure and planning processes.

The final factor is the *urgency for change* around the issue to convince people that an entirely new approach is needed, such as a crisis that creates a breaking point; the potential for substantial funding that might entice people to work together; or a fundamentally new approach to the motivating issue. Conducting research and publicizing a report that captures media attention and highlights the severity of the problem is another way to create the necessary sense of urgency to persuade people to come together.

(Adapted from Hanleybrown, Kania, & Kramer [2012], *Channeling Change: Making Collective Impact Work*, p. 3)

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Systems change literature also outlines the complexities involved in altering system “dynamics, structures, and conditions,” stressing the importance of *systems thinking* and *systems interventions* (Hargreaves, 2010). While many using the Collective Impact approach report that the process can be difficult, it is still described as an effort with

tremendous opportunity because of the focus on “leveraging the highest and best capacities of multiple actors” (Spark Policy Institute, 2014). The Collective Impact approach, adopted by the SV ALLIES Initiative, reflects a substantial body of research on systems change (Hargreaves, 2010; Preskill & Beer, 2012), including a growing attention on “community collaboratives” (Jolin, Schmitz, & Seldon, 2012).

## Cross-Sector Collaboration Strategies

Evaluations of prototypes stemming from Collective Impact, such as the well-known Strive Partnership and its “cradle-to-career” structure (Kania & Kramer, 2011; Jolin, Schmitz, & Seldon, 2012), have examined successes and challenges associated with the model. FSG, the group that spearheads the Collective Impact approach, has produced eight case studies evaluating effective Collective Impact efforts (Kania & Kramer, 2011; Jolin, Schmitz, & Seldon, 2012). Two of these case studies, *Opportunity Chicago* and *Partners for a Competitive Workforce*, deal specifically with workforce development.

The Opportunity Chicago initiative is upheld as a model Collective Impact effort based on the approach’s strategies at different phases of development (FSG, 2013). The initiative’s success has been attributed to several factors: clearly defined goals and strategic planning (a five-year time frame for guiding 5,000 low-income and low-skill job seekers living in public housing to services and job opportunities through transitional job programs); the backbone group and partner organizations that had significant expertise and resources to apply to serving the target population; adaptable and mutually reinforcing working groups; timely dissemination of data; and the ability to raise and sustain funding (FSG, 2013). FSG studied the Opportunity Chicago initiative, noting important firsts for stakeholders and changes to systems, such as forging collaboration between partners who had not previously worked together and focusing specifically on underserved populations—goals also set by the SV ALLIES Initiative (Parkes, Holt, Lee, Theodore, & Cook, 2012).

Partners for a Competitive Workforce (PCW), a CI effort in Northern Kentucky, Indiana, and Cincinnati, also addressed workforce development systems and employers’ needs for skilled workers. The effort resulted in 6,400 people trained for “in-demand jobs” and high percentage gains in employment, job retention, and earnings (FSG, 2013). Lessons learned included developing a shared measurement system, implementing a common database to overcome challenges, building strong relationships with partners and stakeholders, and keeping the agenda “fresh” throughout the initiative (FSG, 2013).

### Exhibit 1: Phases of Collective Impact

Components for Success	PHASE I Initiate Action	PHASE II Organize for Impact	PHASE III Sustain Action and Impact
<b>Governance and Infrastructure</b>	Identify champions and form cross-sector group	Create infrastructure (backbone and processes)	Facilitate and refine
<b>Strategic Planning</b>	Map the landscape and use data to make case	Create common agenda (goals and strategy)	Support implementation (alignment to goals and strategies)
<b>Community Involvement</b>	Facilitate community outreach	Engage community and build public will	Continue engagement and conduct advocacy
<b>Evaluation and Improvement</b>	Analyze baseline data to identify key issues and gaps	Establish shared metrics (indicators, measurement, and approach)	Collect, track, and report progress (process to learn and improve)

Source: Hanleybrown, Kania, & Kramer (2012), *Channeling Change: Making Collective Impact Work*.

In 2014, Education Northwest profiled eight education efforts that were using the CI approach; these profiles underscored three main elements critical to success during an initiative's phases of implementation: (1) "authentic, cross-sector engagement" from the beginning and evolving throughout successive phases of effort; (2) "data to drive the work," which continues to be produced "as projects evolve"; and (3) "learning and improvement" as an iterative maturing process (Garringer & Nagel, 2014). One of the education efforts profiled by Education Northwest, the All Hands Raised Partnership in Portland, Oregon, effectively leveraged cross-sector partnerships with six county school districts, parents, CBOs, government organizations, research and educational organizations, corporate partners/sponsors, and others; these cross-sector partners helped ensure that "less 'powerful' voices" (particularly youth) contributed to student success from "cradle to career" (Garringer & Nagel, 2014). Concerning the importance of data, the report on the All Hands Raised Partnership notes that measurement challenges (i.e., capacity to gather, report, and share high-quality data) arose for some initiatives; for example, when information was based on "nonacademic indicators" (Garringer & Nagel, 2014). To respond to these types of measurement challenges, some initiatives have created tools to consistently measure nonacademic metrics, such as



surveys aimed at capturing information on student engagement and motivation (Garringer & Nagel, 2014).

The White House Council for Community Solutions, created in 2010, tasked itself with investigating how “communities are solving problems together and moving the needle [of change] in a way that improves results for the whole community” (Jolin, Schmitz, & Seldon, 2012, p. 2). In a report highlighting 12 case studies out of over 100 initiatives, the Council found that promising collaboratives followed four core principles:

(1) commitment to long-term involvement; (2) involvement of key stakeholders across sectors; (3) use of shared data to set the agenda and improve over time; and (4) engagement of community members as substantive partners (Jolin, Schmitz, & Seldon, 2012). Among the successful initiatives, the Council also referred back to the Strive Partnership and PCW effort in Northern Kentucky, noting that “successful collaboratives usually conduct extensive research and data collection to understand both the problem and how systems will need to shift over time” (Jolin, Schmitz, & Seldon, 2012, p. 4). The Council also noted that challenges to effective collaboratives included lack of commitment and difficulty making sustained efforts (Jolin, Schmitz, & Seldon, 2012).

In addition to using the Collective Impact approach to guide its work, the SV ALLIES Initiative supported pilot projects that focused on helping English learners access career pathways to enable them to succeed in family-sustaining careers. The pilot projects provided both job seekers and incumbent workers with access to education and training because advancing from an entry-level or low-skill position to one with more responsibility often requires additional skills in addition to higher levels of English language proficiency.

## Career Pathways Initiatives

Career pathways initiatives and sector strategies seek to meet employers’ needs for a skilled workforce and help workers (in many cases, entry-level and low-skill workers) access the education and training they need to secure employment and advance to higher-paying jobs. In general, sector strategies focus intensively on the workforce and economic development needs of a specific industry or a cluster of related industries over a sustained period. They promote economic growth and industry competitiveness by developing new education, training, and career pathways into targeted industries, including for low-income and underserved populations. Evaluations suggest these approaches have produced positive results for employers, students, and job seekers

(Roder & Elliot, 2014; Conway, Blair, & Helmer, 2012; Maguire, Freely, Clymer, Conway, & Schwartz, 2010; Aspen, 2002; Roder, Clymer, & Wyckoff, 2008).<sup>1</sup>

A widely studied, replicated, and successful pathways model, Washington's Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) program, blends ESL instruction with technical skills training. The I-BEST model, created by the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, integrates basic-skills and technical-skills instruction to help adult basic education and ESL students complete postsecondary credentials and advance to higher education. A quasi-experimental impact study of I-BEST found that I-BEST students are more likely than regular adult basic education and English learner students to earn college credit, more likely to earn a certificate or degree, and more likely to achieve learning gains on basic skills tests (Zeidenberg, Cho, & Jenkins, 2010). The I-BEST model was a strong influence in planning discussions that generated the SV ALLIES project pilots.

## English Language Training for Incumbent Workers

Some states use government funds to support English language training for incumbent workers with limited English proficiency through training grants provided to eligible employers. Evaluations of English language training programs for incumbent workers in California and New Jersey found generally positive results for employers and employees (Moore, Blake, Phillips, & McConaughy, 2003; Heldrich Center, 2008). The New Jersey evaluation found that approximately one third of all the 363 grants awarded in New Jersey between 2002 and 2004 were used to support (all or in part) literacy or basic skills training. Interviews with employers providing ESL training found “companies reported that they would not have provided ESL training, or provided it at a lower level, without the Customized Training grants.”<sup>2</sup> Companies reported that the ESL training increased the productivity of workers by increasing their ability to communicate with co-workers, supervisors, and in the case of casinos, with customers” (Heldrich Center, 2008). The study of New Jersey's Customized Training grants also examined wages of a group of incumbent employees who

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<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is currently conducting the first large-scale, experimental study of career pathway models focusing on adult students (the Innovative Strategies for Increasing Self-Sufficiency evaluation). Final results are not expected until 2017 (Fein, 2012).

<sup>2</sup> Customized Training Grants support training of incumbent workers, where the training is customized to fit the needs of workers at a given workplace.

completed ESL training and found that their average wages remained stable in the period prior to the program and up to eight quarters after training ended.<sup>3</sup>

## Evaluation of the SV ALLIES Initiative: Contribution to the Knowledge Base

When WestEd met with the SV ALLIES team in March 2013 to discuss the evaluation plan, few reports on Collective Impact had been published, and all had been released by the foundations funding the initiatives. No independent third-party study had been conducted or published. In September 2013, FSG began releasing brief case studies of successful Collective Impact initiatives. However, these case studies represent only initiatives described by FSG and/or project stakeholders as successful, and focus on large CI efforts that build on existing initiatives serving well-defined target populations.

This study represents one of the first evaluations of a CI initiative conducted by an independent third-party evaluator. It examines an attempt to apply the CI approach to initiate action among stakeholders to build a coordinated system, as well as programs and services, to meet the education and workforce needs of a marginalized and highly diverse target population. In addition, while evaluations have documented outcomes for career pathways programs in many settings, few studies have evaluated career pathways programs in adult school settings or programs that have a primary focus of serving English learners. Likewise, few studies have focused on contextualized English language instruction for incumbent workers. This evaluation of the SV ALLIES Initiative will contribute to the existing body of evidence by reporting outcomes for adult school English learner students and for incumbent workers engaged in training that integrates English language instruction and technical skill training.

The information derived from the development, implementation, and evaluation of SV ALLIES will add to the body of knowledge available about workforce development systems, career pathways models, integrated skill-building interventions, and systems change including:

- Demonstrating how the Collective Impact approach was used to produce change in workforce development systems and training initiatives tailored to needs of English learners.

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<sup>3</sup> This study did not measure impacts.

- Identifying successes and challenges that occur during collaboration guided by the CI approach.
- Reporting employment, retention, and perceived benefit outcomes for adult school English learner students and for incumbent workers engaged in training that integrates English language instruction and skill training.

# III. Formative Evaluation of Silicon Valley ALLIES Collective Impact Approach

The Silicon Valley ALLIES Innovation Initiative (SV ALLIES) was designed to support adult immigrant English learners in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties to succeed in family-sustaining careers. The project had two primary goals: (1) Build a system to coordinate and align the activities of multiple stakeholders who provide education, training, and employment opportunities to English learners; and (2) pilot new program services for English learners that blend English instruction and workforce readiness skills. It sought to do this by applying the Collective Impact (CI) approach to social innovation to increase cross-sector alignment and learning among the multiple stakeholders participating in the initiative and to direct their actions toward achieving common goals.

In this chapter on WestEd's formative evaluation of SV ALLIES, we first present an overview of the Collective Impact approach, along with a description of the SV ALLIES Initiative's plan for building the conditions of Collective Impact. We then describe how the formative evaluation was conducted and what it examined. Next, we offer the findings of the formative evaluation from Year 1, Years 2 and 3, and the Steering Committee's perspective on the Collective Impact approach; through these findings, we describe the initiative's progress toward establishing the conditions of Collective Impact, launching pilot projects to achieve change in workforce systems, and testing new services for English learners. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the successes, challenges, and lessons learned from the initiative's efforts to apply the CI approach to build a cross-sector workforce development initiative serving English learners.

## Overview of Collective Impact

Collective Impact involves the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem. Collective Impact holds that, as no single organization is responsible for any major social problem, no single organization can solve it. Also fundamental to Collective Impact is the idea that convening multiple stakeholders with vested and common interests in a

pressing social issue will create opportunities for innovative solutions to emerge from their interactions. The CI approach outlines five conditions that must be in place to support multiple stakeholders working together towards common goals and, in the process, generating organic forms of social innovation. Exhibit 2 outlines the five conditions of Collective Impact.

**Exhibit 2: Five Conditions of Collective Impact**

Condition	Description
<i>Common Agenda</i>	All participants have a shared vision for change including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed-upon actions.
<i>Shared Measurement</i>	Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants ensures efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable.
<i>Mutually Reinforcing Activities</i>	Participant activities must be differentiated while still being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.
<i>Continuous Communication</i>	Consistent and open communication is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and create common motivation.
<i>Backbone Organization</i>	Creating and managing Collective Impact requires a separate organization(s) with staff and a specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative and coordinate participating organizations and agencies.

Source: Hanleybrown, Kania, & Kramer (2012).

Further, three preconditions must be in place before launching a Collective Impact initiative: an *influential champion*, *adequate financial resources*, and a sense of *urgency for change*. As described in the Literature Review of this report, these preconditions define the opportunity, motivate the stakeholders to come together, and “hold them in place until the initiative’s own momentum takes over” (Hanleybrown, Kania, & Kramer, 2012, p. 3).

Once these preconditions are in place, activities to launch a CI effort typically unfold in three phases: initiate action, organize for impact, and sustain action and impact. The first two phases can take between six months and two years, while the third can last decades. Specific timelines depend on the degree to which the initiative builds on existing collaborative efforts, the scope of the problem, and the breadth of community engagement. Activities within and across these phases unfold iteratively and, as

conditions change over time, require ongoing refinement and adaptation. Being realistic about timelines and conducting a readiness assessment based on the preconditions of Collective Impact can help planners anticipate how much time will be needed to prepare for and progress through the phases to launch Collective Impact (Hanleybrown, Kania, & Kramer, 2012).

Exhibit 3 outlines important activities associated with each phase of launching a CI effort. The SV ALLIES team developed this exhibit by adapting FSG material (discussed in the Literature Review chapter of this report), adding the column for Phase III to FSG's original material. The first phase of a CI effort focuses on establishing the boundaries of the system affecting the issue targeted for social innovation and a shared understanding of the issue. The second and third phases focus on organizing for impact and developing strategies. The final phase is characterized by efforts to foster ongoing strategic learning; identify and implement refinements and adaptations responsive to emerging conditions and solutions; and build resources to sustain action over time.

**Exhibit 3: Planning and Implementation Phases of Collective Impact Efforts**

Components for Success	Phase I Initiate Action	Phase II Organize for Impact	Phase III Develop Strategies	Phase IV Sustain Action and Impact
<b>Governance and Infrastructure</b>	Identify champions and form cross-sector group	Create infrastructure (backbone and processes)	Facilitate communication and accountability	Facilitate and refine
<b>Strategic Planning</b>	Map the landscape and use data to define the problem and make case	Create common agenda (agree on goals)	Develop and prioritize strategic options to apply against the goal	Support implementation (alignment to goal and strategies)
<b>Community Involvement</b>	Facilitate community outreach	Engage community and build public will	Educate community around prioritized strategies	Continue engagement and conduct advocacy
<b>Evaluation and Improvement</b>	Analyze baseline data to identify key issues and gaps	Establish shared metrics (indicators, measurement, and approach)	Refine metrics relative to strategies, develop efficient data collection process	Collect, track, and report progress (process to learn and improve)

Source: SV ALLIES Common Agenda and Roadmap for Implementation (adapted from FSG materials), July 2013.

## SV ALLIES Project Plan to Build Conditions of Collective Impact

The SV ALLIES project plan to build the conditions necessary for Collective Impact was organized into four phases, with the first three to be completed during a planning phase over the course of the first year of the three-year grant term. The phases summarized in Exhibit 4, below, were outlined in the SV ALLIES original technical proposal and the SV ALLIES Common Agenda and Roadmap for Implementation prepared by the project team and presented to the Steering Committee in July 2013.

Results that were to be accomplished in Year 1 included:

- 1) **Build regional system capacity**, specifically through organizing Collaborative Action Teams, the members of which would be recruited by the Steering Committee to further elaborate and carry out the work of the common agenda.
- 2) **Prepare data and tools for implementation**, including developing an inventory of the organizations, services, and programs in Silicon Valley geared toward serving English learners, and identifying sectors and occupations relevant to the English learner population.
- 3) **Develop plans for pilot tests or “quick wins”** through the Collaborative Action Teams, to adapt the overarching strategies suggested by the Steering Committee to local conditions in communities across the region.

**Exhibit 4: SV ALLIES Project Plan to Build Conditions of Collective Impact**

Year	Month	CI Phase	SV ALLIES Project Activity
<b>YEAR 1: Planning</b> July 2012–July 2013	3–7	1: Initiate Action	Convene a Steering Committee and develop a common vision and high-level goals; set the Common Agenda.
<b>YEAR 1: Planning</b> July 2012–July 2013	7–10	2: Organize for Impact	Establish Collaborative Action Teams. The teams adapt the overall vision outlined in the Common Agenda to local conditions, promote collaboration of organizations with shared customers, and identify/design pilot projects.
<b>YEAR 1: Planning</b> July 2012–July 2013	7–12	3: Develop Strategies	Create and refine a shared set of metrics, build out the backbone organization, develop and prioritize strategic options, and draft an implementation plan.
<b>YEARS 2 &amp; 3: Implementation</b>		4: Sustain Action and Impact	The Collaborative Action Teams will establish working groups to pursue the prioritized strategies, and implement pilots to serve English learners.



## Staffing of the SV ALLIES Initiative

In Year 1, the initiative was staffed by a project director, a private consultant who was also serving as project director of the original ALLIES initiative;<sup>4</sup> a project specialist at the San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department (the executive director position was vacant, but the executive director was meant to have a role on the project leadership team); and a team of consultants at the nonprofit firm FSG, a principal of which developed the Collective Impact Approach to Social Innovation. During the first year, the WIF grant project team served as the interim backbone organization for SV ALLIES. In Collective Impact efforts, the backbone organization is tasked to coordinate and manage activities among stakeholders, guide vision and strategy, support aligned activities, establish measurement practices, build public will, advance policy, and mobilize funding.

In addition to the project team staffing the initiative, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) assigned a federal project officer charged to facilitate access to technical assistance and provide guidance to grantees on program and grants management regulations and compliance issues. Within the first year of the grant, the DOL federal project officer assigned to the grant changed three times. In addition, the DOL offered technical assistance through contracts with several third-party vendors, which developed online communities of practice around subject matter areas, resources, and webinars, as well as provided targeted assistance in response to grantees' specific questions and/or the Department's suggestions. The DOL assigned grantees specific TA providers based on categories of change strategies and subject matter areas, and grouped them with other grantees exploring similar strategies to facilitate shared learning.

## Formative Study

WestEd conducted a formative study to generate information that could help project leaders and stakeholders better understand how SV ALLIES was unfolding and inform their planning for moving the project forward. The formative study had two objectives: first, to provide the project team and participating stakeholders rapid cycles of

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<sup>4</sup> The original ALLIES Initiative formed in 2010 with support from the Silicon Valley Community Foundation to bring together adult schools and community colleges to meet the needs of adult English language learners in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties. The original initiative remained active throughout the term of the grant-funded project. The SV ALLIES project was intended to build on and significantly expand the early efforts of ALLIES.

feedback over the course of the project's planning and early implementation phases; and, second, to document key benchmarks, successes, challenges, and lessons over the course of three years of the project's efforts to build a workforce service delivery system addressing the needs of English learners by applying a Collective Impact approach.

The formative study followed two dimensions of SV ALLIES project activity:

- Efforts to create conditions of Collective Impact and achieve systems change; and
- How SV ALLIES developed its pilot projects, with a specific focus on a pilot to improve systems-level coordination of existing services for English learners and a pilot that intended to serve job seekers through entrepreneurship training.

## Research Questions

The formative evaluation addressed the following research questions:

- 1) To what extent are SV ALLIES Collective Impact strategies evolving as planned?
- 2) How do SV ALLIES stakeholders perceive the Collective Impact approach adds value to (or extends) existing workforce system change strategies?
- 3) To what extent is the SV ALLIES Initiative creating a more organized education, training, and support-services system for English learners to transition to career pathways?
- 4) What lessons have been learned that could inform similar efforts in other communities or workforce systems?

## Data Sources

Data to answer these questions were obtained from multiple sources. In the first year of the project (between November 2012 and July 2013), WestEd adopted a developmental evaluation approach and methods. The evaluators participated in, observed, and documented regularly scheduled project planning meetings, and observed, documented, and gathered feedback at Steering Committee meetings. Evaluators met and shared observations and feedback with the project team regularly, and conducted in-person and telephone interviews with the project team.

Beginning in Year 2, WestEd shifted to a formative evaluation approach and methods. Evaluators continued to participate in, attend, and document meetings—particularly those to plan and launch the pilot projects—and project leadership and Steering Committee meetings. Evaluators also conducted in-person and telephone interviews with key project staff; facilitated group discussions with the Steering Committee and

Core Leadership Group (a subset of the Steering Committee); conducted two online surveys of Steering Committee members; and polled Steering Committee members at the final in-person meeting to gather their perceptions of the CI approach and lessons learned over the course of the project. Researchers also reviewed notes, meeting minutes, documents and materials that were developed to support the project and Steering Committee meetings.

A full description of the methodology can be found in Appendix C.

## Summary of Findings

The main formative evaluation findings are summarized below.

**The SV ALLIES Innovation Initiative led to new relationships between members of the initiative’s Steering Committee and created information resources that helped to establish a foundation for change.** While the initiative did not achieve the change in workforce systems serving adult immigrant English learners that was initially envisioned, the stakeholders—who participated in the Steering Committee over the course of the three-year effort and worked together to launch and run pilot projects—credited the project with facilitating changes in their approach to working with other partners in the workforce development system and designing and providing services.

**When launching a Collective Impact (CI) initiative, it is critically important to establish the preconditions of CI.** To successfully launch a CI initiative and make sustained progress toward an initiative’s goals, it is essential to have a small stable group of influential leaders, or “champions,” who are in a position to command resources, affect policy, and lead progress through phases of activity to build conditions of CI.

**While it is possible to generate early interest among community leaders and develop a common agenda, data that defines important issues along with opportunities for collaborative action are important for sustaining momentum.** Sequencing activities in early phases of action to ensure data defining the population and issues are available to make the case for action, guide development of the Common Agenda, and inform decisions on strategy and priorities for implementation is critical to maintaining focus and progress.

**A project’s scope, organization, and staffing are important factors affecting progress toward building the conditions of Collective Impact.** Keeping the scope of work feasible and focused on quick wins and near-term results while simultaneously working on longer-term objectives is important to maintaining stakeholders’

engagement and motivation. Since CI initiatives take time to build, this type of “both-and” approach is necessary.

**The conceptual organization of the Collective Impact approach might be improved by further research.** While Collective Impact is meant to be a flexible, adaptive approach to solving complex problems, not a prescriptive model, close observation of SV ALLIES Initiative activities and careful review of the literature suggest that aspects of launching a CI effort could be more adequately addressed in the literature that describes the approach and suggests effective practices.

**Collaborative work on concrete projects early in an initiative is important to launching a successful CI effort.** Supporting implementation of activities related to specific goals of the initiative is a critical component for success in early phases of the initiative, in addition to action that builds conditions of Collective Impact and advances progress through phases of CI.

The rest of this chapter is organized as follows. The first section describes how the Collective Impact approach developed over the course of the SV ALLIES Initiative, specifically addressing progress toward establishing the five conditions of CI and tracking major milestones of project activity, including development of pilot projects, over time. The second section examines stakeholders’ perspectives on successes and challenges associated with implementing the CI approach. The final section synthesizes findings and discusses lessons learned.

## Findings

The first year of the SV ALLIES Initiative was devoted to building the conditions of Collective Impact and planning for implementation activities in Years 2 and 3. To document the initiative’s progress over time, this section presents findings for Year 1 and then Years 2 and 3; the section concludes with a summary of the Steering Committee’s perspectives on the Collective Impact approach.

### Year 1: Planning Phase

In the first year, the initiative cultivated relationships among leaders and organizations in the two-county region with a role in serving adult English learners and established a Common Agenda. However, the initiative experienced challenges in fully developing key elements of the initiative’s plan to establish conditions of Collective Impact in Year 1, including developing data to inform strategies, a shared measurement system, a local structure to support implementation, and concrete ideas for participant-serving pilot projects.

### **The initiative recruited a Steering Committee and established a Common Agenda.**

Between July and December 2012, the project team successfully recruited 25 members to the SV ALLIES Steering Committee from multiple sectors with a stake in coordinating workforce and other services for English learners, including community colleges, workforce development agencies, adult schools, community-based organizations, employers, and organized labor organizations. In a planning meeting in October 2012, project leaders indicated that in the process of recruiting members to the Steering Committee, they sought to “elevate” the issue—that is, promote the large-scale significance of anticipated shifts in the composition of the local workforce toward a majority of English learners. One leader said the initiative’s goal was seen as an issue relevant only to “ESL” or “low-skill” populations and, while recruiting Steering Committee members, the team began framing it as a multigenerational workforce issue, to enroll people in a larger vision creating avenues for economic stability and widespread social change in the region. Project leaders also noted a tension in identifying target population(s) to support through the SV ALLIES Initiative. That is, while the WIF grant focused on adult immigrant English learners in the workforce, a more comprehensive social justice focus would target the entire population of low-skilled English learners, which could include undocumented adults.

The Steering Committee convened six times between January and July 2013, with each meeting lasting three hours. Five of the meetings were held at the office of a foundation represented on the Steering Committee; the office was centrally located in the Silicon Valley region. Efforts to establish a common vision and goals for the initiative were at the forefront of Year 1 activities, with all of the Steering Committee meetings devoting a portion of the agenda to reviewing, discussing, and contributing to a common understanding of the SV ALLIES Common Agenda. The Common Agenda set out the vision, outcomes, desired future state, change strategies, and principles that were to guide the effort.

The time Steering Committee members spent solidifying their understanding and support for the Common Agenda helped foster a sense of collaboration, open communication, and trust. This was consistently expressed in the meeting feedback forms and during meeting discussions. For example, one Steering Committee member reported that the initiative is responsible for her organization partnering with a neighboring adult school, which she described as a “refreshing change.” Other members stated that they appreciated “the rich conversations,” “people giving opinions,” “working groups,” and “small group facilitation.”

The project team also initiated communications with key stakeholders beyond the Steering Committee. In March 2013, the SV ALLIES project director prepared an advocacy statement advancing policy recommendations on funding for adult education, which was adopted by the Steering Committee and presented at a hearing before members of the California legislature. In the same month, the project team met with the Foothill College Basic Skills and CTE Task Forces to explore opportunities to align efforts. In April 2013, the project director collaborated with one of the foundations on the Steering Committee to convene a group of regional community-based organizations (CBOs) to discover new ways to collaborate and strengthen the work they already do. Based on observations recorded by the evaluation team during the meeting, CBO participants appeared to be willing to explore opportunities to leverage their work, seek additional partners, and brainstorm and work together.

**Year 1 planning took longer than anticipated and the infrastructure for implementing the initiative’s tasks and activities did not materialize. Steering Committee members consistently expressed an interest in focusing less on process and more on concrete projects.**

Steering Committee meeting agendas typically included time to review content from prior meetings, listen to presentations of best practices and examples from CI efforts in other communities, and participate in large and small group discussions to brainstorm ideas. While Steering Committee meetings lasted three hours, the project team was not able to work through all items on the agenda at any of the six meetings held between January and July. As the Steering Committee continued to discuss high-level strategies, the timeline for implementing key elements of the five CI conditions and project tasks continued to be extended into the future after each meeting.

