CSW
Corporation for a Skilled Workforce
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California Workforce Development Board
Regional Plan Implementation

RPI 3.0 EVALUATION REPORT
March 2022

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Corporation for a Skilled Workforce

Corporation for a Skilled Workforce (CSW) served as the external evaluator for California's Regional Plan Implementation (RPI) 3.0 initiative, as it has for previous iterations of RPI. CSW is a national organization specializing in research and evaluation, strategic advising, planning, initiative development, implementation and sustainability, with more than three decades of experience in working closely with state and local workforce boards, postsecondary institutions and a range of workforce partners to create shared visions and roadmaps to success.

Executive Summary

RPI 3.0 represented a significant step forward in California's ongoing effort to promote a regional approach to workforce development. Progress was made over the grant period in helping local workforce boards begin to see the benefits of adopting regional strategies, and in helping CWDB find ways to work more collaboratively with local boards to allow them to embrace regionalism on their own terms. Over time, local board staff began to exhibit more positive attitudes about regionalism, at times volunteering examples of how regional coordination and the sharing of promising practices have led to improvements in the workforce development system. From the now-common practice of having multiple local business services teams coordinate their approach to major employers, to local boards standardizing their Eligible Training Provider List policies across a region, to the institutionalization of regional professional development and capacity building efforts for staff and partners, RPI 3.0 helped to make the workforce system more efficient and effective. The COVID-19 pandemic, which coincided with RPI 3.0, also led local boards to communicate with regional partners more than ever as they explored best practices for providing services during a public health emergency.

Not surprisingly, however, key issues remain for local boards with respect to regionalism. Particularly for boards embedded in county or municipal government, the administrative burden of serving as fiscal lead for regional funding allocations can be problematic if not prohibitive. The perceived rigidity of the current regional boundaries, meanwhile, appears to discourage local boards from forming sub-regional or cross-regional partnerships. Local directors continue to seek flexibility in these and other matters related to regionalism.

Over the RPI 3.0 contract period, CWDB began managing the RPI contracts more closely than had been done in the past, which resulted in clearer communication with the regions regarding expectations and accountability. This coincided with a shift away from tracking regional progress through a series of *process* measures derived from the ten 'Regional Indicators of Coordination and Alignment' to a new strategy of trying to reach agreement with each region on a small number of *outcome* measures, and then allowing the regions to determine the best way to work towards them – a new approach which is still a work in progress in RPI 4.0

The role of the evaluation team also shifted during the RPI 3.0 period. Under previous iterations of RPI, the evaluation team interviewed CWDB staff at key points but also maintained a certain distance in order to play a neutral role with respect to the regions and local boards. With 3.0, the evaluation team, while continuing to maintain that same objectivity, was increasingly called upon to engage as a thought partner with CWDB to help move regionalism forward in ways that would work for local boards and regions. As detailed in this report, the evaluation team engaged in a much more hands-on way with both CWDB staff and local workforce boards to identify mutually-acceptable approaches to regionalism.

Finally, looking back over the past six years of regional efforts in California, the evaluation team noted a significant narrowing of focus, from the big-picture, social-change emphasis of the original SlingShot regional initiative to the relatively small-scale, project-focused approach most

regions adopted for successive iterations of RPI. While not surprising in itself, given the smaller funding levels of RPI, it is worth noting that the evaluation team today sees signs of a renewed emphasis on tackling the big picture, as regions increasingly attempt to address such critical social issues as income inequality, racial equity and job quality.

Communities Working Together in Regions

In 2013, the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) unveiled what it called an "innovation initiative" aimed at encouraging the state's 45 local workforce development boards to work together at a regional level in ways they had not previously done. The SlingShot initiative asked local workforce boards and their partners to come together, in regions of their choosing, to tackle pressing workforce development issues. Each region was offered $1 million, with very few strings attached, to develop a strategy and implement it. In response, the local boards organized themselves into a dozen regions and embarked on an unprecedented effort to build a variety of regional partnerships. Many were aimed at bringing together major regional employers in key industry sectors to explore mutual needs and align training services with industry demand.

The following year, Congress passed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014. WIOA represented the reauthorization of its predecessor, the Workforce Investment Act, and while it maintained many of the key elements of WIA, it also made some significant changes. One of those involved a new emphasis on regionalism, and the inclusion of a requirement that workforce systems at the state and local level engage in regional planning with an eye towards achieving administrative efficiencies and providing more effective services to both job-seekers and employers.

In California, therefore, the SlingShot initiative essentially 'jump-started' regionalism a year before WIOA, putting the state ahead of the curve in responding to the regional imperatives of the new law. Local boards in California had already spent a year voluntarily working together, had made significant progress in developing a range of regional efforts, and were well-positioned to respond to WIOA's regional expectations.

Subsequent iterations of SlingShot funding focused on the development of new industry sector partnerships. These efforts continued under the banner of Regional Plan Implementation (RPI) grants, which supported regions as they developed 4-Year Regional Plans and implemented further regional initiatives.

Notably, however, RPI funding levels were significantly less than the original SlingShot amount, and at the same time, RPI funding tended to have a few more strings attached to it than did SlingShot. These two facts are essential to understanding the evolution of RPI, and of the RPI 3.0 landscape.

Figure 1: California's 15 Labor Regions

3.0 Report

Introduction

The third iteration of CWDB's Regional Planning Initiative, RPI 3.0 was designed to further promote regionalism by asking each of the state's 15 workforce regions to demonstrate progress on specific indicators. The "Regional Coordination and Alignment Indicators" developed by CWDB in 2017 outlined ten domains in which regions could assess their current level of development and plan for future growth. The 3.0 application process required regions to choose from that list and commit to showing progress on one or more of the indicators. The high-level indicators are shown in the table below. For each indicator, there followed a series of assessment questions which allowed regions to gauge their level of development with respect to that indicator. The full indictors document is included as Appendix 1.

Table 1: Regional Coordination and Alignment Indicators	
Indicator A	Region has a team that jointly convenes industry
Indicator B	Region has a shared sector/occupational focus and shares/pools resources to meet demand in the region
Indicator C	Region has a process to communicate industry workforce needs to supply-side partners
Indicator D	Region has policies supporting equity and strives to improve job quality
Indicator E	Region has shared target populations of emphasis
Indicator F	Region deploys shared/pooled resources to provide services, training, and education to meet target population needs
Indicator G	Region utilizes shared, common case management strategies such as co-enrollment, navigators, and/or multi-disciplinary teams to developed shared responsibility for providing services and ensuring quality outcomes
Indicator H	Region has shared/pooled admin systems and/or processes for achieving administrative efficiencies and program outcomes
Indicator I	Regional decision-making in formalized structures
Indicator J	Regional organization and evaluation of performance

Timeline of California's Regional Initiatives

2018 - 2019
RPI 1.0
Original grant terms:
January 1, 2018 through
June 30, 2019

2020 - 2021
RPI 3.0
Original grant terms:
April 1, 2020 through
September 30, 2021

2014 - 2019
SlingShot
Projects funded in 3 separate
phases from March 1, 2015
through March 2019

2019 - 2020
RPI 2.0
Original grant terms:
April 1, 2019 through
September 30, 2020

