The "Fifth Pillar"

The San Diego and Imperial Counties Employment Readiness and Job Placement Services Project Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Updated February 8, 2018

The "Fifth Pillar" report is a culmination of a set of activities in Phase I of the *Employment Readiness and Job Placement Services Project* (ERJP project)*.* Working closely with and guided by the Employment Readiness Committee (committee), a representative subgroup of the San Diego and Imperial Counties Regional Consortium (consortium), WestEd conducted a series of research and engagement activities to inform the recommendations contained in the report. Below we summarize key components of the report including project description, context, recommendations, and action steps.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PURPOSE AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The ERJP project addresses the need to develop an infrastructure and processes for a regional system that will provide all ten of the San Diego and Imperial County colleges with access to programs to support students in preparing for future careers and acquiring employment upon completion of their programs of study. The goal is for the colleges to develop a system with three key functions: 1) proactive career planning and career preparation, including the development of 21st Century Employability Skills; 2) proactive, case-managed job placement especially in the priority and emerging sectors; and 3) an online management system that provides for student tracking of progress, benchmark intervention, and documentation of all services provided, including job placement.

Once complete and fully implemented, the proposed system will allow students to transport their career plans among the colleges, access regional career exploration and internship opportunities, develop the work readiness skills required by employers, get help to find a job in their field, and have the skills needed to navigate their careers over time.

METHODOLOGY

With the goal of developing a set of recommendations to facilitate a regional comprehensive employment readiness and job placement approach (including processes and tools) for Career Education (CE) students, WestEd conducted a set of environmental scans, research on best practices, and in-depth stakeholder engagement strategies to gather critical information that directly informed the recommendations. Specifically, the work involved

- Development of a roadway graphic (see Exhibit 2 below) and associated glossary;
- Conducting key informant interviews;
- Facilitating virtual engagements (focus groups);
- Researching best practice;
- Analyzing tools; and
- Engaging with the employment readiness committee.

CONTEXT AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

REGIONAL CONSORTIUM STRUCTURE

Three critical entities guide the work of supporting students' educational and career success. These three groups include the San Diego-Imperial Counties Community Colleges Association (SDICCCA), that provides policy leadership to the consortium; the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC), that ensures that the work aligns with the vision and strategic priorities of the consortium; and the Workforce Development Council (WDC), that supports the consortium's program operations. Guided by these entities, the project and its resulting recommendations and call to action consider the needs of the ten community colleges in the San Diego and Imperial Counties region[1] as well as the region's economic and workforce development needs.

REGIONAL NEED

At the heart of the consortium's work is a shared vision of regional prosperity and economic mobility for all populations within the region. The San Diego Workforce Partnership together with the workforce development boards of both San Diego and Imperial Counties, developed a joint workforce development plan to build an integrated workforce development system. Drawing on the results of interviews and surveys with scores of businesses in the region, agencies identified five high-wage, high-demand priority sectors on which to focus their development efforts, including Advanced Manufacturing and Renewable Energy; ICT Digital Media; Health; Life Sciences/Biotech; and Small Business.

However, students' persistence in college pathways aligned to the priority sectors suggests the need for strategies to strengthen programs in these sectors. While students are persisting in individual courses, they are not completing full pathways within their selected career area. Only 34 percent enroll in an aligned course in subsequent terms, and 13 percent remain within the pathway across *any* of the colleges within the SDIC region.[2] In addition, at one college in the region, earning gains have been increasing since 2010, but only 47 percent earned a living wage in 2013–14 (Booth, 2017).

---

[1] Cuyamaca College, Grossmont College, Imperial Valley College, MiraCosta College, Palomar College, San Diego City College, San Diego Continuing Education, San Diego Mesa College, San Diego Miramar College, Southwestern College.
[2] Custom data based on LaunchBoard 2015-16 data, retrieved January 2018. Data reflect students enrolled in programs aligned to priority sectors within the San Diego/Imperial Strong Workforce region.

The populations of San Diego and Imperial Counties and their community college students have pressing needs for robust, differentiated instructional and support services to ensure student persistence and long-term success.[3]

- Over one-third of the population in the region lives at or near poverty levels.
- 34 percent of the population over 25 (over 750,000 adults) holds a high school diploma or less.
- 46 percent of community college students are over the age of 25; 32 percent are between the ages of 20-24; and 22 percent are age 19 or less. This youngest group appears to be growing.[4]
- Approximately 38 percent of students in the region are "first generation" college students.
- Across the ten colleges, 5 to 38 percent of students took one or more credit or noncredit ESL courses.

"Guided Pathways" has taken hold nationally as an approach that can help support student success and equitable outcomes — whether certificates, employment, or transfer — by providing structured course sequences, careful intake and planning processes, rich learning opportunities, and robust support services (Bailey et al., 2015b).

The Guided Pathways approach aligned with Strong Workforce goals can be further enhanced by using regional approaches, especially for business engagement processes, as described in the *Southern Border Regional Workforce Development Plan* (SDIC Regional Consortium, 2017).

SYSTEM COMPONENTS FOR STUDENT SUCCESS: MOUNTING EVIDENCE FOR NEEDED CHANGE

Colleges are implementing a variety of initiatives that align to the Employment Readiness and Job Placement Project, including SSSP, Student Equity planning, Basic Skills Transformation, and the Strong Workforce Program. The most encompassing and current of these is Guided Pathways. The Guided Pathways movement has gained momentum in recent years among colleges seeking to improve retention, persistence, and completion. At the core of this approach is a fundamental reconfiguration of college experience that focuses on student needs and provides "intrusive" or proactive direction that guides students to completion and success. Rather than working with a subset of students, Guided Pathways is a collegewide undertaking that provides a framework for integrating all of the California-based initiatives.[5]

Through a review of the literature, interviews, and focus groups, key system components were identified as critical for student success in college, employment, further education, and long-term careers. These components are closely aligned with those supported by the Guided Pathways initiative,

---

[3] Regional demographic data derived from 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, with additional poverty data derived from estimates from the San Diego Center on Policy Initiatives. Student demographics reflect 2016–17 community college data pulled from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office MIS Data Mart and custom data based on LaunchBoard 2015-16 data, retrieved January 2018.