As early as January 2013, some Steering Committee members indicated on meeting feedback forms that too much of the meeting time was devoted to process and not enough to concrete work on how best to actualize the goals of the initiative. This sentiment continued to be expressed over time. In feedback forms in March 2013, the month by which the project plan called for Collaborative Action Teams to be organized, three of seven who provided feedback asked to spend time discussing more practical ideas; for example, one member expressed the need to “Start to identify some low-hanging fruit to start working on together. Conversations are still quite broad.”

The project team stressed the importance of continuing work to establish the conditions of Collective Impact before moving to pilot projects, noting the planning phase in other CI initiatives had sometimes lasted more than one year. However, in response to continued suggestions of some Steering Committee members, at the end

of the April 2013 Steering Committee meeting, limited time was allocated for members to brainstorm “quick wins” or pilot projects. At the May 2013 meeting, the Steering Committee generated an extensive list of high-level ideas for pilot projects (e.g., collaborate on outreach campaign, create crosswalk of assessment tools, build referral system, co-locate classes), and broke into smaller, regionally focused groups to recommend members for the Collaborative Action Teams that would be formed to support local action. The Steering Committee did not meet in June.

At the July 2013 meeting, Steering Committee members reviewed a roster of individuals nominated to work on three regional Collaborative Action Teams with a view toward recruiting these members over the summer and convening the Collaborative Action Teams in the fall. As a result, planning pilot projects or “quick wins” was further delayed, because the Action Teams, which had not yet been formed, were intended to take the lead in developing specific designs for the pilots.

**Some of the data to support the planning process were not collected and analyzed, such as an inventory of the current English learner-serving organizations and programs in Silicon Valley and an analysis of the sectors and occupations relevant to the English learner population.**

At the March 2013 meeting, the project team presented a high-level environmental scan which outlined major issues affecting demand for services for English learners; some regional organizations responsible for providing education, training, and workforce services for English learners; and possible strategies to address issues related to providing language- and workforce-support services for English learners in Silicon Valley. In March, April, and May of 2013, Steering Committee members expressed the need for more information on specific programs and services providing ESL instruction, adult, general and career education and training, job preparation and a wide range of family and social supports that existed in the region (an asset map), as well as initiatives and policy discussions underway in the adult English learner-serving system (i.e., a map of the landscape as state-mandated policy and funding changes were unfolding). They also requested data on key issues and gaps in the field of services for English learners to inform development of pilot project strategies. These materials had not been developed by the July 2013 meeting.

One of the five conditions of a successful CI effort is development of a shared measurement system to ensure participating organizations collect data and measure results consistently and their actions can be aligned with larger initiative goals. The SV ALLIES project team indicated it was having trouble locating and triangulating existing data describing the target population (i.e., who the English learners were,



their skill levels, and their past and current education and workforce successes and challenges). The absence of baseline data on the target population made it difficult to achieve focus and agreement on goals. Organizations on the Steering Committee did not hold English learners as central to their mission and, in the absence of data, members struggled to identify and prioritize either a group(s) of English learners or a specific challenge around which to organize their efforts.

At the July 2013 meeting, Steering Committee members participated in a brief activity to prioritize indicators that would best track the progress of the SV ALLIES Initiative and demonstrate its success. However, the Steering Committee did not formally adopt a set of measures to guide the initiative and no data were collected or analyzed in the categories of action identified in the Common Agenda to inform decision-making in Year 1.

**Changes in project leadership, project staffing, and the scope of the project, as well as shifting ideas about the initiative's priorities, contributed to delays in implementing the initiative's tasks and activities.**

The departure of the executive director of the San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department shortly after the SV ALLIES Initiative was launched left a key leadership position unfilled for approximately nine months during the first year of the project. The project specialist at the San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department also left early in 2013 for a new job at a neighboring workforce development agency, and continued to participate in the Steering Committee but not on the project team. Further, the federal project officer assigned to the grant changed three times, and the TA consultant assigned to the project left for a new position. Consequently, active project management and workforce development leadership from the San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department was absent, and communications with and from the funder (DOL) and its TA provider were not tapped to help direct the course of the project during most of the first year.

In addition, staffing changes at FSG, the Collective Impact consulting organization, also affected progress. During the first year of the project, four different individuals filled the role of lead consultant to the SV ALLIES project, and other members of the consulting team changed as well. In addition, none of the FSG consultants, including the project director, had subject matter knowledge in workforce development or English language learners or prior experience in leading workforce development projects. This instability and inexperience contributed to delays in producing



materials and progress on the work plan because of the learning curve associated with new consultants joining a project already in progress.

At the end of Year 1, the SV ALLIES project director and the FSG project team explained that the SV ALLIES project differed from other CI efforts in important ways. First, the SV ALLIES project's leadership structure was organized differently than in other CI efforts. In other Collective Impact efforts, the project funder—usually a foundation or philanthropic organization—plays a pivotal leadership role. In the case of SV ALLIES, funds were awarded by DOL and managed by the San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department that lost its director shortly after the grant was awarded, and the position remained unfilled for an extended time. As described by one SV ALLIES project leader from FSG: “In a typical CI process, the funder comes along with us, is at the table and ‘bought in’ throughout the entire process. We don’t exactly have that same tie to the DOL or our funder here—this impacts an understanding of expectations for the CI process, how it’s implemented, how we intend to move forward.”

FSG also noted its role in this project differed from the roles it typically plays in CI efforts. As the consulting group that developed Collective Impact, an FSG team is usually embedded in all aspects of a CI effort to help direct, manage, resource, and evaluate the work. In Year 1 of the SV ALLIES Initiative, FSG served as a member of the project team in a consulting role to the project director. The project director also consulted with other technical assistance providers, including local organizations with a focus on adult education and/or English learners and those retained by the DOL to support WIF grantees, as well as an independent evaluator for the original ALLIES project. This staffing structure—in which multiple parties were consulted for technical assistance and support—increased the need for both role clarification and close coordination and communication among members of the project team, which was not always easy or possible to achieve.

Project leaders also attributed delays in progress on the work plan to the scope of the effort. Reflecting on the first year of the project in June 2013, they indicated they initially underestimated the complexity of working to achieve change in the workforce system and the effort required to convene organizations from widely different sectors, none of which hold English learners as central to its mission. In addition, many individuals on the Steering Committee had not worked closely together before.

**Steering Committee membership and participation declined during the first year.**

Between April and July 2013, the number of Steering Committee members attending meetings declined and leveled at approximately 13-16 of the original 25 members. Three Steering Committee members attended only one or two of the six meetings; two were from CBOs and one was from a community college. Three other committee members resigned by July 2013, due to either leaving their current positions or competing demands on their time; two new members were recruited and joined the group by July.

Project leaders indicated they had to spend more time and effort “cultivating our champions” compared to other CI efforts because “people haven’t worked together and don’t know one another.” They explained other CI initiatives typically build on existing collaborative efforts in which “the major players and stakeholders are well known and have interacted with each other, and have connections with funders. The players are highly visible.” In addition, the initiative was launched against a backdrop of shifts in the policy and funding environment for adult education that introduced competing priorities and a high degree of uncertainty among stakeholders participating in the initiative.

The planning process unfolded against a backdrop that shifted from optimism, as federal policy discussions briefly focused on immigration reform, to one of concern as immigration reform stalled in Congress and the California State Assembly passed legislation (Assembly Bill 86) creating a new adult education grant program that mandated regional, collaborative program planning and budgeting.<sup>5</sup> Project leaders reported that changes in the adult education policy landscape created sensitivity in relationships between SV ALLIES stakeholders; distracted their attention away from the SV ALLIES effort; and made the process of designing innovative program strategies more difficult because stakeholders were unsure how existing programs and budgets would be affected by the new grant program.

At the end of Year 1, project leaders explained that CI efforts typically unfold in an iterative process, and elements planned in each phase can move forward more quickly or slowly depending on the direction and resources provided by project stakeholders. SV ALLIES project leaders acknowledged the “Initiate Action” phase (to convene the Steering Committee and develop the Common Agenda) had been lengthy: “We have

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<sup>5</sup> See The Policy Landscape text box in Chapter 1 for a description of California’s workforce development policies over the last few years.

had to take a long time to do this with SV ALLIES.” Project leaders explained that it can take a significant amount of time before conditions for collective action become mobilized. They acknowledged that this reality was in tension with the timelines required by the grant agreement, which required all planning necessary to launch pilots serving the target population to be completed in one year.

**The pilot projects did not emerge from Collaborative Action Teams, as planned.**

As noted above, the Steering Committee first began to brainstorm ideas for “quick wins” or pilot projects at the conclusion of the April 2013 meeting, generating a short list of approximately eight ideas. At the May 2013 meeting, the group generated a considerably longer list of ideas, ranging from system-level to participant-serving strategies. The ideas were high-level visions of system or program operations (e.g., conduct outreach campaign, develop map of service offerings, collaborate around digital literacy, co-locate classes, build common assessment tool) and were not developed more fully at subsequent Steering Committee meetings.

The first idea for a concrete project to serve English learners was offered by the leader of an organization who had joined the Steering Committee in May 2013. The Service Employees International Union-United Healthcare Workers-West (SEIU-UHW-WEST) & Joint Employer Fund (Education Fund),<sup>6</sup> which had previously worked with community colleges and adult schools to deliver other types of training, recognized the opportunity to partner with other organizations on the Steering Committee to offer contextualized English language instruction to environmental services workers at Kaiser Permanente, which has a large English learner workforce. The idea for the Kaiser Permanente Workforce English pilot project was presented and approved at the July Steering Committee meeting.

## **Years 2 and 3: Implementation**

Challenges in executing the Year 1 plan and ongoing changes in project leadership and staffing in project Year 2 resulted in decisions to align project activities more closely to Steering Committee members’ feedback and the requirements of the WIF grant agreement. Strategies to improve alignment included refining the scope and sequence

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<sup>6</sup> The Education Fund is a Taft-Hartley Trust Fund. The trust funds are collectively bargained by a union and a group of employers. The Education Fund provides education and training programs to eligible workers that help them improve their careers. Concurrently, the training enhances participating employers’ ability to attract, train, and retain its workforce.

of project activities, streamlining project leadership, stabilizing staffing structures, and making the SV ALLIES work plan and timeline more visible and accessible to help keep attention focused on implementation activities and deliverables.

**Changes in project leadership, staffing, and strategy continued in project Year 2, then stabilized in Year 3.**

The San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department hired a new executive director in August 2013, who began to take an active role on the SV ALLIES project leadership team. In response to Steering Committee members' requests for information and to move more quickly toward concrete projects, the new executive director of the San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department initiated discussions with the Initiative's project director to refine the scope and focus of the SV ALLIES effort and provided leadership while pilot projects were being designed and launched. However, the director left the position in December 2013, after approximately five months. An interim director was named and another new executive director was hired in March 2014, approximately four months later, who did not take as active a role in the project. A few months into project Year 3, the San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department announced it would officially merge with a neighboring workforce development agency, which was also participating in the project, and the director of the Workforce and Economic Development Department moved to a position in the Human Services Agency.

In concert with transitions in the Workforce and Economic Development Department's leadership, there were major changes in project staffing in Year 2. The consulting firm FSG, which was to provide ongoing support during implementation of the SV ALLIES Initiative activities, was released from the project and a local community-labor organization was procured to develop an asset map, labor market information, and data sharing tool through the CARS pilot (see description, below). In February 2014, the interim director of the San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department assumed the role of project director for SV ALLIES. The outgoing project director continued leading the original ALLIES effort and assumed the role of lead facilitator for a year-long San Mateo County adult education planning effort. In March 2014, the interim Workforce and Economic Development Department director/SV ALLIES project director retained a consultant with significant prior experience managing DOL grant-funded projects to join the project management team as the SV ALLIES Initiative project manager.

These shifts in personnel led to decisions by the new project management team to tailor the project's scope, activities, and work plan to meet WIF grant requirements and respond to Steering Committee feedback and requests for information provided in Year 1. The role of the Steering Committee changed slightly as a result of the project's strategic shift to tighten the scope of activities, focus on supporting pilot projects, and develop information that had not been completed in Year 1 to better support planning for systems change. The Steering Committee continued to provide direction and advice on building strategic connections across organizations in the two-county region, but was called on to make fewer decisions about comprehensive project strategies as well as specific project activities, such as building out conditions of Collective Impact beyond the Common Agenda.

As the new project management team assumed responsibility, they sought to engage Steering Committee members in individual discussions about their experience on the committee and with building conditions of Collective Impact. One of the new project leaders noted that the Steering Committee members:

Seem to think the first element (Common Agenda) is complete. There is little talk about shared data—this will come out of [CARS] and pilot projects. As far as other elements go, there is enough “disgust” about the process to be careful about dipping into it. The [Steering Committee] described the biggest source of frustration as too much time spent on the CI process, which should have been completed in 4–6 months, without a companion piece of implementation. What was proposed was not feasible—it didn't resonate, wouldn't work, but something else will.

The new project leaders' priorities were to “fast-track and back-track implementation” activities, including recruiting new members to the Steering Committee who could help implement project goals, establishing constant communication and transparency in actions taken to align with requirements of the WIF grant agreement, and creating a longer-range plan to establish backbone support in the future. Their preliminary plans included initiating discussions with the original ALLIES project to serve as a backbone organization, despite uncertainty of the long-term plans for specific pilot projects.

**As implementation of the initiative progressed, the composition of Steering Committee membership changed and stabilized. A Core Leadership Group**

**convened more frequently to provide direction and facilitate work on pilot projects.**

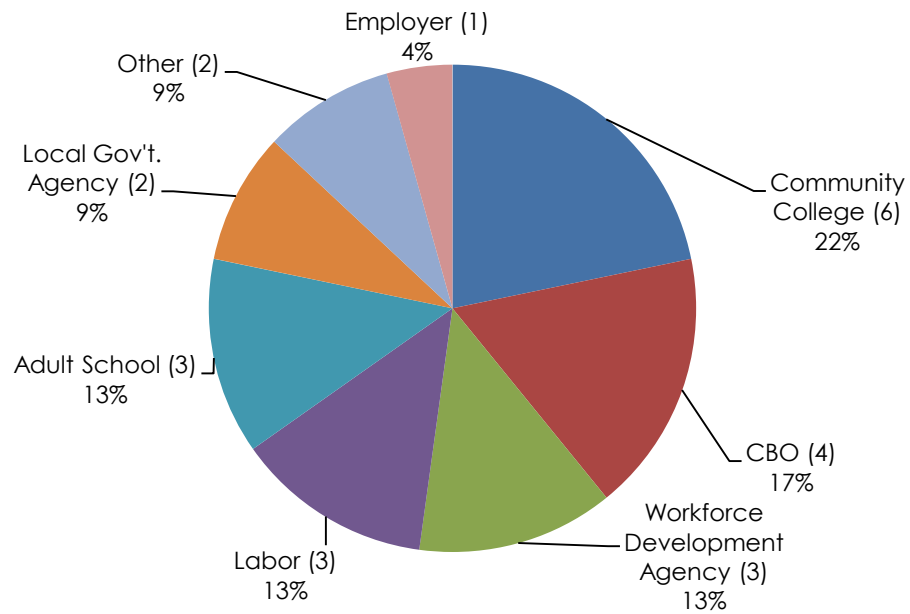
The Steering Committee was scheduled to convene quarterly in Years 2 and 3, and the project team recruited a subcommittee, the Core Leadership Group, to provide guidance and facilitate work between meetings. The Core Leadership Group was composed of nine individuals representing all key constituencies on the Steering Committee and initially met monthly, shifting to every other month and then to less frequent meetings in Year 3. Its membership remained relatively stable for the duration of the project. Overall, the Steering Committee convened five times over Years 2 and 3, somewhat less frequently than planned.

In Year 1 of the Steering Committee, there was strong representation from community colleges (22%) and CBOs (17%), but very limited representation from employers, with only one Steering Committee member identifying as an employer. By the midpoint of the second year through the end of the project, the number of members attending the Steering Committee meetings declined and leveled at approximately 13–16 members. The Steering Committee membership was less diverse in Years 2 and 3, with only one community college participating, and employers, students, and government agencies other than the workforce development agencies no longer represented.

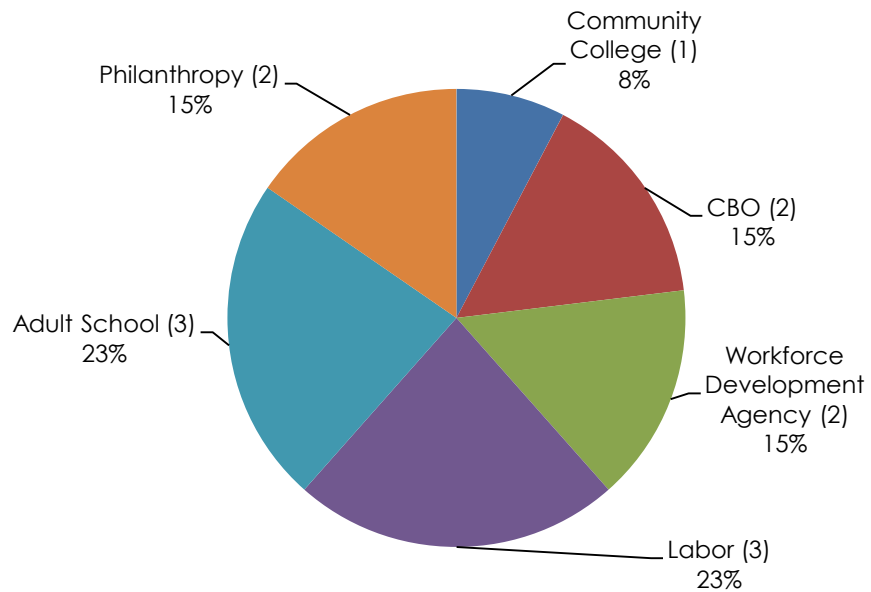
Exhibit 5 shows the organizational affiliation of Steering Committee members who attended meetings when the committee first convened in January 2013 and when the Steering Committee was last convened in October 2014 and January 2015.

### Exhibit 5: Type of Organizations on the Steering Committee

**Year 1: 2013**  
**(N=24)**



**Year 3: 2014–2015**  
**(N=13)**



*Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.*

Source: Attendance records from the following meetings: January 2013, October 2014, and January 2015.

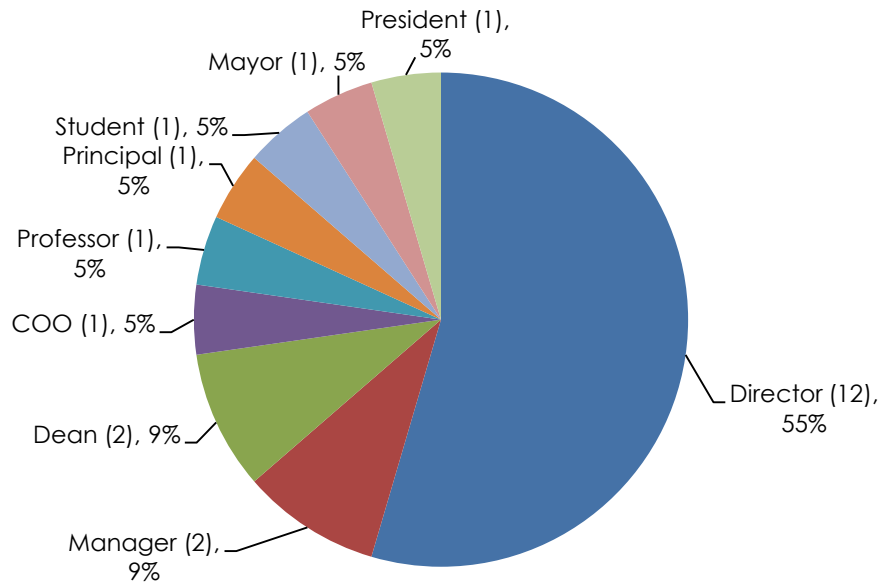
When asked if the Steering Committee had the right mix of people in terms of perspectives brought to the issue of serving the adult English learner population, there was a drop from 2013 to 2015 in the percentage of members who thought the Steering Committee reflected the right mix of people. While 63% of 2013 survey respondents said they felt the Steering Committee reflected the right mix of people very well or fairly well, only 45% of 2015 respondents answered that way. Instead, over half (57%) of 2015 respondents said they felt the Steering Committee reflected the right mix of people somewhat well. Some thought that recruiting additional members could have furthered their efforts. In each year of the project, Steering Committee members expressed improving opportunities to engage “heavy hitting industry representatives” and other key English learner stakeholders could have improved their experience with the initiative.

In addition to changes in the composition, the types of stakeholders who attended Steering Committee meetings shifted—in some cases from those in top leadership roles, like presidents and directors of organizations, to those with roles more closely linked to direct services, such as program directors and instructors. Exhibit 6 illustrates the shift in job titles of the Steering Committee members.

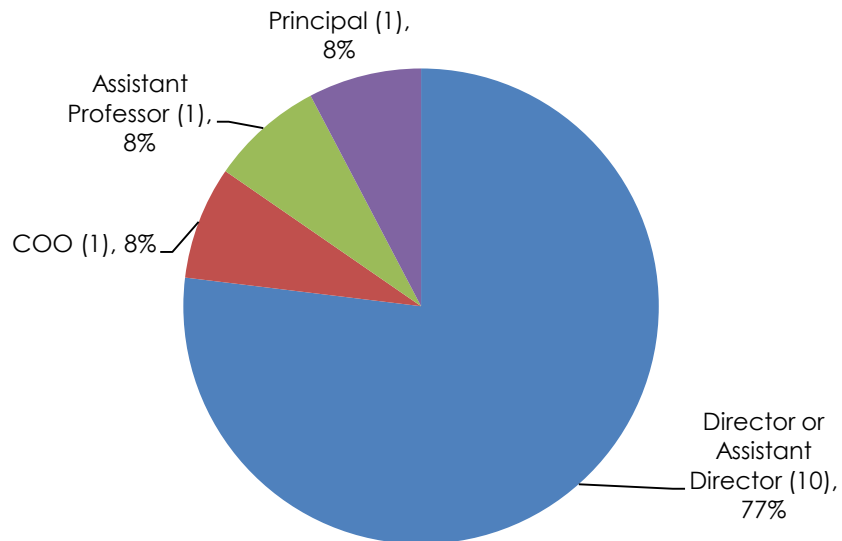


**Exhibit 6: Job Titles of Steering Committee Members (N=22)**

**Year 1: 2013  
(N=22)**



**Year 1: 2014–15  
(N=13)**



Source: Attendance records from the following meetings: January 2013, October 2014, and January 2015.

The changes in Steering Committee composition outlined in Exhibit 6 reflect and are consistent with changes in the initiative's overall strategy, which transformed the

Steering Committee from a large group (approximately 22–25) of executive project advisors to a slightly smaller group (approximately 13–16) focused on designing and implementing programs. While the Steering Committee membership underwent changes, the members continued to appreciate the opportunity to work together and carry forward work related to the Common Agenda.

**The project planned and implemented pilots in Years 2 and 3, shifting project resources to grow successful EL-serving pilots.**

Pilot projects were successfully developed and launched in Year 2. The project leaders sought guidance from the DOL and grant-funded technical assistance providers on program eligibility requirements concerning the use of federal funds in serving immigrants to facilitate pilot project planning. They reported receiving contradictory and ambiguous guidance on participant eligibility requirements, first from the TA provider and then from DOL, and repeated requests to TA providers and the DOL to obtain accurate information delayed progress in planning pilots. When the team received accurate guidance, the information required shifts in strategy concerning recruitment to the job seeker pilots (see discussion of ELLS pilot, section IV, below) to comply with eligibility regulations on use of federal funds to support services for immigrants.

In the beginning of project Year 2, the idea for the Santa Clara Kaiser Permanente Workplace English (KPWE) pilot was carried forward. Between July and November 2013, KPWE and two more participant-serving pilots that built on high-level ideas generated by the Steering Committee (in April and May 2013) were developed by the project team and a few members of the Steering Committee. The scope of a fourth pilot project—originally envisioned by the project team in Year 1 to create a common assessment and coordinated referral system (CARS) for English learners—was refined to focus on developing labor market information to inform career pathways planning and development, as well as an asset map of agencies serving English learners (see CARS section, below). Two of the three participant-serving pilots, the English Learners’ Ladders to Success (ELLS) and KPWE, progressed successfully. When the third pilot floundered, SV ALLIES shifted resources to support additional cohorts of the KPWE incumbent worker pilot and to launch additional incumbent worker pilots. WestEd conducted outcomes studies on the successful pilots (which are presented in subsequent chapters in this report). Factors that contributed to the success of the pilots included high levels of employer involvement, strong cross-sector connections between employers, support of education and community organizations, and support from the SV ALLIES project team.

### *Lessons from a Discontinued Pilot*

One pilot project targeting job seekers experienced challenges and was discontinued in project Year 2. The Job Connections pilot tested a partnership between one of the three participating workforce development agencies and three adult schools to provide English language instruction contextualized to job readiness skills development, along with an option to pursue either skills certification or entrepreneurship training. The main goal of the program was to connect English learners with resources to help them identify their career goals and improve their job-search skills and job skills. English language instruction was contextualized into the job search learning experience.

Students recruited from three participating adult schools participated in an orientation at work2future and 14 were enrolled in the 10-week program. The program was divided into two parts: (1) A four-week curriculum that included the basics of cover letters, resumes, interviewing, and online tools (such as social media networking for employment prospects); and (2) a six-week skills training track, in which students chose either a skills certification track or an entrepreneurial track.

The Job Connections pilot experienced recruitment challenges almost immediately. The pilot's launch was accelerated to meet the timing of grant objectives and to coincide with the adult schools' calendars, but conflicted with the winter holiday season during which many English learners return to their native countries for extended family visits. The launch was also complicated by interrupted communications between the pilot project team and SV ALLIES staff due to several factors: the work2future's decision to reorganize from a government agency to a foundation, SV ALLIES staffing changes, and the less frequent schedule of SV ALLIES Steering Committee meetings.

In Year 2, recognizing these challenges, SV ALLIES staff decided to shift resources from the Job Connections pilot to other new incumbent worker pilots after the initial Job Connections cohort was completed (11 participants completed a job-search skill-building course, and/or financial plan or business plan associated with the entrepreneurship track of the program). An additional two incumbent worker pilots were funded as a result of this shift in resources, and together the two new pilots served 91 participants.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The two additional pilots were: (1) A pilot in partnership with Building Skills Partnerships, which provided additional funding for a cohort of 11 incumbent workers to receive an additional 37.5 hours of Vocational ESL (i.e., workplace English) instruction. (2) A pilot in partnership with the South Bay HERE Training Trust fund, which served 80 incumbent workers through a five-week class (20 hours) in banquet service, workplace English

**In addition to the participant-serving pilots, SV ALLIES developed a pilot project to build capacity for systems-level change that generated the data and information resources the Steering Committee requested in Year 1.**

In Year 1, the initiative anticipated launching a pilot project to develop a coordinated assessment and referral system (CARS) focusing on key intake processes, shared assessment tools, a common database, and staff training. This work was to be planned and conducted through regional Collaborative Action Teams. It became apparent that the scope of this effort exceeded the capacity of the project and that Collaborative Action Teams would be difficult to convene and support. Accordingly, the focus of the pilot shifted from creating a shared intake process and referral system to engaging community stakeholders and compiling an asset inventory that could be used to eventually improve appropriate referrals and support development of an online directory of services.

