



SANTA CLARA COUNTY
Early Learning
MASTER PLAN

2010



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with the assistance of John Harris and Melinda Felice
and contributions from a thriving and engaged community of
stakeholders from all sectors of the early learning community

Sponsored by

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Lucile Packard
FOUNDATION

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My first experience with the notion of preschool came 20-plus years ago, when my son was 2 years old, and there was no full day preschool in the town in which we lived and worked. My wife and I ended up opening our own facility—an experience that taught me how difficult it is for young families to afford high quality preschool.

In the ensuing years, there has been much good work done in the effort to give all of California’s children access to high-quality early learning. And yet, we still have not found a way to make that goal a reality.

This is hard to justify, because we know that high-quality early learning:

- enables children to develop the skills they need to succeed in school;
- helps to reduce the readiness gap, which turns into the achievement gap;
- correlates to higher levels of education, and ultimately employment; and
- lowers the level of incarceration.



Given these and dozens more equally compelling reasons, we can no longer afford to wait—not in a world that poses increasingly stringent demands for knowledge and skills that our children must have to succeed.

This Santa Clara County Early Learning Master Plan—created by a dedicated collaboration of education professionals, community members, civic leaders, and child development advocates—is a vigorous, decisive action. It outlines a vision, defines a strategic mission, and lists metrics for implementation of a plan over the next seven years.

By the way: We titled the effort an “Early Learning Plan” advisedly. We wanted to convey the message that early learning is not an “extra” or a preamble to “real” school, but rather a vital component of the birth-to-adult learning continuum.

Thanks to the collaborators and supporters who made this document possible, the entire community is sure to benefit from the Early Learning Master Plan for many years to come.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charles Weis".

Charles Weis, Ph.D.
Santa Clara County Superintendent of Schools

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We name the individuals below for their consistency, commitment and coherent contributions to the plan.

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Executive Summary

In March 2009, approximately one hundred early education professionals, community members, civic leaders, and child development advocates gathered at the Santa Clara County Office of Education for the first of four meetings designed to develop an Early Learning Master Plan for the County. This Initiative—originally termed the Santa Clara County Preschool Planning Initiative—was intended to be broad based, collaborative, participatory and consensus building, so that all engaged would be invested in the outcome and in the implementation of a new system for early education.

By November 2009, the meeting process was complete, and the group had attained the goals of outlining a vision, defining a strategic mission for each programmatic domain of the system, and developing metrics for implementation over the next seven years. Consensus was reached on key policy decisions, including management of the implementation process, and the form and direction the system should take. The result built upon all the previous accomplishments and investments made in early learning in the county, and broke new ground for conceptualizing preschool in the context of a birth to age eight developmental framework.

Following are the key findings, decisions, goals, and action items that define this plan for implementing an early learning system in Santa Clara County.

Though Santa Clara County ranks at or near the top in the state of California for measures of income, education, and economic success, there is a persistent achievement gap between the affluent and low income families of the community. Through collaboration across the early learning and K-12 communities, complemented by strong business and civic engagement, it should be possible to mitigate the gap and boost the achievement of students, including dual language learners. The guiding principles for an early learning initiative in Santa Clara County would have the following six principles (Section 1):

- The organization of such an effort should embrace early learning as a ***developmental continuum*** of learning birth to age eight. This approach recognizes that experiential processes from birth cumulatively build a strong foundation for learning in school and achieving reading and math fluency by third grade. A high quality preschool program is the bridge between infant toddler services, and the elementary school classroom.
- While the early learning initiative aims to boost achievement it does so by creating ***equitable access*** to high quality early learning experiences that ensure kindergarten readiness; which, in turn, affects third grade outcomes.

Through collaboration across the early learning and K-12 communities, complemented by strong business and civic engagement, it should be possible to mitigate the gap and boost the achievement of students, including dual language learners.

- **Collaboration**, which leverages resources and promotes the exchange of ideas, will move the initiative forward. Santa Clara County has a history of collaborative program implementation and will take this approach to a larger scale with the Early Learning Initiative.
- **Innovation**, a signature of Santa Clara County in industry and in early education will help the initiative to flourish. Programs will build upon current innovations in the county, and new projects, in the category of a place-based strategy, which is epitomized by the Harlem Children’s Zone, will be tried and tested here.
- Santa Clara County will continue to embrace **diverse delivery systems** for the implementation of an early learning initiative. This means that all types of center- and home-based programs might participate if they meet the quality standards that will meaningfully shift these early experiences of children. Public, private, faith-based, center- and home-based settings are likely to qualify to participate if they meet program terms and conditions
- **Quality and Excellence** are the primary criteria for an early learning provider aiming to participate in the proposed early learning system. Whether the quality standard is the State of California’s own pending quality standard, or if the standard is developed locally, the early learning community is determined to have high quality programs.



In formulating the scale and scope of the Initiative, an analysis of community assets (Section 2) revealed the following:

- Public subsidy for early education in Santa Clara County currently reaches almost 60% of the eligible children, substantially higher than in most of the state which averages about 38% having access to subsidy.
- Teachers in early education programs are also better educated than the early education workforce in the state as a whole and participate in CARES, a professional development subsidy program that has made it possible to earn the B.A. Degree.
- The effectiveness and history of collaboration will pave the way for the large scale work needed to build a system.
- Philanthropic investment in the county has been excellent, resulting in very good and insightful data on school readiness.

- There remains a shortage of spaces in the areas of greatest need for preschool access, which points to the need for a plan to address facilities development.
- Dual language learner students comprise a significant proportion of the population not served by or not having access to early education programs.
- There is a compelling need to enlarge the circle of engagement around the issue of early learning and education. Continued outreach to family child care and the K-12 community, as well as specific outreach to the diverse sectors of the business and industry circles and coordination of efforts with municipal initiatives (SJ2020), is essential.

The planners translated the core knowledge regarding assets and needs into a plan for the future (Section 3). The vision for the ideal future as a result of this planning effort is:

Families, educators, and community and business leaders will together support and sustain an early learning system that ensures every child birth to age eight has the opportunity to learn in an environment of such high quality that each child's ability to succeed is secured, the achievement gap is eliminated, and students, families, the community, and the local economy benefit.

By 2017, the planners set goals to achieve outcomes in fourteen domains. Highlights of the broad system goals include:

- All parents will have an active engagement and investment in the process of learning and committing to consistent school attendance, and supporting program quality through their engagement.
- Curriculum for early learning services will be aligned from pre-natal parent education services through third grade instructional programs for all children with language-rich models including dual language learners, who comprise about a quarter of all students.
- All schools will be “ready schools” involved in the alignment of a developmentally continuous learning experience from the preschool years to third grade.
- Data management will be continuous and on-going; providing well-documented evidence of program success.
- Frequent and cogent communications around outcomes and results will sustain civic engagement.
- All children will have regular and meaningful assessments of developmental progress.
- Families will have choices among diverse settings and educational philosophies as long as quality standards are met.
- Teachers and programs will meet quality standards and be supported in continuous quality improvement.

Workgroups organized themselves around translating the broad system goals into implementation plans with periodic milestones for benchmark years. These plans are organized around functional areas of system development: Program Quality, Family Engagement and Leadership, Workforce Development, Data Management, Articulation and Alignment, and Facilities. These plans are a roadmap for the future and the mission statement and goals for each domain have been cross-checked to form an inter-connected whole supporting system unification and consistency.

As a plan for immediate implementation, the work product from the planning process is concrete and provides metrics for achievement in each domain. However, the design is elastic, providing for adjustments

as implementation unfolds. The Strategic Mission Statement which outlines what is to be accomplished is expected to remain constant while the tactics for achieving that goal may flex and bend with the changes that occur in the policy and economic environments.

The planning group also identified early wins, accomplishments for the first year of implementation that will signal to the community both the resolve to transform children’s early learning trajectories, and the feasibility of bringing a plan to life. Among the early wins are:

- Piloting at least three elementary school district “meet and greets” where early education providers and elementary educators begin formulating approaches toward aligning their curricula and creating a more unified and continuous learning experience for the children.
- Convening a community-wide forum on parent engagement in learning.
- Developing a strategic plan for a place-based strategy similar to the Harlem Children’s Zone in Santa Clara County.
- Developing a communications campaign to build and sustain local awareness and champions for the Birth – Preschool – 3rd grade approach to continuous learning experiences for children.

In translating the plan into action (Section 4), the planners reached consensus on responsibility centers for coordinating the work ahead and designated the Santa Clara Office of Education as overall convener and coordinator of two Advisory Committees that will further refine the work plan, bring additional resources and leaders to the table, and continue to promote early learning as a key investment of the community as a whole.



One Advisory Committee, the Program Development Group, will focus on systems design, program operations and implementation—the core of the operating system. A second Advisory Committee, the Civic Engagement Leadership Group, will focus on widening the circle of public engagement, specifically around large systems requirements for facilities, governmental affairs, public polling and external communications. The advisory committees will engage in joint meetings twice a year to gauge progress and connectedness on the many goals outlined in the plan. They may eventually merge as the system itself becomes whole (or may merge with leadership groups of other initiatives)—a living system comprised of inter-connected networks unified by a common purpose and shared vision of the future for Santa Clara County.



SECTION 1

Framing an Early Learning Master Plan

Section 1: Framing an Early Learning Master Plan

By any measure, Santa Clara County is emblematic of accomplishment. First among the ten most populous counties in California in income, adult educational attainment, children’s academic achievement, and Fortune 1000 headquarters,ⁱ Santa Clara County is a dynamic economy in its own right and an international “epicenter of innovation.”ⁱⁱ

Santa Clara County’s family median income, at \$104,022, is almost 50% higher than the state family median income of \$70,029.ⁱⁱⁱ Where about 29% of Californians over age 25 have a Bachelor’s degree or better, 44% of adults in Santa Clara County have post-secondary or advanced degrees.