[4] Median Percentage of First-Generation Students for six out of the ten colleges within the region, for which data were available. Data reflect 2015-16 academic year. Calculations by WestEd. Source: 2017 Student Success Scorecard.

[5] For more information about the California Guided Pathways Initiative, see www.caguidedpathways.org.

with additional emphasis on career-related experiences and employment services. Below is a high-level summary of the key system components.
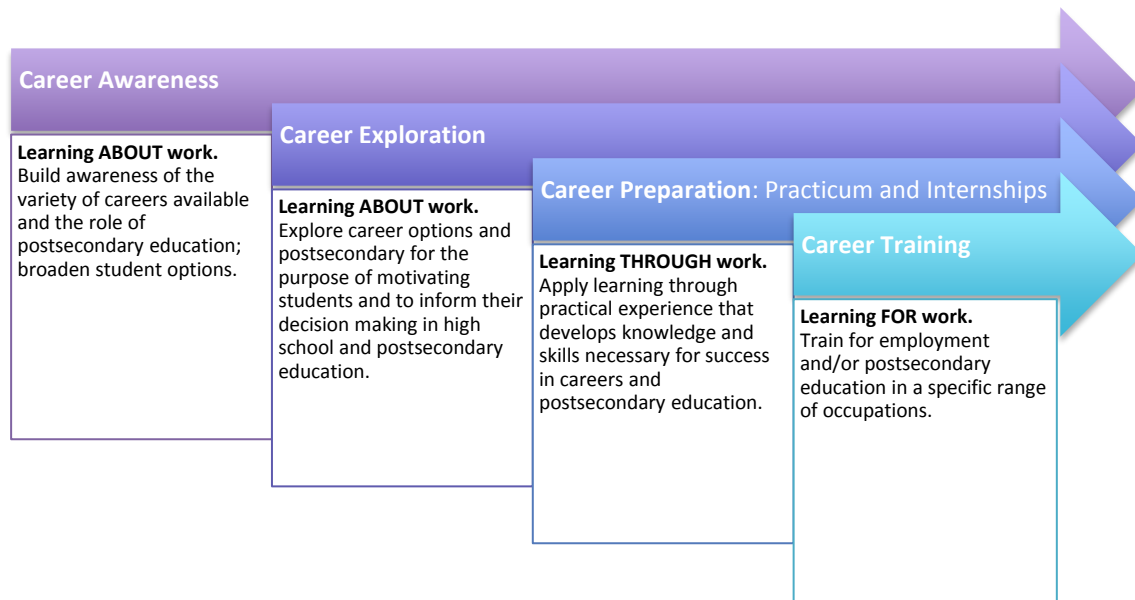
- *Pre-enrollment engagement:* activities conducted prior to matriculation with prospective students to facilitate enrollment, and aid in their understanding of the educational options, pathways, and services available (Edwards & Belfield, 2012; Barnett, 2016; Barnett et al., 2013; Completion By Design, 2016).

- *Matriculation and comprehensive assessment:* the process of enrolling in a community college and completing the necessary assessments and plans to pursue a pathway (Completion By Design, 2016; Jenkins & Fink, 2015; Rodriguez et al., 2016; Jenkins et al., 2017).

- *Career exploration:* a process of learning about career options through workshops, classes, tours, career-related research projects, informational interviews, and job shadows, based on identified interests and goals (CDE & CCCCO, 2008; Jenkins et al., 2017; Karp, 2014).

- *Career planning:* development of a career plan, which includes a student's interests, skills, and values, the career options that the student is interested in pursuing, and the educational and work-related experiences that will lead to one or more long-term career goals (Scrivener et al., 2012; Karp & Stacey, 2013; Karp, 2013 Jenkins et al., 2017; Kalamkarian & Karp, 2017a).

- *Education planning:* development of an education plan, which includes the documentation of the courses needed for a student to complete a specific degree, certificate, or transfer program of study and fulfill their educational goals, both at the community college level and beyond (Scrivener et al., 2012; Karp, 2013; Karp & Stacey, 2013; Karp, 2013 Jenkins et al., 2017).

- *Pathway participation and career preparation:* engagement with the courses and experiences offered in a career pathway (CDE & CCCCO, 2008; Jenkins, 2011; Jenkins & Cho, 2013).

- *Applied and work-based learning (WBL):* strategies that deepen learning and support career awareness, career exploration, and career preparation through engagement with employers and real work opportunities[6] (Bailey et al., 2004; Darche et al., 2009; Holzer & Lerman, 2014; Cahill, 2016; Jenkins et al., 2017; CDE & CCCCO, 2008).

- *Student supports:* the full range of services needed to successfully complete pathways including tutoring, testing for special education, peer study groups, assessment and accessibility supports for students with disabilities, and nonacademic supports for personal needs such as just-in-time housing services, transportation and parking, food and nutrition, child care, financial assistance, and other subsidies (Kalamkarian et al., 2017b; Bailey et al., 2015a).

- *Employment preparation and transition:* activities that prepare students to transition into further education, formal training, and/or the workforce such as resume writing, interview skills, job search and placement services, letters of recommendation, and feedback and coaching opportunities (Martinson & Holcomb, 2007; Chan & Derry, 2013; Jenkins & Fink, 2015; Crosta & Kopko, 2014; Shapiro et al., 2012).

---

[6] Work-based learning experiences are offered along a continuum, ranging in intensity, from tours and job shadowing, which expose students to career options, internships, work experience, co-op, and apprenticeships, which teach both general and specific career-related skills through actual work, as illustrated in Exhibit 1.