The pilot was renamed the Community Asset Referral System (it kept the same acronym—CARS) to reflect the new focus on developing an asset map, as had been requested by the Steering Committee, which could be used to share important information about resources among project stakeholders. The project convened two focus groups of English learner service providers in each county to gather information on existing services and programs offered to English learners across the region; conducted interviews with English learners and gathered demographic information to create a profile of the workforce and English learners' needs; and developed occupational and industry information on career pathways in high-growth sectors. Priorities that drove these efforts included facilitating conversations and developing a product that could help build provider relationships, promote “warm handoffs” with referrals, and help to establish a “no wrong door” policy for English learners needing services and job skills training.

As one stakeholder expressed, “A big part of the asset map is identifying not only the training needed but the assessment tools, and then understanding why the tool is used for that organization’s clients. That is the part that is going to be the most important legacy.” The project team presented initial findings from the CARS pilot in September 2014 and at a subsequent meeting in January 2015, including a prototype for the

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instruction, and customer service. The pilot served 37 participants in one cohort and 43 in another.

searchable database that would house data from the asset map. All products were completed in May 2015.

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## Key activities of the CARS asset mapping process included the following:

**Establishing English learner demographics.** In order to better map the landscape, a variety of information on English learners in both counties was collected, including languages spoken in the area, residency and citizenship status, geographic distribution, educational levels, and employment and income (WPUSA, 2015). Seventy-seven languages in all were reported for English learners in Silicon Valley, with Spanish being the top language spoken by English learners (ibid., p. 8).

**Creating an inventory of available services, possible areas for alignment and collaboration, and current gaps and needs.** Stakeholders indicated that a main barrier to making referrals was knowing what services other organizations provided. The CARS pilot collected data that may promote collaboration or alignment of services among several sectors: adult schools positioned to provide access to GED and high school diploma opportunities; non-profits and CBOs that provide a wide range of support, including immigration and legal assistance; community colleges, which offer language, vocational, and postsecondary classes; and workforce development agencies, which offer employment and career development services. Gaps and needs that were identified included accessibility of services for different language groups other than Spanish; public and social assistance/policy (e.g., housing, childcare); and access to current labor market information and employment services.

**Identifying workforce and career opportunities.** Data generated during the CARS effort also included identifying areas for workforce and career opportunities for English learners in four categories: (1) labor force participation, (2) earnings, (3) current employment patterns, and (4) occupations with opportunity. The top opportunities outlined for English learner employment were in the service and care sectors, in occupations such as workers, housekeeping, grounds and construction, laborers, and maintenance.

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As described throughout the Findings sections for Year 1 and Years 2 and 3, the SV ALLIES Initiative went through many changes as it worked to build the conditions of Collective Impact and, ultimately, to develop and launch pilot projects to support the language and workforce readiness skills of English learners in Silicon Valley. Exhibit 7 summarizes the major changes over the course of the SV ALLIES Initiative.

### Exhibit 7: Overview of Major Changes in SV ALLIES Initiative

Area of Change	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
<b>Leadership structure</b>	San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department director position vacant for nine months Multiple changes in project consulting staff	Two changes in leadership at the San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department Multiple changes in project team staffing	San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department merged with neighboring workforce development agency
<b>Strategy</b>	Build conditions of Collective Impact Focus on both job seeker and incumbent worker pilots	Focus on developing information Steering Committee requested to support planning and pilot projects Focus on expanding incumbent worker pilots	Focus on developing information Steering Committee requested to support planning and pilot projects Focus on expanding incumbent worker pilots
<b>Direct service pilots</b>	1. English Learners' Ladders to Success pilot (ELLS) 2. Santa Clara Kaiser Permanente Workplace English (KPWE) 3. Job Connections	1. ELLS 2. KPWE 3. Skyline English Language Development Training (ELDT)	1. ELLS 2. KPWE 3. ELDT 4. Building Skills Partnership 5. Hospitality 360 Banquet Service Class
<b>System coordinating pilot</b>	Coordinated Assessment and Referrals/Community Asset Referral System (CARS) to focus on: (1) Common assessment, (2) asset mapping, (3) data system development, and (4) intake staff training	Community Asset Referral System: (1) Asset map of agencies serving English learners; (2) prototype for online directory of English learner services in region; and (3) labor market information to promote career pathway development	Community Asset Referral System: (1) Asset map of agencies serving English learners; (2) prototype for online directory of English learner services in region; and (3) labor market information to promote career pathway development

### Steering Committee Perspectives on Collective Impact

In August 2013, WestEd emailed a survey to 22 members of the Steering Committee. Nineteen of the 22 members responded to the survey (86% response rate). The purpose of the survey was to capture baseline information on key components of the SV ALLIES project and the Collective Impact (CI) approach. The survey included

questions about members' experience on the SV ALLIES Steering Committee, the goals and strategies of the SV ALLIES project, as well as the conditions of Collective Impact.

Due to significant changes in project strategy and in the composition of the Steering Committee, WestEd conducted a poll and facilitated a discussion of questions similar to those in the baseline survey at the last Steering Committee meeting held in January 2015, rather than replicating the entire baseline survey. In March 2015, a survey similar to the discussion questions posed at the final Steering Committee meeting was then emailed to all Steering Committee members who had ever attended a meeting. Due to a low response rate, WestEd used both the results of the poll and the discussion in the Steering Committee meeting and responses to the March 2015 survey to gauge Steering Committee members' perspectives on their experience with the project and the conditions of Collective Impact.

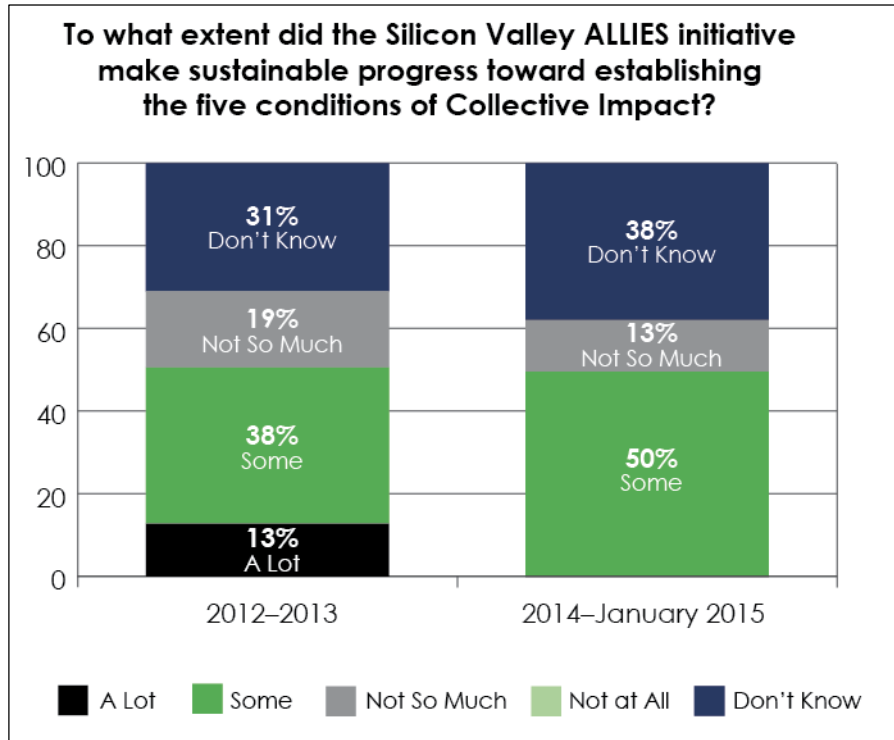
This section presents findings on Steering Committee members' perspectives on the extent to which the conditions of Collective Impact had been created in this initiative and on the CI approach more generally, as well as their thoughts on progress toward the SV ALLIES project goals to affect change and improve programs and services in the workforce service system for English learners.

### ***Collective Impact Conditions and Approach***

Reflecting on how the initiative had progressed since its inception, Steering Committee members reported in January 2015 that they thought the five conditions of Collective Impact were somewhat implemented relative to the planned approach. As shown in Exhibit 8, at the January 2015 Steering Committee meeting, the plurality of Steering Committee respondents (n=16) indicated that the Silicon Valley ALLIES Initiative made some sustainable progress toward establishing the five conditions of Collective Impact.

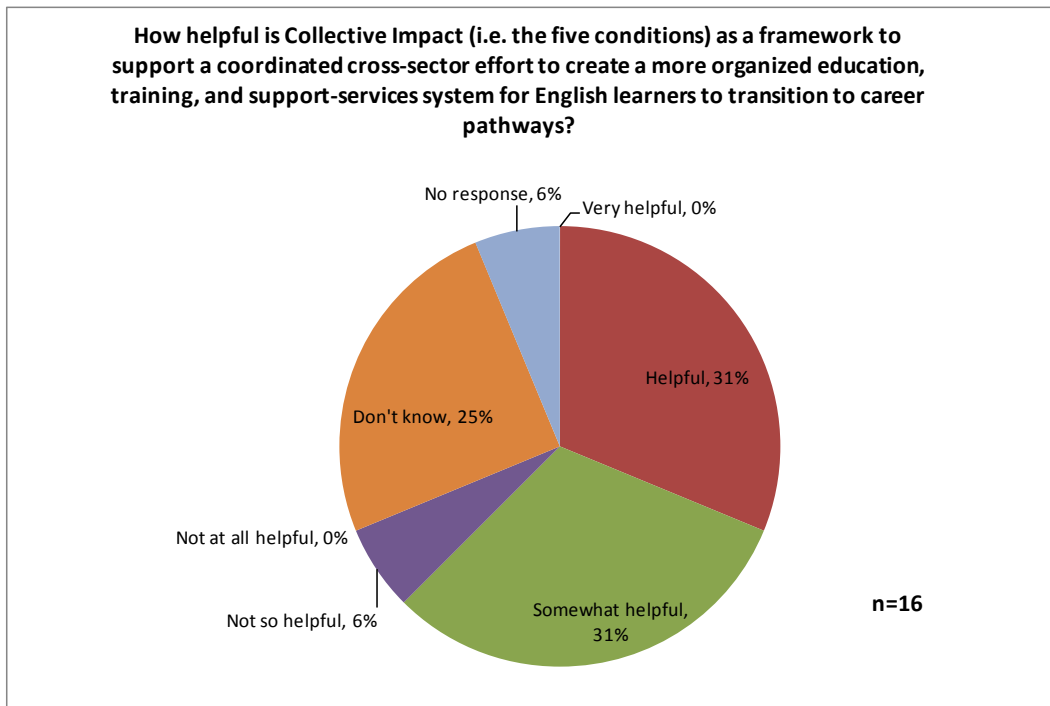
When asked about the CI approach on the whole, most Steering Committee members thought Collective Impact was a helpful framework to support coordinated cross-sector work. As seen in Exhibit 9, 62% of Steering Committee members who participated in the January 2015 poll said they thought Collective Impact was helpful or somewhat helpful as a framework for supporting a coordinated cross-sector effort to create a more organized education, training, and support-services system for English learners to transition to career pathways.

### Exhibit 8: Progress in Establishing the Five Conditions of Collective Impact



Source: Steering Committee Meeting Poll, January 2015.

### Exhibit 9: Steering Committee Perceptions on Value of Collective Impact



Source: Steering Committee Meeting Poll, January 2015.



In a discussion following the polling activity at the January 2015 meeting, some Steering Committee members said that personal connections established through the effort were the most meaningful outcome. In general, they saw value in the CI framework and approach to social innovation, but thought focusing on the “big picture” in the absence of information that would help direct strategy hampered progress toward both building conditions of Collective Impact and the specific goals of the WIF grant. Some described the effort and project plan for Year 1 as “executed poorly,” “ambitious,” and “too big,” but also thought that the value of what had been undertaken shouldn’t be discounted: “There was a lot of brilliance in bringing the partners into communication” and, “Conceptually, this was important to do.”

In the same discussion, Steering Committee members echoed earlier feedback indicating that access to better information to support planning, more rapid progress on developing a Common Agenda, and launching specific projects earlier in the process would have made the effort more meaningful and engaging to Steering Committee members. They noted that in Year 3 the Steering Committee numbered approximately half of the original group and that many of the remaining members were also participants in the original ALLIES effort. One member said, “Every time you lose a person from the group, you lose something. Part of the goal of Collective Impact was getting everyone thinking the same way—every time someone left, we lost something. There has to be a way to create a process within Collective Impact to understand this process and fix it.”

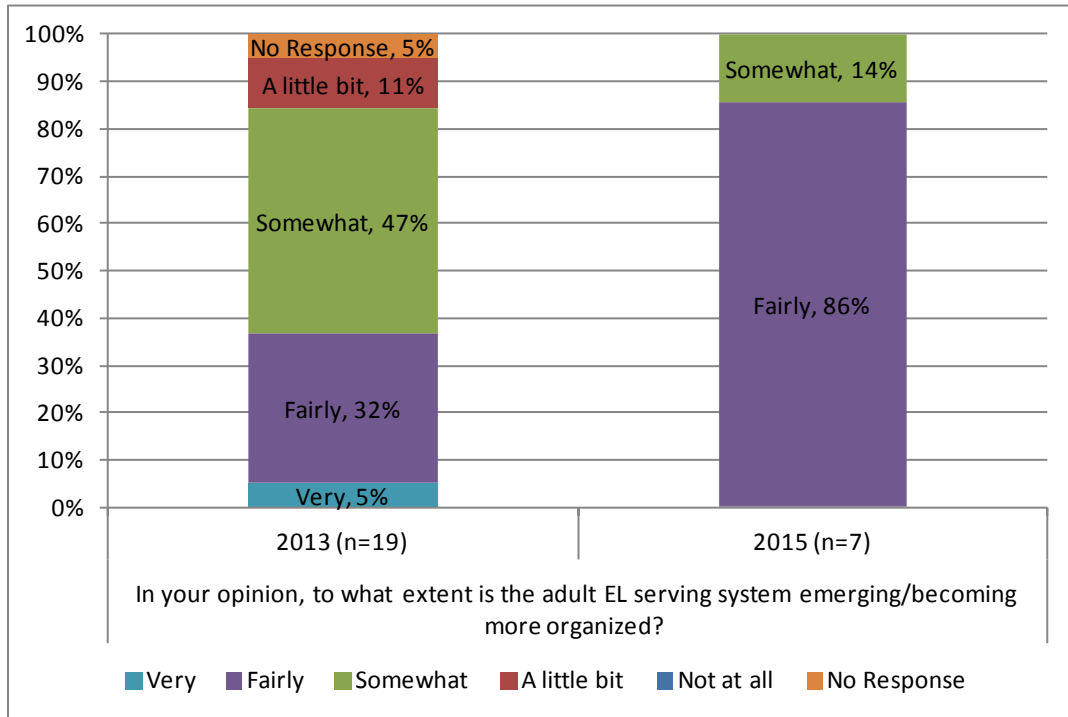
### ***Progress toward Project Goals***

While there were modifications and delays in implementing the conditions of Collective Impact and some key project activities, Steering Committee members felt that, overall, SV ALLIES produced positive steps toward systems change and developing services for the target population of adult English learners. However, they were less certain about the longer-term trajectory of their work, both with respect to the impact it was likely to have on creating a more organized workforce system serving English learners and the likelihood that specific pilots serving job seekers would be carried forward into the future.

Looking at change in the education and workforce system serving English learners over time, a larger share of Steering Committee members in 2015 than in 2013 thought that the system serving English learners was becoming more organized as a result of the SV ALLIES Initiative’s efforts (see Exhibit 10). In the August 2013 survey, 47% (8 of 19) thought activities in the first year had resulted in a somewhat more organized system. During the January 2015 Steering Committee meeting, 60% (9 of 15) of Steering

Committee members indicated that the Silicon Valley ALLIES Initiative had created a somewhat more organized education, training, and support-services system for English learners to transition to career pathways.

**Exhibit 10: Progress in Creating a More Organized System for English Learners**



Source: Steering Committee Survey 2013 and 2015. Response rate was 86% in 2013 and 29% in 2015.

Steering Committee members appreciated that SV ALLIES created a space for them to network and build partnerships, and provided funding for pilot projects that reached participants who had not previously enrolled in English language instruction courses. They thought the project created a space for organizations with a shared interest in serving the adult English learner community to discuss how to improve the system. One Steering Committee member said that SV ALLIES “brought together stakeholders who haven’t worked together, yet had the same goals of helping [English learners].” Another member noted that “there is more collaboration between agencies, who better understand each others’ missions.” New partnerships that were developed through the SV ALLIES work carried over to other related work, including state-mandated AB86 adult education planning efforts.

Steering Committee members thought the pilot projects helped catalyze cross-sector collaborations and that these partnerships helped leverage resources and increase

reach. In the words of one Steering Committee member, these partnerships also produced “new models of instruction from pilots that blend ESL instruction with workplace training or vocational skills development.” Working together to share curriculum and students, considering how to implement a “no wrong door” approach to designing programs, and reaching students who had not been served before were all cited as positive results flowing from increased coordination across the sectors (i.e., adult schools, community colleges, workforce development agencies, and employers) serving English learners.

At the January 2015 Steering Committee meeting, members suggested the SV ALLIES effort could have been improved if more time were taken in the first year to develop information and conduct planning with a smaller group before engaging the larger, diverse group of stakeholders. They noted that, while important work had been done through the pilots to develop useful information and establish new working relationships and educational approaches, there was little progress on activities that established a firm foundation for change in systems. They attributed this, in part, to changes in the policy landscape that were restructuring the design and funding for adult education programs and competing for Steering Committee members’ time and resources, as well as changes in the leadership and structure at two of the three workforce development agencies participating in the initiative.

One Steering Committee member summarized the successes and challenges of the SV ALLIES Collective Impact process as follows:

I like the elements of Collective Impact and understand how these elements could change the way we do our community work. We did adopt a Common Agenda that was broadly understood and had continuous communication, but our backbone organization and staff changed, resulting in some breaks in the process. Unfortunately I do not feel we accomplished impactful change. Through the process we did accomplish a higher degree of integration of services and programs, and tested a few pilot strategies; but there was no broad public awareness of the work, no engagement of elected officials. Not sure how our pilots will lead to future change in delivery of services to [English learners].

### ***Project Sustainability and Next Steps***

As the project progressed into Year 3, the SV ALLIES project director initiated discussions with members of the original ALLIES initiative, who had been participating on the Steering Committee over the course of the three years, to plan for sustainability. In May 2015, shortly before the WIF grant term ended, the evaluation

team met with the SV ALLIES project team and leaders of the original ALLIES effort to discuss transition plans and lessons learned.

Leaders of the two efforts had agreed that the original ALLIES initiative would serve as custodian of the asset map inventory of English learner-serving organizations across the region and prototype of the searchable database that had been developed from the CARS pilot, to ensure these would be kept current. The SV ALLIES project team was hopeful that Steering Committee members beyond the original ALLIES group would continue to be engaged in directing the course of future activities to build a more coordinated service system for English learners through the ALLIES initiative.

The original ALLIES project leaders relayed that, during the course of the second and third years of the SV ALLIES Initiative, the landscape and environment for adult education had been significantly transformed. Members of the original ALLIES initiative had participated and assumed leadership positions in the state-mandated AB86 adult education planning process in San Mateo County, which had convened a county-level leadership consortium that would be in place through 2015–16 and had produced a strategic plan for adult education. The adult education leadership structure and plan was influenced by the SV ALLIES Year 1 project plan to build conditions of Collective Impact such that functions typically associated with a backbone organization were represented in San Mateo County’s adult education strategic plan.

For example, in San Mateo County a countywide regional consortia leadership team meets monthly and sub-regional teams meet periodically. In addition, a cross-sector regional convening of the same stakeholders targeted for the SV ALLIES effort will be conducted three times each year to gather input and develop career pathways. Financial support for the legislatively mandated adult education consortia was included in the Governor’s budget and it appeared likely that the consortia would serve as the planning and fiscal allocation structure for adult education. While the consortium addresses the needs of all adult learners, members of the original ALLIES initiative contribute perspectives and information that represent the needs of English learners, including products from the Collective Impact and CARS processes in the SV ALLIES project.

ALLIES leaders also described how the asset mapping process and information generated through the CARS pilot had informed work already underway in the ALLIES initiative. ALLIES used funding from the foundation sponsoring its work to award micro-grants to leadership teams in the adult education consortium to conduct expanded local needs assessments and pilot-test projects to better coordinate services

for English learners. ALLIES viewed the opportunity to carry forward work initiated by SV ALLIES through the regional structure created by the San Mateo County adult education strategic plan as an opportunity to extend conditions of Collective Impact. That is, the plan addressed, in some manner, activities that touched on all five conditions of Collective Impact and preserved a strong focus on engaging multiple stakeholders, including adult schools, community colleges, workforce development agencies, CBOs, social services agencies, and employers to reach goals set forth in the plan.

SV ALLIES and ALLIES project leaders noted that, in addition to the products generated by the CARS pilot, the curricula developed for the job seeker and incumbent worker pilots would continue to be used by project partners and would be available to any other stakeholders who had an interest in using them. They agreed that the pilots “brought full form and life” to the Collective Impact approach and allowed the effort to generate interventions that reduced barriers to English learners seeking services to advance their careers. They thought the pilots were an effective way to engage employers in the SV ALLIES project, and regretted the pilots weren’t launched earlier in the process.

When asked to provide advice they might offer to others planning to undertake similar efforts using a Collective Impact approach, the leaders of both the SV ALLIES and ALLIES projects offered the following ideas:

- **Take time to prepare.** Spend more time assessing and understanding core incentives for participation and partners’ accountability structures to identify areas of shared gain before engaging community leaders and launching the CI effort.
- **Start small.** Map out a scope and scale that is feasible to manage at the outset. Begin with a core group of stakeholders invested in the process and begin to map and test possible strategies to decide what is scalable to a larger effort. Don’t underestimate the level of effort involved in trying to engage a diverse stakeholder constituency over a large region in an already complex process.
- **Build flexibility into the process.** Once you begin the process, it’s hard to backtrack without losing momentum. CI efforts are organic and need to be responsive to emerging opportunities as well as constraints.
- **Make sure funding sources are appropriate to the work.** Vehicles like the DOL grant that carry specific timelines and outcome expectations might not be the best funding strategy for CI initiatives that, particularly in the beginning, are characterized by a high degree of unpredictability.

These recommendations are consistent with events and discussions WestEd evaluators documented over the course of the SV ALLIES Initiative, specifically looking at how the CI approach and pilot projects developed in the three-year timeframe of this grant.

## Discussion of Findings and Lessons Learned

This section presents a synthesis of the formative evaluation findings and summarizes lessons learned.

Despite challenges, the initiative did facilitate steps toward change in relationships among stakeholders in the workforce development system and positive outcomes for job seekers and incumbent workers who participated in the pilot projects. The data suggest that in order to successfully implement Collective Impact and launch the participant-serving pilot project, the SV ALLIES Initiative needed to ensure that (1) the preconditions of Collective Impact were in place; (2) the strategies and scope of the project plan were feasible to implement and adequately resourced; and (3) a realistic timeline and appropriate sequence of activities were established to help build the five conditions of Collective Impact and to effectively balance requirements of the WIF grant agreement. The data further suggest that the absence of stable and experienced project leadership through much of the first two years of the initiative had a negative impact on the initiative's overall success.

**The initiative led to new relationships between members of the project's Steering Committee and created information resources that helped to establish a foundation for change.**

While the initiative did not achieve the change in workforce systems serving adult immigrant English learners that was initially envisioned, the stakeholders who participated in the Steering Committee over the course of the three-year effort and worked together to launch and run pilot projects credited the initiative with facilitating changes in their approach to working with others partners in the workforce development system and in their approach to designing and providing services.

**Establishing the preconditions for implementing Collective Impact is important to accomplish by the start of launching a CI initiative.**

The three preconditions that need to be in place when launching a CI initiative—*influential champions, adequate financial resources, and a sense of urgency for change*—were not all in place when the initiative's first phase, Initiate Action (see Exhibit 3), was launched, or by the end of the project's first year of planning. Of the

three preconditions for Collective Impact, only one—identify champions—was represented in the activities outlined in the phases of Collective Impact mapped by the project team (see Exhibit 3).

*Influential champion.* In CI efforts, a private funder (usually a foundation or philanthropic organization) typically plays a key leadership role. CI efforts also typically involve one or more influential CEOs or community leaders who can command change, serve as a champion, and tap a group of civic and business leaders (who lead their own initiatives and may have previously worked together) to provide direction and resources.

While SV ALLIES Steering Committee members were influential leaders in the region, no clear influential champion or small group of champions was identified to help steer SV ALLIES. At the end of the first year, project leaders acknowledged that cultivating “champions” had taken longer than expected and that a small group of influential leaders had still not coalesced to assume either symbolic ownership or actual stewardship of the initiative in the two-county region. Further, many Steering Committee members had not previously worked together on their own or other initiatives, and the SV ALLIES effort did not integrate other existing projects or initiatives serving English learners.

*Adequate financial resources.* While WIF grant funds were used to launch the initiative, the funding was time-limited and tied to specific grant conditions, requirements, and deliverables. As challenges and decisions to pivot strategy during implementation unfolded, the grant was not considered an ideal fit for building conditions of Collective Impact and achieving initiative goals. However, no time was allotted at Steering Committee meetings in the first-year planning phase for resource development discussions and a clear plan or commitment for additional resources was not developed by the project team. After the first year, the project did leverage resources and in-kind support for specific activities and pilot projects, which suggests that Steering Committee members were able to identify opportunities and had the capacity to extend their existing work.

*Urgency for change.* Collective Impact is meant to be applied to an issue that is intuitively understandable, and appeals to and inspires action among a wide range of community leaders and stakeholders because they have a stake in resolving it (for example, improving K–12 education). This was not necessarily true of the SV ALLIES Initiative. For instance, while there was optimism as federal policy discussions briefly focused on immigration reform, that optimism gave way to other priorities as immigration reform stalled in Congress. Employment and education for adult



immigrants, while economically important to the region, may not have held the type of intuitive appeal or urgency typically associated with CI efforts, as evidenced by the fact that none of the organizations participating on the Steering Committee held English learners as central to their mission. Moreover, data had not been developed that might have helped inform understanding and sharpen the focus of issues affecting a targeted population of English learners as a growing segment of the workforce and as having an important impact on the regional economy.

Further, the initiative's planning process unfolded against a backdrop of major shifts in policy and funding, as the California State Assembly passed legislation creating a new adult education grant program that mandated regional, collaborative program planning and budgeting (for more information on this legislation, see The Policy Landscape text box in Chapter 1). Project leaders reported that changes in the adult education policy landscape created sensitivity in relationships between SV ALLIES stakeholders, distracted their attention away from the SV ALLIES effort, and made the process of designing innovative program strategies more difficult because stakeholders were unsure how existing programs and budgets would be affected by the new grant program.

**While it is possible to generate early interest among community leaders and develop a Common Agenda, to sustain the momentum it is important to have data that adequately describe the issue, along with opportunities for collaborative action.**

The SV ALLIES Initiative established a Common Agenda and cultivated relationships with important stakeholders, but experienced challenges in fully implementing key elements of the project plan required to move successfully through the *Initiate Action* and *Organize for Impact* phases of the initiative's work plan. Steering Committee members appreciated the opportunity SV ALLIES provided them to connect with their colleagues who served English learners. They also indicated that their participation in the initiative helped open channels of communication outside of Steering Committee meetings and seeded ideas for possible collaborative projects.

However, planning the Common Agenda took a long time and key elements of the project plan were not fully realized, including developing and using data to describe the target population, identify existing resources, define the problem, inform strategies, and establish a shared measurement system. Discussions at Steering Committee meetings were conducted at a conceptual level, and failure to adequately define the problem, develop data to guide decisions on specific strategies, and provide opportunities to engage the stakeholders in action outside Steering Committee



meetings contributed to a loss of momentum in Year 1. A regional implementation structure through Collaborative Action Teams, which were to have led sub-regional work loosely coordinated through the Steering Committee, did not form and pilot projects did not emerge from the Collaborative Action Teams as planned.