The 2008 average Academic Performance Index (API) of elementary schools for Santa Clara County as a whole is 825 out of 1000. Many counties in the state would take pride in having some schools attain an average API score of 900, but in Santa Clara County entire school districts have average elementary API scores above 900.

Underneath the general picture of success, however, Santa Clara County faces an issue of growing educational inequity. **The achievement gap**, which reflects a widening divide between white and Asian children compared to children from all other ethnic groups, will have compounding negative effects on the future economic security of the county.

Pop. Rank	County Name	Degree Holders	Family Median Income	Fortune 1000	County API
6	Santa Clara Co.	1	1	1	1
1	Los Angeles Co.	6	8	2	10
2	Orange Co.	4	4	3	2
3	San Diego Co.	5	5	4	3
4	Riverside Co.	8	7	6	7
5	San Bernardino Co.	9	9	7	9
7	Alameda Co.	2	3	4	5
8	Sacramento Co.	7	6	8	6
9	Contra Costa Co.	3	2	5	4
10	Fresno Co.	10	10	-	8

Fig. 1-1. Ranking of 10 Most Populous Counties on Four Different Indicators

1.1 The Achievement Gap Analysis for Santa Clara County

Figure 1-2 (next page) displays the fifteen largest school districts in Santa Clara County. It shows that the achievement gap is concentrated in two school districts but spreading into others. Franklin-McKinley and Alum Rock Union Elementary districts score nearly 100 points below the county average, but some individual schools within higher performing districts (Yellow) score in the low 600-700s. In 2008, any school at or below a score of 736 was in the lower third of California’s schools. Of the 81,833 enrolled elementary school children, 11,000 (14%) are in the low-achieving school districts, but another 7,200 are in low-achieving schools within higher-scoring districts, bringing the total to 18,200 or 22% of the elementary age population.

ⁱ Figure 1-1 is a compilation of data from the 2008 American Community Survey 1- Year Estimates for each county, [www.money.cnn.com/.../fortune/fortune500/.../full list/](http://www.money.cnn.com/.../fortune/fortune500/.../full_list/) for 2009, and original computation of average API scores for each of the ten counties from the cde.ca.gov API database for 2009

ⁱⁱ Silicon Valley Community Foundation, 2010 Index of Silicon Valley, pg. 8

ⁱⁱⁱ 2008 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

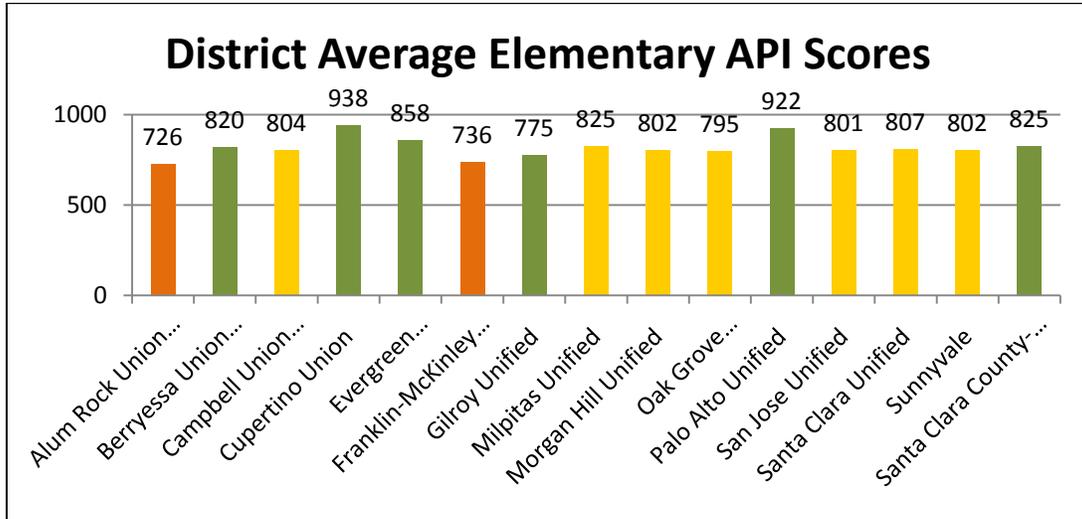


Fig. 1-2. District Average Elementary API Scores
 Calculated from CDE Data- 2009 Base Report by Elementary Schools within each district

The confounding problem with the achievement gap is that it is more defined by racial/ethnic lines than any other variable. Children of Latino and African-American descent, regardless of income, have significantly lower scores than white and Asian children. For as many white and Asian children that score proficient and above in reading by third grade, an equal proportion of low-income Latino and African-American children score below the line of proficiency (Figure 1-3). Middle class Latino and African-American children, who are fewer in number, do fare somewhat better on the tests, but are on par with low-income white and Asian children.

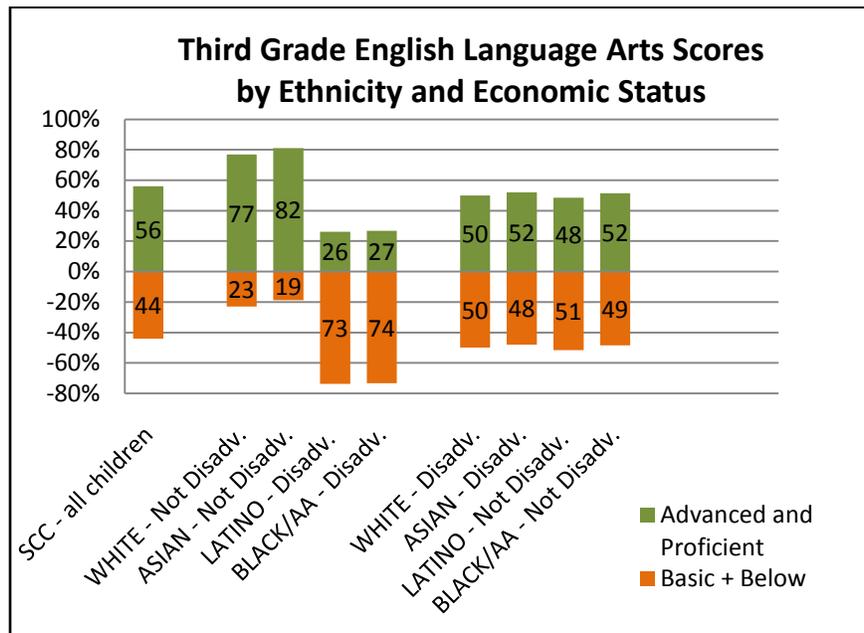


Fig. 1-3. 2009 Data retrieved from www.star.CDE.ca.gov for Santa Clara County

There is a proven remedy for the achievement gap. Two case studies described in the last section of the Master Plan illustrate different approaches that could be very effective in Santa Clara County. Both require a sustained effort that actively nurtures the acquisition of knowledge and the development of social competence in children from birth through age eight.

This Master Plan aims to unfold a seven-year Early Learning Initiative that, if fully implemented, will immediately begin mitigating the achievement gap through improvements in kindergarten readiness. The plan will incrementally increase academic performance among children expected to perform below proficiency in reading and math with each subsequent year. Moreover, because of the developmental approach that is being advanced by the stakeholder-leaders, the Initiative will increase family engagement in learning. Finally, with benefits appearing early in the roll-out of the Initiative, the Early Learning Initiative should marshal a broad base of civic and private sector support. The intent of this Master Plan is to launch a pre-emptive strategy against low achievement before its impact becomes too difficult to eliminate.

1.2 What is the Starting Point?

In March 2009, the Santa Clara County Office of Education convened a large group of early learning and community leaders to develop this Master Plan. Their starting point was to propose an overarching approach to the work that would capture what has been learned from decades of demonstration projects in early learning and education.

Six themes run through the past work of the child development stakeholders in Santa Clara County. The guiding principles call for adhering to the context of the *developmental continuum*, providing *equity* through access to services and to educational opportunity, achieving system goals through *collaborations*, being *innovative* in the system design and program models, supporting a *diverse delivery system*, with a provider base that includes private, public, faith-based, school districts and publicly subsidized center-based programs, and pursuing *excellence* in every dimension of the work.

1.2 A The Developmental Continuum

The early education stakeholders were firm about positioning preschool on a developmental continuum of learning from birth to age eight. This conceptual orientation is a bold departure from other local early learning initiatives, which have sometimes treated preschool as an end unto itself. Political efficacy has been the main driver for the preschool-only approach as there is a policy foundation to build upon for pre-K systems (see Appendix 1 for Policy Discussion). However, the science of child development leans toward a continuous trajectory from birth through age eight, when children's grasp of the fundamental math and language operations should be sound. Santa Clara County stakeholders have held to these research foundations for this plan's contextual and developmental approach to preschool.