Career Awareness

Learning ABOUT work. Build awareness of the variety of careers available and the role of postsecondary education; broaden student options.

Career Exploration

Learning ABOUT work. Explore career options and postsecondary for the purpose of motivating students and to inform their decision making in high school and postsecondary education.

Career Preparation: Practicum and Internships

Learning THROUGH work. Apply learning through practical experience that develops knowledge and skills necessary for success in careers and postsecondary education.

Career Training

Learning FOR work. Train for employment and/or postsecondary education in a specific range of occupations.

Source: Linked Learning Alliance (2012).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The ERJP project employed a number of research and engagement strategies to inform the recommendations detailed below. These recommendations are written in alignment with Guided Pathways practices, and with the intention — as with Guided Pathways — that they benefit all students, not only those in CE programs. Exhibit 2 below, resulting from a number of research and engagement strategies, represents the continuum of a student's academic and career journey from pre-enrollment to employment and beyond. The recommendations are organized by the main segments of the journey, which are aligned with the pillars of the Guided Pathways model. Additionally, the recommendations (and subsequent action steps) are framed by systems change principles.

OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Recognize career exposure and preparation as a central purpose of the college experience for all students and add a "fifth pillar" to the Guided Pathways model to reflect this view.[7]
2. Develop a regional approach to career preparation and job placement that builds coherence across all ten colleges for both students and employers.
3. Integrate career preparation into instruction and student support delivered throughout the students' college experience, from first entry through transfer and employment, to ensure successful transitions and job placement.
4. Align institutional and program-level student learning outcomes to reflect a focus on career preparation for all students.
5. Make career-related services and tools readily accessible to all students.

---

[7] The Fifth Pillar concept is intended to suggest that all students — in general education, career education, or integrated programs — can benefit from career exposure, whether they plan to transfer or go straight to work.

6. Expand the scope of the learning environment to include workplaces and communities, positioning work-based learning as integral to career preparation and student success.
7. Ensure adequate staffing and strengthen processes, supported by technology, to engage all students in comprehensive career planning and career preparation activities, keep them engaged, and monitor their success through employment, as well as to engage employers for advisory services, work-based learning, and job opportunities.
8. To support students in navigating their college experience from pre-enrollment to employment, provide students a comprehensive and articulated set of the services, resources, and tools — including tools for career planning, career exploration, internships, and job placement.

EXHIBIT 2: A COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT'S ROAD TO SUCCESS
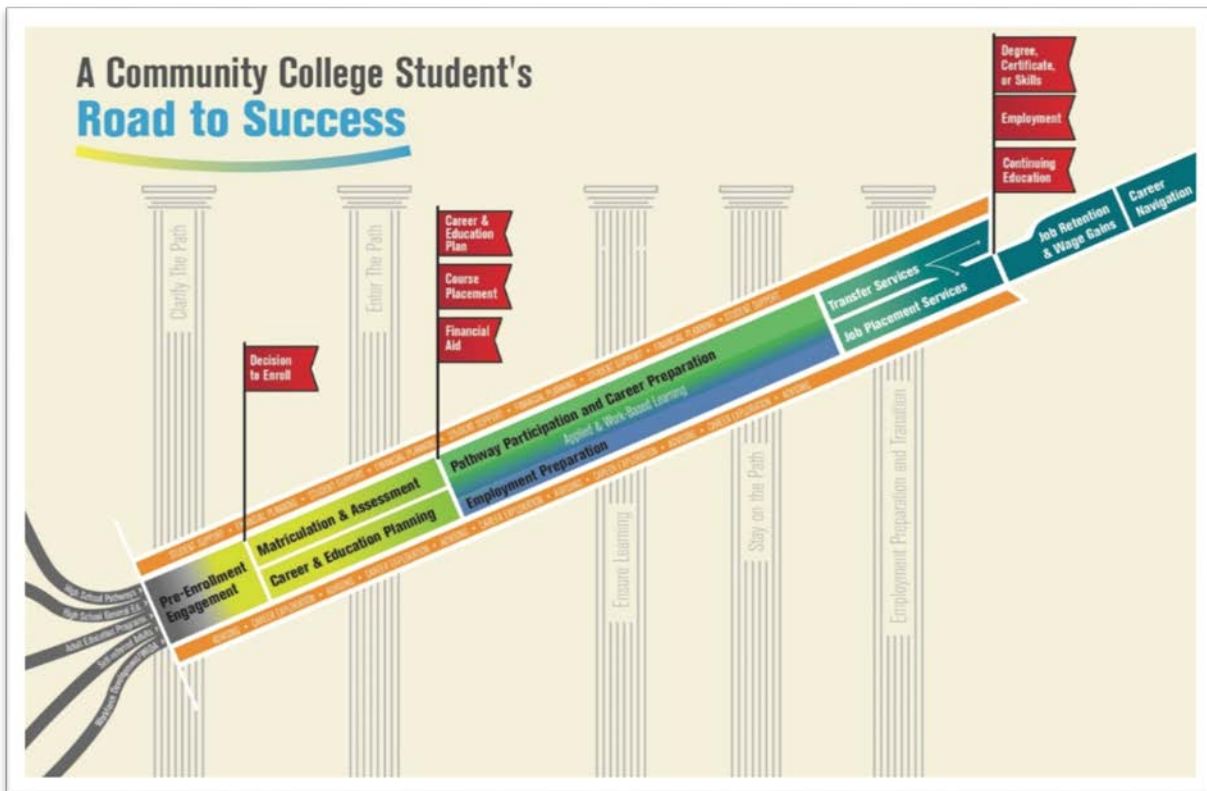
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STRENGTHENING AND ALIGNING PROCESSES TO SUPPORT STUDENTS

ENTERING THE PATH

1. **Pre-Enrollment Engagement**
   1.1 ***Connections with high schools and adult schools.*** Begin the pre-enrollment process with linkages to high schools and adult schools by expanding opportunities for dual and concurrent enrollment classes, locating college counselors or advisors in their schools, and collaborating with WIOA staff in America's Job Centers to ensure that students referred to the colleges have clear goals before they arrive on campus.