2021
RPI 4.0
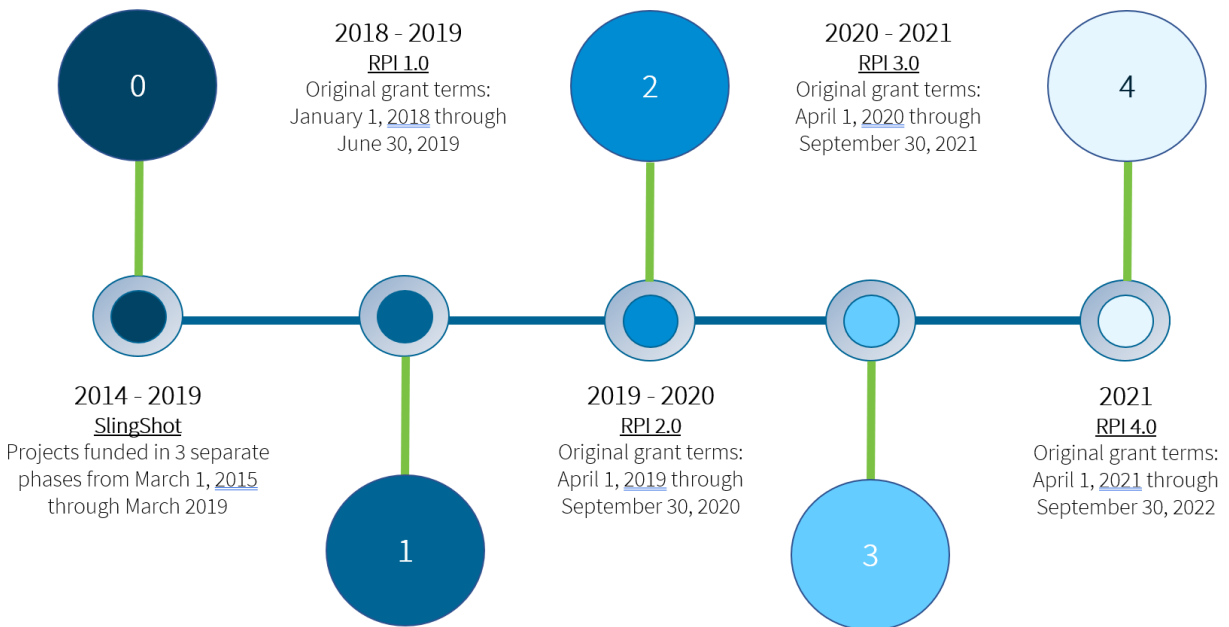Original grant terms:
April 1, 2021 through
September 30, 2022

Figure 2: Regional Plan Implementation Timeline

In April of 2020, the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) engaged Corporation for a Skilled Workforce to evaluate regional plan implementation efforts in California's fifteen regional planning units under the state's third round of Regional Plan Implementation (RPI) funding. As the coordinator of the 2017-2018 evaluation of the SlingShot initiative, and the evaluator for subsequent iterations of RPI, the evaluation team, with CWDB's encouragement, has increasingly come to view these discrete regional evaluation projects as part of an ongoing, multi-year assessment of the extent to which California's workforce regions are making progress in working together and establishing measurable goals for their regional investments.

A key recommendation of CSW's RPI 2.0 evaluation report, issued in early 2021, was a suggestion that the state shift from a reliance on multiple process measures, as reflected in the Regional Indicators document, to a clear focus on performance *outcomes*. The evaluators suggested that local workforce boards might respond favorably to a de-emphasis on *how* they were expected to implement regionalism in exchange for a small number of mutually-agreed-upon outcome goals, allowing the regions the freedom to decide how best to work towards achieving those goals. It was recognized that this would not necessarily be an easy adjustment to make, and that it would require significant developmental steps leading to a new emphasis on measurable outcomes.

Consequently, the RPI 3.0 evaluation, while assessing overall regional activities as reflected in RPI-funded projects and regional plans, centered on looking at how regions were adjusting to the new emphasis on outcome measures, and on providing CWDB with recommendations for

what might be done to improve the success of this new and decidedly different focus on measuring the progress of regionalism.

While CWDB's seminal regional initiative, SlingShot, had an expansive system-change mandate, RPI 2.0 essentially saw most regions using their regional grant funds to support a more limited, project-based approach to developing regional capacity. In most cases the selected projects, while important to the regions, were focused on fairly narrow objectives related to a specific problem to be solved. Noting this narrowing of focus, CSW's RPI 2.0 evaluation report articulated the value and potential of a broader framework for assessing the return on investment of the RPI regional grants and the more comprehensive 4-Year regional plans. As the regional work evolved from 2.0 to 3.0, so did the role of the evaluators, as discussed below, with the evaluation team moving into a dual role of evaluation and strategic advising to CWDB.

Themes and Key Findings

RPI 3.0 Highlights:

> *Local Workforce Board Directors showed an increased appreciation for working collectively in regions*

> *Evidence of increased regional coordination of key services and practices*

> *Tension persisted regarding administrative burdens and reporting requirements*

> *Local Workforce Board Directors sought more flexibility and latitude to enact policy changes*

Increased appreciation for working collectively in regions. The cornerstone of the RPI 3.0 evaluation was a series of in-depth Zoom interviews conducted in the spring and early summer of 2021 with the local workforce board directors in each workforce region. These interviews were similar to, and built upon, the in-person interviews conducted in the fall of 2019 as part of the RPI 2.0 evaluation, which highlighted many of the concerns local directors had regarding CWDB's approach to regionalism. While there was still a fair amount of criticism of regionalism

in the 2021 interviews, the overall tone of responses this time was more positive. Whereas it took an effort, in 2019, to get interviewees to admit – often rather grudgingly – that there were perhaps a few benefits to working together as a region, this time most respondents were fairly quick to volunteer that there were in fact things they valued and appreciated about regionalism. The ongoing professional development offered by the RPI-funded Regional Training Coordinators was particularly popular. As one local board director explained, *"Staff at all levels now have colleagues [in neighboring workforce areas] with whom they can communicate and develop their skills, which is really impactful around system development and professionalizing the folks that are doing the work."*

Increased coordination of key services. Interviewees generally highlighted the fact that they had learned a good deal from each other through their regional work. The exchange of ideas and cocreation of best practices proved critical in increasing the resilience and adaptability of local boards during the pandemic. One local director stated: *"I don't think the pandemic negatively affected our regional work. If anything, we've had more communication with our regional partners. Who better to commiserate with and come up with best practices to respond to a pandemic than those in other workforce areas in similar situations?"* Another local director agreed that collaboration and coordinated services between regions reached their peak during the pandemic. *"Things worked as well as they've ever worked during the pandemic among the regional partners: We wrote a 4-year regional plan on Zoom. We held public input sessions together on Zoom."* Several regions noted that they had adopted uniform regional policies around items such as the Eligible Trainer Provider List (ETPL), making it simpler for job-seekers in the region while preventing service providers from "shopping around" to see which local board would give them the best rates. Likewise, many regions have used RPI to significantly enhance the coordination of business services to ensure that key industry sectors are not being approached multiple times by multiple local areas.

Administrative burden. At the same time, in the view of most local directors, certain key issues persisted. The administrative burden of serving as the fiscal lead for a region came up in nearly every interview, with compelling examples of the time-consuming (and costly) bureaucratic hurdles involved in moving relatively small amounts of money from point A to point B. County counsel and procurement officers generally insist on carefully reviewing all contracts and transactions, requiring that standard procurement practices be followed – and often then seek reimbursement for the time they spend on that review. Local directors invest months or even years educating local officials about why certain funds received by a local entity must be shared regionally – and then have to start from scratch when those officials are replaced by new ones. These issues are particularly acute for workforce boards embedded in government entities.