In the developmental model, *preschool is the bridge that transitions infants and toddlers from one array of learning experiences and prepares them for a new, more formalized model of learning, the pedagogy of K-3 education.*

The California Master Plan for School Readiness (2002) envisioned that the state should take this developmental approach to both the practice of education and the organization of the California Department of Education. The plan envisioned voluntary infant-toddler-preschool programs, with full day kindergarten, all aligned to a developmental K-3 curriculum. In that regard, Santa Clara County will be *the first initiative to substantially comport to the State Master Plan and test some of the ideas within it.*

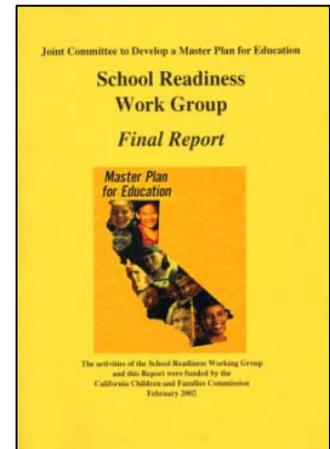


Fig. 1-4

The developmental model has significant implications for preschool system design and dictates that the system be reverse engineered. The first step would be to evaluate what competencies we would like children to have by age eight, and deconstruct the content to develop the sequence of curriculum and social experiences that support each child attaining the goal. Second, we must consider, given the programmatic content and the child’s developmental needs, what will be the most appropriate organizational framework at each age for a delivery system. Just as important, the continuum concept requires that we pay great attention to the nexus between one developmental stage and the next within the eight-year developmental period. The potential for losing gains made because the content of one program does not developmentally evolve into the content of the next program punishes the child and compromises his or her learning curve.

1.2 B Equity through Opportunity

The stakeholders embraced the principle that educational achievement, equitable access to and participation in high-quality early-learning experiences go hand in hand. Santa Clara County is a place where the possibility of achieving equity in opportunity, regardless of socio-economic status or ethnicity, could be real. The chart below illustrates the gap that results in part from not having access to early education.

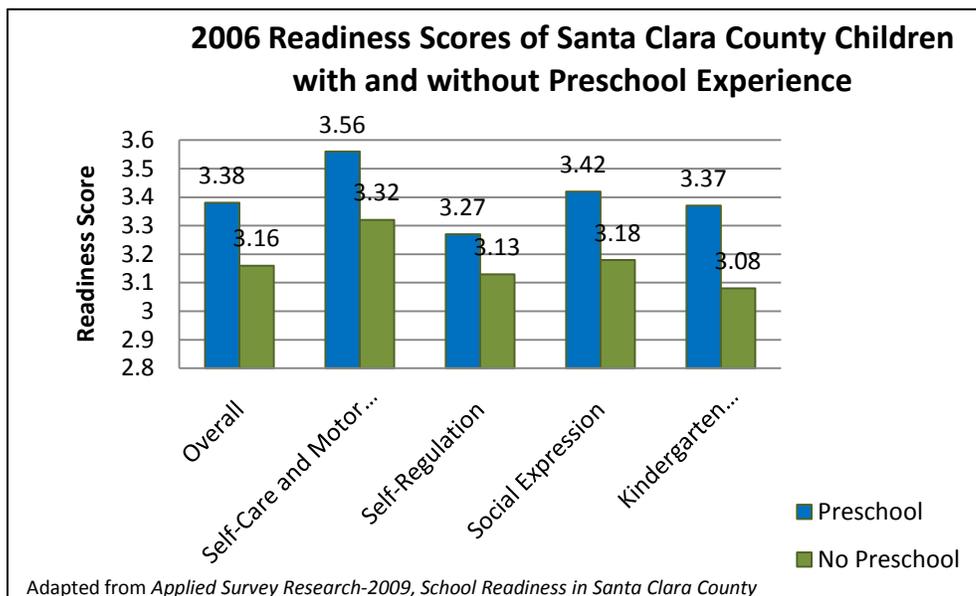


Fig. 1-5

According to the 2008 Applied Survey Research Report on Santa Clara County, only 57% of Latino children are participating in preschool, compared to 78% of Asian children and 91% of white children. Additionally, only 60% of low-income children are participating. These stark disparities in school readiness could have a profound impact on later reading and other achievement scores.

1.2 C Collaboration

In Santa Clara County, the early childhood education (ECE) collaboration among organizations has been at a very high level over the last decade. Stakeholders have leveraged resources, disseminated information, and achieved goals because they are focused and purposeful about moving at multiple levels in but one direction: forward. Collaboration in Santa Clara County on early learning issues is standard operating procedure, and the stakeholders are efficient about managing process. This bodes well for designing a future system that will consolidate many independent efforts into a unified whole with little loss to auspice identity or programmatic fidelity.

Stakeholders...are focused and purposeful about moving at multiple levels in but one direction: forward.

1.2 D Innovation

Without the leadership of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County early learning would not command the interest or have the public profile it has today. FIRST 5 Santa Clara County has been the primary source of innovation for services to children birth to age 5 in the last decade, and the catalyst that led the way for stressing the developmental continuum concept. Inclusive of its work, there have been at least ten separate efforts of current or pending innovations addressing early learning and specifically preschool in Santa Clara County (see Section 2). Being open to experimentation has proved an effective way to test models and explore alternate pathways before deciding on a final course of action. This approach to innovation was born out of an era of scarce resources, but it has given the county stakeholders time to prepare and to practice collaborating before going to scale.

Another benefit of innovation is that the stakeholder community sees the advantage in multiple efforts taking shape around a critical problem that has many dimensions. So, for the achievement gap, for example, in addition to pursuing county-wide articulation and alignment to kindergarten, it is likely that different models of dual language learning will concurrently be rigorously explored and evaluated. In developing educational models the county has already pursued what can be described as a modified *place-based strategy* of intervention. This will continue on a deeper level in the coming years.

1.2 E Diverse Delivery System: Different Funding Streams, Different Provider Auspices

The early learning community is committed to leveraging the various modes of service delivery to create one early childhood system that works. Though the separate public funds for early education have different regulatory requirements, it is possible to account for the state's broad investments in several programs as a single system, based on the passage of AB 2759 in 2008. With these resources, private, public, faith-based and home- and school-based programs can all participate in a community-wide effort to raise achievement and develop the community's social support infrastructure that sustains those achievements over the long haul.

1.2 F Excellence/Quality

The stakeholders of Santa Clara County have demonstrated time and again that they believe access without quality is not effective if the goal is to achieve school readiness. The Local Planning Council has already proposed that Santa Clara County be a pilot site for the new California Early Learning Quality Improvement System (ELQIS). The CARES workforce development program has assisted a cohort of students in finishing the San Jose State University B.A. program in child development. In part because of CARES, 36% of Santa Clara County teachers have B.A. Degrees, a far greater proportion than the statewide average of 25%^{iv}. Moreover, the county's Power of Preschool program has been cited by First 5 California for its outstanding performance and for raising children's school readiness assessments. The private and public providers that comprise this project's base all meet or exceed quality standards that are above the norm. Quality in teacher preparation and performance in the classroom will be a baseline expectation for programming implemented under the Santa Clara County Early Learning Master Plan.

1.3 Plan Organization

The plan document is organized into four sections, each having content with direct relevancy to implementation. Section 1 **frames the challenge** that catalyzed the Early Learning Initiative, describing the philosophical and conceptual foundations for developing a Master Plan for a Santa Clara County preschool system that is embedded in a birth to age eight developmental framework.

Section 2 examines the **asset base** that will be deployed in service to the Master Plan. In Section 2.1 we present an inventory of the key assets that form the current education infrastructure of a targeted preschool system. This section discusses how each asset has and will play a role in the integrated birth to age eight developmental model with an emphasis of preschool. Section 2.2 includes a review of community assets, particularly emphasizing economic trends that strongly suggest growing local talent will become increasingly important to industry in the coming decades. In Section 2.3, a quantitative analysis of Santa Clara County's supply and demand for preschool space is reported. This analysis uses GIS mapping to display shortages of preschool supply, including the overall gaps in supply, and the gaps for services that would require capital outlay and operating subsidy if communities were prioritized by economic need.

Section 3 contains the **strategic plan** for building out the early learning system and fulfilling its goals. It encompasses the Vision Statement, Strategic Mission Statement, Program Dimensions, and the two-, five-, and seven-year-goals for each domain of the system. Metrics are associated with the achievement of each goal. Section III ends with a priority listing of early implementation goals (within one year of launch), and a review of the consensus items that will underlie the implementation of the plan.

^{iv} Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, UC Berkeley and the California Child Care Research and Referral Network. California Early Care and Education Workforce Study: Licensed Child Care Centers and Family Child Care Providers; Statewide Highlights, July 2006, and Santa Clara County Highlight, August 2006

Section IV is **the roadmap to implementation**, and presents an organizational model for translating the plan into action. The organizational model is *based* on extensive inter- and intra-agency collaboration and coordination, and will definitely enlarge the circle of participation in the work. The overlapping relationship between this Initiative and other local initiatives such as SJ2020 is presented as is a unifying concept for the multi-faceted, comprehensive, and collaborative approach this plan represents to challenge the achievement gap in Santa Clara County.

Also in Section IV is a listing of early “wins;” ***accomplishments*** that will mobilize support from different sectors of the community and lay the foundation for executing the plan. Finally, it is a distillation of what the body of work being done in Santa Clara County will mean to the state and to the nation.

In the end, three features will distinguish the leading edge work that is likely to be accomplished in Santa Clara County. First, this will be the only county that is actually implementing the core elements of the State Master Plan for School Readiness. The logic of the developmental continuum was fundamental to the State model, and Santa Clara County will be a demonstration site. Second, Santa Clara County is creating an advanced ***system of systems***, with preschool serving as the bridge between very nurturing family-based early-childhood experiences and the classroom environment of elementary education. The third distinguishing feature of the Santa Clara County Plan is that it will catalyze an unprecedented involvement of the business community in early learning. This will emanate from a shared goal to erase the achievement gap because it will create a pipeline of talent that will support this county’s high-achieving economy.



Section 2: Santa Clara County Community Assets

Santa Clara County has a well developed early learning sector including private fee-for-service and publicly subsidized programs. However, as this chapter will illustrate, there are substantial shortages of preschool spaces, particularly for the children who would benefit most from early education.