1.2 ***Intake forms.*** Develop a pre-enrollment "intake form" for prospective students and ensure opportunities for students to engage with career services or otherwise allow students to describe their circumstances and goals.

1.3 ***Early career exploration.*** Offer students career exploration opportunities, such as career assessments and time to speak with career guidance staff. Leverage other funding sources to collaborate with middle schools, high schools, adult schools, and WIOA staff.

2. **Matriculation and Comprehensive Assessment**

   2.1 ***Differentiated orientation.*** Offer comprehensive orientation to campus programs and services. Create separate orientations for students coming from high schools and adult schools, based on groupings suggested by the intake forms.

   2.2 ***Comprehensive assessment.*** Use comprehensive assessment and measures, including career, academic, 21st Century Employability, and other factors that will affect the students' success in college and future careers.

   2.3 ***Consistent and coordinated advising.*** Assign students to faculty advisors who will support the students' progress throughout their tenure at the college and track alerts and services provided to the students, leveraging early alert tools described below. Coordinate counseling and advising across departments on a given campus (e.g., CalWORKS, general counselors, career advisors, EOPS staff, and faculty) to ensure that all staff have up-to-date information and are coordinating their messages to students, either in their direct contacts or through an assigned advisor, and that each knows what services the others offer.

3. **Career and Education Planning**

   3.1 ***Transfer plans linked to career and education plans.*** Connect transfer plans to career plans, just as education plans are connected to career plans.

   3.2 ***Career plans before education plans.*** Provide students with career planning services before developing an education plan to enable clarification of long-term goals. Early conversations and intake processes will reveal whether students are clear about their goals, and career assessments will help point students in one or more directions.

   3.3 ***Early career exploration opportunities for students.*** Provide students with career exploration exposure at the onset of their college experience to include a wide variety of WBL activities that involves direct engagement with employers.

   3.4 ***Staff capacity-building.*** Ensure that all students have access to advising and staff who can assist with career as well as education plans.

   3.5 ***Career preparation orientation courses.*** Provide dedicated resources to support separate credit and non-credit courses for career preparation, as part of the orientation to the college (with professional development for career staff), before students create education and career plans and select courses.

ENSURE LEARNING

4. **Pathway Participation and Career Preparation**

   4.1 ***Embedded career preparation.*** Infuse career preparation into existing pathway courses, with support for faculty. Create or adapt existing career development course modules and embed

them into pathway course offerings, with the support of career center staff. Include "21st Century Employability Skills" as one module to set the stage and augment skills learned through technical skill instruction.

4.2 ***Support to faculty.*** Provide faculty with necessary support and professional development to embed 21st Century Employability Skills into coursework. Use available materials and 21st Century Employability Skills standards, as described in the Career Cluster "Career Ready Practices" and the U.S. Department of Education Employability Skills Framework.[8]

5. **Applied and Work-Based Learning**

5.1 ***Rigorous applied and work-based experiences for all.*** Offer rigorous applied, project-based, WBL experiences through classroom instruction, giving all students the opportunity to learn and practice the 21st Century Employability Skills of collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity (among others) in addition to technical skills.

5.2 ***Applied learning strategies integrated into coursework.*** Integration of applied learning strategies helps to make academic subjects relevant and meaningful, and promotes persistence.

5.3 ***Continuum of work-based learning for all.*** Provide all students with access to a continuum of career exploration and work-based learning experiences throughout their college tenure, linked to coursework when possible.

5.4 ***Embedded practice-based experiences.*** Make experiential learning with employers, such as internships (practice-based learning), an embedded component of the CE curriculum.

5.5 ***Industry-informed projects to address transportation issues.*** Offer industry-informed projects that can be completed in class, in addition to campus employment to provide all students with opportunities.

5.6 ***Regional approach.*** Take a regional approach to employer engagement, to streamline contacts for employers and maximize access to opportunities for students. Link students to regional opportunities through electronic systems and sharing of information among coordinators across colleges.

5.7 ***Engagement with the Workforce Development Council to identify regional employer resources by sector***. Engage the WDC to identify regional employers by sector, that can support work-based learning for students throughout the region; leverage the efforts of regional advisory committees.

5.8 ***Coordination with faculty to support and expand upon employer contacts.*** Develop processes that allow faculty to maintain connections with employers with whom they have pre-existing relationships — especially with smaller, local companies — while leveraging collegewide and regional resources to expand upon faculty connections.

5.9 ***Adequately resourced and coordinated employer engagement.*** Ensure adequate staffing to engage with employers for development of opportunities and coordination with faculty, for example, by engaging job developers to work with career services staff. Coordinate employer

---

[8] See the CTE Standards facilitated by Advance CTE, formerly the National Association of State CTE Directors Consortium, at https://careertech.org/CCTC and https://careertech.org/career-ready-practices, which include the 21st Century Employability Skills. See also the U.S. Department of Education Employability Skills Framework: http://cte.ed.gov/employabilityskills/

engagement regionally with Deputy Sector Navigators, to foster expertise among staff in distinct in-demand industries and occupations.

5.10 **Assessment and measurement.** Assess and track the attainment of critical skills (acquired through course content and WBL) through portfolios or other means that signal students' accomplishments to employers and other educational institutions; track data to inform program improvement.

STAYING ON THE PATH

6. **Academic Supports and Career Exploration**

6.1 **Co-requisite courses.** Create co-requisite courses that enable students to master academic content and strengthen areas of weakness — whether English language or other basic skills — at the same time, whenever possible.