Need for flexibility. Interviewees also highlighted the need for flexibility in defining regional boundaries and eliminating real or perceived disincentives for sub-regional and cross-regional partnerships. The expectation that new state funding may in part be tied to regions in other systems that do not align with the existing Regional Planning Units (RPUs) has heightened this concern. Local directors argue that regionalism must become less rigid and more nimble if it is

to be truly successful, allowing local areas to come together as needed and in whatever configurations make sense for a given project or initiative. *"We receive a lot of money for workforce development, but the money we receive comes with so many restrictions that we're not always able to help the people we want to help the ways we want to help them,"* a local director lamented. This necessarily presents a challenge for CWDB, as it looks for ways to allow flexibility without erasing regional boundaries or funding requirements altogether.
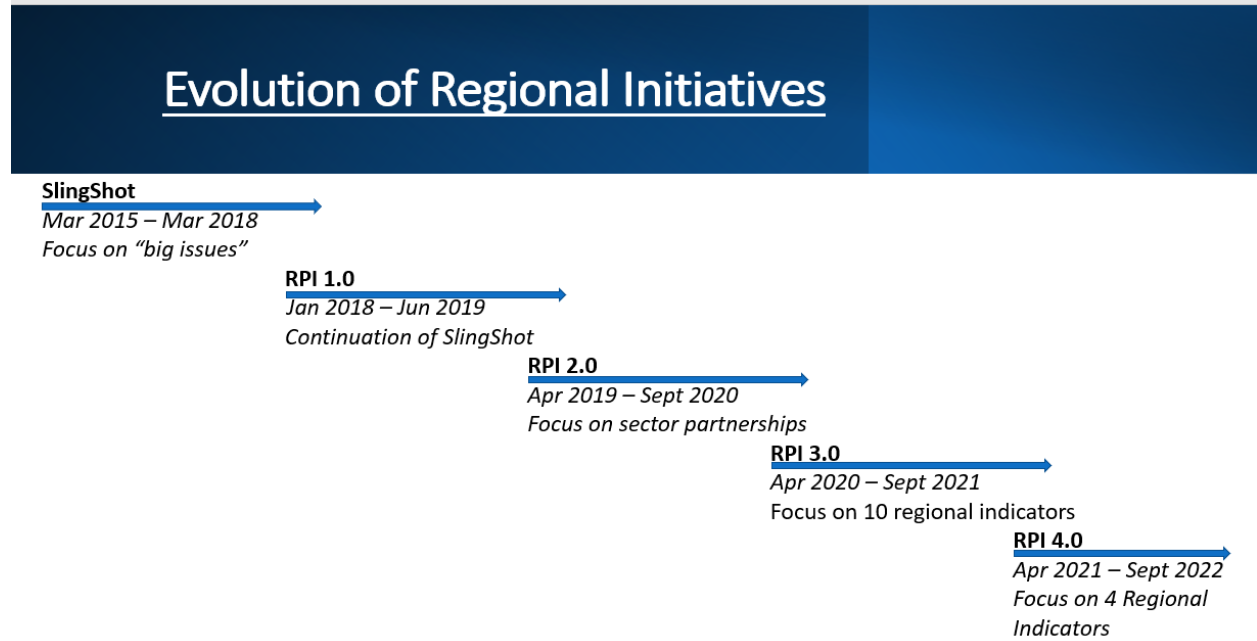

Evolution of Regional Initiatives

SlingShot
Mar 2015 – Mar 2018
Focus on "big issues"

RPI 1.0
Jan 2018 – Jun 2019
Continuation of SlingShot

RPI 2.0
Apr 2019 – Sept 2020
Focus on sector partnerships

RPI 3.0
Apr 2020 – Sept 2021
Focus on 10 regional indicators

RPI 4.0
Apr 2021 – Sept 2022
Focus on 4 Regional Indicators

Figure 3: Evolution of Regional Initiatives

Looking ahead to RPI 4.0. Toward the end of each RPI 3.0 interview, the evaluators turned to RPI 4.0 and asked the interviewees for their thoughts on the requirement that they begin to identify ways to quantify the benefits of their regional work. Very few regions were able to point to anything concrete in this regard – not surprising, given that the interviews took place in the spring of 2021, when their expectation was that they would be working with the technical assistance providers (Jobs For the Future and the California Workforce Association) and CSW over the coming months to identify such metrics. The evaluation team's assessment was that (much as in 2019), the boards fell into three camps: those ready to move forward on outcome measurement of some sort, those opposed to the idea on principle, and those in the middle, who, while not necessarily opposed, were skeptical that useful metrics could be established. The difference was that in 2019, only one or two regions were truly ready to move forward, whereas in 2021, nearly half of the regions appeared to be willing to engage.

A number of interviewees noted what they called the "backwards" schedule which required them to submit their RPI 4.0 proposals before they had finished – or even really begun – the process of developing their 4-Year Regional Plans. They understood the fiscal and administrative realities that dictated the respective deadlines, but pointed out that it would

have been better to be able to contemplate RPI 4.0 in the context of the new 4-Year Plan, rather than in advance of it. This had the effect of forcing regions to make their initial decisions about RPI 4.0 metrics before they and their stakeholders had been able to discuss regional 4-year priorities. The subsequent announcement that future regional funding would be tied to the new Regional Equity and Recovery Partnerships (RERP) with community colleges may build nicely upon existing community college partnerships in some areas, while other regions are likely to view it as a sharp departure from what they had in mind for 4.0.

Goals of the Evaluation

The RPI 3.0 evaluation sought to better understand alignment between the regional plan implementation efforts and the vision outlined in California's Strategic Workforce Plan. RPI 3.0 was designed to further promote regionalism by asking workforce regions to demonstrate progress on specific indicators. However, during the evaluation period, a number of events and changes impacted the original evaluation plan. These disruptions and subsequent shifts are detailed further in the *Limitations* section of this report.

In CSW's evaluation proposal, we outlined an approach that would be a mix of on-site visits to selected regions and phone interviews with the remainder. Using the Regional Indicators as our guide, we also suggested seven broad questions to be explored as part of the evaluation:

Table 2: Initial Evaluation Questions	
Does region have a focus on reaching low-income residents in order to move the needle on poverty?	
Does region have job quality standards serving the interest of upward mobility and poverty reduction?	
Is region focused on identifying and working with 'high-road' employers who can deliver quality jobs?	
How many genuinely employer-led regional sectors is the region actively working in?	
To what extent is the region's network of workforce providers actively engaged in understanding and responding to employer needs?	
To what extent are multiple local boards actively working together as part of a regional workforce system? Is there a fiscal/administrative lead for the region, and a regional decision-making structure?	
Is region using the Regional Indicators self-assessment process as a tool to push regionalism forward?	

After being awarded the evaluation contract, CSW had an opportunity to review several key sets of documents that had bearing on the evaluation design. First and foremost were the proposals from each region. These were supplemented by a review of CWDB's scoring summary, a summary of funding recommendations including updated grant activities reflecting modifications, and a spreadsheet on proposal elements particularly related to High Road Training Partnerships. We noted that, in general, the proposals focused on very discrete projects. While many were linked to key indicators and the overall policy direction of CWDB, the work to be done was understandably limited to efforts to advance specific project work, such as strengthening an existing sector partnership, starting a new one, or creating a support tool to help job-seekers better gauge their career options.