Despite the shortages, the existing platform of services is a solid start toward fulfilling the promise of the Master Plan in heading off the encroachment of the achievement gap. The core services for low-income families in the county are the publicly subsidized child development programs. Currently, over 8,000 of the estimated 14,000 income-eligible three- and four-year-olds are enrolled in state or federally funded early education programs. This is close to 60% of the eligible population, substantially higher than the 38% of eligible children enrolled statewide. The funding models include preschool only, preschool programs with wrap-around child care, and voucher programs that purchase child care/preschool services in private programs throughout the community.

Because many of these programs have been involved in collaborations and projects that have enhanced program quality, Santa Clara County has a running start in realizing the potential of a linked and articulated developmental model of birth to age eight learning. The myriad relationships and interconnectedness of people, programs, and agencies in Santa Clara County serve as an exemplar for the word “collaboration,” and the genesis of the culture of innovation.

2.1 Early Learning Assets

There are thirty state and federally funded contractors providing early learning services to preschool-aged children in Santa Clara County. They include 14 school districts, 9 nonprofit organizations, and 6 colleges. The services they provide are strikingly similar, but are funded from ten different revenue streams. These revenue sources constitute “funding and regulatory silos” that complicate management and hinder sustainability of early learning programs.

Funding Silos in Early Care and Education in Santa Clara Countyⁱ



Fig. 2-1. List of Agencies provided by California Department of Education

The preschool contractors may be single-purpose providers (early learning services only) or providers who are embedded in larger multi-purpose and education agencies. All are connected to the larger organizational ecology of the early education sector that coalesces itself into a whole--despite different specializations and funding streams--because there is a shared commitment to children's advancement.

The planning process was an open, transparent effort that harnessed the assets of the existing early learning provider infrastructure, with the combined energy, interest and talents of community leaders, elected officials, and other stakeholders, committed to a very big goal: creating an early learning system that will ensure all young children in Santa Clara County enter school with the secure learning foundation necessary to have success in school and ultimately achieve their lifetime potential.

Translated into a much broader outcome measure, this planning group was determined to find a way to reduce or eliminate the achievement gap, beginning with early learning. But the process to get there would require building upon the current asset base and working outward--to the families, communities, complementary institutions, and the business sector--and forward with sustained and purposeful intention.

Listed below is a description of many, but not all, of the key organizations that anchored the planning process and will continue to make substantial and consistent investments in system development, even as additional partners and collaborators come on board. Many ideas within the initiative have already achieved traction in the community and organizations have launched efforts consistent with overall goals of the plan. SJ2020 and the First 5 Family Resource Center Initiative, for example, emerged just as the planning process was completed.

2.1 A Santa Clara County Office of Education

The Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) served as the convener for the Master Plan Initiative process. This is a reflection of the activist role the Office has taken in the last two years to combat the achievement gap. The role of the County Office is inherently important; as a stakeholder, SCCOE operates preschool services for 30% of the county's subsidy-eligible children. In addition, the current Superintendent, Dr. Charles Weis, has been an advocate for early learning, dating back to co-chairing the 1998 Universal Preschool Task Force for the California Department of Education.

The Santa Clara County Office of Education plays an integral role in early learning systems and the superintendent established a new Early Learning Services Department in 2009 to manage an expanded agenda. The department has line responsibility for the Local Early Education Planning Council (LPC), the California Preschool Instructional Network (CPIN), Head Start, Parkway State Preschool Program, and the Inclusion Collaborative (the *Warmenhoven Institute for Inclusion*). Through in-kind supports and inter-organizational collaboration, SCCOE now touches and participates in every significant effort to accelerate the progress of quality early education in the county, from supporting the Partnership for School Readiness, local school districts initiatives, FIRST 5 Santa Clara County initiatives, and—with San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed—SJ2020, a city-wide effort to eliminate the achievement gap. Many of the efforts described in this inventory of community assets are co-sponsored or directly managed by SCCOE. The Early Learning Services Department cultivates and sustains key strategic partnerships with stakeholders who can support the work of

the Master Plan. It will continue to be a visible early learning leader on behalf of the County Office of Education and for the county at the state and national levels.

2.1 B Local Education Agencies

i. Franklin-McKinley School District

Under the leadership of Dr. John R. Porter, Jr., the Franklin-McKinley School District (FMSD) is working to implement a raft of concentrated services to mitigate the achievement gap with an initiative inspired by the Harlem Children’s Zone. This comprehensive place-based strategy of intervention is focused on bringing about change in schooling and in the community itself. Through collaboration with community partners, FMSD has applied for President Obama’s Promise Communities funds. It will include the

development of high quality early learning environments for every three- and four-year-old child within the 24-square-block Phase 1 Zone (all within zip code 95111).

To kick-start implementation, a summer kindergarten preparation program was offered in summer 2010 to children who did not have the benefit of preschool and were expected to attend kindergarten in the fall.



ii. Gilroy Unified School District

In Gilroy, administrators are piloting two programs: an articulation and alignment project and a data management project, which feeds into the former project’s success. These programs build connections between local preschools and kindergarten, working to smooth the transition of young children between the two and to align the curriculum and experiences for the child. In order to achieve this, preschool students

are given a Unique Student Identifier (USI), parents are assisted with pre-registration for kindergarten, and schools are provided kindergarten readiness assessment information that can be used to plan classroom placements. New teachers can access pupil information before the first day of kindergarten. More than 500 out of 800 prospective kindergarteners received a USI number for 2010-2011. The district also facilitates monthly meetings between kindergarten teachers and preschool providers to focus on curriculum, articulation, and kindergarten readiness. These activities are the starting points for a preschool-to-grade-3 curriculum alignment.

2.1 C FIRST 5 Santa Clara County

Without the leadership of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County, early learning would not command the interest or have the public profile it has today. FIRST 5 Santa Clara County has been the primary source of innovation for services to children birth to age 5 in the last decade, and the catalyst that led the way for stressing the developmental continuum concept. Since 2001, FIRST 5 Santa Clara County has funded several well-respected innovations that will impact the long-term organization and delivery of services in the county. Under the leadership of Executive Director Jolene Smith, this work has included an Early Learning Initiative, Quality Early Learning Opportunities Initiative, and High-Risk Research and Design Initiative. The last effort is an exemplar for converting research-based strategies to fully-implemented programs.

Launched through a partnership with the WestEd E3 Institute (Advancing Excellence in Early Education), the High-Risk Design Initiative identified several risk factors associated with poor outcomes for children, researched where those factors were geographically located, and then generated zip code and school district maps to depict the areas of highest cumulative risk for children and families. The Power of Preschool (PoP) project was created to serve these high-need areas. Since 2006, PoP has provided services to over 800 children per year in four high-need school districts. This state pilot program, managed by the E3 Institute, has been evaluated by First 5 California and was singled out as a highly effective program among the nine county pilots statewide^v.

**FIRST 5 Santa Clara County
has been the primary
source of innovation for
services to children birth
to age 5 in the last decade**

Another successful model of program collaboration led by FIRST 5 Santa Clara County has been in the area of workforce development. The county's CARES (Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational Standards) program blends funding from First 5 California, the local First 5, and the California Department of Education, and has funded \$22 million in workforce development supports to 5,800 early educators in the county, touching more than 89% of Santa Clara County's early educators. Additionally, San Jose State University, with CARES support, developed a cohort program for early care and education transfer students, which provides tuition, books, university fees, academic advising, a class schedule tailored to working professionals, and peer support as they pursue their B.A. degrees.

FIRST 5 Santa Clara County will be launching the Learning Together Initiative: a place-based approach to services for families. The goal of this LTI initiative is to increase the capacity of families and communities to ensure young children are healthy and prepared to enter school. FIRST 5 funded grantees provide school readiness, health, and oral language development information to families with children prenatal through age five, within the family resource centers and community worker program throughout Santa Clara County.

^v First 5 California, Power of Preschool Demonstration Program Progress Report October 2008

Lastly, in a joint project with the Partnership for School Readiness, FIRST 5 Santa Clara County developed and published a definitive kindergarten handbook and DVD to help parents and caregivers prepare young children for the transition to kindergarten.

2.1 D Private Nonprofit Organizations

i. Continuing Development Incorporate (CDI)

Child Development Centers (CDC) and Continuing Development Incorporated (CDI) are statewide private, nonprofit child care agencies managed by Child Development Incorporated, which holds the largest child development center-based and state preschool program contracts in Santa Clara County (services are provided both in and outside of Santa Clara County). They offer a variety of infant/toddler, preschool, and after-school programs funded by both parent fees and California Department of Education (CDE) contracts.

ii. Go Kids

Go Kids, Inc. is a state-contracted nonprofit organization whose purpose is to enhance the lives of children and families through the delivery of comprehensive child development services and community involvement. Go Kids also operates a Family Child Care Home Education Network with a rigorous selection process. For 12 years, the agency has operated a Migrant Head Start program, holding all programs accountable to the most stringent standards (i.e., Head Start Performance Standards). The organization manages 8 centers and 107 family child care homes in 4 counties, including Santa Clara, San Benito, Monterey, and Santa Cruz.

iii. Kidango, Inc.