6.2 **Academic support.** Provide students with adequate academic support such as embedded and peer tutoring, distance learning strategies, supplemental instruction and other methods.

6.3 **Career exploration to support persistence.** Employ targeted career exploration to help students understand how coursework relates to areas of career interest and thereby promote persistence in the face of challenges.

7. **Financial Planning and Other Support Services**

7.1 **Financial planning services.** Provide financial planning services to all students as needed. This has been demonstrated to be particularly important to help ensure the income security of low-income students. Incorporate financial literacy, including sustainability planning, into financial planning processes or other curricula to support students' self-sufficiency.

7.2 **Proactive referral based on stated needs.** Create referral systems at each college to differentiate advising and other support services based on needs expressed in the intake form. This referral practice will help provide students with adequate support and engagement with needed services at the onset of their college experience.

7.3 **Closing the loop.** Create a feedback process that ensures all referrals were addressed and that students have adequate support services, including financial planning services, health services, transportation, childcare, and other needed services.

7.4 **Collaboration for comprehensive services.** Build capacity for providing support services at the college by leveraging local community-based organizations through centers such as "Sparkpoint."

EMPLOYMENT PREPARATION AND TRANSITION

8. **Employment Preparation and Job Placement Services**

8.1 **Comprehensive and coordinated employment preparation and job placement.** Facilitate transitions to employment by providing comprehensive employment preparation, employment advising, and job placement services that are coordinated with career planning functions, pathway (technical) instruction, and delivery and assessment of WBL experiences.

8.2 **Staffing for employment preparation and job placement.** Provide adequate staffing for the employment preparation and placement functions, while leveraging technology and community resources, to ensure that students are receiving the needed support.

8.3 ***Tracking and dissemination of employment data.*** Make student employment-related outcome data available to faculty and staff for program improvement purposes and to outside stakeholders as a means to showcase student successes and bring visibility to the importance of career and employment services.

9. **Transition Services**
   9.1 ***Assistance for obtaining and/or applying for degrees and certificates.*** Provide students with assistance in securing their degrees and certificates, including degree audits, as these processes are often cumbersome.
   9.2 ***Services for alumni.*** Provide access for recent graduates to employment preparation services, including job seeking, resume writing, mock interviews, and networking skills. Such services will support successful employment and strengthen employment outcomes. Providing these services will also support continued engagement of alumni with the colleges, building loyalty and encouraging later re-enrollment for career advancement, providing support to students through mentoring and perpetuating work-based learning opportunities.
   9.3 ***Co-locate transfer and career services***. To help students connect their transfer plans to their long-term career goals and facilitate students' consultation with both transfer staff and career services staff, consider co-locating transfer and career services.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TOOLS TO SUPPORT STUDENT SUCCESS

SPECIFIC TOOL RECOMMENDATION

Based on the results of the review process, two tools are recommended for consideration, one for *planning and support* activities and the other for *career preparation and employment* activities. Specifically:

- *EAB Navigate* is a planning and support platform offering a continuum of tools to students and staff following the four pillars of Guided Pathways. An intake process initiates a student's engagement, followed by career research and goal setting, academic planning with a link to registration, and a customized to-do plan with corresponding notifications and resources. College staff and faculty may issue kudos or alerts along the way and direct students to appropriate interventions, as needed, using embedded appointment scheduling and tracking tools. The tool is the most modern and best designed of those reviewed but also boasts exceptional planning and implementation support.

- *Jobspeaker* is an employment collaboration platform with student, college, and employer interfaces. The student's profile features verifiable skills mapped to SIS/LMS data on courses the student has completed and integrates with online badges such as LinkedIn and New World of Work to highlight skills to employers. The system provides career research tools through an integration with Burning Glass labor market content; allows for coordination of work-based learning activities such as job shadowing and internships; and includes a robust employment verification process for tracking student outcomes. In addition, its mobile-first user experience is modern and one of the most intuitive of the products evaluated. Feedback from current adopters, including a consortium of 6 colleges in Los Angeles County, indicate the tool is outstanding for customer support and scalability.

TOOL ADOPTION RECOMMENDATIONS

To support the successful adoption and implementation of the two recommended tools, the following adoption recommendations are presented.

1. Support a differentiated approach to address the need.
2. Define and implement a college by college adoption approach to EAB.
3. Define and implement a regional adoption approach to Jobspeaker.
4. Support linkages of the tools, both new and existing, to create a seamless support structure for students.
5. Leverage existing pilots (e.g., LaunchPath, Starfish) to inform college-specific and regional approaches.

RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO OVERALL IMPLEMENTATION

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
1. Build awareness among all faculty, staff, and administrators about the importance of career preparation to ensure equity of opportunity for all students.
2. Build a model of professional learning that emphasizes peer to peer learning and problem solving.
3. Provide targeted professional development and learning opportunities to all stakeholder groups.

STRUCTURAL OR ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN SOLUTIONS
1. Align organizational structures and resources to support student career preparation as an integral aspect of learning, for example, by incorporating career preparation under Instructional Services.

LEVERAGING OF RESOURCES
1. Align SSSP Student Equity Planning and other programs with the goals of the Guided Pathways and Strong Workforce initiatives, to support the development of a comprehensive and coordinated system for student success through transfer and employment.
2. Leverage collaborations built through the California Pathways Trust initiative to support middle school and high school college and career preparedness activities, including career exploration opportunities, to facilitate decisions about pathway and course selections when students arrive at the college.
3. Leverage collaborations built through the Adult Education Block Grant Program to support successful transitions of adults from adult schools to the colleges.
4. Leverage collaboration with the Workforce Development Board to explore co-location strategies and other means to share tools and processes that can benefit both transitioning adults seeking to enroll in the colleges and college students needing America's Job Center services.