Literature on Collective Impact stresses that activities associated with phases to launch CI efforts do not progress linearly, but instead are iterative and must continually be adapted and refined. However, the experiences of this project suggest that it is important to develop data that adequately define the target population and/or the central issues and can be used to support decisions on appropriate action before undertaking community outreach and engagement and developing a Common Agenda. Data to inform decisions and opportunities for stakeholders to solidify relationships through collaborative action can give meaning to the overall effort. In the absence of targeted data and concrete opportunities for collaborative action, the Common Agenda is not an effective tool on its own to sustain momentum.

**A project's scope, organization, and staffing are important factors affecting progress toward building conditions of Collective Impact.**

A number of factors related to project staffing, strategy, and scope presented challenges to building conditions of Collective Impact for the SV ALLIES Initiative. Coordination and communication were time-consuming and challenging due to the instability in key leadership positions at the San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department and on the SV ALLIES project team, as well as a staffing structure in the initiative's first year that involved the participation of many more organizations than are typically involved in supporting a CI effort. The absence of strong and consistent leadership on the project team was not resolved in time to galvanize support (both strategic and financial) for building a longer-term governance infrastructure and backbone organization to staff and support the CI effort during the term of the grant.

As work in the first year of the project progressed, it became apparent that the scope of the project and the activities set out in the project plan were not feasible to manage in the manner and timeline that had been proposed. The project leaders, by their own admission, had underestimated the degree of complexity and level of effort required to support the initiative's attempt to initiate change in workforce development systems and programs to effectively support adult immigrant English learners to succeed in family-sustaining careers. The scope of the project sought to essentially build a system where none existed among organizations that did not hold the target population or outcome as central to their respective missions. As mentioned above, in the absence of

data that could have helped clarify the systems-change effort and more narrowly focused the work, the Common Agenda actually amplified the scope of activities, such that Steering Committee members often had no clear idea what action to take.

**The conceptual organization of the CI approach might be improved by further research.**

This formative evaluation focused on how the SV ALLIES Initiative unfolded and the extent to which the five conditions of Collective Impact were implemented to support the initiative. At the time the SV ALLIES effort was launched, little had been published on Collective Impact and, specifically, on how the approach was used to establish initiatives and what the results of those efforts were. As the SV ALLIES project progressed into its second year, FSG began publishing case studies of successful CI efforts and practices; FSG also launched a CI forum and released a toolkit on how to evaluate CI efforts. In 2014, the *Stanford Social Innovation Review* published a set of short policy briefs authored by leaders of CI efforts recommending successful practices (some of these briefs were special supplements supported by the CI forum). However, few independent studies have explored attempts to establish all five conditions of Collective Impact in order to implement a CI initiative.

Much of the literature published after the SV ALLIES effort was launched described successful CI efforts that had been driven by the executive leadership of groups of public and private organizations with considerable capacity to marshal and coordinate existing initiatives and resources to achieve concerted action on narrowly defined targets that were part of larger community-wide goals. Much of this literature on Collective Impact is meant to motivate and instruct through examples of success. However, the examples provided in the literature do little to distinguish between all of the unique activities related to (1) building the foundation for the CI approach (i.e., the various project management and coordinating activities that must be completed to build an overarching infrastructure for a CI initiative) and (2) implementing new and/or ongoing programs and services that are coordinated by the CI initiative.

For example, the materials developed by FSG and adapted by the SV ALLIES project team to outline the phases of Collective Impact and the conditions for success (see Exhibits 1 and 2) do not explicitly include two of the three preconditions that should be in place before launching the phases of Collective Impact. These materials also do not address implementation of the CI effort's projects, programs, or services until Phase III of CI implementation (or Phase IV, in the case of the SV ALLIES plan).

While Collective Impact is meant to be a flexible approach to solving complex problems and not a prescriptive model, materials describing the conceptual

organization and framework of the approach could be strengthened by additional research. For instance, the organization of the conceptual map/framework meant to illustrate the activities involved in successive phases of a maturing CI effort could benefit from additional research on the preconditions of Collective Impact. The framework could also benefit from additional research on the concept of “emergence” and its relationship to existing resources, programs, and services organized by a CI initiative as well as to the activities needed to implement new programs, services, or projects to achieve the goals of the CI initiative.

The experience of the SV ALLIES Initiative suggests that, in the near term, the conceptual map/framework describing the CI approach might benefit by the addition of the following:

- All three preconditions for launching Collective Impact.
- A new precondition related to determining the availability and extent of existing resources to be coordinated by the CI initiative.
- A new Component for Success titled “Implementation” that, for each phase of CI, would outline the necessary activities to identify, build, and manage capacities, structures, programs, services, tools, and resources to achieve the goals of a CI initiative.

**To implement a successful CI initiative, it is important to collaborate on concrete projects early in the initiative.**

In the literature, opportunities for collective action are described as emerging organically from the interactions of stakeholders. However, in the instance of the SV ALLIES project, the Steering Committee members’ repeated requests to more quickly begin implementing pilot projects were deferred in favor of proceeding with plans to build a detailed Common Agenda and CI infrastructure to manage the initiative (conditions outlined in the first two phases of Collective Impact implementation). The SV ALLIES pilot projects did not initially emerge organically from stakeholder interactions, but the pilot projects did eventually build networks of relationships and led to innovative and successful practices and positive results for English learners.

## **Lessons Learned**

- A small stable group of influential leaders, or “champions,” in a position to command resources and affect policy, is essential to launching successful CI initiatives, making sustained progress on building conditions of Collective Impact and undertaking action toward the initiative’s goals. It is also important to ensure other preconditions of Collective Impact are met.

- It is critical to ensure that data are available early on to help define the population and/or issues, inform the case for action, develop the Common Agenda, and inform decisions on strategy and implementation priorities.
- It is important to keep the scope of work feasible and focused on quick wins and near-term results, while simultaneously working on longer-term objectives, in order to maintain stakeholders' engagement and motivation. Because CI initiatives take time to build, this sort of "both-and" approach is necessary.
- It is critical to implement activities related to specific goals of the initiative early on, in addition to supporting action that builds conditions of Collective Impact and advances progress through phases of Collective Impact.
- Communication and technical assistance from the DOL and its technical assistance providers could be improved to support projects experiencing staffing changes and to deliver accurate and rapid responses to technical questions.

## IV. Outcome Evaluation: Pilot Projects

In addition to conducting a formative evaluation of SV ALLIES and its work to build the conditions of Collective Impact, WestEd conducted an outcome evaluation of the pilot projects implemented by the SV ALLIES Initiative.

These pilots were informed, in part, by high-level Steering Committee discussions during Year 1 about systematic ways to improve language and workforce-training services for English learners to improve opportunities for advancement on their career pathways. These discussions included reviewing promising practice models, such as Washington's Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) and Minnesota's FastTrac program.<sup>8</sup> Both models blend English instruction with technical skills instruction.

The pilots evaluated by WestEd include one for job seekers and three for incumbent workers: (1) the English Learners' Ladders to Success pilot for job seekers, (2) the Santa Clara Kaiser Permanente Workplace English pilot, (3) the Skyline College English Language Development Training pilot, and (4) the Hospitality 360 Banquet Service Class.<sup>9</sup> This chapter of the report includes descriptions of each of these pilot projects and presents findings and lessons learned from their respective outcomes.

### Job Seeker Pilot

The English Learners' Ladders to Success (ELLS) pilot is a collaborative effort of three organizations on the Steering Committee: the Palo Alto Adult School (PAAS), the

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<sup>8</sup> Washington's I-BEST was created by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. It is a nationally recognized model that concurrently improves students' literacy and provides technical skills training so that they can earn credentials and obtain jobs. The I-BEST curriculum combines workforce training, adult basic education, and English as a Second Language. Minnesota's FastTRAC program integrates basic skills education and career-specific training in high-demand occupational areas.

<sup>9</sup> The Building Skills Partnership pilot was not included because it was a small cohort, but participants did complete an exit survey. The second cohort of the Santa Clara Kaiser Permanente Workplace English pilot and the Hospitality 360 Banquet Services class were not included because outcomes for the cohorts would not be available in time to be included in the evaluation.

Sequoia Adult School (SAS), and the San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department. Silicon Valley ALLIES sponsored and contributed funding to the pilot and its staff also provided general strategic guidance. Prior to this pilot, the two adult schools had not worked together nor had either adult school had such a close connection to the San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department. The goal of the pilot was to help participants improve their English language skills, learn job search strategies, and find a new job that paid higher wages. The pilot project was structured to provide six classroom-based instructional modules and ongoing independent career advising:

- 1) Career Assessment & Goal Setting
- 2) Computer/Digital Literacy
- 3) Job Search
- 4) Job Search Tools
- 5) Interview Skills
- 6) Pulling It All Together

Classes took place at Palo Alto Adult School and Sequoia Adult School. Participants met at the school weekly for 10 weeks, for a total of 30 hours. Through the teacher-led modular curriculum, participants created a job search portfolio—which included a resume, a cover letter, a list of career goals, and an elevator pitch—learned to conduct a job search using online tools, and practiced their English.

In addition to the classroom time, a job advisor from the San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department met with participants regularly at both locations during the 10 weeks to support participants in developing their portfolio and identifying job openings. The advisor was available for continued advising for 10 weeks after the class ended.

Participants were recruited from the community, including the participating adult schools (PAAS and SAS), various local community-based organizations, such as the Palo Alto Housing Corporation and faith-based organizations. An ELLS recruiter identified potential participants through an informal screening process (guided by a rubric to assess their work experience and career goals). The recruiter identified candidates that were, at minimum, looking for work or had an interest in switching to a job more related to their career goals. Potential participants were referred to the program for a more formal oral assessment, and eligibility for the program required demonstrated English comprehension at a low to high-intermediate level on the CASAS (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems) instrument. Since the

curriculum was focused on job search and career development skills, participants selected for the program were actively seeking to find jobs and/or to further their education in order to switch jobs, were unemployed, or were employed below their current skill level.

## Evaluation Overview

There have been limited evaluations of job-seeker programs in adult school settings, as noted in the literature review chapter. This evaluation of the ELLS pilot project will contribute to the literature by examining outcomes for participants who were served through a collaboration among adult schools and a local workforce development agency.

The evaluation studied outcomes related to English language skills, employment, career-pathways planning, and student confidence by addressing the following main research questions:

- 1) What are the gains in English skills and digital literacy for program participants?
- 2) Is greater participation in the pilot intervention (as measured by attendance levels) associated with a higher likelihood of obtaining a new job?
- 3) What were participants' satisfaction levels with the pilot programs and how did they perceive it influenced their career plans?
- 4) What lessons have been learned that could inform similar efforts in other communities or workforce systems?

Data to answer these questions were obtained from multiple sources: attendance and test score data recorded by teachers during the class; an in-class exit survey<sup>10</sup> completed by students; employment status information collected by a job advisor during the 10 weeks following the class; and post-program interviews with two program managers, two teachers, and one job advisor. The outcome study used a non-inferential regression model to evaluate the relationship between attendance levels and likelihood of employment in a new job. Since the methodology used in this study does not adjust for selection bias (i.e., allow for disaggregating the influence of the program and the job seekers' own effort), the outcome results of this evaluation are not generalizable. Lessons learned in the implementation process are, however,

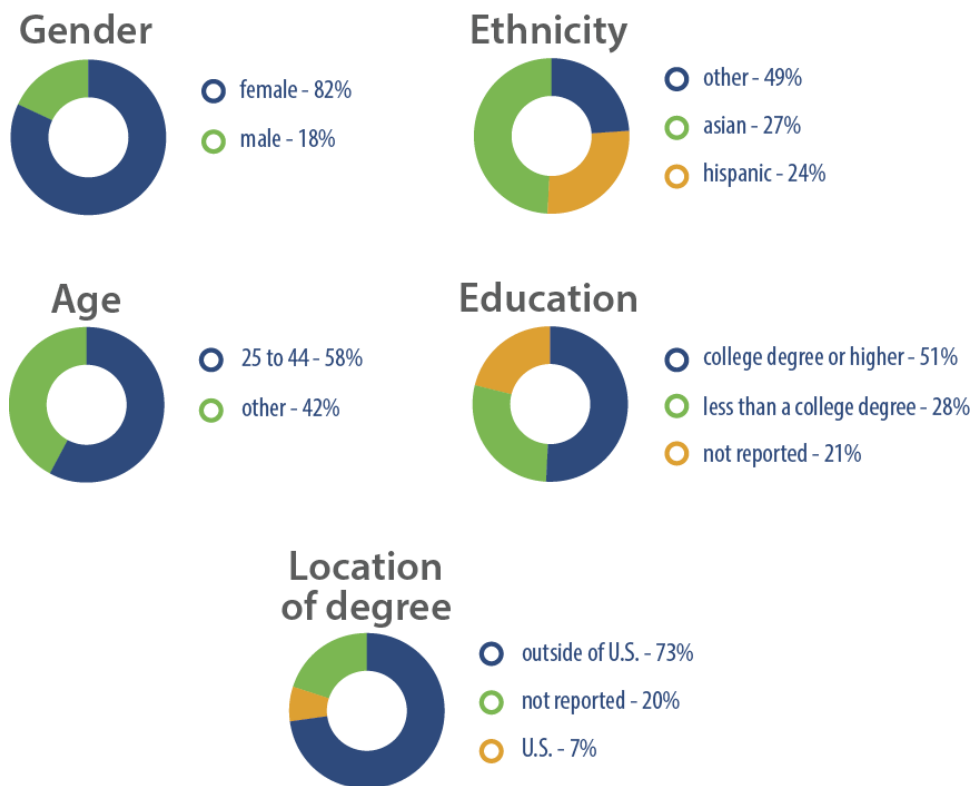
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<sup>10</sup> The exit survey included questions about program satisfaction and perceived benefits (related to English language skills, communication skills at work, improved confidence, and digital literacy [when applicable]).

transferable to similar program contexts. A full description of the methodology can be found in Appendix C.

A total of 71 participants enrolled in the ELLS program. The majority were female (82%), a quarter (24%) were Hispanic, and 27% of the participants were Asian. Half of the participants had a college degree or higher (51%), and the majority had received their highest degree outside of the United States (73%). Approximately half of participants earned a college degree outside of the U.S. Nearly 60% of the participants were between the ages of 25–44 years old. A more detailed demographic summary can be found in Appendix D.

#### Exhibit 11: ELLS Demographics



\* n = 71

Source: Sequoia Adult School, Palo Alto Adult School, and San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department, 2014.

The main findings from the evaluation included:

- Approximately half (53%) of program completers experienced an English language skills gain in one or more class modules, which was just above the programs' performance goal of 50% of completers experiencing a gain in English language competency.



- There was a positive and significant association between the number of job advising sessions attended and the likelihood of obtaining a new job.
- A majority of program participants perceived that participation increased their English language skills, job search skills, digital literacy, and confidence in applying for jobs with higher pay.
- Program staff perceived that the program helped students improve their job search skills and their confidence in speaking English during interviews.
- Program implementation contributed to cross-sector collaboration and the Collective Impact goal of mutually reinforcing activities and continuous communication. Program staff expressed that critical lessons learned included the importance of “partnering and sharing resources.”

The next section presents findings on participants’ English test scores, employment outcomes, and perceptions about the program, as well as staff perspectives on project implementation. The section concludes with a discussion of the main findings and lessons learned.

## Outcomes

### *English Literacy Gains*

English language gains were measured for each of the five modules by pre-tests and post-tests developed by the school staff. As indicated in Exhibit 12, over half of ELLS completers (53%) had English language gains in one or more modules, which is just above the program’s targeted goal of 50%. Another 22% (7 of 32) had no gain on any module. A gain was defined as scoring one or more points higher on the post-test than on the pre-test. A quarter of ELLS completers (8 of 32) achieved 100% gains on both pre- and post-test. The greatest number of participants who completed the course demonstrated gains in the job search and interview skills modules.

**Exhibit 12: English Language Test Score Gains for ELLS Completers**

	Number	Percentage
Gain on one or more modules*	17	53%
Maximum on both pre- and post-test	8	25%
No gain on any module	7	22%

\*A gain was defined as scoring one or more points higher on the post-test than on the pre-test.

*Note:* The five modules in the class were Career Assessment and Goal Setting, Computer and Digital Literacy, Job Search, Search Tools, and Interview Skills.

Source: Pre- and post-test results from Sequoia Adult School and Palo Alto Adult School, 2014.

Participants' perceptions about their English language gains were captured by an exit survey. Approximately half (49%) of the survey respondents strongly agreed that "Participation in ELLS has improved my English language skills," while another 34% agreed with that statement. One survey respondent wrote, *"It help me to improve my English and find a job that relates for what I am learning [sic]."*

Pilot project instructors perceived that students gained confidence through practicing their English during mock interviews. A student survey respondent echoed this sentiment: *"Thanks for our lessons I felt much more confident during course mock interview at the end of the course [sic]."*

One instructor also commented that students gained cultural knowledge, which included developing a better understanding of the marketplace and their own skill sets, values, and interests. The teacher noted that this understanding helped some students consider jobs that they might not have pursued on their own but were directed toward based on their values and interests.

### ***Employment Outcomes***

Participants' employment status was captured by the job advisor during regular meetings and correspondence. Twenty of the 71 participants (28%) had found new jobs 60 days after the class ended.<sup>11</sup> Participants' new job titles included data analyst, cashier, sales associate, administrative assistant, house cleaner, cook, and teacher assistant.

Two primary barriers to employment that program staff described during interviews were participants' limited English skills (such as pronunciation and fluency) and some participants' reluctance to apply to entry-level jobs because the jobs they held in their native country did not transfer well to job requirements here. Program staff worked with participants to address both barriers during the 30-hour class.

Program participants noted additional barriers in a program exit survey. Approximately a quarter of the respondents indicated that limited availability of college/university program opportunities made it more difficult for them to obtain a new job. A smaller share (between 11–14%) indicated that childcare or family

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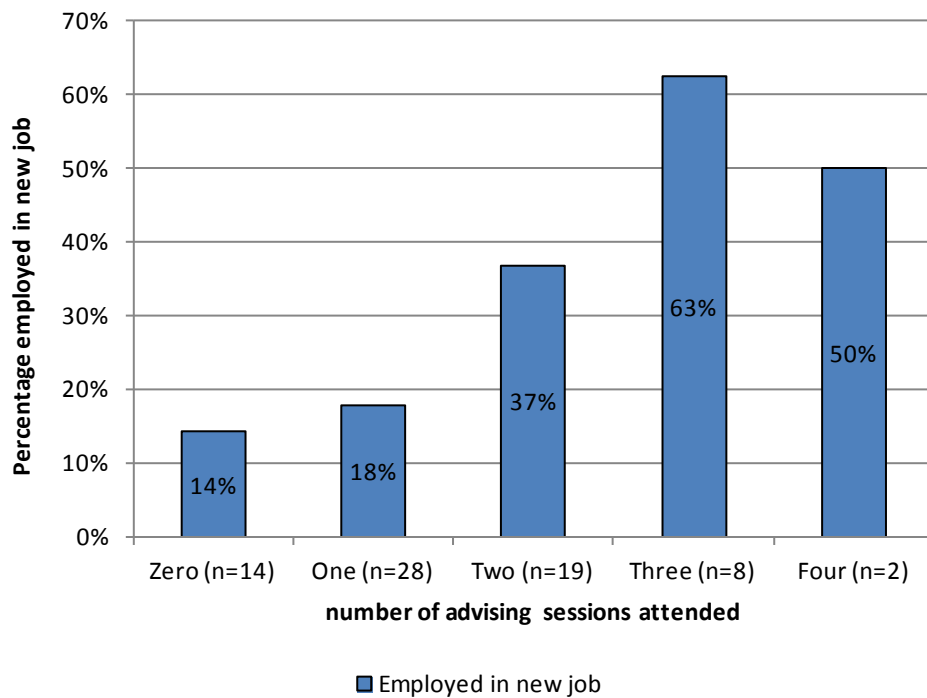
<sup>11</sup> This employment rate is likely a lower limit because additional participants will likely find jobs outside of the data collection window of two months.

responsibilities, transportation, or limited access to the Internet made it more difficult to obtain a job.

### ***Association between Attendance and Employment Outcomes***

WestEd researchers analyzed the association between program attendance and employment status. Program attendance was measured by attendance in class and attendance in advising sessions. Exhibit 13 shows that the portion of participants employed is greater among those who attended more job advising sessions. The variation in employment status by attendance in class showed no consistent pattern.

**Exhibit 13: Percentage of Participants Employed by Number of Job Advising Sessions Attended**

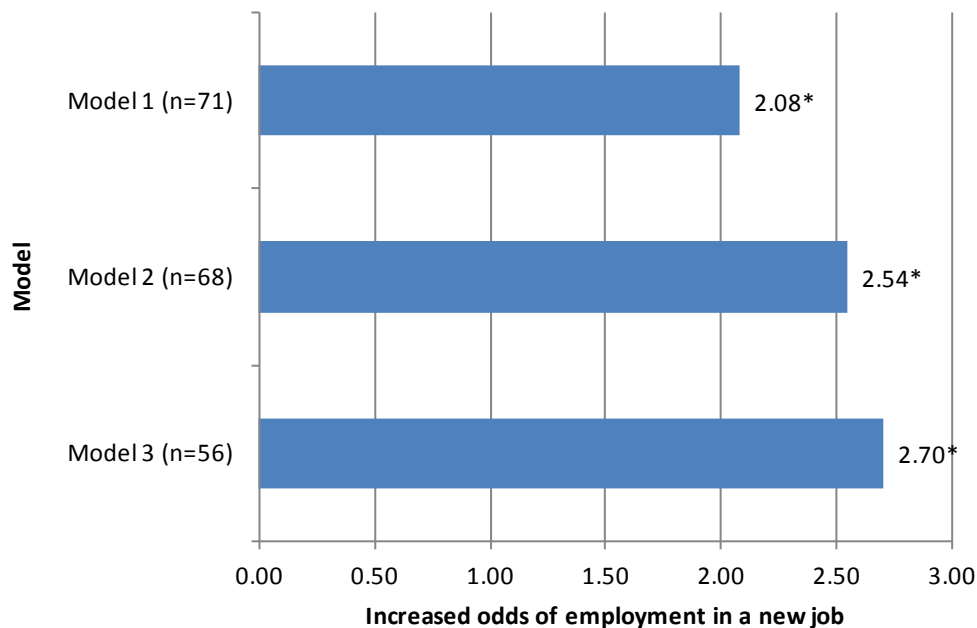


Source: Sequoia Adult School, Palo Alto Adult School, and San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department, 2014.

WestEd also utilized a logit regression model (controlling for age, years of schooling, race, and pre-program English skills) and found a positive and statistically significant association between employment in a new job and number of job advising sessions attended. Exhibit 14 illustrates that by attending one additional advising session, participants were 2 to 2.7 times more likely to find a new job. The results do not imply causation because they do not control for unmeasured or unknown factors. For

example, instead of job advising sessions leading to employment, it may have been that a characteristic of certain job seekers (such as their motivation) influenced both their attending job advising sessions and their employment status. Because we cannot separate out these two effects, we cannot disaggregate the influence of the advising sessions themselves. The results suggest, however, that the advising sessions could be helping participants find jobs. The full regression results can be found in Appendix E.

**Exhibit 14: Odds Ratio Estimates for Number of Job Advising Sessions Attended**



*Notes:*

Figure reads: "Each advising session attended increases the odds of employment after 60 days by 2.077, 2.543, 2.701 for Models 1 to 3, respectively."

\* Statistically significant at p-value < .05.

Model 1 is a base model which includes one variable: number of job advising sessions attended. The R-squared is .0986.

Model 2 controls for gender, number of classes attended, pre-program English literacy score, and number of job advising sessions attended. All variables are insignificant except number of job advising sessions attended. R-squared is .1308.

Model 3 controls for gender, age, years of schooling, number of classes attended, pre-program English literacy score, and number of job advising sessions attended. All variables are insignificant except number of job advising sessions attended. R-squared is .2018.

Source: WestEd calculations based on data provided by Sequoia Adult School, Palo Alto Adult School, and San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department, 2014.

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## Job Placement Success Story

One student found a job at Google as a line cook. The participant had to complete a lengthy selection process which included two screening interviews with recruiters, an on-site interview, and a cooking assessment in which the student demonstrated his/her cooking skills. An instructor perceived the class helped the student understand the job search process.

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### Participant Perceptions

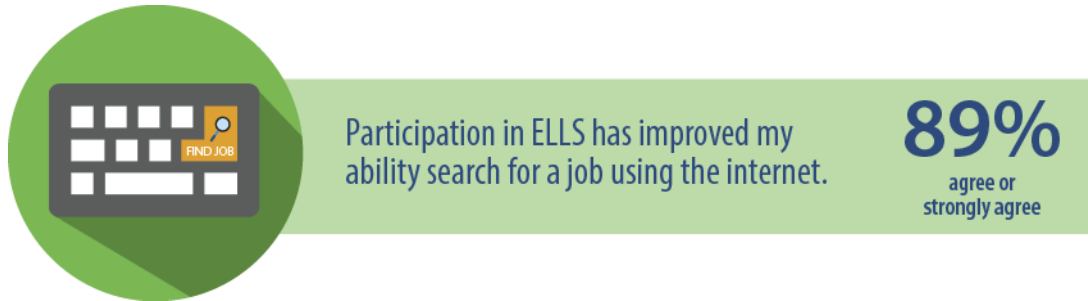
#### *Digital Literacy and Job Search Skills*

Approximately 63% of participants strongly agreed or agreed that participation in the program improved their ability to use a computer. Program staff reported that many of the participants had strong computer skills, so not all program participants were in need of basic computer training. A total of 89% of participants strongly agreed or agreed that participation improved their ability to search for a job using the Internet (Exhibit 15). Similarly, one survey respondent wrote, *“The class was a great experience. I certainly gained more information and knowledge on where to search for a job online.”* One program instructor also reported that the biggest digital literacy gains were in “information literacy”—that is, being able to locate resources online. The same instructor also explained how students gained cultural knowledge about job search norms in the United States, such as shaking hands.

## Exhibit 15: ELLS Participants' Perceptions about Digital Literacy and Job Search Skills



\*34% were neutral or did not respond and 3% disagreed.



\*11% were neutral or did not respond.

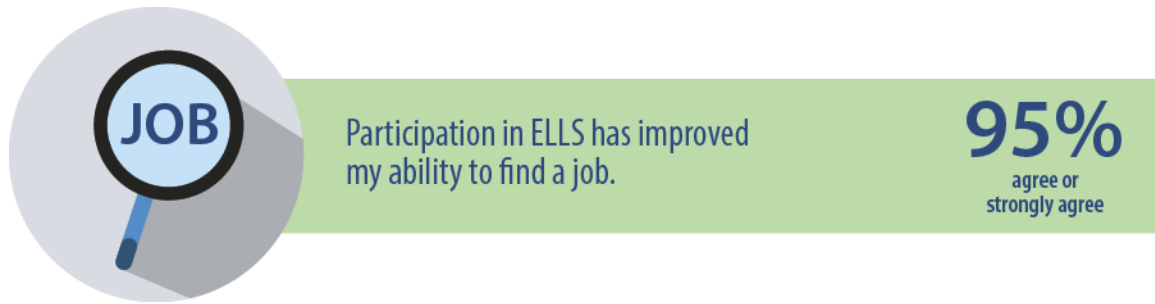
(n=35)

Source: Participant Exit Survey, 2014.