Kidango is a private, state-contracted, nonprofit agency dedicated to providing early care and education services to children and support services to their families. It serves children in quality preschool, school age, infant/toddler care, Head Start, early intervention, mental health, and family child care home education programs located across Santa Clara County and the San Francisco Bay Area. Kidango also operates a Family Child Care Home Education Network (FCCHEN). In order for providers to qualify, they must rate at least a 5 (out of 7) on a Kidango-administered FCCERS (Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale), among other criteria. Kidango provides monitoring, training, and access to resources for their staff and their family child care providers.

iv. SJB Child Development Centers

SJB Child Development Centers help families establish financial independence by creating a nurturing environment for their children while they are at work, seeking to break the cycle of poverty by offering the same opportunities for low-income children as those enjoyed by more affluent families. SJB's Infant & Toddler care program is designed to encourage and stimulate critical early development with hands-on activities, singing, and small group interaction, with a special focus on socialization. As a current Head Start partner, SJB is experienced in meeting Head Start performance standards and monitoring requirements for

preschoolers; its Head Start centers were included in a federal on-site review that resulted in the award of the Gold Certificate of Excellence.

v. **The Alternative Payment Programs (APP)**

Alternative Payment Programs (APP) play a large role in the provision of basic early education services in the county, providing vouchers to 18% of the children receiving a public subsidy to cover the costs of their program. Child Development Inc., Choices for Children, PACE APP, and Community Child Care Council (4C's) of Santa Clara County all hold APP contracts with the California Department of Education and provide families in Santa Clara County with vouchers for child care and/or preschool in the private fee-for-service sector. The selection of provider is by parent choice and typically the payment is the regional market rate for the type of service the parent's work schedule requires. Approximately 1,500 preschoolers in the county have services paid for with an APP Voucher.

2.1 E Catalysts, Advocates, Research Collaborators

i. **Santa Clara County Partnership for School Readiness**

The Santa Clara County Partnership for School Readiness (Partnership) is a collaborative of public, private, and nonprofit organizations that have an interest in supporting the development of children from birth to age 8. The Partnership began meeting in 2001 to address the need to build strategic linkages between the organizations that invest in early childhood programs. The members made a commitment to develop a shared

understanding of the results of the local investments in early childhood, and to foster collaboration among the Partners. The Partnership provides research and local leadership to help inform the community about how to improve school readiness. The Partnership has published reports that inform the public about kindergarten readiness in Santa



Clara County, and it has also developed resources for parents and teachers related to school readiness.

ii. Kids in Common

Kids in Common is the only organization in Santa Clara County that focuses primarily on advocacy for policies, partnerships and investments that improve children's lives in Santa Clara County. It informs decision-makers on best practices and champions local implementation. The foundation of its work is the Santa Clara County Children's Agenda. Kids in Common is partner-based, counting organizations and individuals as public policy partners. It is able to leverage partners' expertise to educate lawmakers, community leaders, decision makers and funders for the betterment of children and their families. Kids in Common is the Santa Clara County representative member of Voices for America's Children.

iii. 4C's

Santa Clara County's Child Care Resource and Referral (R&R) agency is also one of its Alternative Payment Program agencies. The *Community Child Care Council of Santa Clara County (4C's)*, connects parents with child care providers, dispenses information on quality care, and offers professional development to the field. 4C's also conducts quarterly updates on licensed child care supply, types of care requested by parents, the geography of where requests are made, as well as managing the Centralized Eligibility List (CEL) of families who qualify for subsidized care. 4C's was recently awarded a new Early Head Start contract through the ARRA expansion funds.

iv. LPC

The *Santa Clara County Local Early Education Planning Council (LPC)* is an association of representatives from the early care and education field that facilitates collaboration of early education stakeholders, manages needs assessment data, and reviews local priorities for current and future child care funding. LPCs were created by the Federal Child Development and Block Grant of 1990 and enhanced in California by AB 2141 of 1991. The LPC in Santa Clara County reports to a joint committee of board members from the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors and Santa Clara County Board of Education, and is staffed by an employee of the SCCOE. The LPC released the *Vision for the Future of Early Care and Education*, which called for more integration of services for children from birth to 12 years of age. This framework, along with the outputs from the 2005 Preschool for All plenary effort, provided many important foundational ideas represented by participants in the Early Learning Initiative process resulting in this plan.

2.1 F Research Partners

i. E3 Institute

WestEd's E3 Institute (Advancing Excellence in Early Education) supports and strengthens early childhood professional development through education, recruitment, and financial incentives. The Institute serves Santa Clara County and reaches new recruits, family child care providers, center-based programs, programs for children with special needs, employers, faith-based providers, and the corporate community with the goal of leveraging local resources for child care professionals. E3 conducts research on and related to the early learning workforce, manages the CARES program (Comprehensive Approaches to Raising Educational

Standards), coordinates the SJSU B.A. Cohort program, and administers the Power of Preschool (PoP) Program. At the state level, E3 has funded the Curriculum Alignment Project (CAP) which will support teacher preparation for the field of early education.

ii. **Applied Survey Research (ASR)**

ASR is a nonprofit social research firm dedicated to helping people build better communities. ASR helps communities measure and improve their quality of life, and assisting organizations in measuring and improving the impact of their services. Since 1980, ASR has worked with organizations of all sizes and all types, from the federal government to state and local governments, from cities to counties, and from nonprofit organizations to foundations. ASR has worked closely with the Partnership for School Readiness, the Santa Clara County Office of Education, and FIRST 5 Santa Clara County on a number of research and evaluation projects.

2.1 G Higher Education

i. **De Anza Community College**

De Anza College is one of the largest community colleges in the country, with an average enrollment of about 24,000 students. Their Child Development Center serves 100 children each year. In addition to its high-quality early childhood program, De Anza College is an important partner because of the number of early childhood practitioners trained there every year. The Child Development instructional program trains over 1,000 students per quarter with six full-time and ten adjunct faculty. As the trends in the early learning field have become more diverse and require a wider range of skills the department has responded with classes in working with infants, diverse families, children with special needs, early intervention and the preschool English language learner. Both the SCCOE and De Anza College are interested in exploring the creation of a pipeline program through which the SCCOE would be assured of a steady stream of highly qualified early childhood practitioners with A.A. degrees who could be recruited into Early Head Start/Head Start programs.

ii. **San Jose State University**

San Jose State University provides a comprehensive university education, granting Bachelor's and Master's degrees in 134 areas of study. The Child and Adolescent Development (ChAD) Department serves students and professionals working in or toward careers in education, social welfare, nursing, child care, and other human services. The program incorporates theory, research, policy, and practice into its curriculum. The CARES program and E3 Institute work in collaboration with the ChAD department to offer a B.A. cohort program to foster a supportive learning pathway toward a bachelor's degree.

iii. Other Institutions of Higher Education

There are six community colleges and two universities that participate in the CARES program in Santa Clara County, serving as an integral part of the professional development of the local early learning workforces. Aside from the IHE’s listed above, they include the De Anza, Foothill, Gavilan, Mission, San Jose City, and West Valley Community Colleges, as well as the National Hispanic University.

2.1 H Municipal Government: City of San Jose

i. Smart Start San Jose (SSSJ)

SSSJ is part of the City of San Jose’s early childhood education initiative for the city’s children so that they enter kindergarten *ready for academic and social success*. The focus is on the expansion of quality early childhood development facilities and building the capacity of early childhood development professionals. SSSJ programs are located in areas that are identified as *in need* of early childhood development programs, and there is an annual award for outstanding examples of effectiveness.

ii. SJ2020

This effort, a collaboration co-chaired by the Mayor Chuck Reed of San Jose and Superintendent Charles Weis of the Santa Clara County Office of Education, was launched in October 2009 with the goal of eliminating the achievement gap by 2020. The collaboration will wed services, including early learning, to a vision of creating a culture of success, including high standards for all children, regular assessments to inform instruction, extended learning time strategies, and increasing parent participation in children’s education.



2.1 I Civic Leadership and Philanthropy

i. Silicon Valley Leadership Group

The Silicon Valley Leadership Group is organized to involve principal officers and senior managers of member companies in a cooperative effort with local, regional, state, and federal government officials to address major public policy issues affecting the economic health and quality of life in Silicon Valley. The Silicon Valley

Leadership Group was founded on the premise that local employers should be actively involved in working with government to find innovative solutions to issues like transportation, housing, permit streamlining, education, and the environment. The Silicon Valley Leadership Group represents more than 300 of the Silicon Valley's most respected employers. Silicon Valley Leadership Group members collectively provide nearly 250,000 local jobs, or one of every four private sector jobs in Silicon Valley. The Silicon Valley Leadership Group has worked with county officials as part of a local business advisory council that aims to provide outreach, expertise, and professional development for early learning providers. The partnerships between businesses and county representatives have helped accelerate the institutionalization of policies that support the early learning industry.

ii. David and Lucile Packard Foundation

Since 2003, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation has taken center stage as philanthropic leader working for the advancement of early education in California. The Board and executive leadership have supported this work which flourishes under the leadership of Lois Salisbury, who served on the committee to create the State Master Plan for School Readiness. The Packard Foundation has committed ten years to the issue of preschool (2003-2013) with a goal to secure high-quality preschool opportunities for all three- and four-year-olds in the state by funding leadership and constituency-building, technical assistance and systems building, research, and public preschool programs in selected California communities. The foundation recognizes the need for improvement in both access to preschool and quality of existing settings. This planning effort was funded by the Packard Foundation.

iii. Other Civic Leadership

Several other philanthropic investments in early education have been made by local family foundations and corporate donors. The Sobrato Family Foundation is currently piloting a PreK-3rd grade language development program for English Learners. Applied Materials and the Morgan Family Foundation have invested in the New Teacher's Center, Teach for America, and Partners in School Innovation. The Morgan Family Foundation also invested in the Partnership for School Readiness as has the Bella Vista Foundation.