Given the relatively narrow focus of most of the RPI 3.0 proposals, and in the context of COVID-19, the evaluation team refined and adjusted its questions. Among other things, the revised questions explored whether and how attitudes toward regionalism had changed from 2.0 to 3.0. This adjustment in questioning was consistent with the continuum framework the evaluation team has come to find most useful in the overall evaluation process for the evolving RPI initiative. The evaluation team added a combination of both reflective and forward-looking questions. As noted, the RPI 2.0 evaluation interviews had uncovered a significant difference of opinion between CWDB and the regions regarding the value and purpose of regionalism. The evaluation team consequently thought it would be of value to probe whether and how that disconnect had changed over the previous 18 months, as CWDB moved to promote regionalism in a more collaborative way, and as COVID-19 impacted the way people viewed regionalism in general. The full revised interview protocol is included in Appendix 2. The major topic areas are noted below under methodology.

Methodology

Method 1: Document Review

The evaluation team began by reviewing key documents, starting with the proposal submitted by each region, CWDB's scoring summary document, and any negotiated workplan modifications. Documents were provided by CWDB staff or retrieved from state or local workforce area websites. Information gleaned from these documents was used to gain context as to the unique efforts of each region and to tailor regional interview protocols. After the regional interviews were conducted, a more detailed review of documents was conducted to search for answers to outstanding questions.

Method 2: In-Depth Interviews

On-site interviews were not feasible due to mutual safety concerns. Instead, Zoom, the platform used by CWDB and thus quite familiar to all regions, was employed. CSW developed a brief SurveyMonkey tool to be administered prior to the Zoom call with each region; however, response rates to the survey were low, and it was eventually dropped. The seventeen revised

interview questions in Appendix 1 were adopted in lieu of the original seven questions (Table 2) included in the evaluation team's proposal. These questions were sorted into three major categories: impact of the pandemic on regional plans and activities, evolution of regional activities from RPI 2.0 to 3.0 (and eventually 4.0), and general questions.

In-depth interviews were conducted between mid-April and early June of 2021 with each workforce region as part of the RPI 3.0 evaluation. As noted, unlike the fall 2019 RPI 2.0 regional interviews, which were largely conducted on site, the 3.0 interviews were conducted entirely by Zoom. There were other noteworthy methodological differences as well.

In contrast to 2019, where the interviews were often piggybacked onto a pre-existing regional meeting with a range of attendees (board members, staff, partners), the interview cohorts this time tended to be smaller – typically just the local directors and perhaps a staff member or two. Where the 2019 interviews were by design very open-ended, allowing respondents as much time as they needed to air their concerns regarding regionalism, the evaluation team was able to be a little more focused in the 2021 interviews – in part because many of the respondents indicated that they felt that they had been 'heard' in the previous interviews, and had in fact seen their opinions reflected in the RPI 2.0 evaluation report.

Limitations

Impact of COVID-19 pandemic. During the evaluation period, there were a number of significant events and changes, some of them quite disruptive, that impacted the original evaluation plan. The foremost of these was of course the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic which continues to have a major impact on the national and California workforce systems and on society in general. With unprecedented levels of unemployment, particularly among low-wage workers, the demands on workforce systems have been extraordinarily high.

At the same time, the efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19 dramatically impacted both the labor market and how workforce services were delivered. There is no clear indication of when these disruptions will finally end, or whether there will be a complete return to 'normal.' Will we go back to full reliance on in-person contact instead of the heavy use of remote service delivery in each aspect of the workforce development process (recruitment, assessment, enrollment, career planning, service delivery)? Regions reported they have been pushed to the limit in responding to vastly higher demand for a broad range of social services, while attempting to respond to the needs of those sectors that continued to grow in this disrupted environment. Responding to these disruptions will, for some time, continue to be the focus of the entire workforce system, no matter the region.

Shift from process measures to outcome measures. The second significant change during RPI 3.0 involved the shift by CWDB from tracking regional progress through a series of *process* measures, derived from the ten 'Regional Indicators of Coordination and Alignment,' to a new strategy of trying to reach agreement on a small number of *outcome* measures. This change

was first unveiled by CWDB in late 2020 in the initial draft planning guidance for the upcoming four-year plan cycle, and was discussed at that time with local workforce directors. In large part due to feedback received from the local directors, the final guidance did not require that outcome measures be put in place in the near term. Instead, there was an expectation that regions would be working with TA providers over the next two years to determine how to make that shift, with outcome measures anticipated in the 2-year plan updates that will be submitted to CWDB in early 2023. Regions were also asked to use their upcoming RPI 4.0 grants to begin to pilot outcome measures. Exploring each region's RPI 3.0 proposal and reports, their RPI 4.0 proposal, and their 4-Year Regional Plan has proven to be of great value in assessing regional receptivity to the idea of outcome measurement for regional activities, and gauging the regions' progress toward this new way of doing business.

Evolving Role of the Evaluation Team

CSW's work during the previous RPI 2.0 evaluation included two key interim updates to CWDB, one regarding communication issues with the regions, the other outlining the proposed shift from process measures to outcome metrics. Both of these themes continued into RPI 3.0, but the evaluation role evolved significantly. Instead of occasional interim updates, CSW provided continuous ongoing

"The state sometimes seems to think it gets to decide what the goals are, and we just carry them out."

feedback to CWDB on its strategies related to communications, metrics and other issues. This feedback took place during bi-weekly Zoom meetings used to brainstorm on a wide variety of topics typically put on the discussion table by either CWDB or the evaluators. Written comments and/or discussions covered such topics as: how best to increase collaboration with regions and local areas on the prep work required to address the metrics issue; comments from the evaluation team on draft planning instructions; ideas for messaging on new funding initiatives (High Road, RERP and others); general reporting instructions and practices for RPI; and specific issues related to selected regions. CSW played a key role in helping CWDB think through the 4-Year Regional Plan guidance, the expectations for RPI 4.0, the connections between RPI and the new Regional Equity and Recovery Partnerships, and the use of the quarterly reporting system to help move regionalism forward. These ongoing interactions proved beneficial to the evaluators in shaping the evaluation approach, and to CWDB in identifying next steps in moving the overall regional agenda forward.

Lessons for RPI 4.0 and future regional initiatives

Lesson One: Take a Collective Impact Approach

It has been eleven years since the Stanford Social Innovation Review introduced its Collective Impact Model, but it still rings true as an effective way to collaborate and partner in a meaningful way across entities to produce significant impact on broad societal issues. This approach aligns well with both the sector strategies model and the more recent adoption of High Roads principles by CWDB, which call for "a partnership of multiple employers within a critical industry that brings together education, economic development, workforce systems, and community organizations to identify and collaboratively meet the workforce needs of that industry within a regional labor market."

The Five Conditions of Collective Success:

1) *Common Agenda*
2) *Shared Measurement Systems*
3) *Mutually Reinforcing Activities*
4) *Continuous Communication*
5) *Backbone Support Organization*

Although CWDB, EDD and local boards are all part of the larger workforce system, they are in essence different entities with their own leadership, culture, and agenda. Despite much progress since SlingShot's launch nearly a decade ago, the state and local workforce boards are not yet fully on the same page as collaborative partners with respect to regionalism. Local directors, as a group, continue to have a problem with the notion that their role is to simply "align with" or "implement" the goals of the State Plan. To them, this feels like proof that the State Board subscribes to a 'top-down' approach to a system that they argue is supposed to be founded on local workforce boards with real decision-making authority. As one local director put it: *"The state sometimes seems to think it gets to decide what the goals are, and we just carry them out."*

Successful collective impact requires all parties to have a common agenda and shared vision for change. All partners need to know that they have a seat at the table and a role to play, and must feel ownership of group efforts. This does not mean that all partners will always agree on everything, but it is critical that sufficient time is spent up front to discuss and resolve key differences so that there is agreement on the primary goals and strategies. There then must be ongoing communication to keep all partners engaged, active, and 'bought in' to the overall vision and agenda.