TAKING ACTION

INTRODUCTION

Below are described specific actions to take in order to move forward on the recommendations outlined above. Action steps will require coordinated and iterative processes at the regional and local levels, with the regional effort benefitting from local pilots and tests of change, and the local efforts benefitting from regional peer learning and economies of scale. The proposed actions address *process improvement* considerations and *tool implementation* considerations.

To make fundamental and lasting changes, the work needs to occur at three levels:

1. Consortium Leadership – to provide strategic leadership and guidance (SDICCCA), and oversight (ROC and WDC).
2. Regional Implementation – to focus on *Career Preparation and Employment* (including work-based learning) in order to define a regional approach rather than college by college. This is consistent with the San Diego Workforce Partnership workforce development plan, the Southern Border Region's Regional Plan, and the Doing What Matters for Jobs and the Economy Framework.
3. College Implementation – to focus on implementation of *Planning and Support.* It should be addressed at the individual college level as the context and needs of each will influence how *Planning and Support* will be implemented.
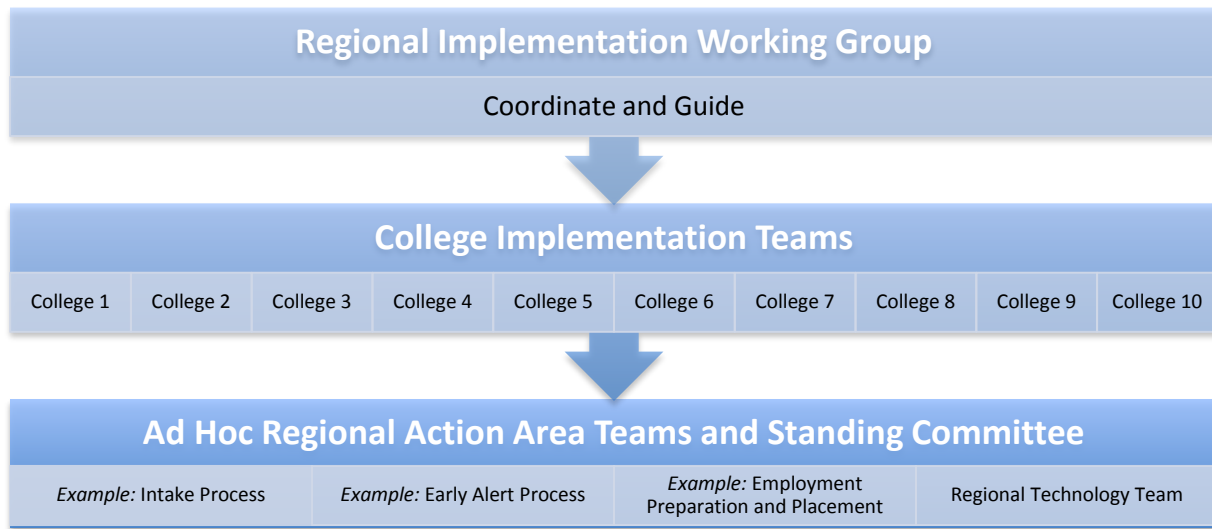
To build and maintain momentum, ensure consistent communication, and make steady progress, we propose establishing a tiered set of working groups and teams that will leverage existing task groups and committees. Exhibit 3 below illustrates this tiered approach.

We propose that:
1. Select members of the Workforce Development Council and Regional Oversight Committee serve as a Regional Implementation Working Group (IWG), with representation from each of the colleges. The purpose of this working group is to coordinate and guide a regional approach to the implementation work.
2. The IWG will coordinate with College Implementation Teams (CITs) that will focus on implementation requirements at the individual colleges conducting the self-assessments, informing tool adoption plans, building buy-in, and so on.
3. The IWG will also coordinate with a Regional Technology Team (comprised of IT staff from each of the colleges) that will launch, guide, and monitor the piloting of tools.
4. Members of the CITs will form ad hoc action area teams as needed and will focus on a key implementation topic (e.g., intake process) for a short period of time to support rapid decision making and implementation efforts.

Regional Implementation Working Group									
Coordinate and Guide									

College Implementation Teams									
College 1	College 2	College 3	College 4	College 5	College 6	College 7	College 8	College 9	College 10

Ad Hoc Regional Action Area Teams and Standing Committee			
Example: Intake Process	*Example:* Early Alert Process	*Example:* Employment Preparation and Placement	Regional Technology Team

Below we outline specific action steps organized in three phases:

- Phase I – Consolidate and Launch
- Phase II – Act Quickly and Strategically
- Phase III – Improve Continuously

PHASE I – CONSOLIDATE AND LAUNCH

AFFIRM VISION

1. Establish SDICCCA as the regional leadership body for the Employment Readiness and Job Placement Initiative, not only to secure approval but to align multiple regional efforts, including career pathway development, Guided Pathways efforts at pilot sites, SSSP, and related initiatives.
2. Secure approval from the colleges' leaders to move forward with recommendations for both processes and tools.
3. Create a regional communications plan to disseminate recommendations widely, build the case for change and, at the appropriate time, introduce the piloting and adoption of new tools.

LAUNCH IMPLEMENTATION

1. Establish and convene[9] a Regional "Fifth Pillar" Implementation Working Group (IWG) within the Workforce Development Council, with representation from each of the colleges. This IWG will coordinate the evaluation of needs and development of strategies to address recommendations for each campus, in alignment with Guided Pathways efforts.

---

[9] Recommendation is for the Employment Readiness Committee to lead convenings (as referenced throughout this section) with support, as appropriate, from consultants to organize, prepare for, and facilitate the convenings.