2.1 J Collaboration Effectiveness in Santa Clara County

The above list of agencies, organizations and groups anchored the planning process. Leadership and staff were among the co-chairs and members of committees. In addition many agencies, organizations and individuals not mentioned here but acknowledged in the report made substantial contributions to the planning process and developed the overall strategic plan through an open, plenary, participatory process.

The value in describing these particular organizations is that they also provide examples of the interconnectedness of much of the work in early education in this county. For example, when FIRST 5 Santa Clara County and WestEd's E3 Institute worked together to form the PoP program, funds from First 5 were used to enhance the quality of the programs and to afford some ancillary services. These included public and

private programs, community-based organizations, family-based businesses, and school district settings. The external evaluation was funded by the State First 5 agency.

Another example of the interconnectedness can be seen with the CARES program. CARES' dedicated commitment to higher education for early education professionals created a demand for courses and counseling at Santa Clara County's community colleges, which responded by working with E3 around course alignment and more effective transitioning of students from 2-year to 4 year institutions. CARES also saw a need to further support degree attainment, from which sprang forth the B.A. Cohort model, hosted by San Jose State University.

Similarly, the Partnership for School Readiness joined forces with Applied Survey Research to study kindergarten readiness. Their work resulted in concrete recommendations for the development of preschool to third grade alignment standards and strategies. Gilroy Unified School District, with the help of the Partnership, developed a PreK-3rd Alignment pilot program, which is now being implemented throughout the city's publicly funded child development programs, and now is recruiting private centers as well. The County Office of Education is working with Gilroy to implement this Data Management Pilot project (within the alignment project), and will utilize assessment data to inform current and future planning efforts.

Taken together, efforts like these and many others that currently exist in Santa Clara County form an impressive demonstration of the organizational capacity and predisposition to collaborate to get the best job accomplished; often beyond expectation. In considering the possibilities for the future, it is important for the early learning community to look outward, and reach for new possibilities and partners for collaboration—even outside of the education and public sectors.

The high interest in student achievement and workforce competitiveness is not unique to Santa Clara County, but it is of particular concern to many of the technology-oriented businesses that call the Silicon Valley home. As we move forward from this plan a priority goal must be to widen the circle of engagement. We must convert the concern about workforce competitiveness into action to create and grow a talent pipeline in Santa Clara County.

The high interest in student achievement and workforce competitiveness... is of particular concern to many of the technology-oriented businesses that call the Silicon Valley home.

2.2 Community Assets – Enlarging the Circle of Engagement

2.2 A Industry as a Driver of the Economy, Language and Ethnic Diversity

Being in front of the curve is nothing new for Santa Clara County; since the late 1930’s the platform of electrical engineering and semi-conductor manufacturing provided the valley with a robust economy based in technology. But it was the research and development labs that were growing and refining silicon component manufacturing and technology during the 1960s, that literally created the dawn of the tech era. By the 1970s when the microprocessor revolution began, the region had earned its nickname “the Silicon Valley” and the economy of Santa Clara County was changed forever.

Today, the companies that started it all and others developed as recently as a decade ago, lead the Silicon Valley economy in sales and profits, employing hundreds of thousands of workers throughout the world (see Figure 2-2).

Largest Companies Based in Silicon Valley, 2008 (San Jose Mercury News, www.siliconvalley.com)						
	Sales (in millions)	Sales Rank	Profits (in millions)	Profits Rank	Employees	Employee Rank
Hewlett Packard (est. 1939)	\$118,697.0	1	\$8,050.0	1	321,000	1
Cisco (est. 1984)	\$39,575.0	2	\$7,492.0	2	66,129	4
Intel (est.1968)	\$37,586.0	3	\$5,292.0	4	83,900	3
Apple (est. 1976)	\$33,038.0	4	\$4,858.0	5	32,000	5
Oracle (est. 1982)	\$23,630.0	5	\$5,739.0	3	84,233	2
Google (est. 1998)	\$21,795.6	6	\$4,226.0	6	20,222	6

Fig. 2-2

With the advent of the “tech boom,” many of the professionals who migrated into the county hailed from Asia, including a large proportion of Chinese, Indian, and Taiwanese immigrants. The addition of these families re-ordered the composition of ethnic groups within the region: the county became “majority-minority” by the year 2000, with Asian and Pacific Islander groups growing at the fastest rate and coming to rival the proportion of Caucasian residents in 2008. The rapid development of the Silicon Valley economy not only attracted legions of highly trained workers, keeping pace with California’s overall growth, but also rapidly diversified the population (see Figure 2-3).

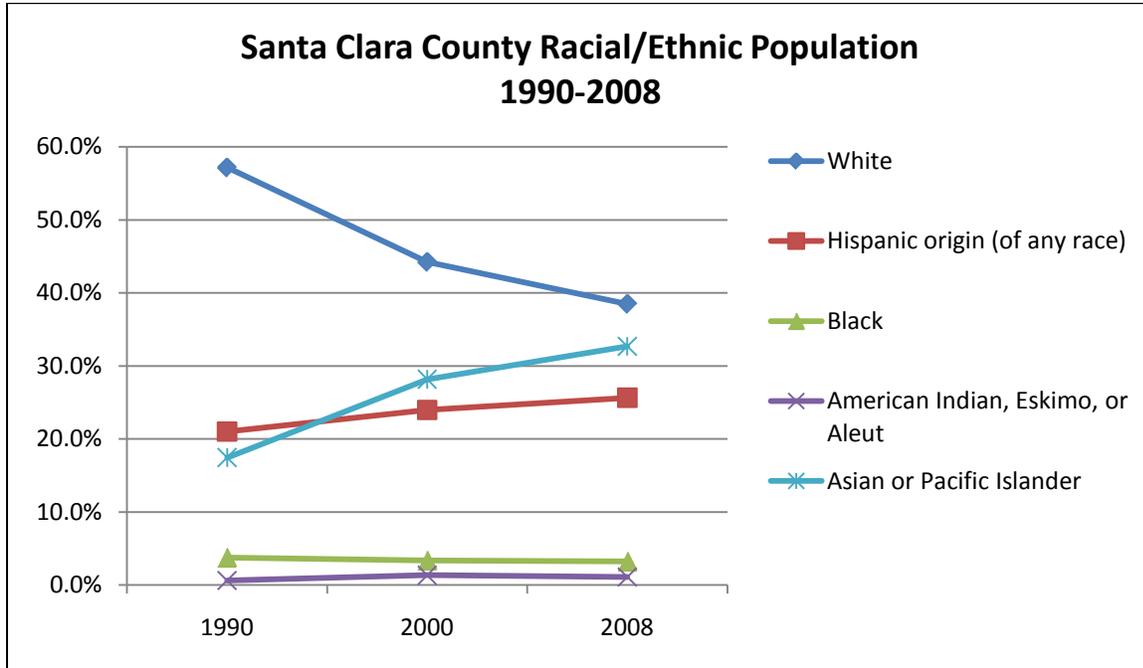


Fig. 2-3

Since 2000, Santa Clara County has passed San Francisco and is in a dead heat with Los Angeles to become the California county with the highest percentage of immigrants. Over a third (36%) of its population is born outside of the United States. Miami is the only metropolitan region in the United States with a higher percentage of immigrants than the San Jose area.

Befitting its status as one of the most diverse communities in the United States, the linguistic diversity of the community reflects its high degree of demographic complexity. Congruent with the changes brought by the previous two decades of immigration, a full 50% of Santa Clara County residents 5 years and older speak a language other than English at home. And, consistent with the large number of immigrants, 22% admit to “not speaking English very well^{vi}.”

While the combined Asian languages have grown rapidly, Spanish remains the most common foreign language, after English, in Santa Clara County. It is spoken by about 19 percent of the population, up from about 14 percent in 1990. Mandarin and other dialects of Chinese are next, spoken by about 8 percent of the population - double its share in 1990. Vietnamese and Tagalog come next.^{vii}

^{vi} 2008 American Community Survey Santa Clara County

^{vii} http://www.mercurynews.com/valley/cj_7666999?nclick_check=1 “Other tongues overtaking English as language spoken in majority of Santa Clara County homes”

Spanish	19%
Asian or Pacific Islander Language	22%
Indo-European Language	8%

Fig. 2-4. Percent of population speaking languages other than English

The ethnic and linguistic diversity of Santa Clara County is evident in its population of children as well. Latino children make up the largest proportion of residents age 0-17. Additionally, the language spoken by the largest group of children entering kindergarten is Spanish, followed by several other languages.

English is their Primary Language	47%
Spanish is their Primary Language	28%
Other Languages	25%
Total	100%

**Fig. 2-5. Percent of children speaking English, Spanish and other languages
Applied Survey Research, 2008**

According to the Readiness Assessment Data collected by Applied Survey Research for the Partnership for School Readiness, just over a quarter of the children entering kindergarten in Santa Clara County speak Spanish as their primary language. Another 25% spoke another language.

The data from ASR is corroborated by California Department of Education statistics that report 47.3% of the 2008-2009 kindergarten class spoke a language other than English as their primary language. This is a staggering challenge and opportunity for developing dual language fluency, and definitely adds to the complexity of pre-empting the achievement gap, if third grade reading proficiency in English is one of the strongest predictors of later school and occupational success.

2.2 B The Challenge of Maintaining a Competitive Workforce

The *Index of the Silicon Valley 2010* Report highlights the importance that the achievement gap may play given how the economic rise of developing nations has begun to affect the region’s talent pool. The report, which aggregates statistics on businesses and communities including Santa Clara, San Mateo and southern Alameda counties, reveals that 60% of Silicon Valley’s science and engineering workforce was born outside of the United States. It also highlights how growing numbers of foreign-born workers were an important part of the region’s rapid growth from 1970 to the present, providing intellectual firepower and an increasingly diverse population.