The irony, of course, is that the vast majority of local directors, if asked, actually agree with such goals as upward mobility for all and demand-driven skills attainment. Even the somewhat more technocratic goal of "aligning, coordinating and integrating programs and services" is something they can get behind in the interest of providing more effective services. The communications challenge, then, is getting local directors to understand – and *feel* – that they

are in fact implementing their own local goals – not some arbitrary commandments the state has handed down. This might be accomplished, in part, by consistently referring to the goals as something that everyone agrees on, rather than something that regions are obligated to implement simply because they are in the State Plan.

CWDB took a major step in late 2020 by inviting local directors to discuss, in a pair of meetings, the plan to shift from process measures to outcome measures – and then making major adjustments to that plan in response to local concerns. Local directors who participated in those discussions saw that their concerns were being heard, and at least partially addressed. Such forums could perhaps be utilized more regularly, possibly in conjunction with the bi-weekly calls now being hosted by the California Workforce Association for local directors and CWDB/EDD, giving the state and local directors a regular opportunity to discuss progress, raise issues or challenges, and collectively problem-solve and set direction.

Lesson Two: Establish participant outcome metrics as a key aspirational goal

As regional funding made the shift from the initial $1M SlingShot grants to the significantly smaller amounts of RPI 2.0 and 3.0, most regions responded by narrowing the focus of their RPI grants to specific projects of relatively limited duration and breadth. When they were asked, in the 3.0 Request for Applications (RFA), to align their regional work with the Regional Indicators, the predominant approach was to essentially do it in reverse: they reviewed their existing regional projects to identify which indicators might be a good fit for their current work.

> For the first time, a few directors volunteered ideas about what they considered important to measure, and offered some tentative suggestions as to how the state might begin to move forward on regional metrics.

The general thrust of the regions' 3.0 work was to strengthen what was already in place. This allowed them to continue, or expand upon, efforts they already had underway, as opposed to using RPI to create something new. Local directors argued that this made sense, given the limited amount of funding and the fact that they did not know how long it would be available to them. Some simply continued a project that had begun under SlingShot or RPI 2.0; others took something they had piloted in one sector and applied it to another sector. But overall, there was little in the way of new activity to strengthen regional strategies under 3.0. Instead, regions generally kept on doing what they were doing before, in some cases replicating or expanding upon it.

As noted, RPI 3.0 began as an effort to get the 15 workforce regions to focus on one or more of the ten Regional Indicators, and to commit to demonstrating progress on that specific indicator or indicators. The hope was that each region would pick the one or two indicators that most resonated with them, and then document measurable gains over time on those specific indicators.

Instead, the regions treated RPI 3.0 much the same as they had treated the Regional Indicators previously, when they were first introduced as a self-assessment tool in the 2019 2-Year Plan Update process. Rather than picking one or two indicators for 3.0, most regions said that they would be working on all, or nearly all, of the ten indicators – and then proceeded to develop little in the way of measures related to those indicators. With the benefit of hindsight, it seems clear that CWDB would have needed to be more specific in its RFA about what was meant by "demonstrating progress" in order to get to measurable outcomes.
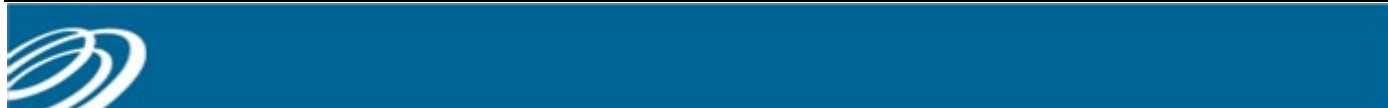
At the time, since this was new for all concerned, CWDB did not have a mechanism in place to negotiate such issues with the regions. The Regional Indicators had deliberately been given a very "soft" launch during the 2-Year Plan Update process, whereby each region decided for itself where it stood in relation to each indicator, with CWDB essentially accepting that self-assessment at face value. The idea was that by introducing the indicators in this way, the regions would be induced to embrace them and to use them to establish a baseline for themselves, and would subsequently revisit the indicators periodically to see whether progress was being made.

It was logical, therefore, for the regions to assume that RPI 3.0 would continue in that vein, and that the prudent course of action would be to tie their regional work, as loosely as possible, to as many of the indicators as could be made to fit. Even if CWDB had been prepared to argue, during contract negotiations, that a given region ought to narrow their focus to a smaller number of indicators, that would have been a hard argument to make, since the regions at that time were in fact expected to be working on all ten indicators.

In the run-up to RPI 4.0, with assistance from the evaluation team, CWDB used a series of statewide Zoom calls with local directors and regional organizers to broach the subject of measurement, and to narrow the focus from the original ten indicators to the four key indicators that CWDB felt were most directly related to the State Plan:

Table 3: Key Regional Indicators	
Indicator C	Region has a process to communicate industry workforce needs to supply-side partners
Indicator D	Region has policies supporting equity and strives to improve job quality
Indicator E	Region has shared target populations of emphasis
Indicator F	Region deploys shared/pooled resources to provide services, training, and education, to meet target population needs

This effort to engage local directors in the discussion embodied a collective impact approach and showed real promise: for the first time, a few directors volunteered ideas about what they

considered important to measure, and offered some tentative suggestions as to how the state might begin to move forward on regional metrics. For example, several directors expressed an interest in finding ways to establish meaningful living-wage targets for their communities, while emphasizing that strategies for moving people towards such jobs would require interim steps and measures along the way, as opposed to an either/or proposition.

At the same time, those conversations between CWDB and local directors made it clear that there was unlikely to be agreement across all 15 regions regarding what to measure. As a result, CWDB backed away from the idea of building uniform metrics into the 2021-2025 4-Year Plan Directive, opting instead to allow each region to develop and pilot its own metrics under RPI 4.0. In the RPI 4.0 Request for Applications, regions were asked to pick at least one of the four key Regional Indicators, and demonstrate *measurable* improvement on that indicator.

These examples point to a larger theme: the need for effective and consistent follow-through on State Board initiatives.

CWDB further clarified that while employer-related metrics were welcome, there needed to be *participant* outcome metrics as well, the theory being that if the regional work is benefitting residents of the region, there must be ways to begin to quantify that benefit. As CWDB Director Tim Rainey noted in an April 2021 email to local directors:

"The work you have done over the past several years has resulted in the development of employer-led sector strategies and partnerships with community colleges, adult education, and apprenticeship to meet the workforce needs of businesses driving the regional economy. As California opens over the next year, these partnerships should result in quality job placements for people accessing the AJCC system. If the regional work is truly effective – if the dollars that have been invested in RPI have been well-spent – then it is reasonable to expect that individual residents of the region are benefiting from that work. Our challenge is to figure out a way to quantify those successes and make the case for continued regional funding."