2. Convene college-level "Fifth Pillar" implementation teams to identify process needs at each college, based on Guided Pathways or other self-assessment processes.[10]
3. Work with existing Guided Pathways subcommittees at each of the three pilot sites to align efforts with the Employment Readiness recommendations.
4. College implementation teams complete a technology needs assessment, inventory, and gap analysis using a technology adoption readiness assessment.
5. Conduct stakeholder implementation work sessions that bring together a variety of "user/stakeholder" groups representative of all 10 colleges, including instructional faculty, counselors and advisors, employers, IT staff, and students. The purpose is to fully elaborate stakeholder needs by group across the region and identify concrete implementation strategies to be carried out through the IWG.
6. Using the results of the self-assessment, technology needs assessment, inventory, gap analysis, and stakeholder work sessions, develop college-specific implementation plans that incorporate or build on current pilot efforts (e.g., LaunchPath, Starfish).
7. Conduct cost analysis which should include detail about the software, hardware, and network requirements; the cost to acquire, use, and maintain the system; and the cost and effort to implement the new tool(s).
8. Communicate results of implementation launch (i.e., college plans) with key stakeholders.

PHASE II – ACT QUICKLY AND STRATEGICALLY

BUILD MOMENTUM WITH QUICK WINS
While the assessments are being completed, below are steps that can be taken immediately, based on project research findings.
1. Develop or review existing intake forms to ensure that they capture all the information needed to refer students appropriately to both counselors for career and education planning, and to campus services.
2. Create a college orientation course that includes career exploration as well as career planning, educational planning, and general orientation components that can be implemented in multiple colleges. Implement the course on a pilot basis in at least one college that is not already implementing such a course.
3. Build buy-in by conducting demonstrations of tools under consideration.

REVIEW COLLEGE-LEVEL PLANS AND MOVE TO ACTION
1. Convene Fifth Pillar Regional Implementation Working Group to identify areas of common implementation and professional development needs across the colleges from college-level plans.
2. Build action area teams around discrete action areas — for example, linking career planning with academic planning — thereby harnessing faculty and staff expertise across the region to rapidly address issues of common interest across colleges.

---

[10] The assessment tool will leverage existing assessments to avoid duplication of effort.

3. Engage with IT staff to discuss technology adoption policies and considerations for integration with existing systems (e.g., SIS, LMS).
4. Leverage pilot efforts or recent technology adoptions to inform implementation of recommended tools and design of a regional approach. Colleges that are currently adopting tools of this nature can provide guidance to the region on lessons learned; these include Palomar College (Starfish), Grossmont College and Cuyamaca College (GradGuru and LaunchPath), Mira Costa College (GradLeaders), and Mesa College (College Central Network).

LEVERAGE REGIONAL EMPLOYER-RELATED ACTIVITIES

1. Leverage any existing high-level employer advisory panels for the region, organized by in-demand industry sectors, to set foundational guidelines for work-based learning and job placement functions in their respective industries. Develop guidelines in partnership with workforce development and K–12 partners. The guidelines will need to include protocols to identify regional (shared) versus local employers, and guidance regarding coordination activities. The panels would also provide guidance about critical skills needed in their industry.
2. Establish regional goals for work-based learning and job placement processes, including goals for numbers or percent of students that will participate in work-based learning opportunities at each level, ranging from career exploration (informational interviewing and job shadowing) to career training (internships and apprenticeships), as well as job placement goals.

PHASE III – IMPROVE CONTINUOUSLY

REVIEW PROGRESS ON COLLEGE-LEVEL PLANS AND SURFACE CHALLENGES TO CHANGE

1. Convene IWC members to review progress on plans. Identify challenges and steps to overcome them. Adjust plans as needed.
2. Identify local policies, organizational structures, funding, and capacity issues that may inhibit change and report these to the Workforce Development Council, the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC), and SDICCCA for action.
3. Communicate progress with key stakeholders.

ESTABLISH CROSS-REGIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT LEARNING

1. Identify regional professional development opportunities and strategies that will build collective understanding of student and employer needs.
2. Develop targeted professional development opportunities to address specific learning needs of faculty, counselors, and staff.

ASSESS PROGRESS AND IDENTIFY NEXT PHASE OF IMPLEMENTATION

1. Review results of regional and college activities, analyze progress, and determine next steps.
2. Share learnings among Area Action Teams and identify next steps.
3. Develop the next phase of plan implementation for IWG and colleges.
4. Share results of progress analysis and details about next phase implementation with stakeholders.

REFERENCES

Bailey, T. R., Hughes, K. L., & Moore, D. T. (2004). *Working knowledge: Work-based learning and education reform.* New York and London: Routledge Falmer.

Bailey, T. R., Jaggars, S., & Jenkins, P. D. (2015a). *What we know about guided pathways.* Retrieved from https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/catalog/ac:185800.

Bailey, T. R., Smith Jaggars, S., & Jenkins, D. (2015b). *Redesigning America's community colleges: A clearer path to student success*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Barnett, E. (2016). *Building student momentum from high school into college. Ready or not: It's time to rethink the 12th grade.* Jobs For the Future. Retrieved from http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED564836.pdf.

Barnett, E. A., Fay, M. P., Trimble, M. J., & Pheatt, L. (2013). *Reshaping the college transition: Early college readiness assessments and transition curricula in four states. A state policy report.* Community College Research. Retrieved from http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED565659.pdf.

Booth, K. (2017, October 27). *CTE, GE, and You* [PowerPoint presentation to Mesa College]. San Francisco: WestEd.

Cahill, C. (2016). *Making work-based learning work.* Jobs for the Future. Retrieved from http://www.jff.org/sites/default/files/publications/materials/WBL%20Principles%20Paper%20062416.pdf.

California Department of Education & California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. (2008). *California state plan for career technical education.* Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education.

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. (2017). *Management Information Systems Data Mart.* Retrieved from http://datamart.cccco.edu/datamart.aspx.