However, the report acknowledges that the growth of emerging economies may slow the current inflow of high skilled workers, threatening Silicon Valley’s future growth. In fact, between 2008 and 2009, net foreign

migration to the region decreased 34%, resulting in the fewest number of immigrants since before the year 2000. With only 19% of today's science and engineering workers coming from the state of California, the report cautions that it would be unwise to continue to rely so heavily on foreign talent to meet future workforce needs. Nineteen of the region's top 25 occupations require a four-year degree.

In the next 10 years, California's Employment Development Department projects that Santa Clara and San Benito County will need over ten thousand new workers with a bachelor's degree, or higher education each year. If the immigration of foreign talent continues to slow, it will be imperative that local employers are able to find qualified workers domestically—and there is ample opportunity to invest in local human resources by providing a solid foundation to the education system.

While Santa Clara County's education system has produced outstanding results overall, it is falling short of the mark in adequately preparing over a quarter of its students to become Silicon Valley's workforce for the future. Latino students are the fastest growing group of students in the community, yet barely more than a third are able to read proficiently at third grade, consigning them to poor prospects for one day obtaining a bachelor's degree. In order for Silicon Valley to have access to the qualified workforce it needs, we need to start investing in education now—beginning with early education.

It takes time to foster the development of a talented workforce, and research repeatedly shows that getting children ready for school, by providing them with a high quality early learning experience, is the most fruitful investment a community can make. To that end, in the next section we analyze and articulate the supply and demand for the existing preschool space in Santa Clara County, with an eye toward leveraging this asset to create a more favorable future for the community.

2.3 Preschool Supply and Demand: Capacity for System Development

In this section of the plan we have analyzed preschool supply and demand to discern a starting point for the next stage of system development. The demand side of the equation includes three- and four- year-old children. The community stakeholders determined enrolling two age cohorts was the long term goal. Decisions to bifurcate cohorts could be made as resource availability dictated, or if priority by age was determined by an external funder.

The supply side of the equation is based on licensed center and large group home based preschool facilities in the subsidized and fee-for-service sectors. In the following two tables and maps, we review and discuss the data that illustrate the gaps in service—one for the population as a whole and the other for the likely target population of a subsidized preschool program focused on reducing the achievement gap.

2.3 A The Landscape: A Look at the Numbers

The preschool supply data is from the 3rd quarter 2009 Child Care Resource and Referral local agency database. We assumed that 90% of licensed preschool spaces (licensed for ages 2-5 years) were available to three- and four-year-old children. Each subsidized space was identified cross referencing local data with the California Department of Education, Child Development Division enrollment report system (Form 801-A). We also cross referenced Head Start spaces with the local provider (SCCOE) and the enrollment manager in Gilroy.

For the demand side of the equation, we relied on the State Department of Health Services database on births for 2006 and 2007, sorted by the zip code of mother's residence. We estimated a 60% uptake for three-year-old children and a 70% uptake for four-year-old children for our general estimate of demand. For uptake of a publicly subsidized program by income eligible children, we estimated 70% for three-year-old children and 80% for four-year-olds. Both uptake rates are deliberately conservative, falling below local data collected by Applied Survey Research (2009), showing that middle income usage for preschool in Santa Clara County is around 85% and up to 92% for white upper middle income families.

i. Overall Supply and Demand

There were 55,347 total births during the years 2006 and 2007. At the aforementioned rates of 60% and 70% overall utilization per age cohort, we estimate a total demand of 36,000 overall. The highest concentrations of three- and four-year-old children are in Downtown, Alum Rock, East San Jose and Gilroy, each having at least 1,100 preschoolers per zip code. The number of children in these nine high-concentration zip codes



equals almost 12,500 children, over one-third of the three- and four-year-old children. The county overall has approximately 32,567 licensed spaces available for three- and four-year-olds.

As can be seen on the Map 1 (next page), the supply and demand for preschool are not perfectly aligned. There appear to be large surpluses of space on the western side of the county and severe shortages in the central and east San Jose areas. The highest gaps between supply and demand are greatly concentrated in a nearly contiguous area (red zip codes) including Downtown San Jose (95131), Edenvale (95111), Alum Rock (95127) and East San Jose (95148). There is also a severe shortage in Palo Alto (94303) and another in Sunnyvale (94085); both surprising because the entire western corridor of the county seems to have abundant supply.

The estimated overall gap between the number of children likely to enroll in preschool and the number of spaces available for preschoolers is approximately 3,400 county-wide. However, this number may be misleading. There are surpluses on the western side of the county, particularly in the communities of Los Gatos (95032), Campbell (95008), Saratoga (95070), Cupertino (95014), Burbank (95128) and Willow Glen (95124) areas of the county. Theoretically all the zip codes showing surpluses could offset some of the space deficit in the red zones if transportation and subsidy were not an issue.

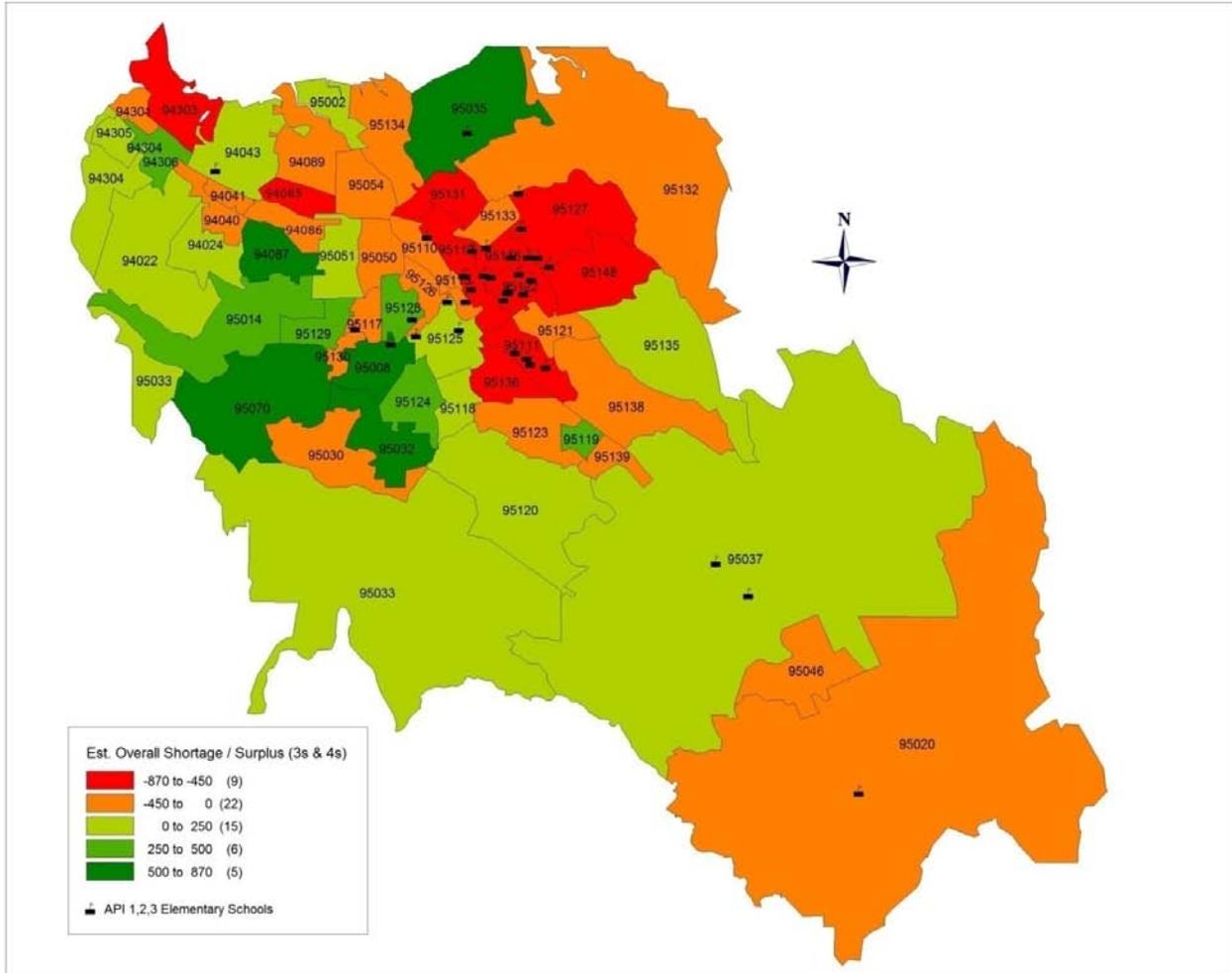
However, functionally the net 3,400 space gap is probably an artifact of our conservative projections model. We estimate uptake at 60% for three year olds and 70% for four year olds. However, the Applied Survey Research study (2008), estimated that the uptake among upper and middle income households which populate many of these zip codes is at 85%-90%. Using an elementary sensitivity analysis (see Figure 2-6), we see that at an uptake of 70%-80% the space gap would reach 8,921 spaces. This level of preschool utilization eliminates using any western corridor surplus for support of the high need zip codes.

Sensitivity Analysis: Overall Gap			
Uptake %	Demand	Supply	Gap
60-70	35954	32567	-3387.00
60-80	38699	32567	-6132.00
70-80	41488	32567	-8921.00
70-90	44234	32567	-11667.00

Fig. 2-6

This artifact will take on some significance when looking for spaces for lower income children as **the gap in the red zip codes only**, not counting Palo Alto and Sunnyvale **is 5785** (see Figure 2.7).