Lesson Three: Incorporate Frequent, Direct Feedback to the Field

Over the past year, CWDB has made significant strides in using the quarterly reporting process to nudge grantees along by routinely asking follow-up questions about any aspects of the quarterly reports that seem vague or non-responsive. Grant management and reporting functions shifted from EDD to CWDB during the 3.0 grant period, and CWDB staffed-up specifically to support RPI grant management. Once the new staff had a chance to learn a bit about the grants they were managing, the benefits of this new approach were almost immediate. (This can be seen as well in other CWDB initiatives, such as AB1111, where CBO

grantees previously unfamiliar with state funding or the quarterly reporting process were guided and coached into providing adequate quarterly reports based on project workplans.)

While this more proactive approach to the quarterly reporting process was not yet in place at the start of the RPI 3.0 initiative, it is already being used effectively for both RPI 3.0 and RPI 4.0. After seeing, in the first 4.0 quarterly reports, that most regions merely indicated that they were "working on" developing metrics, CWDB program staff worked with the TA and evaluation teams to add specific questions about metrics to the 2nd and 3rd quarter reports. For the first time, the regions were asked whether they had in fact developed metrics yet; if so, what were those metrics; if not, when did they anticipate having metrics. Moreover, if regions give vague answers to these questions, program staff are following up and asking for clarification. As subsequent quarterly reports are reviewed, CWDB should have a much better sense of which regions are moving forward and which are still in wait-and-see mode.

These examples point to a larger theme: the need for effective and consistent follow-through on State Board initiatives. At times in the past, major initiatives involving significant expectations for the local workforce boards have been announced by CWDB, only to lead to frustration at the state level when local boards resisted or ignored the new initiative, or merely went through the motions of compliance without fully embracing it. An evaluation cannot solve this; the solution would seem to lie in effective and timely monitoring and feedback.

With hindsight, it is possible to identify times when it might have been useful for CWDB to have provided more direct feedback to local boards and regions. For example, following the soft launch of the 'Regional Indicators of Coordination and Alignment' in 2019, the regions' responses were reviewed by CWDB. Some regions clearly misunderstood the instructions, and did not realize they were supposed to provide a response for each of the ten indicators, so they only addressed the ones they felt were applicable to them. Some regions provided little or nothing in the way of backup evidence for their self-rankings. A few regions gave themselves ratings that might seem inflated to an objective reader, while others, realizing that this first iteration would be serving as a baseline from which to show improvement, presumably ranked themselves deliberately low. CWDB chose not to engage with the regions on the self-assessments, in the spirit of keeping it a "soft launch." While this probably made good strategic and political sense in the moment, it also represents a lost opportunity, in that it allowed the regions to conclude that their responses had been both adequate and accurate.

We observed a similar phenomenon in RPI 3.0, when as noted the regions generally retrofitted their ongoing projects into the selected indicators rather than engaging in new activities that derived from the indicators. By contrast, we note that early progress in a few regions under RPI 4.0 shows how community-wide issues can in fact be addressed with the full support of the workforce system, with emerging metrics that reflect how workforce systems are working regionally to support broad community goals such as racial equity and quality jobs.

Each region prepares a workplan as part of its response to the RPI Request for Applications. Some months later, that workplan is either approved or the region is asked to make modifications to it as part of the contracting process. Quarterly reports are based on the

workplan, and require regions to either verify that they have done the work planned for that quarter, or explain why it was not done and when it will be done. The state entertains requests for modifications to the workplan, and at times (as in the early days of COVID-19) actively encourages modifications. Ideally, such evolving expectations are most effective if incorporated as grant modifications. The state's rather cumbersome contracting process, however, can make this problematic. There is clearly room for improvement in the timeliness of processing contracts and modifications. We recognize, however, the administrative burden that contract modifications place on CWDB, EDD, the regions and local boards. The creative use of evolving reporting requirements, as noted above, can be a good proxy.

Over the past several years, as CSW has worked on the evaluations of SlingShot, RPI 2.0, RPI 3.0 and now RPI 4.0, we and CWDB have increasingly come to understand the regional work as a continuum, rather than as discrete annual buckets of funding. It can be difficult to discern significant progress when you look only at the annual grant, but viewing the RPI investments as a multi-year process, we can in fact see significant progress as regions figure out how to center the workforce system in broader community efforts to address major societal issues.

Conclusion

As noted, CSW views its evaluation work on RPI as a continuum of effort that can help inform both CWDB and the local areas on the products and processes of the ongoing investment in regional strategies. We found RPI 3.0 to represent the beginning of a transition period that will take time to show results, reflecting an early step in moving from measuring process to measuring outcomes. We expect to see considerably more concrete progress in the RPI 4.0 evaluation.
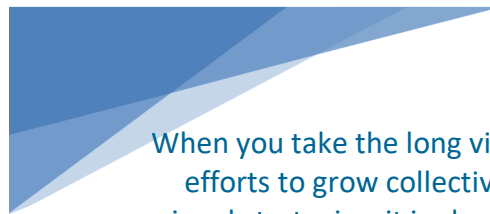
When you take the long view of California's efforts to grow collective impact through regional strategies, it is clear that the original intent of SlingShot is indeed beginning to take hold across many regions.

CWDB has a long history of investing in regional prosperity, reaching back nearly a decade to SlingShot. That pioneering initiative set a lofty agenda of tackling large-scale community problems though a broadly-defined workforce development strategy. We conclude this evaluation report with an observation: When you take the long view of California's efforts to grow collective impact through regional strategies, it is clear that the original intent of SlingShot is indeed beginning to take hold across many regions. Continued attention to establishing and maintaining a common agenda, developing and utilizing shared measurement systems, and engaging in continuous communication and feedback will be critical for future success.

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Appendicies

Appendix 1: Regional Coordination and Alignment Indicators

Demand Driven Skills Attainment Indicators

Indicator A: Region has a team that jointly convenes industry

Example Considerations: region has a dedicated team (recognized as such by regional workforce and education partners), multiple committed companies (industry champions) in each prioritized industry sector, unions from prioritized industry sectors where workers are represented, frequency of meetings, diversity and reach of representation on the team, depth and representation of priority industry sectors (decision makers, number of employers, size of workforce represented) and a method of ensuring core program partners are connected.

Assessment Questions:	
What industries/sectors meet in the region?	
Who are the industry champions including unions where applicable for each industry sector?	
How were the lead organization(s) and sector experts responsible for convening employers identified?	
What activities take place during a convening/meeting?	
How frequently do convenings/meetings occur? Who attends each convening?	
What new Industry Recognized Credentials and/or Apprenticeship programs will result from the Industry Sector convenings/meetings? Have the partners identified existing credentials offered in the region that meet Industry needs?	
Assessment Levels:	
Learning/ Experimenting	Some of the relevant partners meet episodically with a handful of employers to comply with planning requirements and share labor market information and employer's workforce needs.
Operationalizing/ Doing	All of the relevant partners meet at least a few times a year to discuss industry sector needs, with industry champions and sector experts and are engaged in a planning process that will result in a regional approach to meeting industry's workforce needs.
Growing/ Expanding/ Scaling	A dedicated and specialized team of relevant partners meet regularly with decision-making leaders/industry champions in a specified industry to develop and execute a meaningful plan to meet industry workforce needs and includes measurable goals to develop education and training programs that meet the needs of industry sectors.

Indicator B: Region has shared sector/occupational focus and shares/pools resources to meet demand in the region

Example Considerations: regional plan partners have identified industry sectors with large numbers of good quality jobs with openings; region has a shared written assessment of regional needs; region has a concrete plan to meet written identifiable needs; region demonstrates ongoing meaningful activity to meet needs and achieve workforce goals; region has achieved relative scale and diversity of dedicated resources and shared/pooled funds, and/or has identified common tools for determining job quality that help assess what industries, companies, and jobs to target.