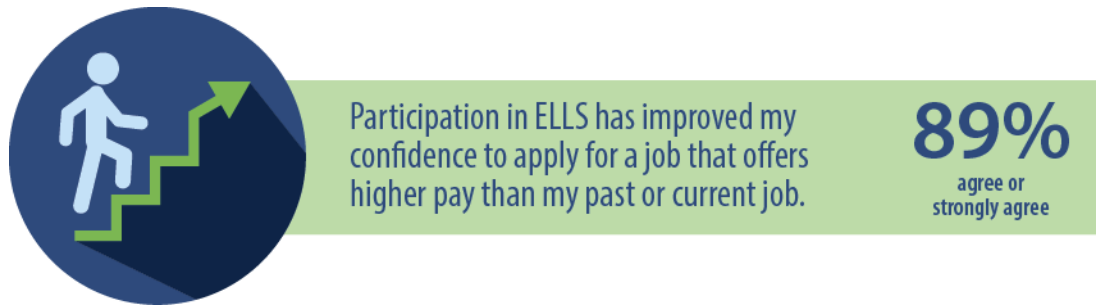
### ***Influence on Career Plans***

The vast majority (95%) of ELLS participants that responded to the survey agreed or strongly agreed that participation improved their ability to find a job. Similarly, 89% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that participation in the program increased their confidence to apply for a job that offers higher pay than their past or current job.

## Exhibit 16: ELLS Participants' Perceptions about Job Advancement



\*5% were neutral or did not respond.



\*11% were neutral or did not respond.

(n=35)

Source: Participant Exit Survey, 2014.

One participant expressed how the program helped his/her career planning: "I felt much more confident during course mock interview at the end of the course. Now after finishing this course I see clearly my next steps in my job searching process."

Program staff also reported the program helped participants with their career planning. For example, one instructor perceived that the skills assessment helped students identify jobs they may not have considered before because they gained a deeper understanding of their interests and skill sets.

### ***Participant Satisfaction***

All respondents to the ELLS exit survey were either very satisfied (n=30) or satisfied (n=5) with the overall services received through the program. Participants also expressed general appreciation for the class through survey responses like the following: "Thank you very much for this wonderful program I really learned a lot"; "I learned a lot from the class and enjoyed it"; and "Thanks. It's a good program."

## Pilot Project Implementation: Successes and Challenges

### *What Worked*

The ELLS pilot program provided the adult schools and the San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department an opportunity to collaborate together for the first time to jointly offer program services. Program staff expressed the importance of “partnering and sharing resources.” They viewed the collaboration to be valuable in general, and in three specific ways.

First, as one administrator noted, participating in SV ALLIES changed the administrator’s way of operating from acting independently or competing with other programs to collaborating and sharing students; the administrator noted that this new way of working together will continue beyond the grant. The two adult schools, in neighboring counties, used to compete for students but the common goals of the grant helped them focus on ways to collaborate.

Second, program administrators also identified collaboration with the San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department as a new valuable approach and one that they would like to continue. One administrator explained, “The services of the workforce development agency were key to getting students jobs.” The San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department supported the program by providing a job advisor who helped students identify job leads, tailor their cover letters and resumes to specific job opportunities, prepare for interviews, and support other job search activities. The job advisor also held conference calls with the instructors to review student progress and areas of need. The San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department also served as a resource because the job advisor referred some clients to the One Stop (the agency that serves job seekers) for additional services.

Third, staff also spoke about the importance of cooperation with regard to curriculum development, instruction, and adaptation. For example, the curriculum developer and teachers from the two adult schools reported they appreciated the opportunity to collaborate on curriculum development and during regularly scheduled teacher meetings (every two weeks) during the pilot. They noted these practices supported continued programmatic consistency between sites and allowed them to share strategies to cope with challenges.

### *Implementation Challenges*

The compressed timeline during which the pilot was planned and launched presented a challenge. As described earlier, the overall SV ALLIES Initiative plan was to have the



Steering Committee establish an infrastructure and generate recommendations for pilot projects to test innovative language and workforce-training services for English learners in Year 1. However, the pilot projects were developed and approved very quickly at the beginning of Year 2 of the SV ALLIES Initiative. As one administrator noted, “We had to develop the pilots in a very short period of time.” All program materials, staffing, and recruitment activities were developed and accomplished within three months, which limited opportunities to discuss many aspects of program operation in detail.

Additionally, there were recruitment challenges due to the absence of clear early communication about the eligibility guidelines governing participation in services funded by the federal grant. The eligibility guidelines required participants to show right-to-work documentation; program staff reported this requirement would likely reduce the number of applicants, as right-to-work documentation relates to immigration status, which can be a sensitive topic even for those who have the proper paperwork. When the program managers learned the accurate eligibility rules, they changed and broadened their recruitment strategies. Changes included hiring extra people to conduct outreach, advertising in local media, and creating a student referral program.

The instructors noted that another challenge was presented by the varying skill levels of the students, because the initial curriculum assumed more uniform skill levels. The instructors overcame the challenge by making the curriculum more flexible (e.g., by varying specific assignments within a given topic) and giving students more individualized attention. Instructors also reported that occasionally students would help each other.

Another challenge was scheduling time with the job advisor. As one administrator noted, “A lot of time was spent trying to figure out how to get students from the classroom to meet with the job advisor.” One suggestion made for resolving this challenge in future programs was to designate a teacher that would be responsible for both teaching and job-placement assistance.

## **Discussion of Findings and Lessons Learned**

The ELLS program provided the opportunity for the partners to innovate in multiple ways. First, the program established relationships across two counties, enabling two neighboring adult schools to collaborate for the first time to serve English learners. Previously the two schools did not partner, in part because they competed for students. They have plans to continue to cooperate, even though it’s likely they will

still compete for students. In addition, it was the first time they had collaborated with a workforce development agency.

Second, it was the first time both schools incorporated a job search component into one of their programs. In addition to combining job search training, English literacy, and digital literacy instruction, partnering with the San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department to provide students the opportunity to meet with a job advisor proved to greatly increase participants' ability to find a job. Finally, the program reached a population that the participating adult schools had not reached on a large scale before—English learners with college degrees that they earned in another country. They reached this group by hiring extra people to conduct outreach, advertising in local media, and creating a student referral program.

Overall, the collaborative relationships established through this pilot helped lay a foundation for building a system of services to help English learners move toward family-sustaining jobs, the overall vision for the SV ALLIES effort. As funding to continue the program in the future remains uncertain, it will be important to track whether the relationships become institutionalized over time.

The participant-level results of this innovative pilot program were generally positive. Approximately half of program completers experienced English language gains in one or more modules, as measured by a comparison of pre- and post-tests. Additionally, a majority of program participants reported that participation increased their English skills, job search skills, digital literacy, and confidence for applying for jobs with higher pay. Program staff also noted that the program helped students improve their job search skills and their confidence about speaking English during interviews.

The outcome data indicated a positive and significant association between number of job advising sessions attended and the likelihood of finding a new job. The positive trend does not imply a causal relationship because the evaluation approach does not allow us to separate the influence of the program from the job seekers' own job search efforts.

### ***Lessons Learned***

Lessons learned through implementing the ELLS pilot that may inform the development of similar efforts include the following:

- **Strategic Planning:** While pilots are intended to be flexible test cases, funders or project sponsors (in this case, the SV ALLIES staff) should provide written guidance and information in advance to support pilot planning, such as outlining funding restrictions, expectations for timelines,

and eligibility requirements. Multiple changes in the DOL project officer assigned to the grant as well as leadership of the San Mateo County Workforce and Economic Development Department, and the project team's inexperience in running DOL grants, led to a communication vacuum that created difficulties during implementation.

- **Infrastructure:** Allocating dedicated resources to helping participants find a job significantly increases their probability of success. The ELLS program provided this support via a job advisor, which program staff viewed as a critical component of the program for helping students find jobs. If the program includes a job advisor, it would be useful to allocate specific times for student meetings with the job advisor or to provide professional development training to the instructor so he/she can be responsible for both teaching and job advising.
- **Communication:** Communication between teachers at the two adult schools and the job advisor was perceived to be a valuable practice because it allowed teachers to both assess the progress of students and adjust as needed. The teachers met every two weeks during the pilot. Communication between program managers was similarly helpful in sharing ideas and resources.

Administrators at both adult schools think the program is worth continuing and value the job search component and the opportunity to work with another school. Discussions about how to continue the job advising component continue. However, the availability of funding to continue the program is uncertain. Options under consideration include a state-funded effort to encourage adult schools and community colleges to jointly serve students.

## Incumbent Worker Pilots

The SV ALLIES Initiative also supported pilot projects that provided training to incumbent workers that blended technical skills training with English language instruction (sometimes referred to as workplace English or vocational English as a second language). In this section we describe and present the outcomes for three incumbent worker pilots evaluated by WestEd: the Santa Clara Kaiser Permanente Workplace English (KPWE) pilot, the Skyline English Language Development Training (ELDT) pilot, and the Hospitality 360 Banquet Service Class (H360).

These pilots aligned resources from organizations across different sectors and members of the Steering Committee. The general approach to designing each pilot involved the following: the SV ALLIES staff facilitated general planning discussions

with a focus on the SV ALLIES Common Agenda; an intermediary organization led the detailed program planning and implementation process and brokered employer involvement; and the SV ALLIES Initiative provided funding to help support the pilot. Exhibit 17 provides a brief description of each pilot.

#### Exhibit 17: Overview of Incumbent Worker Pilots

	Partners	Description
<b><i>Kaiser Permanente Workplace English for environmental service workers</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– SEIU-UHW-WEST<sup>a</sup> &amp; Joint Employer Fund (Education Fund)</li> <li>– Kaiser Permanente Santa Clara (KP Steering Committee)</li> <li>– Santa Clara Adult School</li> <li>– Building Skill Partnership (BSP)</li> </ul>	Provides employees with English language instruction contextualized to environmental services skills required in the healthcare industry; provides digital literacy training.
<b><i>Skyline College English Language Development Training</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Skyline College</li> <li>– California Community College System</li> <li>– Hotels in San Mateo County</li> <li>– SV ALLIES</li> </ul>	Provides hotel employees with English language instruction contextualized to hotel customer service skills; includes content to support the Certified Guest Service Professional credential.
<b><i>Hospitality 360 Banquet Service</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– South Bay Hotel Employees Restaurant Employees (HERE) Training Trust Fund</li> <li>– Hotels in Santa Clara County</li> <li>– SV ALLIES</li> </ul>	Provides hotel employees with English language instruction contextualized to hotel banquet services.

a. Service Employees International Union-United Healthcare Workers-West.

### Description of Incumbent Worker Pilots

#### ***English for Environmental Service Workers***

The Santa Clara Kaiser Permanente Workplace English (KPWE) program provided environmental service employees with English language training contextualized to their workplace needs. The goal of the program was to help incumbent workers improve their skills in English, customer service, and digital literacy. The program was designed and supported by several organizations. Kaiser Permanente Santa Clara (KPSC), the Service Employees International Union-United Healthcare Workers-West

& Joint Employer Fund (Education Fund),<sup>12</sup> and SV ALLIES funded a portion of the program.

The Building Skills Partnership's (BSP) vocational English janitorial curriculum served as a model for the class curriculum. Santa Clara Adult School, the Education Fund, and the KP Steering Committee collaborated to customize the curriculum for Kaiser environmental service employees. The curriculum was customized to Kaiser's needs, which are focused on the specific requirements and regulations governing sanitation and maintenance in healthcare and hospital settings. It also included a focus on learning how to use Kaiser's human resource website and using a computer in general. Santa Clara Adult School instructors delivered the instructional services, with input from BSP.

The class was 28 weeks long and met each week for 6 hours at the work site. Students attended the class on paid release time and their shifts were covered by other staff. Program staff recruited environmental service employees based on their expressed interest in the program and need for English language instruction. Program staff used the BEST (Basic English Skills Test) Plus tool to assess the English language ability of all prospective students who expressed interest and selected those at a beginner level.

### ***Skyline College English Language Development Training for Hospitality Workers***

The Skyline College English Language Development Training (ELDT) pilot was a collaboration between Skyline College, two hotels in San Mateo County, and Silicon Valley ALLIES. The pilot's goals were to improve participants' English language skills and customer service skills, and to increase employee confidence and success. Participants were hotel employees with limited English language skills.

A Skyline instructor developed the curriculum and taught the class at the participants' hotel or nearby hotel. The curriculum was tailored to workplace tasks and responded to employer needs. SV ALLIES funded the curriculum development and assisted with general planning of the pilot. The class curriculum also blended in content from the Certified Guest Service Professional credential program, so participants were prepared to complete the exam at the end of the class.

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<sup>12</sup> The Education Fund is a Taft-Hartley Trust Fund. The trust funds are collectively bargained by a union and a group of employers. The Education Fund provides education and training programs to eligible workers to help them improve their careers. Concurrently, the training enhances participating employers' ability to attract, train, and retain its workforce.

For one cohort, the class was built in to the workday and employees were released from work to attend. There were 4 hours of instruction per week for 12 weeks, with ongoing assessments of student progress during the course. The class took place at a hotel and when workers from neighboring hotels participated they were provided transportation to the class location.

Hotel human resources directors and program staff recruited hotel employees based on their interest in the program and assessing their English language ability. Participants with low to intermediate English skills levels as rated on an instructor-developed tool were selected for the program. Additionally, two participants (who were not incumbent workers at the hotels) were recruited from a local adult school so pilot project managers could concurrently serve adult school students and learn how to adjust the curriculum for their needs.

### ***Hospitality 360 Banquet Service Class***

The Hospitality 360 Banquet Service Class (H360) was created by the South Bay Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE) Training Trust Fund<sup>13</sup> and a team of hotel employees who had participated in a similar class, with support from a Mission College English as a Second Language (ESL) instructor and Silicon Valley ALLIES. SV ALLIES provided financial support for the program and provided general program implementation consultation. The goal of the program was to concurrently train current hotel employees to learn how to be a banquet support-server and improve their English skills. The training enabled participants to qualify to work at banquets, and thus work extra hours (in addition to their current responsibilities).

The curriculum focused on topics related to banquet service, hospitality/guest service, and English skills that support banquet and guest services. South Bay HERE subcontracted with an ELS instructor from Mission College to provide the English language instructional content for the class. Additional instructors with extensive work experience in the hospitality industry and peers who had previously taken the class (they acted as mentors) were also part of the instruction team. The class met four hours a week for five weeks at a participating hotel. Students took the class on their

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<sup>13</sup> The South Bay HERE Training Trust Fund is a Taft-Hartley partnership between nine South Bay hotel employers and their union, UNITE HERE Local 19 (Local 19). The Trust Fund provides training to Local 19 employees employed by member employers. The Trust Fund also helps member employers in securing grant funding to leverage its training monies.

own time and received a stipend for completing the class. Mentors and tutoring were available between classes, at participating hotels.

Program staff recruited participants from member hotels and selected students with low to intermediate English skills as rated on an instructor-developed tool, with no prior experience in banquet service, and who were members of the local union.

## **Evaluation Overview**

The design of these pilots was informed by presentations and discussions of career pathways programs during Steering Committee meetings. The pilots were designed to provide employees access to education and training they need to advance to jobs with more responsibility and higher wages, and to help employers develop and retain their workforce. There have been a limited number of evaluations of incumbent worker career pathways programs for workers with limited English proficiency. This evaluation of the three SV ALLIES incumbent worker pilots will expand the evidence base by reporting outcomes for contextualized English language instruction designed to improve English test score gains, retention and promotion, and participants' perceptions of the program.

The main research questions guiding the outcome evaluation of these incumbent worker pilots were the following:

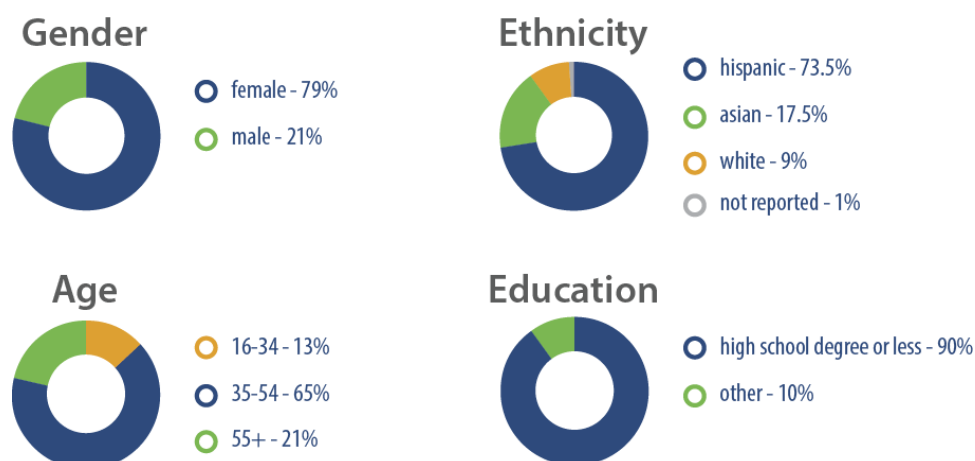
- 1) What are the English-skills, retention, and promotion outcomes for program participants?
- 2) What were participants' satisfaction levels with the pilot programs and how did they perceive the pilot program influenced their career plans?
- 3) What lessons have been learned that could inform similar efforts in other communities or workforce systems?
- 4) What lessons have been learned that could inform similar efforts in other communities or workforce systems?

Data to answer these questions were obtained from multiple sources: test score data recorded by teachers during the classes; class exit surveys completed by students; retention and promotion information collected by the pilot program managers between 30 days and 6 months after the program ended; and post-program interviews with program managers, teachers, and employers. The exit surveys examined participants' satisfaction levels with the programs and the perceived benefits, such as the programs' influence on their confidence to enroll in further training. The interviews with program staff addressed topics including implementation successes and challenges, and perceived program benefits.

The original evaluation plan proposed to measure if higher levels of attendance were associated with higher likelihoods of job retention or promotion and English test score gains. However, because of small sample sizes and very little variation in job retention and promotion, a measure of association was not feasible. Therefore this chapter presents the outcomes without estimating the statistical association with attendance. The outcome results are not generalizable because of small sample sizes. Lessons learned in the implementation process are, however, transferable to similar program contexts. A full description of the methodology can be found in Appendix C.

Sixty-eight participants were enrolled in the three incumbent worker pilots and included in the outcome study.<sup>14</sup> They were mostly female (79%), Hispanic (74%), and had a high school degree or less (90%). Approximately two-thirds of participants were age 35–54, with the exception of the KPWE pilot where 6 of 14 participants were 55 or older when they began the program. Appendix F provides a full demographic summary for each pilot.

#### Exhibit 18: Incumbent Worker Pilot Demographics



\* (n=68)

Source: Data from KPWE, ELDT, and H360 program managers.

<sup>14</sup> The grant performance report participant totals are slightly higher than this outcome evaluation for two reasons: (1) Those reports included all participants who received any services; WestEd included participants who attended at least two classes. (2) Those reports included participants from additional pilots/cohorts that were not evaluated (The Building Skills Partnership pilot, the second cohort of the H360 pilot and KPWE pilot.)



## Summary of Findings

The main findings of the evaluation of the incumbent worker pilots included the following:

- **A majority of pilot program completers demonstrated test score gains on their pilot's English pre- and post assessment test.** A majority of participant survey respondents also agreed that participation improved their English language skills.
- **Employers involved in the pilots reported observing gains in participants' English abilities and confidence.** Additionally, a majority of participants who responded to the survey agreed that participation in the pilot increased their confidence to enroll in additional job training or education, and increased their confidence to apply for jobs with more responsibility and/or jobs higher on the career ladder.
- **The pilots expanded access to English language instruction for incumbent workers with limited English proficiency.** A large majority (70%) of participant survey respondents reported that they had not taken an English class prior to the pilot class.
- **All participants were retained or promoted within 30 or 60 days after the pilot programs ended.** For the two pilots in which promotion and retention were measured for up to six months, all but one participant retained their job.
- **Each pilot benefited from strong industry support during the program design phase, which allowed the curriculum to be customized to employer and employee needs.** The form of employers' involvement varied and included labor-management partnerships and community college-business partnerships.

The next sections present the findings on participant outcomes (i.e., English test score gains and retention/promotion); participants' perceptions and satisfaction with the pilots; employer perceptions of the pilot; and program staff perceptions about the implementation of the pilot. The last section discusses the main findings and lessons learned.

## Outcomes

### *English Skills*

**A majority of pilot program completers experienced English skills gains as measured by each pilot's pre- and post-tests.** A gain was defined as scoring one or more points higher on the English assessment post-test than on the pre-test. Exhibit 19

presents the results for each pilot.<sup>15</sup> The results across pilots are not comparable because the programs used different pre- and post-test instruments, had different curriculum, and varied in length.

#### Exhibit 19: Completers' English Language Test Score Gains

Pilot Program	Assessment Test	Share with at least a one-point gain
<b>KPWE</b>	BEST Plus	6/10 (60%)
<b>ELDT</b>	Teacher developed	12/15 (80%)
<b>H360</b>	Teacher developed	27/35 (77%) (7 scored 100% on both the pre- and post-test)

Source: Test scores provided by pilot project managers, 2014–2015.

**The pilots expanded access to English literacy training for incumbent workers.** Responses to the participant exit survey revealed that approximately 70% (37/53) of incumbent worker pilot participants had not previously enrolled in any English classes.

#### Retention and Promotion

The three pilots began at different times during the grant period, therefore post-program job retention and promotion status were measured in intervals ranging from 60 days to 6 months. For the KPWE pilot, outcome status was measured at 30 days and 6 months; for the ELDT pilot, it was measured at 30 days and 6 months for the first cohort and 30 days and 3 months for the second cohort; and for the Hospitality 360 Banquet Service pilot, it was measured at 60 days.

The retention and promotion outcomes are summarized in Exhibit 20. **All pilot participants were retained within 30 or 60 days after the pilot program ended.** Two of seventeen (12%) participants from the ELDT pilot obtained promotions to Housekeeping Supervisor within 30 days after the pilot. No other participants were promoted.

**Sixty percent (21 of 35) of H360 participants were promoted within 60 days of the end of the program.** Participants were employed in non-banquet hotel positions

<sup>15</sup> The original research plan proposed to measure the association between test score gains and attendance level. The assumption (to be tested) was: Higher attendance levels would be associated with higher test score gains. Because of small sample sizes for each pilot we did not estimate the association.

at the start of the program (e.g., housekeeping room attendant, food server, busser). Working as a banquet server is considered a job promotion in this industry and along the career pathways available to program participants; therefore, we counted working additional hours as a banquet server as a promotion for the purpose of this study.

**Exhibit 20: Participants' 30- and 60-Day Retention and Promotion Outcomes**

Pilot Name	Retention at same employer 30 days after pilot	Promotion 30 days after pilot
Kaiser Permanente Workplace English for environmental service workers (n=14)	100%	0%
Skyline College English Language Development Training (n=17)	100%	12%

Pilot Name	Retention at same employer 60 days after pilot	Worked at 1 or more banquet events 60 days after pilot*
H360 (n=35)	100%	60%

\*In addition to their current job, participants worked in a new role as a banquet server in the 60 days following the class.

Source: Data from KPWE, ELDT, and H360 program managers.

For the KPWE and ELDT pilots, we measured retention and promotion for a longer interval than the interval measured for the H360 pilot (Exhibit 21). Thirteen of fourteen (93%) of the KPWE pilot participants retained their jobs six months after the program ended. All seven participants (100%) in cohort 1 of the ELDT pilot retained a job six months after the program, one of whom accepted a job at a different employer for a higher wage. All 10 participants (100%) in cohort 2 of the ELDT pilot retained their job three months after the program ended. No participants in either pilot received a job promotion at their employer in these intervals.

## Exhibit 21: Participants' Six- and Three-Month Retention and Promotion Outcomes

Pilot Name	Three-month retention*	Six-month retention*
<i>Kaiser Permanente Workplace English for Environmental Service Workers (n=14)</i>	n/a	93%
<i>Skyline College English Language Development Training (n=17)</i>	100% (cohort 2)	100%** (cohort 1)

\*No promotions occurred in this time period.

\*\*Six of seven from cohort 1 retained their job six months after the program and one of seven accepted another job for a higher wage.

Source: Data from KPWE, ELDT, and H360 program managers.

### Industry Certification

The ELDT and H360 pilots enabled participants to earn certificates that allowed them to demonstrate the skills they learned. The ELDT pilot was also designed to prepare participants to take a hotel industry customer service certification test. Twelve of fourteen (86%) participants that took the exam passed it. Participants passing the exam receive a pin, which can be worn at work and designates them as having earned the Certified Guest Service Professional (CGSP®) designation.

The H360 class trained participants to work as a banquet server at any of the local union's member hotels. All 35 participants received a certificate of completion, and were qualified to work banquet events at local hotels.

### Participant Perceptions

Participants in each pilot program were given the opportunity to complete an exit survey in class during the last week of their English class. The overall response rate was 98%.<sup>16</sup> The survey included questions about perceived benefits related to workplace communications, career advancement, and satisfaction level.

### Workplace Communications

**Pilot program participants agreed that participation in the programs improved their ability to communicate at work.** For example, in an open-ended question

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<sup>16</sup> The response rate by pilot was 100% (10 of 10) for KPWE, 100% (30 of 30) of H360, and 93% (14 of 15) for ELDT.

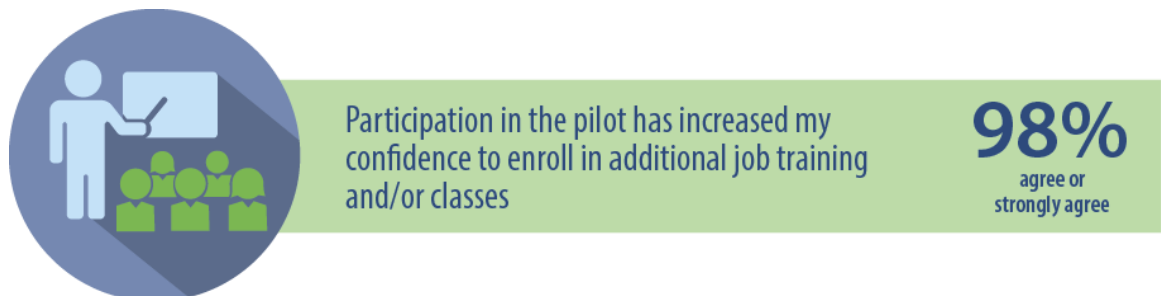
seeking any additional comments, one ELDT survey respondent wrote, “I learned a lot and I feel comfortable to talk with the people [sic].”

All survey respondents (across the three pilots) strongly agreed or agreed that participation improved their English language skills. Similarly, all respondents agreed or strongly agreed that participation improved their ability to communicate with customers or patients and visitors. A full description of the survey results for each pilot can be found in Appendix G.

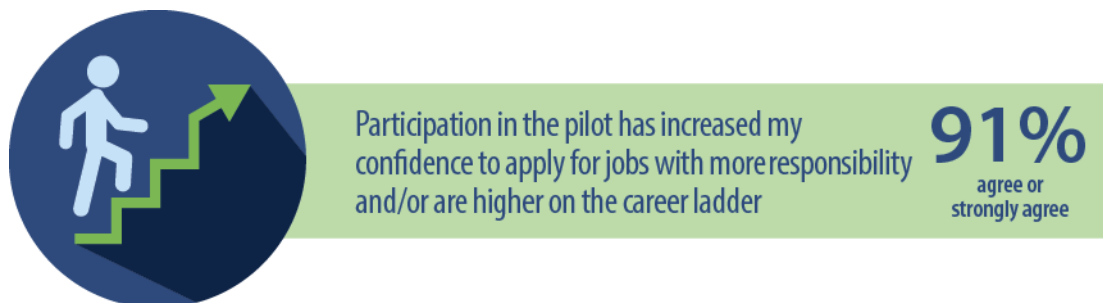
### ***Influence on Career Plans***

More than 90% of pilot program survey respondents agreed that participation in the programs increased their confidence to enroll in additional job training or education and to apply for jobs with more responsibility and/or are higher on the career ladder (Exhibit 22). Appendix G presents the results in detail by pilot program.