Center on Policy Initiatives. (2017). *Making ends meet: A look at the self-sufficiency standard – The income needed for families of various sizes to cover basic living expenses – And the San Diegans whose wages don't reach that level.* Retrieved from http://www.cpisandiego.com/MEM/index.html.

Chan, A., & Derry, T. (2013). *A roadmap for transforming the college-to-career experience. Rethinking success from the liberal arts to careers in the 21st century*. Wake Forest University, North Carolina.

Completion by Design. (2016). *Building guided pathways: Practical lessons from Completion by Design Colleges.* New York: Teachers College, Columbia University. Community College Research Center.

Crosta, P. M., & Kopko, E. M. (2014). *Should community college students earn an associate degree before transferring to a four-year institution?* (Working Paper No. 70). New York: Columbia University, Teachers College, Columbia University. Community College Research Center.

Darche, S., Nayar, N., & Bracco, K. (2009). *Work-based learning in California: Opportunities and models for expansion.* San Francisco: The James Irvine Foundation.

Edwards, L., & Belfield, C. (2012). *Dual enrollment: Helping make college a reality for students less likely to go.* ERIC. Retrieved from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED533753.

Holzer, H., & Lerman, R. (2014). *Work-based learning to expand jobs and occupational qualifications for youth.* Washington, DC: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

Jenkins, D. (2011). *Get with the program: Accelerating community college students' entry into and completion of programs of study* (Working Paper No. 32). New York: Community College Research Center at Teachers College, Columbia University. Retrieved from http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED518094.pdf.

Jenkins, D., & Cho, S. W. (2013). *Get with the program…and finish it: Building guided pathways to accelerate student completion.* New Directions for Community Colleges. vol. 2013, no. 164.

Jenkins, D., Lahr, H., & Fink, J. (2017). *Implementing Guided Pathways: Early insights from the AACC pathways colleges.* New York: Community College Research Center at Teachers College, Columbia University. Retrieved from https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/implementing-guided-pathways-aacc.pdf.

Jenkins, D., & Fink, J. (2015). *What we know about transfer*. New York: Columbia University, Teachers College, Community College Research Center.

Kalamkarian, H. S., Karp, M. M., & Ganga, E. (2017a). *Creating the conditions for advising redesign.* New York: Columbia University, Teachers College, Community College Research Center.

Kalamkarian, H. S., Karp, M. M., & Ganga, E. (2017b). *What we know about technology-mediated advising reform.* New York: Columbia University, Teachers College, Community College Research Center.

Karp, M. J. M. (2013). *Entering a program: Helping students make academic and career decisions.* New York: Community College Research Center at Teachers College, Columbia University. Retrieved from https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/entering-a-program.pdf

Karp, M. J. M., & Stacey, G. W. (2013). *Student success courses for sustained impact.* New York: Columbia University Academic Commons. Retrieved from https://academiccommons.columbia.edu/catalog/ac:170511.

LaunchBoard 2015-16 Data. (2017). Retrieved January, 2018 from: http://doingwhatmatters.cccco.edu/launchboard.aspx.

Linked Learning Alliance. (2012). *Work-based learning in linked learning: Definitions, outcomes, and quality criteria* (Field Review Draft). Sacramento, CA: Linked Learning Alliance.

Martinson, K., & Holcomb, P. (2007). *Innovative employment approaches and programs for low-income families.* Washington, DC: Urban Institute.

Mejia, M. C., Rodriguez, O., & Johnson, H. (2016). *Preparing students for success in California's community colleges.* San Francisco: Public Policy Institute of California. Retrieved from http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R_1116MMR.pdf.

San Diego and Imperial Counties Regional Consortium, San Diego Workforce Partnership, Imperial County Workforce Development Board. (2017). *Southern Border Regional Workforce Development Plan San Diego and Imperial Counties 2017–2020*. Retrieved from http://doingwhatmatters.cccco.edu/portals/6/docs/sw/RegionalPlans/SDIC_SBRWFDPlanFINAL.pdf.

Scrivener, S., Weiss, M. J., & Sommo, C. (2012). *What can a multi-faceted program do for community college students? Early results from an evaluation of Accelerated Studies in Associate Programs (ASAP) for developmental education students*. New York: MDRC.

Shapiro, D., Dundar, A., Chen, J., Ziskin, M., Park, E., Torres, V., & Chiang, Y.-C. (2012). *Completing college: A national view of student attainment rates* (Signature Report No. 4). Herndon, VA: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2016). *Selected housing characteristics, 2012–2016 American Community Survey 5-year estimates*. Retrieved from https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_S1601

Wheatley, M., & Frieze, D. (2006). *Using emergence to take social innovation to scale.* Spokane, WA: The Berkana Institute. Retrieved from http://www.berkana.org/pdf/emergence_web.pdf.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

WestEd would like to thank the many individuals and organizations that contributed to this report. The recommendations were informed by input from individuals throughout the region who work tirelessly to offer the best community college experience for students in San Diego and Imperial Counties. Community college staff and students from across the region provided their insights through interviews, focus groups, and virtual engagements. We are especially grateful to the ERJC Committee members who gave crucial feedback in an iterative and collaborative way throughout the process.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Al Taccone, CE Dean and Committee Chair, MiraCosta College
- Donna Davis, Faculty Director/ Career Studies & Services, MiraCosta College
- Claudia Estrada-Howell, Supervisor/Transfer, Career and Evaluations, Mesa College
- Scott Finn, Counselor, Southwestern College
- Richard Gholson, Interim CE Dean, San Diego Continuing Education
- Larry McLemore, CE Dean, Cuyamaca College
- Renee Nasori, Interim Student Development Services Supervisor, Grossmont College
- Mona Patel, Career Center Coordinator, Miramar College
- Kimberly Teston, DSN, Life Sciences & Biotechnology, San Diego Community College District
- Mollie Smith, Chair, Regional Consortium
- Molly Ash, Coordinator, Regional Consortium