Assessment Questions:	
How does the region identify demand occupations and sectors, and who are the partners engaged in this process?	
How are resources pooled to meet the identified demand?	
Provide 1-3 examples in how demand was identified and resources pooled to meet this demand.	
Assessment Levels:	
Learning/ Experimenting	Regional partners separately identified priority sectors, or some of the relevant partners have identified and agreed upon the targeted sectors in the region and identified employer champions for each sector.
Operationalizing/ Doing	Regional partners identified same priority sectors, occupations with most openings. Employer champions from one or more of the targeted sectors, including labor where workers are represented, are leading the effort to create industry advisory committees, and relevant regional partners have agreed to use advice in planning/implementing sector strategies and developing curriculum to teach skills necessary for employment in target sectors.
Growing/ Expanding/ Scaling	Regional sector committees are business led and functioning in all targeted sectors. Colleges and training providers are training for the skills needed by regional employers. Regional partners identified industry sectors with large numbers of good quality jobs with openings and developed a common tool for determining job quality that helps assess what industries, companies, and jobs to target.

Indicator C: Region has a process to communicate industry workforce needs to supply-side partners

Example Considerations: region has developed communication protocols and professional development opportunities to ensure understanding of the targeted industry sectors and job quality framework by all supply-side partners (America's Job Center of California[SM] (AJCC)staff and partners, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) core program partners, Adult Education Block Grant (AEBG), Community Colleges and other State Plan Partners); has a concrete plan for preparing job candidates to meet the needs of industry; demonstrates ongoing meaningful activity to meet needs and achieve workforce goals; has achieved relative scale and diversity of dedicated resources and shared/pooled funds.

Assessment Questions:	
Who are the supply-side partners engaged at the regional level, and how does the region ensure understanding by staff and partners of targeted industry sectors and job quality framework?	
What training/professional development opportunities are available to front-line staff on targeted sectors and job quality?	
How do the services provided by the AJCC and regional partners prepare job candidates to meet the needs of targeted industry?	
How do One-Stop Operators, AJCC service providers, and other supply-side partners ensure that services are aligned to reduce duplication and redundancy? Give examples.	
Assessment Levels:	
Learning/ Experimenting	One-Stop Operators/AJCC Service providers in a region are connected to Industry Sector Committees, and training is provided to staff and partners on industry workforce needs.
Operationalizing/ Doing	Regional partners have a process to communicate industry workforce needs and train staff on targeted industry sectors and job quality and are developing a method of ensuring that AJCC and other supply-side partners provide work-readiness services to prepare job candidates for targeted industry sector jobs.
Growing/ Expanding/ Scaling	Region has developed communication protocols and professional development opportunities to ensure understanding of the targeted industry sectors and job quality framework by all supply-side partners (AJCC staff and partners, WIOA core program partners, AEBG, Community Colleges and other State Plan Partners); has a concrete plan for preparing job candidates to meet the needs of industry; demonstrates ongoing meaningful activity to meet needs and achieve workforce goals; has achieved relative scale and diversity of dedicated resources and shares/pools funds.

Indicator D: Region has policies supporting equity and strives to improve job quality

Example Considerations: region has developed policies and business engagement protocols that focus on job quality, productivity and value added, using a well-paid workforce for greater production, value employee retention and training, provides employer paid benefits, supports good scheduling and sick time practices, and focuses on long term prospects of the firm and the planet, employers engage workers and community residents.

Assessment Questions:	
Does the region have a job quality policy and make a distinction between better jobs and worse jobs?	
Are business engagement resources targeted to employers who value job quality?	
Does the region assist business customers with internal/incumbent worker skills and retention?	
Does the region reward employers who are treating their workers with care and provide disincentives for employers with high turnover and pay low wage/no benefits?	
Assessment Levels:	
Learning/ Experimenting	Region is working to understand job quality and high road employment practices and is committed to creating and implementing a job quality policy.
Operationalizing/ Doing	Region has a job quality policy in place which requires business engagement staff to assess employers prior to providing services and targeting services to employers who support job quality in their workforce.
Growing/ Expanding/ Scaling	Region is engaged with employers that focus on internal/incumbent worker skills and retention and focuses services on employers with good scheduling and sick time practices, provides training and career pathways with income mobility.

Upward Mobility and Equity Indicators

Indicator E: Region has shared target populations of emphasis

Example Considerations: WIOA core partners, Local Workforce Development Boards (Local Boards), Community College, Adult Education Block Grant programs and community-based organizations identify specific documented target populations to be served at the regional level in a shared regional plan which includes meaningful action steps to provide services to target populations.

Assessment Questions:	
What are the target populations identified in the regional plan?	
Is there agreement by all regional supply-side partners to target these populations?	
Have regional supply-side partners developed any process to evaluate participation by target populations?	
What are the baseline (current) service levels to target populations?	
Have regional partners established service goals for target populations? If yes, what are they?	
Assessment Levels:	
Learning/ Experimenting	Analysis of population in need is conducted by all partners in separate plans and each partner separately implements programs to meet the needs.
Operationalizing/ Doing	Relevant partners agree on targeted populations, begin using Statistical Adjustment Model to measure performance, and develop specific programs and strategies to meet their employment needs.
Growing/ Expanding/ Scaling	Relevant partners meet regularly to ensure programs and strategies meet the needs of targeted populations, professional development opportunities are available to staff for serving this population, and regional partners communicate successes and challenges of serving individuals from target populations so as to better serve relevant individuals.

Indicator F: Region deploys shared/pooled resources to provide services, training, and education, to meet target population needs

Example Considerations: Local Boards, WIOA core partners, Community Colleges, and other relevant regional plan partners pool/share resources, identify areas of strength/ leadership, create regional career pathway programs, identify scale and diversity of dedicated resources and funds pooled to fund relevant activities, implement a shared decision-making process on deployment of pooled resources, and plan alignment of services and programming across funding streams and partner programs.

Assessment Questions:	
Have relevant regional partners entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to share customers, services and costs?	
List funding streams that are shared/pooled to provide services, training, and education to meet target population needs.	
If funding is not directly administered by Local Boards, please indicate levels of shared/pooled funding resources administered by regional partners.	
Assessment Levels:	
Learning/ Experimenting	Local Boards in a region have executed an MOU that includes referral agreements, infrastructure cost sharing and commitment to target population of emphasis described in local/regional plans.
Operationalizing/ Doing	Regional Plan partners are in the process of developing a plan to pool/share resources to provide services to meet target population needs, have identified industry sectors to create regional career pathway programs for targeted populations.
Growing/ Expanding/ Scaling	Relevant regional plan partners pool/share resources, identify areas of strength/ leadership, create regional career pathway programs, share decision-making on deployment of pooled resources, and align services and programming across funding streams and partner programs.

Indicator G: Region utilizes shared, common case management strategies such as co-enrollment, navigators, and/or multi-disciplinary teams to developed shared responsibility for providing services and ensuring quality outcomes

Example Considerations: WIOA core partners and other State Plan/Regional Plan partners have developed policies and are implementing common case management and capacity building practices, including data sharing, co-enrollment, co-location, common assessment tools (including both job skills/work readiness assessment for job seekers and job quality assessment for employers), navigators, professional development opportunities for staff, and/or multi-disciplinary teams, to provide services to common clients who receive services from multiple programs and funding streams.