#### **Exhibit 22: Participants’ Perceptions about Confidence**



\*2% were neutral.



\*5% were neutral, and 4% disagreed.

(n=53)

Source: Participant Exit Survey 2014-2015

Additionally, in open-ended responses seeking general comments about the pilots, some participants expressed an interest in pursuing additional training, including one participant who wrote, “I want to learn so that I may progress in my career. It is also

necessary that I learn English to have more opportunities in other areas. I would also like to take a math class.”

Another respondent expressed appreciation for how the pilot helped with career advancement: “I just want to thank to the people that give us opportunities to take this class cause we learn a lot about banquet and for career advancement. Not only in housekeeping. Thanks [sic].”

### ***Participant Satisfaction***

All participants responding to the survey were very satisfied or satisfied with the services received through the pilot programs. Additionally, in an open-ended survey question asking for any additional comments, many respondents left notes of appreciation, such as: “I can never thank you guys enough for this wonderful class. It was very helpful for me.” “I had wonderful teachers! This class made me more confident!” “I am very grateful to [the teacher] for all the help. The training and patience provided, gave us more strength [sic].”

### ***Release Time***

**Providing employees with paid release time to attend the pilot programs encouraged many employees to enroll in the pilots.** Seven of twelve (58%) KPWE pilot participants responded that they would not have attended the class if it were not on paid release time. The remaining five (42%) said they would have attended the class if it were not on paid release time.<sup>17</sup>

The SV ALLIES Initiative also provided support to another incumbent worker class through the Building Skills Partnership, which was not included in this outcomes study. Since that class was also offered on partial release time, we conducted an exit survey that also asked students about the influence of release time. Three of six (50%) participants in that class responded that they would not have attended the class if it were not on paid release time. The remaining three responded that they would have attended the class if it were not on paid release time.

### ***Digital Literacy***

The KPWE pilot incorporated digital literacy into the curriculum, and all 10 respondents agreed that participation in the pilot improved their ability to use a computer, their ability to use the employer’s human resources website, and their

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<sup>17</sup> To understand how paid release time influenced participants’ enrollment in the program, the KPWE program manager conducted a follow-up phone survey to ask students if they would have attended the class if it were not on paid release time.

ability to search for information using the Internet. During a short focus group conducted after completing the in-class survey, respondents also said they liked learning about computers and expressed interest in learning more about how to use computers.

### ***Suggestions for Improvement***

In an open-ended question and during the survey administration, respondents were given the opportunity to provide suggestions about improving the programs. The most common suggestion across the three pilots was that future classes should spend more time on learning how to use a computer. Suggestions included learning about word processing, spreadsheet software, and finding information online.

### ***Employer Perceptions***

**Employers reported several positive outcomes of the pilots, including improved English skills for the participants and a better trained workforce.** We conducted interviews with two senior managers at the businesses involved in two of the pilot programs. One was the head of the department hosting the pilot and the other was the general manager of a hotel with employees participating in the pilot. Both reported that participants' English had improved. One expressed that participants had "increased confidence in English" and another reported that there was an increase in the ability of graduates to speak and understand English.

The managers also explained how the improvement in English helped the businesses in general. One said that the increased English language ability helped employees "complete tasks" and "respond to requests." Another manager said that as a result of the pilot his business had a bigger group of qualified candidates to support business operations.

Managers also observed how the pilots helped improve employee self-confidence. One manager expressed that the pilot "helped people come out of their shells," noting that before they participated in the training, some workers were shy about engaging with guests and were more confident in their interactions with guests after the pilot. The manager also thought employees were more confident both with English and in general.

The digital literacy component incorporated into one pilot was also reported to have helped participants. The manager said two participants completed an online survey this year without any help, and last year (before they participated in the pilot) that probably would not have happened.

## Pilot Project Implementation: Successes and Challenges

Researchers interviewed the program manager and program staff involved in all three pilots, for a total of 11 interviews. Results from these interviews provided information about staff members' perceptions about program implementation, challenges, and benefits of the program.

### *What Worked*

Aspects of the pilots that staff highlighted as being particularly beneficial or to have facilitated implementation included industry involvement; cross-sector collaboration; and, for one pilot, peer mentors.

#### Industry Involvement

**Industry involvement in the pilots was consistently identified by staff as a key factor of success.** Interview respondents noted the importance of “strong buy-in from both union and management” and pilots being a “holistic endeavor” that involved employer representatives, union representatives, and pilot program staff.

Industry involvement contributed to success because it helped shape the curriculum to meet employer and employee needs. For example, employers provided suggestions on topics to include in the curriculum. Employers also provided meeting rooms for the classes to meet, and in some cases provided employees with paid release time to attend the classes. Two interview respondents also noted the importance of having manager support for the paid release time (i.e., managers paid students their normal wage while attending the class.) Unions, which were involved in two of the pilots, supported the pilots by participating in the planning processes, including participant recruitment and curriculum development.

**The form of industry involvement varied across pilots.** The KPWE and H360 pilots were managed by a multi-employer labor-management training or education trust fund. The ELDT pilot was managed by a community college and was part of a larger community college effort to align community college program curricula with employer needs. These different models demonstrate that there are multiple ways to build support from industry.

#### Collaboration and Mentors

**Program staff reported that the incumbent worker pilots provided organizations the opportunity to work with partners in different sectors—some for the first time—to provide services to English learners.** The SV ALLIES project team also supported the pilots by, for example, facilitating introductions between program managers, adult school staff, and ESL instructors.



The H360 pilot included peer mentors that were present at each class to help students learn. The instructors and staff of the pilot reported that mentors contributed to the success of the pilot because they provided one-on-one teaching support to students during class and participants trusted and valued their support. One instructor explained that some participants were afraid to fail in speaking English, but having peers there helped dispel the fear. The mentors worked at the same hotels as students and had been through a similar class previously.

### ***Implementation Challenges***

According to staff, scheduling was a challenge experienced across pilots because it involved accommodating release time for employees and scheduling substitutes to cover their duties when participants were in class. It was a particular challenge during times of peak demand, such as periods with high occupancy rates and holidays. Scheduling space for the class was also a challenge in some cases when it overlapped with a busy conference season for participating hotels.

Staff from two pilots also reported that students experienced some challenges attending all the classes because of having to balance the demands of having a second job or family responsibilities.

### ***Next Steps***

Staff suggested a few adjustments that may enhance future pilots for future cohorts. Instructors from two pilots suggested the curriculum be expanded to include more grammar; for example, learning about present and past tenses of verbs. Staff from the one pilot that included a digital literacy component suggested starting that component earlier in the class.

All of the pilots have plans for continuing the work begun through the SV ALLIES collaboration. The KPWE pilot partners plan to provide training to other cohorts within the same department. The H360 pilot served an additional cohort of 43 participants (which was not included in this evaluation because it was launched near the end of the grant term) and content developed for that class will be used to support similar contextualized English language instruction at other locations and with other employers supported by the training trust fund.

The ELDT pilot has plans to use what was learned during the pilot to develop a similar contextualized English language program for restaurant and food service employees and employers. They are also exploring the option of modifying and enhancing the current ELDT pilot program to become a bridge program that facilitates the transition of students from adult schools to a community college management degree program.

Two adult school students participated in the ELDT pilot along with incumbent workers, which provided an opportunity for the program managers to learn how the curriculum worked with non-incumbent workers.

## **Discussion of Findings and Lessons Learned**

The evaluation findings show that incumbent workers benefited from contextualized English language instruction. A majority of pilot program completers experienced gains in English skills, as measured by each pilot's pre- and post-tests. Additionally, all survey respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that participation in the programs improved their ability to communicate at work. Similarly, the majority of respondents agreed that participation in the pilot increased their confidence to enroll in additional job training or education and it increased their confidence to apply for jobs with more responsibility and/or higher on the career ladder. Employers we interviewed also reported observing an increase in English language proficiency and confidence.

In addition to the positive outcomes, the pilots contributed to building education and career pathways for English learners in three distinct ways. First, these incumbent worker pilots expanded participants' access to English literacy training. Approximately 70% (37 of 53) of incumbent worker pilot participants reported on the exit survey that they had not previously enrolled in any English classes. The workplace English pilots would not have been possible without a strong commitment from a senior manager and/or a multi-employer labor-management partnership.

Second, the results (limited by small sample sizes) also suggest that offering employees paid release time to attend the pilot programs during the work day encouraged employees to enroll in the programs. Over half of respondents reported that they would not have attended the class if it were not on paid release time.

Third, the pilots supported cross-sector career pathway development. The work conducted during the ELDT pilot is helping the community college create pathways (i.e., a bridge program) between local adult schools and the community college that would allow students to transition from an adult school into a community college degree program. The SV ALLIES project team also facilitated the cross-sector connections between the incumbent worker pilots and ESL instructors in the education sector.

## **Lessons Learned**

These findings suggest several lessons that can guide future efforts to expand English language instruction to incumbent workers with limited English proficiency:

- Employer involvement and cross-sector connections can be brokered in multiple ways: labor-management partnerships, community college-business partnerships, and through connections nurtured by the project team and organizations on the steering committee.
- Offering employees paid release time to attend contextualized English language classes may increase participation by encouraging some to participate who would not in the absence of the incentive. Interview respondents emphasized the importance of manager support for incorporating paid release time into the program structure.
- Co-enrolling non-incumbent workers in workplace English classes can be a valuable way to learn how to adapt the curriculum to serve a broader population and help the non-incumbent worker students gain insights into applying their skills in the workplace. In the case of SV ALLIES, one pilot project used this type of co-enrollment information to begin developing a bridge program for adult school students to facilitate their transition to a community college degree program.

## V. Cost Analysis

The purpose of the cost analysis of the SV ALLIES Initiative was to examine how grant funds were distributed across grant activities and how non-grant funds supported grant activities. Because some of the costs were associated with system building, we first discuss the total system-level costs and then determine a per-participant cost, which is calculated based on actual costs of implementing the participant-serving pilot programs. The information from the cost study provides a point of comparison for the implementation of similar initiatives.

The research questions guiding the cost study were the following:

1. What were the costs of the SV ALLIES Initiative?
2. What was the cost per participant for each participant-serving pilot?

### Data Sources and Analysis

WestEd obtained all data for the cost study from the SV ALLIES project team:

- **Expenditure (cost) data:** WestEd obtained expenditure data organized according to type of expense (e.g., grant program management, system-level activities, pilot projects). The costs were further broken down by the five pilot initiatives.
- **Other funding data:** WestEd requested and obtained data about in-kind and leveraged funds that contributed to grant activities.
- **Pilot administrative data:** WestEd obtained data on the number of individuals who participated in the five<sup>18</sup> participant-serving pilot projects supported by the grant.<sup>19</sup>

To address the research questions, WestEd separated the costs into three categories: (1) system-building (e.g., steering committee planning process, workforce development agency, regional coordination,<sup>20</sup> grant program management, supplies,

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<sup>18</sup> Five pilots were funded, but four were evaluated in this study. The pilot funded but not evaluated was the Building Skills Partnership incumbent worker pilot. It was not evaluated because of the small number of participants.

<sup>19</sup> The grant performance report participant total is slightly higher than the one in the cost study because the totals in the cost study are current through April 2015.

<sup>20</sup> This includes the work each workforce development agency did to support the grant, which includes identifying possible pilots, overseeing the pilots in their region, engaging

travel, evaluation, and the initiative website); (2) the Community Asset Referral System (CARS) pilot (including focus groups, the website prototype, and grant program management); and (3) the participant-serving pilots (including participant-services delivery and pilot project management). The system-building and CARS pilot costs are not included in the cost per participant because they are long-term investments in the system infrastructure. Future cost studies that examine participation over a longer period of time could include them.

WestEd calculated the cost per participant across all the participant-serving pilot projects by dividing the total pilot costs by the total number of participants (see Equation 1):

[Equation 1] Per participant cost = (Total pilot costs) / (Number of participants)

After calculating the cost per participant, WestEd further specified the cost per participant by calculating the cost per participant for each pilot. For example, Equation 2 below demonstrates how the costs per participant were calculated for the ELLS pilot:

[Equation 2] Per participant cost = (ELLS cost) / (Number of ELLS participants)

Finally, we calculated the cost per participant that included total funding (i.e., WIF grant and leveraged and in-kind funds) using modified versions of equations 1 and 2, in which total cost was replaced with either WIF costs or leveraged and in-kind funds, respectively.

### *Limitations of the Cost Study*

There are limits to which this cost information can be used to inform the design and implementation of similar initiatives. First, the resources were allocated based on local needs and overlaid with existing staffing/system structures, which would likely be different in other local contexts. Second, as described in the Formative Evaluation chapter, the SV ALLIES Collective Impact effort was not fully implemented in the three years of the grant due to several challenges. In general, implementing system change initiatives is idiosyncratic in that, under different conditions, more or less could be accomplished with the same resources. Third, this study does not account for non-financial resources such as the contributions of Steering Committee members through their attendance at the meetings.

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stakeholders in their local area, and disseminating information about the initiative efforts to local stakeholders.

## Findings

### Funding Allocations and Funding Sources

Exhibit 23 outlines the WIF grant-funding allocations to the three categories of costs described above (i.e., system-building, CARS pilot, and participant-serving pilots).

- The WIF funding associated with system-building totaled \$1,777,515, representing 68% of the total WIF funding given to the SV ALLIES Initiative.
- The CARS pilot funding was \$390,276, representing 15% of the WIF funding.
- Finally, the participant-serving pilot funding was \$464,459, representing 18% of WIF funding.

**Exhibit 23: WIF Grant Funding Allocations in the SV ALLIES Initiative, 2012–2015**

WIF Grant Activity	Total Funding	Percentage of Total Funding
<b>System-building:</b> Steering committee planning, workforce agency regional coordination, grant program management, supplies, travel, evaluation, and website	\$1,777,515	68%
<b>CARS pilot:</b> Including website prototype and grant program management	\$390,276	15%
<b>Participant-serving pilots</b>	\$464,459	18%
<i>ELLS</i>	\$63,264	5%
<i>KPWE</i>	\$34,000	4%
<i>ELDT</i>	\$32,000	2%
<i>BSP</i>	\$10,195	1%
<i>H360</i>	\$50,000	4%
<i>Pilot project management, coordination, and support services</i>	\$275,000	10%
Total WIF Funds	\$2,632,250	100%

*Note:* ELLS is English Learners' Ladders to Success pilot. KPWE is Kaiser Permanente Workplace English pilot. ELDT is Skyline College English Language Development and Training. BSP is Building Skills Partnership. H360 is Hospitality 360 Banquet Service Class.

SV ALLIES also leveraged additional funding and received in-kind funding. Leveraged and in-kind funding totaled \$652,249, which represented 20% of the total costs applied to SV ALLIES activities (\$3,284,499). Leveraged costs included state community college grants for curriculum development, the grant to the original ALLIES effort, and workforce development agency funds to support regional grant program activities. In-kind costs included paid-time off for incumbent participants, staff time, donated space, development and implementation costs, volunteer teaching aides, and materials. Exhibit 24 outlines the leveraged and in-kind funding, broken down into the three cost categories.

**Exhibit 24: Leveraged and In-Kind Funding for the SV ALLIES Initiative**

WIF Grant Activity	Leveraged Funding	In-Kind Funding	Total
<b>System-building<sup>a</sup>:</b> Steering committee planning, workforce development agency, regional coordination, grant program management, supplies, travel, evaluation, and website	\$192,078	\$185,184	\$377,262
<b>CARS pilot:</b> Including website prototype and grant program management	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Participant-serving pilots (Total)</b>	\$15,000	\$259,987	\$274,987
<i>ELLS<sup>b</sup></i>	\$0	\$96,649	\$96,649
<i>KPWE<sup>b</sup></i>	\$0	\$76,795	\$76,795
<i>ELDT<sup>b</sup></i>	\$15,000	\$19,600	\$34,600
<i>BSP<sup>b</sup></i>	\$0	\$6,943	\$6,943
<i>H360<sup>b</sup></i>	\$0	\$60,000	\$60,000
<i>Pilot project management, coordination, and support services</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Leveraged and In-Kind Funds</b>	<b>\$207,078</b>	<b>\$445,171</b>	<b>\$652,249</b>

a. Grants to original ALLIES in support of planning and development, meeting space, and staff time.

b. State community college grants for curriculum and program, staff time, space, development and implementation costs, employee paid time off for participants, volunteer teaching aides, and materials.

*Note:* ELLS is English Learners' Ladders to Success pilot. KPWE is Kaiser Permanente Workplace English pilot. ELDT is Skyline College English Language Development and Training. BPS is Building Skills Partnership. H360 is Hospitality 360 Banquet Service Class.

Exhibit 25 outlines all of the SV ALLIES Initiative's funding, and differentiates between the portion of each component that is supported by WIF funding and in-kind and leveraged funding.



**Exhibit 25: All Sources of Funding for the SV ALLIES Initiative**

WIF Grant Activity	WIF Funds		Leveraged & In-Kind Funding		Total
	\$	%	\$	%	
<b>Total of all funding sources</b>	\$2,632,250	80%	\$652,249	20%	\$3,284,499
<b>Subtotal of system-building + CARS pilot</b>	\$2,167,791	85%	\$377,262	15%	\$2,545,053
<b>System-building:</b> Steering Committee planning process, workforce development agency, regional coordination, grant program management, supplies, travel, evaluation, initiative website	\$1,777,515	82%	\$377,262	18%	\$2,154,777
<b>CARS pilot:</b> Including website prototype and grant program management	\$390,276	100%	\$0	0%	\$390,276
<b>Participant-serving pilots</b>	\$464,459	63%	\$274,987	37%	\$739,446

***System-Level Costs***

System-level costs were calculated by adding the system-building costs and CARS pilot costs. To determine the total amount, WestEd added the WIF grant, leveraged, and in-kind funding for these costs. The total system costs were \$2,545,053.

***Costs per Participant***

The cost per participant, accounting for only WIF funding, across all pilots was calculated using the pilot costs (\$464,459) divided by the total number of participants (196). The cost per participant across all participant-serving pilots was \$2,370.

Per participant costs for WIF funding for each individual pilot were calculated by first summing the individual pilot costs and the average cost per pilot for pilot project management, coordination, and support services [average cost = \$55,000] and then dividing the sum by the number of participants in the respective pilot. Cost per participant for each pilot (other than CARS) ranged from \$1,313 (H360) to \$6,357 (KPWE). These costs are not comparable across pilots because the pilots had varying lengths, curricula, and staffing structures. Exhibit 26 outlines the costs per participant across all participant-serving pilots, using only WIF funding.

**Exhibit 26: Costs per Participant for WIF Funding**

Program	Number of Participants	Pilot Costs
<b>All participant-serving pilots</b>	196	\$2,370
ELLS	72	\$1,643
KPWE	14	\$6,357
ELDT	19	\$4,579
BSP	11	\$5,927
H360	80	\$1,313

*Note:* ELLS is English Learners' Ladders to Success pilot. KPWE is Kaiser Permanente Workplace English pilot. ELDT is Skyline College English Language Development and Training. BSP is Building Skills Partnership. H360 is Hospitality 360 Banquet Service Class.

Cost per participant accounting for only leveraged and in-kind funding (Exhibit 27) ranged from \$631 (H360) to \$5,485 (KPWE).

**Exhibit 27: Costs per Participant for Leveraged and In-Kind Funding**

Program	Number of Participants	Pilot Costs
<b>All participant-serving pilots</b>	196	\$1,403
ELLS	72	\$1,342
KPWE	14	\$5,485
ELDT	19	\$1,821
BSP	11	\$631
H360	80	\$750

*Note 1:* Per participant costs from leveraged and in-kind funding for all pilots were calculated using the pilot costs from these sources (\$274,987) divided by the total number of participants (196). Per participant costs from leveraged and in-kind funding for individual pilot costs were calculated by dividing the individual pilot costs by the number of participants in the respective pilot.

*Note 2:* ELLS is English Learners' Ladders to Success pilot. KPWE is Kaiser Permanente Workplace English pilot. ELDT is Skyline College English Language Development and Training. BSP is Building Skills Partnership. H360 is Hospitality 360 Banquet Service Class.

The overall cost per participant accounting for all sources of funding was \$3,773, with approximately 60% of the cost covered by WIF grant funds and the remaining portion covered by leveraged and in-kind resources (Exhibit 28). Cost per participant accounting for all sources of funding ranged from \$2,073 (H360) to \$11,843 (KPWE). As explained earlier, the costs are not comparable across pilots because of variation in the pilot structures. For example, the KPWE pilot was the only pilot that provided paid-time off for the time participants spent in class.

**Exhibit 28: Costs per Participant for All Funding Sources**

Participant-Serving Pilots	Number of Participants	WIF Funds		Leveraged and In-Kind Funding		Total	
		\$	%	\$	%	\$	Cost Per Participant
All	196	\$464,459	63%	\$274,987	37%	\$739,446	\$3,773
ELLS	72	\$118,264	55%	\$96,649	45%	\$214,913	\$2,985
KPWE	14	\$89,000	54%	\$76,795	46%	\$165,795	\$11,843
ELDT	19	\$87,000	72%	\$34,600	28%	\$121,600	\$6,400
BSP	11	\$65,195	90%	\$6,943	10%	\$72,138	\$6,558
H360	80	\$105,000	64%	\$60,000	36%	\$165,000	\$2,063

*Note 1:* Per participant costs for all pilots were calculated using the pilot costs (\$739,446) divided by the total number of participants (196). Per-participant costs for individual pilots were calculated using the individual pilot costs, plus the average cost per pilot for pilot project management, coordination, and support services (average cost = \$55,000) and dividing by the number of participants in the respective pilot.

*Note 2:* ELLS is English Learners' Ladders to Success pilot. KPWE is Kaiser Permanente Workplace English pilot. ELDT is Skyline College English Language Development and Training. BPS is Building Skills Partnership. H360 is Hospitality 360 Banquet Service Class.

## Discussion and Lessons Learned

The SV ALLIES Initiative spent its funds in ways that were intended to meet grant objectives and address local needs, complement the local infrastructure, and respond to the state's existing workforce development policy context. Accordingly, this initiative's cost allocations are not necessarily transferable as estimates for launching other Collective Impact efforts. Moreover, this initiative's costs are not representative

of a fully implemented Collective Impact effort for two main reasons. First, as described in the Formative Evaluation chapter, the conditions of Collective Impact were not fully implemented during the three years of the grant. Second, full implementation of a Collective Impact effort depends not on just financial resources, but on project leadership, resources, and contributions of committee members and their organizations, which represent non-quantifiable resources not estimated and included in this analysis.

The costs of the participant-serving pilots are likely more transferable to other comparable program services. However, the costs of the participant-serving pilots should be considered in tandem with the particular structure and duration of each individual pilot program (as described in the Outcome Evaluation chapter).

All the costs represent an investment into the local workforce system and further development of participants' human capital. Estimating a monetary return on these investments requires data on the monetary benefits of the investments, which this evaluation was not designed to capture. Future studies could build on this cost data by estimating the economic returns to efforts that build on the investments made through this grant.

## VI. Conclusion: Summary of Findings and Lessons Learned

The SV ALLIES Innovation Initiative was an ambitious attempt to initiate change in Silicon Valley's workforce development system and to launch new language and workforce-skills services for adult immigrant English learners. The previous chapters in this report presented detailed findings from (1) a formative evaluation of how the initiative used a Collective Impact approach to create system-level change; (2) outcome evaluations of four pilot projects that provided contextualized English language instruction to job seekers and incumbent workers; and (3) a cost study. This concluding chapter summarizes the findings across these studies, provides an overview of key factors that facilitated or hindered the initiative's implementation and progress toward its goals, and reviews lessons learned. The chapter concludes with a discussion of how these findings contribute to the evidence base on language and workforce-skills services for adult English learners.

### Summary of Findings

The formative and outcome evaluations of the SV ALLIES Initiative and its pilot projects produced several findings regarding changes in the workforce system and changes in language and workforce readiness services for adult English learners. The findings are summarized below.

#### Changes in the Workforce System

**The SV ALLIES Innovation Initiative led to new relationships between members of the initiative's Steering Committee and created information resources that helped to establish a foundation for change.** While the initiative did not achieve the change in workforce systems serving adult immigrant English learners that was initially envisioned, the stakeholders—who participated in the Steering Committee over the course of the three-year effort and worked together to launch and run pilot projects—credited the project with facilitating changes in their approach to working with other partners in the workforce development system and designing and providing services.

**A project's scope, organization, and staffing are important factors affecting progress toward building the conditions of Collective Impact.** Keeping the scope of work feasible and focused on quick wins and near-term results while simultaneously

working on longer-term objectives is important to maintaining stakeholders' engagement and motivation. Since CI initiatives take time to build, this type of “both-and” approach is necessary.

**The conceptual organization of the Collective Impact approach might be improved by further research.** While Collective Impact is meant to be a flexible, adaptive approach to solving complex problems, not a prescriptive model, close observation of SV ALLIES Initiative activities and review of the literature suggest that activities important to launching a CI effort could be more adequately addressed in the literature that describes the approach and suggests effective practices.

**Collaborative work on concrete projects early in an initiative is important to launching a successful CI initiative.** Supporting implementation of activities related to specific goals of the initiative is a critical component for success in early phases of the initiative, in addition to action that builds conditions of Collective Impact and advances progress through phases of CI implementation.

### Changes in Services for English Learners

**The SV ALLIES pilot projects provided the opportunity for project partners to innovate.** The SV ALLIES pilot projects enabled new partnerships to collaborate to serve English learners in ways that had not been done before. This occurred, for example, when adult schools partnered with each other and a local workforce development agency to provide services to a shared population. Another innovation included co-enrolling incumbent workers and adult school students in the same pilot program, which allowed a community college an opportunity to gather data that informed its adaptation of an incumbent worker workplace curriculum.

**The SV ALLIES incumbent worker pilots increased the workforce development system's outreach to English learners with low education levels that had not received English language instruction before.** Approximately 70% (37 of 53) of incumbent worker pilot participants reported on the exit survey that they had not previously enrolled in any English classes.

**The employment and retention outcomes for the four pilot projects were positive, and the majority of participants reported that participation increased their confidence to apply for jobs with higher pay or jobs higher on the career ladder.** All the incumbent worker pilot participants were retained or promoted within 30 or 60 days after the pilot programs ended. For the two pilots in which outcomes were tracked for six months, all but one participant retained their job. By 60 days after the job seeker pilot ended, 28% of participants had obtained a new job (this is a lower

bound because program managers expect that participants will continue to find new jobs beyond the 60-day point when follow up was conducted).

**Pilot project staff and employers also reported observing an increase in pilot participants' confidence levels.** Pilot project staff reported that a main benefit for participation in pilots was that participants' English language-speaking confidence increased. This confidence, for example, allowed workers in the incumbent worker pilots to practice speaking with hotel guests, whereas before some workers were shy about engaging with guests.

## Lessons Learned

Based on the findings, this section discusses lessons learned from the SV ALLIES Initiative that could help inform similar endeavors.

### Lessons Learned on Systems Change and CI Efforts

**Establishing the preconditions for implementing Collective Impact is important to accomplish by the start of launching a CI initiative.** To successfully launch a CI initiative and make sustained progress toward an initiative's goals, it is essential to have a small stable group of influential leaders, or "champions," who are in a position to command resources, affect policy, and lead progress through phases of activity to build conditions of CI, adequate financial resources, and agreement among stakeholders there is an urgent need for action.

The research literature on Collective Impact identifies the importance of three preconditions of Collective Impact: (1) having an influential champion (or small group of champions) to lead the effort, (2) having adequate financial resources, and (3) having a sense of urgency for change around the issue. The SV ALLIES Initiative had difficulty in establishing these preconditions. In the initial phases of the SV ALLIES project, establishing a small group of "champions" as well as a stable Steering Committee was difficult, as project leadership and staff changes caused delays that hindered the Steering Committee's function and progress. However, despite frequent changes in leadership and project staff support, the project management team ultimately directed grant resources to support four incumbent worker pilots that helped workers with limited English proficiency access workplace English programs.

**A project's scope, organization, and staffing are important factors affecting progress toward building the conditions of Collective Impact.**

Keeping the scope of work feasible and focused on quick wins and near-term results while simultaneously working on longer-term objectives is important to maintaining

stakeholders' engagement and motivation. Since CI initiatives take time to build, a dual focus on both short-term wins and long-term system building is necessary.

**To sustain momentum in CI efforts, it is important to have data to describe the issue and focus the planning process on the most pressing needs and opportunities for action on “quick wins.”**

Literature on CI efforts stresses the importance of having data to inform process, direction, collaborative action, communication, and shared measurement (Garringer & Nagel, 2014). Early in the initiative's endeavors, it became apparent that service providers, schools, and other stakeholders were using a variety of data without a shared understanding of resources and capacities. Accordingly, the Steering Committee concentrated on organizing the disparate and large amount of data so that they became shared, relevant, and useful. With the help of the consultant group WPUSA, in the final year of the grant the data were organized into an asset map that could help stakeholders collaboratively address their needs in the future.

While it is possible to generate early interest among community leaders and develop a Common Agenda, it is also important to have data that adequately describe the issue, along with opportunities for collaborative action, in order to sustain the initiative's momentum and sense of urgency. It is useful to sequence the initiative's early activities to ensure data defining the population and issues are available to inform the case for action, the Common Agenda, and decisions on implementation strategy and priorities.

### **Lessons Learned from Pilot Projects**

**Through the job seeker pilot, program managers learned that both lower-skilled and higher-skilled workers report a need for contextualized English language instruction.** The job seeker pilot reached a population they had not served before, English learners with a college degree earned in their native country. Approximately half of the job seeker participants earned a college degree outside of the United States.

**Through the incumbent worker pilots, program managers learned a new way to conduct outreach to populations with lower education levels.** Pilot managers had assumed they would have the most success recruiting participants with lower educational attainment by targeting the unemployed. But they learned that recruiting among incumbent workers is also a successful strategy for reaching participants with lower education levels. The incumbent worker pilots reached a group with lower education levels (90% with a high school degree or less) compared to the job seeker pilot, in which 51% of the participants had a college degree or higher.



**Establishing the incumbent worker pilot programs required a strong commitment from the participating employer(s), and involved a senior manager and/or a labor-management committee who championed the program in order to reach this new population.** Employer involvement and cross-sector connections can be brokered in multiple ways: labor-management partnerships, community college-business partnerships, and through connections nurtured by the project staff and organizations on the Steering Committee.

## Contribution to the Evidence Base

Information derived from the development, implementation, and evaluation of the SV ALLIES Initiative adds to the body of knowledge available on Collective Impact and systems change efforts. The findings also demonstrate the challenges and successes of implementing workforce development systems and training initiatives tailored to the needs of English learners. This section highlights how the evaluation findings contribute to the evidence base and identifies areas for further research.

### **SV ALLIES and the Collective Impact Approach**

**The formative evaluation of the SV ALLIES Initiative expands on the current case-study literature about Collective Impact by presenting a case in which the lead organization encountered challenges building the necessary preconditions of Collective Impact.** The SV ALLIES Initiative engaged a large group of stakeholders, yet some members of the Steering Committee provided feedback that the Steering Committee experience could have been improved by involving “higher level decision-makers” and additional representation from leaders in the English learner and business/industry communities. Cultivating champions took longer than expected and competing policy and funding priorities distracted the attention of Steering Committee members away from the initiative. Grant funds were not viewed as a good fit with or sufficient to carry forward the initiative’s goals. Further, early interest in moving forward to implement pilot projects, which initiative leaders viewed as giving “life and form” to the effort, was deferred in favor of building a CI initiative management infrastructure. These factors affected the ability to galvanize support for building the CI effort during the term of the grant.

**The findings of the evaluation highlight importance of working to implement concrete projects or programs early in a CI effort, as work to build conditions of Collective Impact is underway.** While the literature on Collective Impact provides a conceptual framework for organizing cross-sector collaboration around a social issue, this study illustrates the importance of balancing efforts to build the

conditions of CI that establish the overarching management infrastructure for the initiative and identifying and implementing pilot projects or collaborative activities to test the envisioned changes in strategy, programs, and services intended to achieve initiative goals. In the case of SV ALLIES, continuing to work on the Common Agenda tended to amplify the scope of the initiative's activities, such that Steering Committee members had no clear idea of what action to take.

**The findings also suggest areas for additional research on the CI approach.**

While Collective Impact is meant to be a flexible approach to solving complex problems and not a prescriptive model, materials describing the conceptual organization or framework of the approach could be strengthened by additional research. The organization of the conceptual map or framework meant to illustrate activities in successive phases of a maturing CI effort could benefit from additional research on the preconditions of CI, as well as the concept of emergence and its relationship to existing resources, programs, and services organized by a CI initiative as well as to activities to implement new programs, services, or projects toward goals identified by the CI initiative. For example, the experience of the SV ALLIES Initiative suggests that, in the near term, the conceptual map or framework describing the CI approach might benefit by the addition of:

- The three preconditions for launching Collective Impact
- A new precondition related to the availability and extent of existing resources to be coordinated by the CI approach
- A new Component for Success titled "Implementation" that outlines for each Phase of CI activities to identify, build, and manage capacity/ies, structures, programs, services, tools, and resources needed to help catalyze coordinated action on identified goals of a CI initiative, as a distinct part of the process of building conditions and moving through phases of Collective Impact.

### **SV ALLIES and Career Pathways Literature**

The findings from the outcome studies also provide new evidence about outcomes for incumbent workers participating in programs aimed at improving their workplace English. Little evidence is currently documented about these programs. This evaluation revealed these main findings about the incumbent worker workplace English programs:

- The incumbent worker pilots increased the local workforce development system's outreach to English learners with low education levels that had not received English language instruction before.

- All the incumbent worker pilot participants were retained or promoted within 30 or 60 days after the pilot program ended; for the two pilots in which outcomes were tracked for six months, all but one participant retained their job.
- The majority of incumbent participants reported that participation increased their confidence to apply for jobs with higher pay or jobs higher on the career ladder. Program staff and employers also reported observing an increase in pilot participants' confidence levels.

The findings also point to the need for additional research about longer-term outcomes to learn how, if at all, workplace English training contributes to the long-term skill growth and career advancement of incumbent workers.

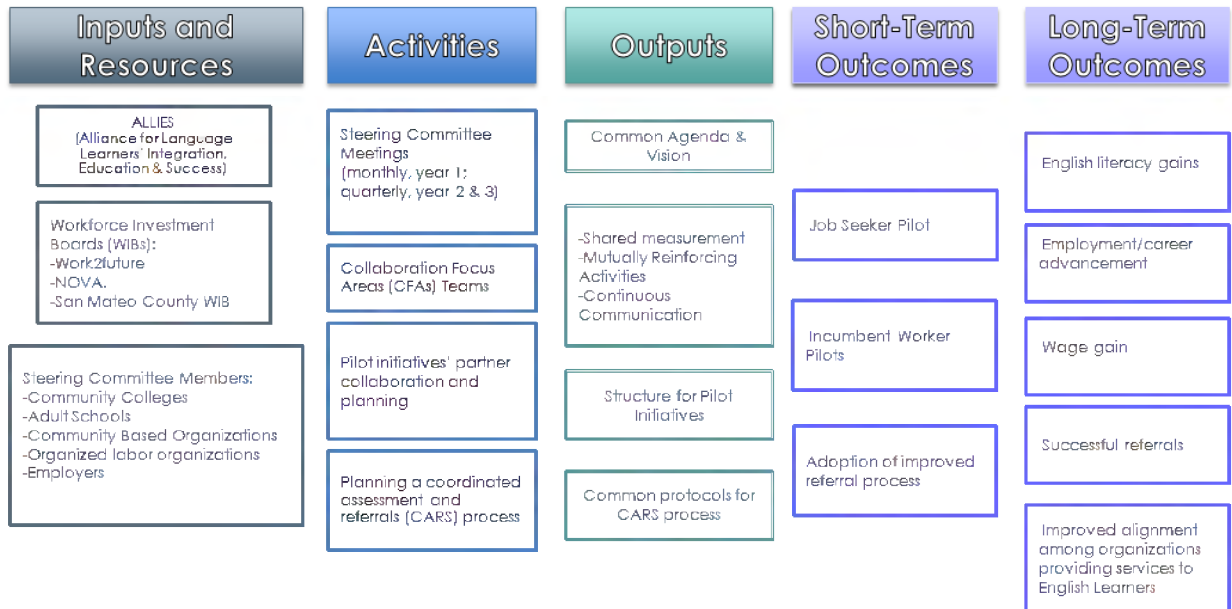
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# Appendix A: SV ALLIES Logic Model

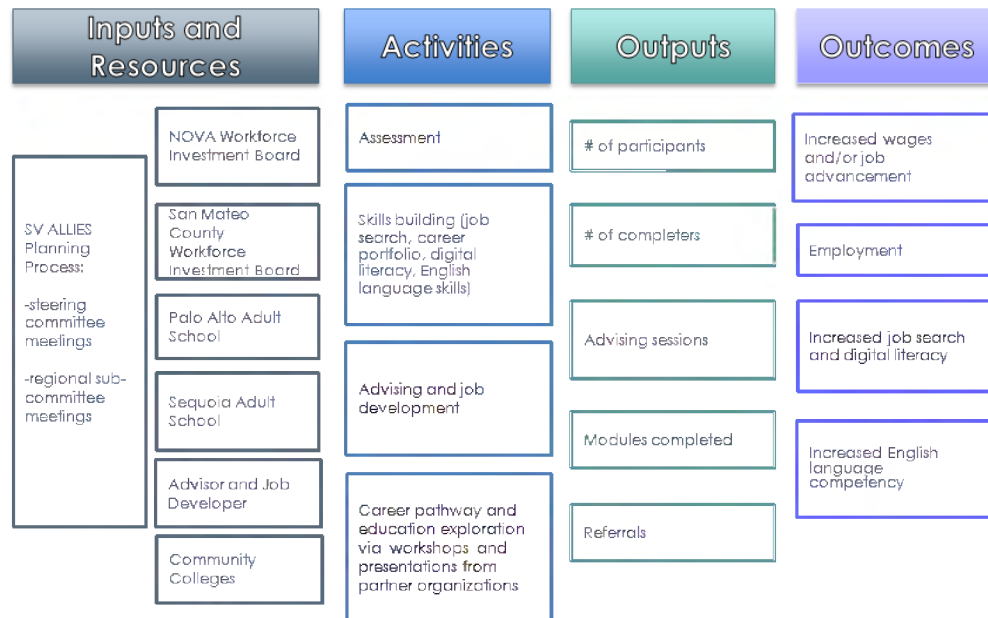
Logic Model — Silicon Valley ALLIES



# Appendix B: Pilot Logic Models

**Exhibit B1: Logic Model: English Learners' Ladders to Success (ELLS): Job Seeker Pilot**

## Logic Model — English Learners' Ladders to Success (ELLS) *Job seeker pilot*

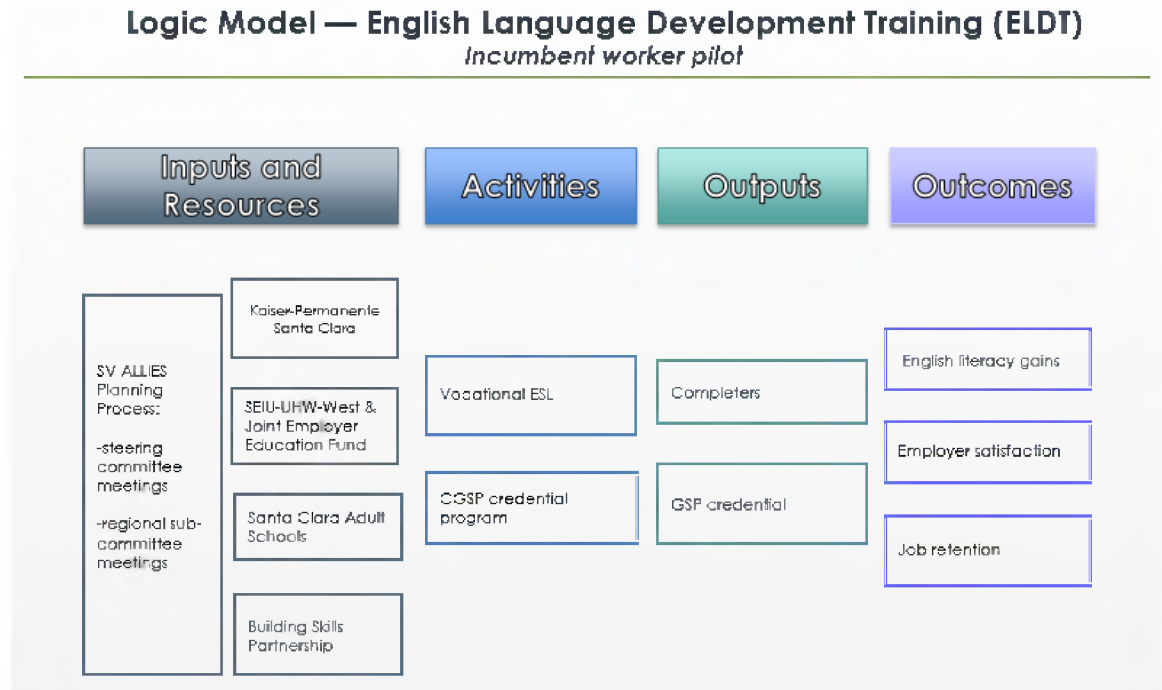


**Exhibit B2: Logic Model: H360: Incumbent Worker Pilot**

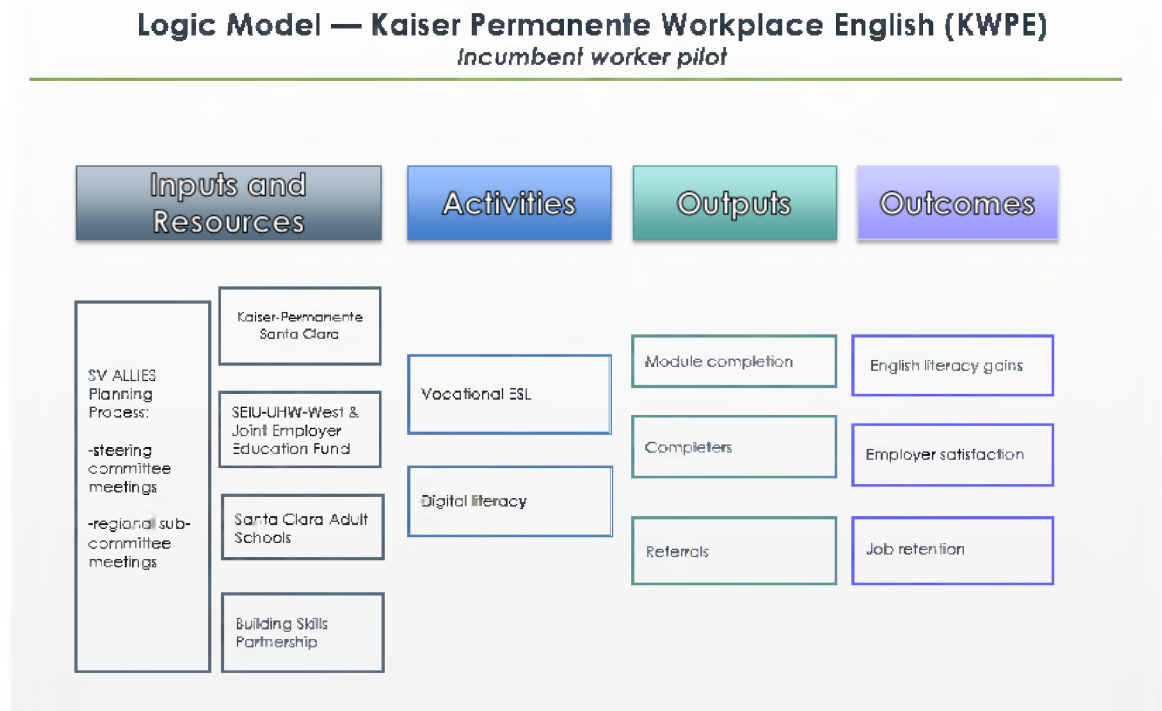
## Logic Model — H360 *Incumbent worker pilot*



**Exhibit B3: Logic Model: English Language Development Training (ELDT): Incumbent Worker Pilot**



**Exhibit B4: Logic Model: Kaiser Permanente Workplace English (KWPE): Incumbent Worker Pilot**





# Appendix C: Methodology

This appendix describes the methodology for (1) the formative evaluation, (2) the outcome evaluation of the job seeker pilot, and (3) the outcome evaluation of the incumbent worker pilots.

## Formative Evaluation

WestEd conducted a formative evaluation to document and provide feedback on how the SV ALLIES Initiative used the Collective Impact (CI) approach to build a system that connected adult English learners to family-sustaining careers. WestEd gathered data to document and assess evidence of the five CI conditions underpinning a successful Collective Impact initiative: common agenda, shared measurement, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and presence of a backbone organization. WestEd also gathered data to document and assess the design and development of a coordinated assessment and referral process to connect English learners with services within the SV ALLIES Initiative. Findings were provided to project leaders and stakeholders in regularly scheduled feedback sessions to help guide strategic planning and continuous improvement as project activities unfolded.

The questions that guided the formative evaluation were:

- 1) To what extent did the SV ALLIES Collective Impact strategies evolve as planned? (As measured by the five elements of Collective Impact.)
- 2) How did stakeholders perceive the CI approach added value to (or extended) existing workforce system change strategies?
- 3) To what extent did the SV ALLIES Initiative create a more organized education, training, and support-services system for English learners to transition to career pathways?
- 4) What lessons have been learned that could inform similar efforts in other communities or workforce systems?

## Participants

The evaluation gathered data from three groups of participants. One group was composed of **Steering Committee members**. Reflecting the CI approach of cross-sector alignment, Steering Committee member organizations represented a range of sectors:

- Community colleges

- Workforce development agencies
- Adult schools
- Community-based organizations
- Employers
- Organized labor organizations

A second group included in the study was **project leaders**, which included members of the project staff and the consulting group that facilitated the Collective Impact approach in the beginning of the project. A third group was the **pilot project managers** who were responsible for the participant-serving pilots and periodically presented status updates at the Steering Committee meetings.

### Data Sources and Data Collection

WestEd gathered qualitative and quantitative data for the formative evaluation from these groups through interviews and surveys. WestEd also obtained data through observations of Steering Committee meetings and other meetings, and a review of documents. The data included information on successes and challenges with respect to creating the five conditions that define a successful CI effort, and designing and developing a coordinated operational structure to assess and refer English learners to services within the SV ALLIES consortium. Exhibit C1 provides a summary of the different data sources.

#### Exhibit C1: Data Sources for Formative Evaluation of Collective Impact Approach

Data Source	Description	Timeframe
<b>Observations and interpretive findings*</b>	<p>WestEd researchers observed and participated in project planning meetings between November 2012 and July 2013 and observed 11 Steering Committee meetings held over the course of the initiative.</p> <p>During the first year, WestEd also participated in a debriefing call after each Steering Committee meeting to review successes and areas that could be improved.</p> <p>For all of the meetings, WestEd provided a summary of observations, key themes, and next steps.</p>	Ongoing

Data Source	Description	Timeframe
<b>Interviews</b>	<p>In June and July 2013, WestEd researchers conducted one-on-one and in-person interviews, and telephone interviews with three key project leaders about the phases and conditions of Collective Impact, as well as the challenges and factors that facilitated progress in implementing Collective Impact (both generally, and specifically in the context of the SV ALLIES project).</p> <p>In January 2015, WestEd researchers conducted two group interviews: (1) with the SV ALLIES Core Group and (2) the full Steering Committee. The interviews captured their perspectives on the initiative's progress and its position relative to carrying forward CI strategies.</p>	<p>June/July 2013</p> <p>January 2015</p>
<b>Surveys**</b>	<p>WestEd collected participant feedback forms at Steering Committee meetings.</p> <p>In August 2013, the 22 Steering Committee members were invited to participate in an online survey. The goal of this survey was to capture Steering Committee members' understanding of key components of the SV ALLIES Initiative. The responses provided baseline information on how Steering Committee members perceived the Collective Impact approach and service offerings for adult English learners at the end of Year 1.</p> <p>In February 2015, the Steering Committee members were again invited to participate in a follow-up online survey to document if and how their perceptions changed over time as the initiative progressed.</p> <p>Finally, during the January 2015 Steering Committee meeting, WestEd researchers asked Steering Committee members a series of polling questions related to their perceptions of the initiative and the Collective Impact approach.</p>	<p>August 2013</p> <p>January 2015</p> <p>February 2015</p>
<b>Document review</b>	<p>WestEd researchers reviewed documents and minutes from project team meetings; Steering Committee meeting agendas, meeting minutes, sign-in sheets/attendance, PowerPoint presentations, and handouts; and, materials from selected subcommittee meetings, including meetings with CBOs and the SV ALLIES Evaluation Working Group.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

\* The Steering Committee meetings focused on broad concepts and goals of the CI approach, as well as allowing some time for collaboration, planning, and reporting back on pilot project efforts. The majority of the meeting time was structured around presentations of key concepts and/or learnings, with more limited time set aside for small group work and/or individual reflection.

\*\* The response rate for the first Steering Committee survey was 86% with 19 of the 22 members responding. The response rate for the second Steering Committee survey was only 28% with 7 of the 25 members (some current, some no longer involved) responding.

## **Data Analysis**

WestEd researchers used quantitative and qualitative approaches to analyze the data sources. Each data source was analyzed separately and then synthesized to provide a comprehensive answer to the research questions. Analyses generated by the formative evaluation were also used to provide feedback to the program managers to help guide the implementation process.

### ***Steering Committee Member Surveys***

Results of the Steering Committee member surveys were summarized by question themes. Quantitative results were examined descriptively using frequencies and were presented in tandem with summaries of qualitative themes identified from open-ended questions. The researchers discussed the results, themes, and patterns that emerged from the surveys with the project team and project stakeholders in feedback cycles and in the report narrative.

### ***Project Leader Interviews and Observations***

WestEd coded and analyzed observation notes and the transcripts from the semi-structured interviews with SV ALLIES project team members in order to address the formative research questions. WestEd used an iterative qualitative analysis, the purpose of which was to provide a comprehensive description of the project leaders' perceptions on effective practices and of the observed trajectory of Steering Committee process in relation to the planned approach. The research team compared and contrasted interview responses across the leaders in order to identify themes and inconsistencies in the findings, triangulate results, and strengthen conclusions. The researchers discussed the results for the transcripts and observation notes and questioned each other about the results. The themes and patterns that emerged from this process were discussed in feedback cycles and in the report narrative.

### ***Document Review***

The document review provided additional context about the development of the Collective Impact effort and how collaboration and system change work was unfolding. WestEd's document review included review of Steering Committee attendance records, minutes, support materials, and communications. Through examining records of content, decisions, and actions, the researchers identified how the innovation processes led by the Steering Committee unfolded. A process similar to that of analyzing the interview data was used to analyze the documents. The themes and patterns that emerged from this process were discussed in feedback cycles and in the report narrative.

## Outcome Evaluation: Job Seeker Pilot

WestEd conducted an outcome study of the job seeker pilot—English Learners’ Ladder to Success (ELLS)—which included an evaluation of whether program attendance levels were correlated with improved employment outcomes. The outcome analysis was supplemented with participant satisfaction surveys and program staff interviews to help contextualize and elaborate the outcome findings. The information helped guide the growth of this new pilot program. The outcome evaluation was guided by the following research questions:

- 1) What were the English skills and digital job search literacy gains for program participants?
- 2) Was greater participation in the pilot intervention (as measured by attendance levels) associated with a higher likelihood of obtaining a new job?
- 3) What were participants’ satisfaction levels with the pilot programs and how did they perceive it influenced their career plans?
- 4) What lessons have been learned that could inform similar efforts in other communities or workforce systems?

### Participants

Data were collected from three groups to answer the research questions. Data collected about **pilot participants** included administrative data about their attendance levels, English assessment test scores, and demographic data. Participants were also invited to complete an exit survey at the end of their class, which sought information about perceived benefits and satisfaction levels.

Pilot participants were adult English learners who demonstrated English comprehension at a low to high intermediate level on the CASAS (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems) instrument. Participants were also actively seeking work either to transition from being unemployed to employed or from being underemployed to obtaining a new job. Underemployed was defined as being employed below their skill level or being employed part-time (when full-time work was desired).

**Program managers** and **program staff** (i.e., teachers and the job advisor) were also invited to participate in interviews, and all accepted. The interviews focused on program implementation and perceived benefits.

### ***Outcome Model Study Sample***

WestEd used a regression analysis that tested the hypothesis that higher attendance levels were correlated with a higher likelihood of employment or of switching jobs while controlling for variation in observable individual characteristics (described below).

The outcome model study sample consisted of three cohorts: participants who started the program in January, April, or September of 2014. Participants in each cohort met the following conditions:

- 1) They attended the program orientation and at least one class. This served as a minimum “dosage” point because this model measured the relationship between intensity of activity and employment outcomes.
- 2) At the beginning of the program (during the pre-class orientation), they were actively seeking work or to change jobs.
- 3) They reported their employment status to their advisor or teacher sometime during the class or up to 60 days after the program.

### ***Data Sources and Data Collection***

Participant test scores, data for the outcome regression analysis, and qualitative data were obtained from the sources described below.

#### ***Administrative Data***

Information to support the outcome model was obtained from the adult schools’ management information system (MIS), an ELLS activity tracking database, and the advisor’s post-program assessment form.

WestEd received information from the program managers about participants’ basic demographic information (i.e., age, years of schooling, ethnicity/race, and gender) and their score on the CASAS exam used for initial assessment. WestEd also obtained attendance data. Attendance was tracked by teachers at both locations through an activity tracking system set up by the job advisor. Program activity consisted of attendance data for class and the advising sessions. WestEd obtained data from both systems.

Post-program data were collected by the advisor at program exit and during the follow-up sessions that occurred in the 60 days following the class. The ELLS post-class advising sessions were designed, in part, to enhance information about available jobs for the participants. Additionally, the advisor collected information about employment status and wages at the post-class advising sessions.

### ***Teacher Assessment Data***

WestEd obtained pre- and post-English literacy test score data from the ELLS program to examine differences in test scores on teacher-developed tests for each module. Teachers monitored the progress of module completion with these module-specific pre- and post-tests.

### ***Survey Data***

All participants were invited to complete an exit survey during the last week of class. The survey asked participants to rate and/or describe their satisfaction, perceived program benefits, and possible barriers to employment. The response rate was 60% (35 of 58). Surveys were distributed in class the last week of class and, in the case of participant absences, surveys were emailed to participants.

### ***Teacher Interviews***

WestEd invited each of the program managers (n=2), teachers (n=2), and the job advisor (n=1) to participate in interviews. All accepted and were interviewed. The interviews were led by a WestEd staff member with experience conducting interviews. The interviews were semi-structured to allow for follow-up of emerging themes during the interview. The interviews explored topics related to English literacy and digital job search learning; challenges experienced (by staff and students); perceived barriers to employment for students; and implementation-related topics (barriers, processes for ensuring consistency in instruction).

### ***Data Analysis***

WestEd's analysis included estimating a regression model and examining survey and interview data. The data sources were analyzed separately and then synthesized to provide a comprehensive answer to the research questions.