Assessment Questions:	
What shared/common case management strategies or goals does the region use to remove barriers to employment and develop shared responsibility of services and outcomes?	
Has the region used evidence based practices and/or customer centered design to develop their strategies? If yes, describe.	
List the partners who share strategy by type of strategy and the number of customers currently participating in shared/common case management strategies.	
Provide examples of services and outcomes that exemplify shared responsibility for removing barriers to employment, providing services and ensuring quality outcomes.	
Has the region provided training to frontline staff on common case management strategies? If yes, list trainings and numbers in attendance/partners participating.	
Assessment Levels:	
Learning/ Experimenting	Regional partners are participating in goal-setting discussion regarding shared/common case management strategies and shared responsibility for services and outcomes?
Operationalizing/ Doing	Relevant partners utilize evidence based practices and customer centered design to develop and implement programs to serve population of emphasis, have provided training to staff and partners.
Growing/ Expanding/ Scaling	Relevant partners utilize shared, common case management strategies such as co-enrollment, navigators, and multi-disciplinary teams to develop shared responsibility for providing services and ensuring quality outcomes. Regions have trained staff and partners in these strategies and are increasing the numbers of partners and customers participating in shared/common case management strategies.

System Alignment Indicators

Indicator H: Region has shared/pooled admin systems and/or processes for achieving administrative efficiencies and program outcomes

Example Considerations: Local Boards, WIOA Core program partners and other State Plan/Regional Plan partners have specific documented goals for achieving administrative efficiencies and reducing duplication, including using dedicated staff and/or pooled/shared resources for regional business engagement, regional training coordination and Training Provider Directories, regional contracting, regional performance negotiations and regional data aggregation measuring progress.

Assessment Questions:	
Does your region have shared/pooled administrative systems or processes? If yes, what are the systems/process?	
Describe the administrative efficiencies that your region has identified that will reduce duplication, streamline processes, save money, and/or improve program outcomes.	
Does your region have MOUs or agreements in place to share resources, streamline administrative processes, and/or improve program outcomes?	
Does your region have a plan to unify the regional partners approach to engaging employers?	
Assessment Levels:	
Learning/ Experimenting	Relevant partners have executed a One-Stop MOU that includes commitment to sharing customers, providing shared services, referral agreements, infrastructure cost sharing for the AJCC system.
Operationalizing/ Doing	Region has shared/pooled admin costs for achieving administrative efficiencies and program outcomes, relevant partners meet on a regular basis to identify additional administrative efficiencies that will improve program outcomes and have a plan to implement one or more regional policies/strategies.
Growing/ Expanding/ Scaling	Region has a formal structure or intermediary in place, common policies, coordinated deployment of resources and shares staffing of services and/or regional systems.

Indicator I: Regional decision-making in formalized structures

Example Considerations: Local Boards, WIOA Core program partners and other State Plan/Regional Plan partners, with input by industry champions, labor and workforce leaders develop formal decision making structures, including MOUs, partnership agreements, intermediaries to ensure regional cooperation and communication and the development of shared, specific, documented quantifiable goals, regional data aggregation, evaluating progress towards those goals by dedicated staff using pooled/shared resources to evaluate outcomes for the region.

Assessment Questions:	
Is there a formal structured regional leadership council/structure operating in the region? If yes, what is it called, how often does it meet and who participates in it?	
Does the leadership council have dedicated staff? Is it funded using shared/pooled resources?	
Has the leadership council agreed to regional goals, and does it evaluate and report progress towards these goals?	
Assessment Levels:	
Learning/ Experimenting	Informal regional meetings are conducted to share information and identify shared projects and goals.
Operationalizing/ Doing	Relevant regional partners meet regularly, have developed and evaluated shared goals, have written agreements to share decision making and streamline processes, and are working towards more formal arrangements.
Growing/ Expanding/ Scaling	Formal decision-making council/structure is operating within the region with participation by industry champions, labor and workforce leaders, written agreements have been developed to ensure regional cooperation and communication and the development of shared, quantifiable goals, regional data aggregation, and evaluating progress towards those goals.

Indicator J: Regional organization and evaluation of performance

Example Considerations: Local Boards, WIOA Core program partners and other State Plan/Regional Plan partners utilize specific documented quantifiable goals, regional data aggregation evaluating progress towards those goals by dedicated staff using pooled/shared resources to evaluating outcomes for the region.

Assessment Questions:	
How will the region qualitatively assess/evaluate progress towards meeting regional industry and occupational demand?	
Have the regional partners determined regional goals for increasing the number of industry-recognized credentials and apprenticeships available in the region? How will, or how might, these outcomes be tracked numerically and categorically?	
Does the region have a numeric goal of placing participants in sector-based occupations? If so, list the sectors and occupations, numeric goal(s), and the number to-date in attaining that goal (baseline).	
Is the region piloting employer engagement performance measures? If yes, what are they?	
Have the Local Boards met to discuss WIOA performance negotiations and how negotiations might align with other regional goals/measures?	
Assessment Levels:	
Learning/ Experimenting	Relevant regional partners meet at least once per year to discuss negotiating regional performance measures with the California Workforce Development Board (State Board), and they use standard performance measures as the basis for evaluating local and regional performance.
Operationalizing/ Doing	Relevant regional partners use the indicators of regional coordination (the nine indicators detailed here) to continuously improve regional plan goals and objectives, develop ways to count, assess and evaluate credential and apprenticeships in the region
Growing/ Expanding/ Scaling	Relevant regional partners work together to evaluate progress on meeting regional industry and occupational demands, share standard performance measures across systems, and develop regional measures to continuously improve regional performance.

Appendix 2: Interview Protocol

Impact of pandemic on regional plans and activities

1. What changes have transpired in your regional work due to the restrictions on in-person activities?

2. In what ways have your regional partnerships changed during the course of the pandemic? Were you able to keep your existing sector partnerships functioning over the past year?

3. Have there been any changes in the regional or local employer base you are accessing in terms of numbers, sectors represented, or other factors?

4. If any of your regional activities involve serving job-seekers (either directly or indirectly), what shifts have you seen in the characteristics of those clients during the pandemic?

5. How have partner changes impacted training opportunities or other services that you have been able to provide for your clients? Can you quantify any of the changes you are seeing?

6. What are the biggest challenges you have faced in making these or other shifts related to the pandemic response?

Evolution of regional activities from RPI 2.0 to 3.0 and 4.0

7. Looking back on your RPI 2.0 activities, what did you learn or value from that effort that has impacted or informed your 3.0 implementation?

8. What steps if any have you taken or explored to strengthen your regional partnership over the course of the 3.0 grant?

9. Have you made or are you considering changes in response to the need to address equity issues?

10. Have you made or are you considering changes in order to promote access to quality careers?

11. What changed or evolved in your regional strategies from 2.0 to 3.0?

12. Do you anticipate RPI 4.0 will be a refinement of your RPI 3.0 work, or a departure from it?

13. Do you envision your regional focus changing in any ways to meet the shift from process measures to shared outcome goals proposed in RPI 4.0?

14. Are there any specific metrics you have been thinking about for RPI 4.0?

15. Have you taken any steps yet to prepare for the anticipated shift from process to outcomes?

General Issues

16. What other areas would you like CWDB to be aware of related to the pandemic, the proposed shift from process measures to shared outcome goals, or other matters?

17. What assistance might be useful to you in achieving your regional goals? Are there specific resources that would be helpful?