### ***Outcome Model Analytic Methods***

The employment outcome model used a logistic regression to examine the relationship between employment status at 60 days after the class ended and intensity of program participation. A logistic regression estimates the likelihood of an event in terms of an odds ratio. For example, if the probability of switching jobs is  $P=.80$ , then the odds ratio would be  $P/(1-P)$  or, empirically, the estimated odds are 4 to 1 that a participant will obtain a new job. The following equation depicts the logistic regression for employment status:

$$\text{logit}(\pi_i) = a + B_1' \text{Demographics}_i + B_2' \text{Controls}_i + B_3' \text{ClassAttend}_i + B_4' \text{AdvisingAttend}_i$$

where  $\pi_i$  was the odds of a participant obtaining a new job 60 days after program completion as a function of number of classes attended and number of advising sessions attended;  $a$  was the constant. *Demographics* was a vector of individual characteristics such as age and gender. *Controls* was a participant's score on the English pre-program assessment. The variables that measure intensity of program involvement were *ClassAttend* and *AdvisingAttend*. These were continuous variables which indicated the number of classes or advising sessions a participant attended, respectively.

The estimated coefficients on *ClassAttend* and *AdvisingAttend* provided an estimate of the strength and significance of program participation's correlation with employment status. These parameters were used to calculate the odds ratio on employment status. An analogous wage regression for the employed was planned, but due to limited sample size the wage regression was not estimated.

### ***Teacher Assessment Data***

WestEd examined what portion of participants experienced a gain in English literacy, as measured by the pre- and post-tests administered by the teachers. The target goal was for 50% of participants to experience a gain. This goal was set by program managers based on discussions about current experience with program completion at the participating adult schools.

### ***Participant Survey Data***

Survey results were summarized by question themes. Quantitative results were examined descriptively using frequencies. Any open-ended questions were coded into different themes that emerged from reviewing commonalities across all responses. The survey results were compared and contrasted to results from the interview findings to identify patterns and inconsistencies.

### ***Teacher Interview Data***

Information from the interviews was used to add depth to the outcome measures (employment status) and teacher assessment data. The interviews helped identify possible challenges to learning and job search goals. Researchers compared and contrasted responses to identify both common themes and significant points of variation and inconsistency.

### ***Threats to Validity***

The two main threats to validity of the outcome model were selection bias and non-response bias. Selection bias occurs because in the absence of random assignment to different levels of program participation, there may be systematic (and



unmeasurable) reasons why some participants choose to spend more time in the program than others. For example, students who choose to attend fewer classes or post-program advising session may do so because they are working. If it happens systematically, the results would show negative correlation between attendance and higher employment levels.

Non-response bias was another concern. The concern is that there is a systematic difference between participants who respond to surveys and those that do not. For example, if those who find a job are less likely to complete a post-program survey because they cannot attend an advising session or class, then non-response bias would lead to an underreported employment rate.

Measurement bias was also a concern because teacher assessments may not accurately capture the change in skills for each module.

## Outcome Evaluation: Incumbent Worker Pilots

The Silicon Valley ALLIES Initiative supported several incumbent worker workplace English pilot programs (descriptions of each pilot can be found in the Outcome Evaluation chapter). WestEd evaluated the outcomes of the following three incumbent worker pilots: Santa Clara Kaiser Permanente Workplace English (KPWE), Skyline College English Language Development and Training (ELDT), and Hospitality 360 Banquet Service Class (H360). The research questions guiding the outcome evaluation of these incumbent worker pilots were:

1. What are the English skills, retention, and promotion outcomes for program participants?<sup>21</sup>
2. What were participants' satisfaction levels with the pilot programs and how did they perceive it influenced their career plans?
3. What lessons have been learned that could inform similar efforts in other communities or workforce systems?

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<sup>21</sup> The original research question proposed to measure the association between attendance levels and test score gains and attendance levels and retention/promotion status. The assumption (to be tested) was: Higher attendance levels would be associated with higher test score gains or retention/promotion. However, because of small sample sizes for each pilot we did not estimate the associations.

## Participants

Data were collected from four groups to answer the research questions. Data collected about **pilot participants** included administrative data about their attendance levels, English assessment pre- and post-test scores, demographic data, job titles at program start, and retention and promotion data. Participants were also invited to complete an exit survey at the end of their class, which sought information about perceived benefits and satisfaction levels.

Pilot participants were incumbent workers and the recruitment was generally through the department managers. The Outcome Evaluation chapter provides more detail on each pilot's recruitment and intake approach.

**Program managers** and **program staff** (i.e., teachers and the job advisor) were also invited to participate in interviews. All program managers and program staff were invited to participate in an interview and all accepted. The interviews focused on program implementation and perceived benefits. The information was used to add depth and context to the outcome study.

**Employers** associated with the pilot programs were also invited to participate in interviews. The employer interviews sought information about perceived benefits to the organization and program implementation.

## Data Sources and Data Collection

### *Administrative and Assessment Data*

WestEd obtained data about participant characteristics and outcomes from program managers. Data on participant characteristics was collected when employees registered for the classes, and included information about age, gender, race/ethnicity, prior education level, and current job title. Outcome data on job retention and any promotions was obtained from program managers after the program ended (from 60 days to 6 months after the program ended).

English literacy assessment pre- and post-test scores and daily attendance data were obtained from teachers by program managers. Each pilot used a different assessment tool. The KPWE pilot used BEST (Basic English Skills Test) Plus, an oral interview designed to assess the listening and speaking skills of adult English language learners. The other two pilots used assessment instruments designed by the ESL instructor.

### *Survey Data*

WestEd conducted a post-program participant survey. Participants were asked to rate or describe their satisfaction with the program and their perceived benefit. Participants

were also asked about their goals (reasons why the enrolled in the class.) The response rate across all evaluated incumbent pilots was 98% (54 of 55). The response rate by pilot was 100% (10 of 10) for KPWE, 100% (30 of 30) for H360, and 93% (14 of 15) for ELDT.

### ***Interview Data***

WestEd conducted interviews with program staff (i.e., 6 teachers, one peer mentor, and one curriculum designer) and all the program managers (n=3) to gain an understanding of class experiences, challenges, and successes. The response rate to the program staff interviews was 92% (11 of 12).

In addition, WestEd invited three managers (one associated with each pilot) to participate in the interview. Two of three agreed to participate. The interview topics included perceived benefits to the organization and participants and reasons for creating and supporting the pilot. All the interviews were conducted by a WestEd staff member with experience conducting interviews. The interviews were semi-structured to allow for follow-up that explores emerging themes.

### ***Data Analysis***

#### ***Outcome Data***

As described earlier, because of small sample sizes for each pilot we did not estimate the association between attendance levels and the outcomes of test score gain, retention, and promotion. As an alternative, WestEd presented basic information about the English assessment test score gains, retention, and promotion outcomes for each pilot.

#### ***Survey Data***

WestEd also reported satisfaction and perceived benefit data from the post-program survey. Survey results were examined descriptively and results were compared and contrasted with outcome results and summaries of qualitative themes identified through the interviews.

### ***Interview Data***

Information from the interviews was used to add depth to the outcome measures and survey data. The interviews helped identify possible challenges to learning and vocational English literacy. Researchers compared and contrasted responses to identify both common themes and significant points of variations and inconsistencies.

## Threats to Validity

The two main threats to validity of the outcome study were measurement bias and non-response bias.

Measurement bias was a concern when examining the change in pre- and post-test data for English literacy. The tests may not capture all literacy gains experienced by the participants. For example, a student may experience gains in their speaking skills, but the test may not be sensitive enough to capture the gain. Therefore, a report of no gains in literacy does not imply the participants had no gain, but rather that the gain was not large enough (or of the precise type) to be captured by the instrument.

Non-response bias was a concern. The concern was that there is a systematic difference between participants who respond to surveys and those that don't. For example, if those who were not satisfied with the class are less likely to complete a post-program survey, then non-response bias would lead to an overreported satisfaction rate.

# Appendix D: English Learners' Ladders to Success

## Demographic Profile

	Number	Percentage
Male	13	18%
Female	58	82%
Age 16–24	6	8%
Age 25–34	22	31%
Age 35–44	19	27%
Age 45–54	11	15%
Age 55+	7	10%
Not reported	6	8%
White	49	69%
Black	1	1%
Asian	19	27%
Other	2	3%
Hispanic	17	24%
Non-Hispanic	54	76%
Less than high school	1	1%
High school	10	14%
Technical certificate	6	8%
AA/AS degree	3	4%
College degree	19	27%
Graduate degree	17	24%
Not reported	15	21%
Highest degree earned outside the U.S.	52	73%
Highest degree earned in the U.S.	5	7%
Not reported	14	20%
Unemployed	49	69%
Employed	18	25%
Not seeking work	2	3%
Not reported	2	3%

Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

# Appendix E: English Learners' Ladders to Success Logistic Regression Results

The below results are from the logistic regression with employment status at 60 days as the dependent variable. It was estimated to examine the relationship between employment status and number of advising sessions and number of classes attended. Models 2 and 3 also included controls for demographic characteristics.

**Exhibit E1: Dependent Variable—Employed in New Job 60 Days After Program: Model 1**

Independent Variable	Coefficient	p value	Point Estimate
<i>Intercept</i>	-2.0487	0.0002	
<i>Number of job advising sessions attended*</i>	0.7309	0.0104	2.077
<i>Sample size</i>	71		
<i>R-squared</i>	0.0986		
<i>Max Square – rescaled R-square</i>	0.1417		
<i>Hosmer and Lemeshow Goodness-of-Fit Test</i>	Pr > ChiSq	0.8438	

\* Statistically significant at p-value < .05.

**Exhibit E2: Dependent Variable—Employed in New Job 60 Days After Program: Model 2**

Independent Variable	Coefficient	p value	Point Estimate
<i>Intercept</i>	-1.1513	0.8612	
<i>Female</i>	-0.5674	0.438	0.567
<i>Number of classes attended</i>	-0.0539	0.5242	0.947
<i>Number of job advising sessions attended*</i>	0.9332	0.0046	2.543
<i>Pre-program English literacy score</i>	-0.00199	0.9454	0.998
<i>Sample size</i>	68		
<i>R-squared</i>	0.1308		
<i>Max Square – rescaled R-square</i>	0.1885		
<i>Hosmer and Lemeshow Goodness-of-Fit Test</i>	Pr > ChiSq	0.5193	

\* Statistically significant at p-value < .05.

**Exhibit E3: Dependent Variable—Employed in New Job 60 Days After Program: Model 3**

Independent Variable	Coefficient	p value	Point Estimate
<i>Intercept</i>	-4.7341	0.5908	
<i>Age in 2014</i>	0.0285	0.3535	1.029
<i>Years of schooling</i>	-0.0285	0.8532	0.972
<i>Hispanic</i>	-0.6666	0.508	0.513
<i>Asian</i>	-0.9253	0.3296	0.396
<i>Other race (non-White)</i>	-1.141	0.5155	0.319
<i>Female</i>	-0.4916	0.605	0.612
<i>Number of classes attended</i>	-0.017	0.8698	0.983
<i>Number of job advising sessions attended*</i>	0.9936	0.0217	2.701
<i>Pre-program English literacy score</i>	0.0113	0.7727	1.011
<i>Sample size</i>	56		
<i>R-squared</i>	0.2018		
<i>Max Square – rescaled R-square</i>	0.2893		
<i>Hosmer and Lemeshow Goodness-of-Fit Test</i>	Pr > ChiSq	0.9833	

\* Statistically significant at p-value < .05.

# Appendix F: Incumbent Worker Pilot Demographic Profile

	All (n=68)		KPWE (n=14)		ELDT (n=19)		H360 (n=35)	
Characteristics	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Male</b>	14	21%	4	29%	3	16%	7	20%
<b>Female</b>	54	79%	10	71%	16	84%	28	80%
<b>&lt; 24</b>	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	1	3%
<b>25–34</b>	8	12%	0	0%	3	16%	5	14%
<b>35–44</b>	24	35%	2	14%	8	42%	14	40%
<b>45–54</b>	20	29%	5	36%	5	26%	10	29%
<b>55+</b>	14	21%	6	43%	3	16%	5	14%
<b>Unknown</b>	1	1%	1	7%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>White</b>	6	9%	4	29%	0	0%	2	6%
<b>Asian</b>	12	18%	2	14%	5	26%	5	14%
<b>Hispanic</b>	50	74%	8	57%	14	74%	28	80%
<b>Less than high school</b>	34	50%	5	36%	10	53%	19	54%
<b>High school diploma</b>	27	40%	5	36%	9	47%	13	37%
<b>Tech certificate</b>	3	4%	3	21%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Some college</b>	1	1.5%	0	0	0	0%	1	3%
<b>College degree</b>	1	1.5%	1	7%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Graduate degree</b>	2	3%	0	0%	0	0%	2	6%

Note: n = Number of Participants.

KPWE is the Kaiser Permanente Workplace English pilot. ELDT is the Skyline College English Language Development Training pilot. H360 is the Hospitality 360 Banquet Service pilot.



# Appendix G: Incumbent Worker Pilot Participant Survey Results

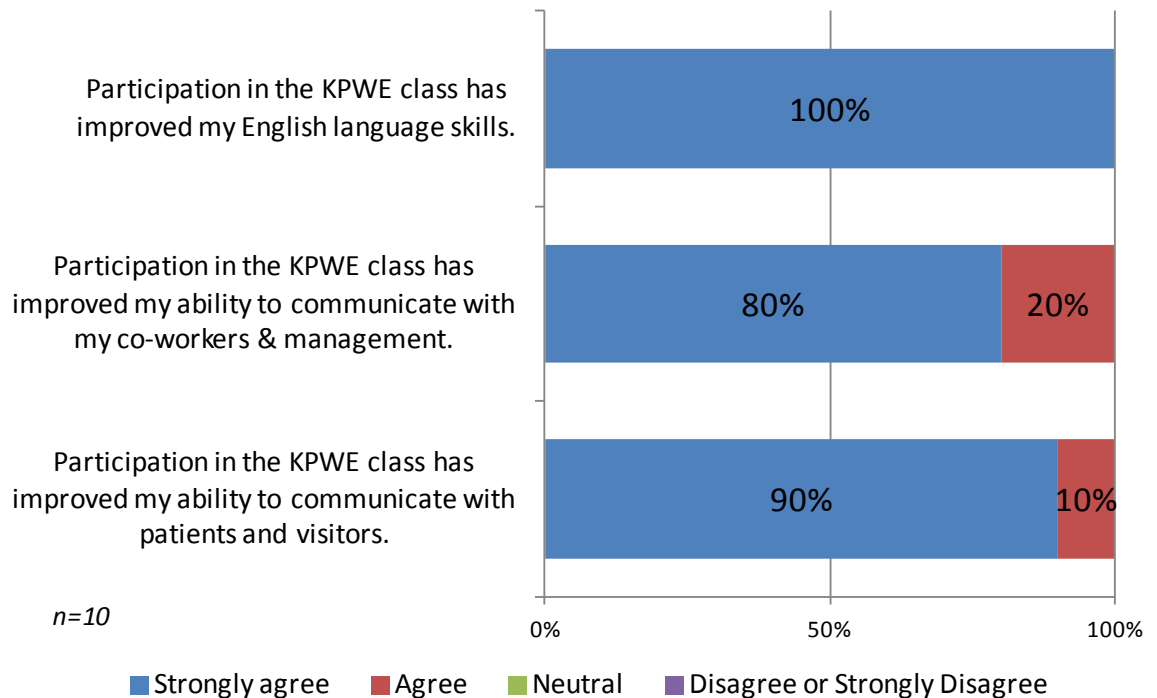
This appendix presents results for the exit survey that was administered in each of the incumbent worker pilot programs.

## Perceived Benefits of Participation

### Workplace Communications

All Kaiser Permanente Workplace English (KPWE) pilot survey respondents strongly agreed that participation improved their English language skills, and all agreed or strongly agreed that participation improved their ability to communicate with patients and visitors (Exhibit G1).

**Exhibit G1: KPWE Participants' Perceptions of Program**

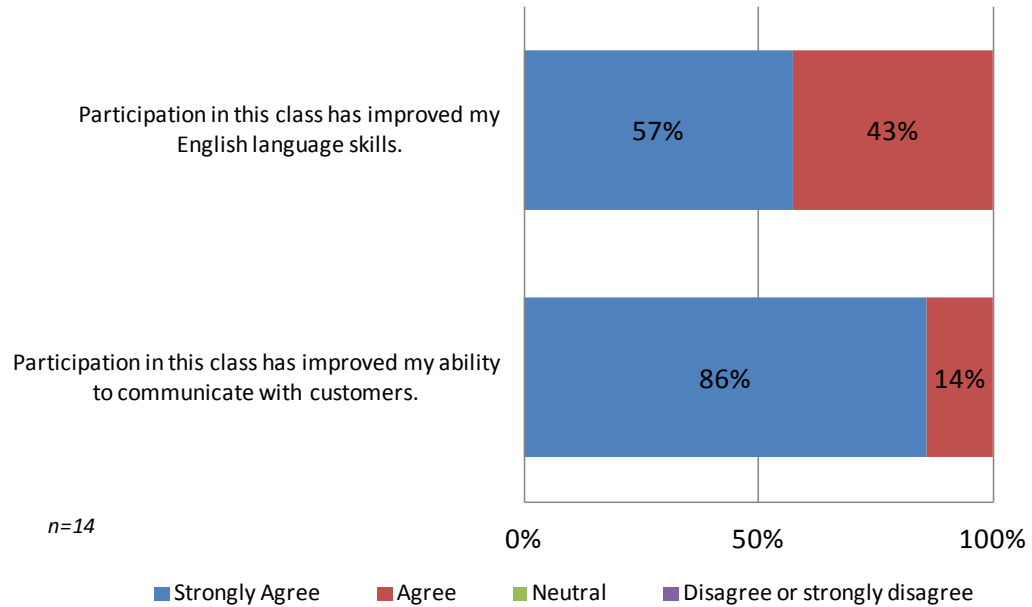


Source: KPWE participant exit survey.

All Skyline College English Language Development Training (ELDT) pilot survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that participation improved their English

language skills and that participation improved their ability to communicate with customers (Exhibit G2).

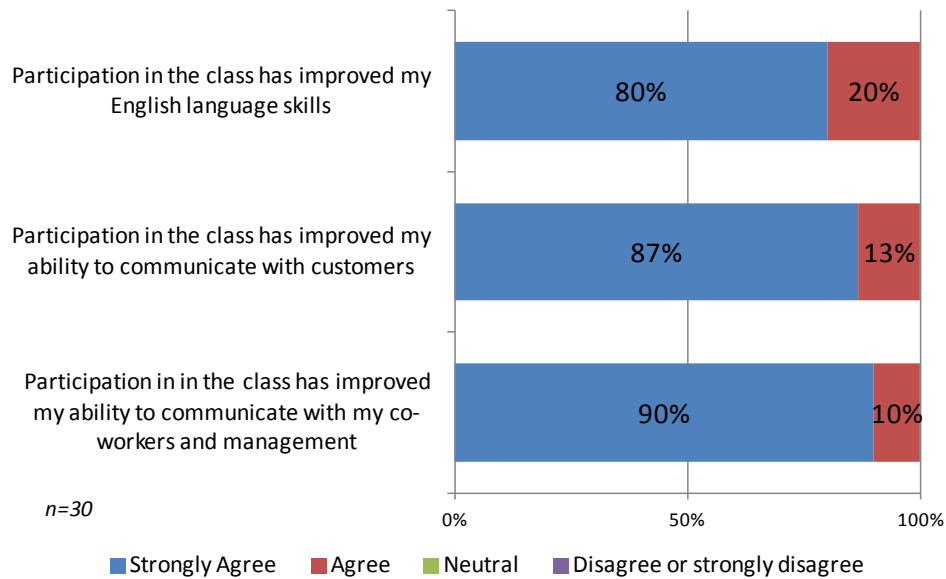
**Exhibit G2: ELDT Participants' Perceptions of Program**



Source: ELDT participant exit survey.

Similarly, all Hospitality 360 Banquet Service (H360) pilot survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that participation improved their English language skills and that participation improved their ability to communicate with customers, coworkers, and management (Exhibit G3).

### Exhibit G3: H360 Participants' Perceptions of Program

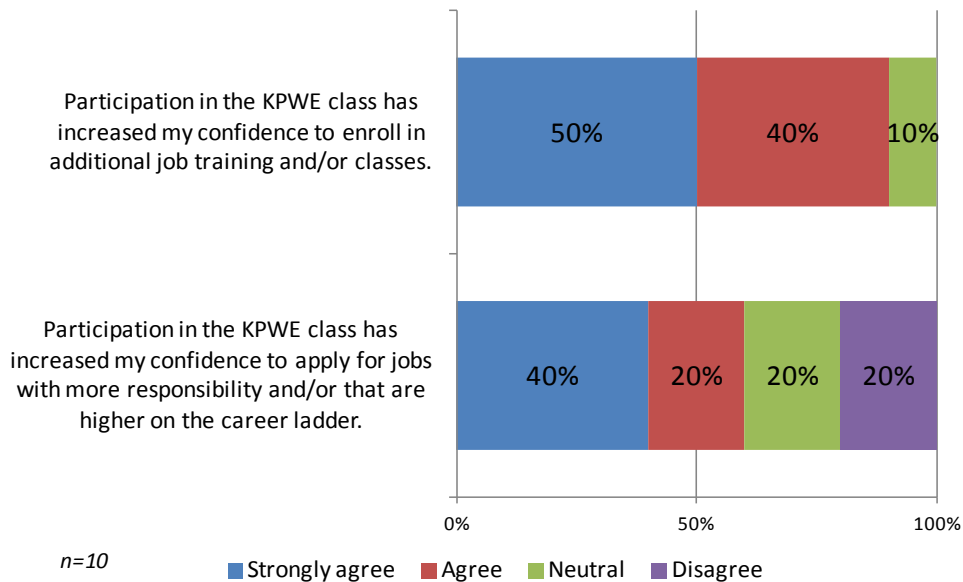


Source: H360 participant exit survey.

### Influence on Career Plans

Most pilot program participants agreed that participation in the programs increased their confidence to enroll in additional job training or education and to apply for jobs with more responsibility and/or higher on the career ladder.

### Exhibit G4: KPWE Participants' Perceptions of Their Confidence About Future Training/Education and Career Advancement



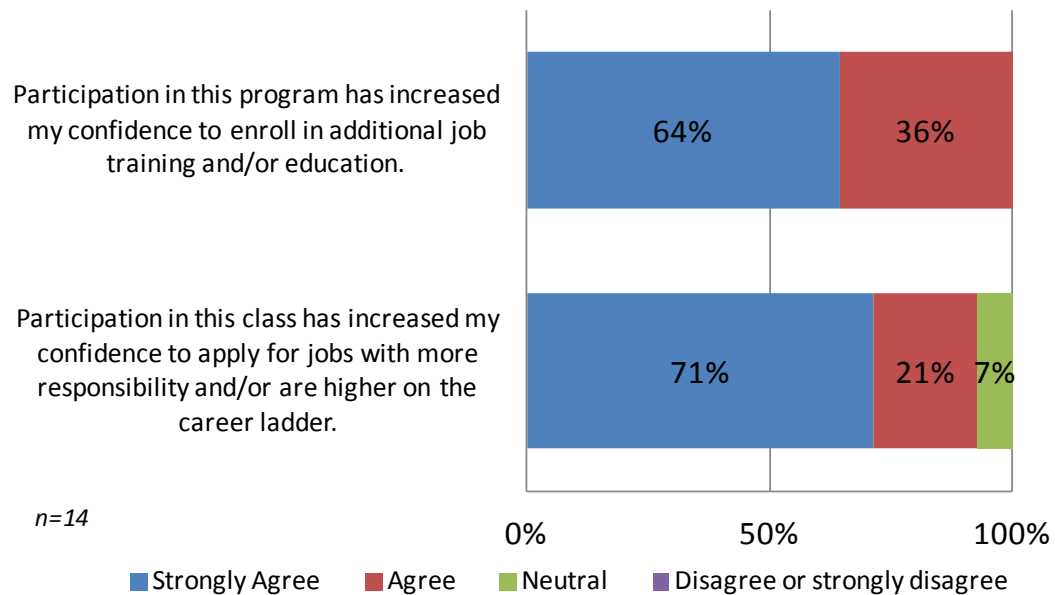
Source: KPWE participant exit survey.

Most (9 of 10) KPWE survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that participation increased their confidence to enroll in additional job training and/or classes (Exhibit G4). Four of ten respondents strongly agreed that participation increased their confidence to apply for jobs with more responsibility and/or that are higher on the career ladder. Another two respondents agreed with this statement, while two respondents disagreed, and two indicated neutrality.

KPWE respondents with more work experience in environmental services were more likely to strongly agree that the class increased their confidence to apply for jobs with more responsibility and/or that are higher on the career ladder. Half (2 of 4) of respondents with 16 or more years' experience strongly agreed with the statement, compared with one-third (2 of 6) of respondents with 10–15 years' experience who strongly agreed. However, given the small sample sizes, we do not know how well this trend generalizes to the larger population.

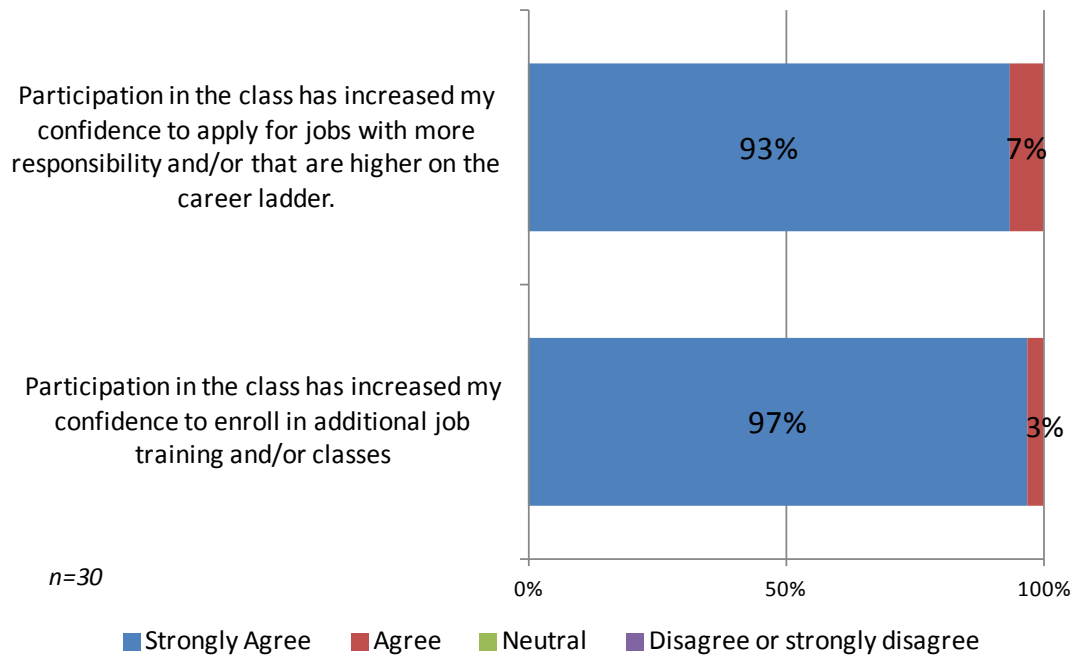
The vast majority of ELDT respondents and all H360 respondents strongly agree or agree that participation in the pilot increased their confidence to enroll in additional job training or education and it increased their confidence to apply for jobs with more responsibility and/or that are higher on the career ladder (Exhibits G5 and G6).

**Exhibit G5: ELDT Participants' Perceptions of Their Confidence About Future Training/Education and Career Advancement**



Source: ELDT participant exit survey.

**Exhibit G6: H360 Participants' Perceptions of Their Confidence About Future Training/Education and Career Advancement**



Source: H360 participant exit survey.



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