MAP 1: Overall Gap in Preschool Supply/Demand Ratio^{viii}



Name	Zip Code	Gap
SJ-Edenvale	95111	858
SJ-Edenvale	95136	455
SJ-Alum Rock	95127	837
San Jose	95126	561
San Jose	95122	696
San Jose	95131	524
San Jose	95116	589
San Jose	95148	507
San Jose	95112	522
TOTAL		(5785)
Sunnyvale	94085	538

Fig. 2-7

^{viii} The shortage in Palo Alto is a function of the zip code spanning two counties; therefore the demand includes children from East Palo Alto, but the supply count is only those providers in Santa Clara County.

ii. Subsidized Supply vs. Demand

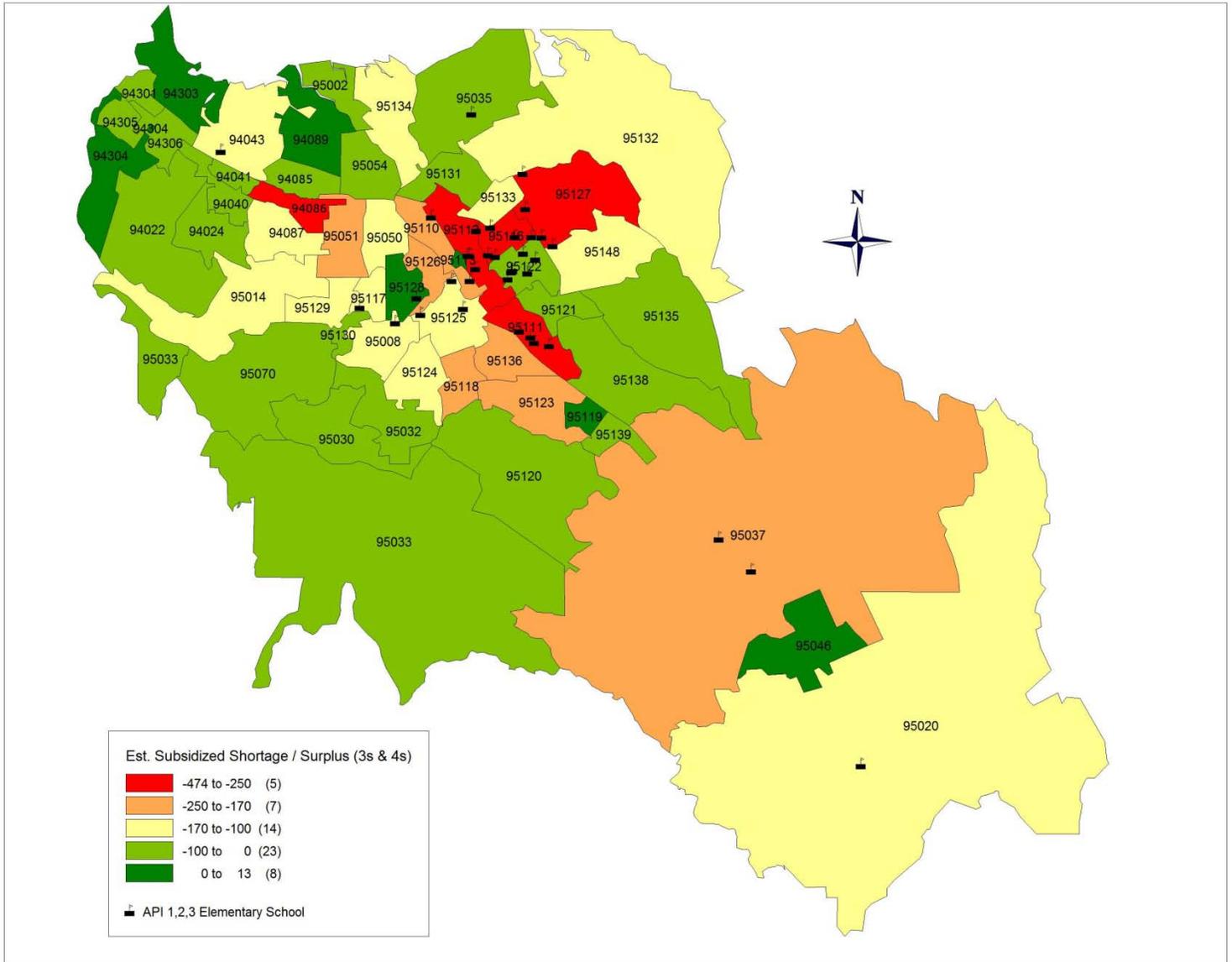
For the estimate of subsidy eligible preschool children, the plan relied upon the Local Planning Council Needs Assessment data, which uses 2000 zip code level census data on family income for households with a child under five projected by growth to 2006. The yield from this formula is approximately 14,200 subsidy eligible preschool-age children in Santa Clara County. As discussed earlier in this section about 8,250 of these children are in a subsidized preschool program (including vouchers from Alternative Payment Programs), a comparatively high rate of 58% penetration compared to other counties.

There still remains a need for approximately 5,900 additional subsidies based on uptake levels of 70% and 80%. Almost half (47%) of this need is in the nine mostly contiguous zip codes of East, Central and South San Jose, Alum Rock, Evergreen, Blossom Valley, Rose Garden and Edenvale. As can be seen from on Map 2 (next page), in addition to the highly impacted contiguous zip codes, Santa Clara (95051) has about 250 eligible unserved children, Morgan Hill (95037) has 176 unserved eligible children, and Sunnyvale (94086) has 333 eligible unserved children. Interestingly, the county as a whole has significant dispersal of low-income children; of 57 total zip codes 43 could fill at least one or more subsidized classrooms (20+ children). Of the total zip codes 26 have at least 100 children eligible for subsidy and not enrolled in preschool.

There still remains a need for approximately 5,900 additional subsidies.



MAP 2: Overall Gap for Subsidized Preschool Programs



Contiguous Subsidy Gaps		
95112	Downtown/East San Jose	474
95116	Downtown/East San Jose	392
95127	Alum Rock/East San Jose	285
95111	Edenvale/San Jose	272
95126	San Jose	243
95136	Edenvale/San Jose	241
95110	San Jose	222
95123	San Jose – South	173
95118	Cambrian-Pioneer	171
TOTAL		2473

Fig. 2-8

Non-Contiguous Subsidy Gaps		
95051	Santa Clara	237
95037	Morgan Hill	176
94086	Sunnyvale	333
TOTAL		746

Fig. 2-9

Because there is a space gap in almost every zip code where there is a subsidy gap, it will be very important to perform a sensitivity analysis at different rates of uptake to determine just how many new classrooms will need to be built, renovated, or leased in order to ramp up a program. Even within the county, micro analyses could be performed to determine if supply in one zip code could be deployed to fulfill demand in another. For example, consider the Sunnyvale example below. The overall gap refers to all families, private pay, and income eligible. Zip code 94087 appears to have excess space (861) and there are 529 low-income children residing in adjacent zip codes.

Sunnyvale Micro-Analysis		
Zip	Available Spaces	Subsidy Gap
94085		-58
94086		-333
94087	861	-134
94089		-4
Net Total	861	-529
Balance	332	

Fig. 2-10

It would be possible to develop a vendor relationship with one or more private preschool providers who were willing to meet the quality standards and accept public reimbursement for the cost of the child’s early education. There is abundant precedent for this type of arrangement in Alternative Payment Programs. But more directly, the Los Angeles Universal Preschool System is entirely a vendor program with public and private vendors meeting the standards within a five-star rating system. However, if the sensitivity analysis shows that the “surplus” space shown on Map 1 in 94087 is being utilized by private fee-for-service families, then the subsidy gap in Sunnyvale is also a facility gap.

Sunnyvale notwithstanding, in all other cases in the high need zip codes the subsidy gap is also a space gap, because the zips identified all had shortages of space on the overall analysis. A consumer use study and space inventory related to the space/subsidy/gap analysis should be performed in the early stages of implementation so cost projections can be reasonably accurate.

2.3 B Relating Community Assets to the Plan

In this section of the plan, we described the organizational asset base of the early learning community, local education agencies, and municipal government as it related to engagement with the development of an early learning system. We also considered the possibility that there could be a shared goal between the business sector and the education sector. That goal is to counteract the achievement gap by developing a sound learning foundation during the first eight years of life, resulting in a pipeline of college educated talent for future jobs in the Silicon Valley economy.

The inventory of preschool supply, demand, and subsidy was very positive but also sobering. There is a great deal of supply, and subsidy is serving almost 60% of the low-income children in the county. This is an outstanding platform upon which a system can be developed. However, the subsidized supply may be at maximum facility capacity for the 5,900 three- and four-year-old children who would likely enroll in an expanded system. If utilization among the middle class is consistently high, as local research has reported,

there is no unused space inventory in bridge communities that could be considered for participation in a high quality publicly funded system. The opportunity for access to a quality early learning experience is not only a financial barrier for more than a third of the low-income child population, it is a facility barrier as well. There are not enough preschool classrooms (or spaces) that can be deployed to bring an early learning system to scale. It will require funding and fund raising to build out the early learning system.

Creating a system from this asset base will take several different kinds of investments to achieve success. Enlarging the circle of engagement in system development will distribute the many aspects of growth to the full range of community members most skilled to undertake each type of responsibility. It will take real estate stakeholders and public property managers to figure out creative strategies for land acquisition and development. It will take advocates and public affairs professionals to communicate to the taxpayers what the value of early learning will bring to the Santa Clara County community in the short and long term. It will take business champions looking to sustain the high quality flow of a workforce well into the future to embrace the concept of this system. It will take K-12 educators to buy into the developmental model for them to get the full benefit of the talent and motivation young children bring to table when they are adequately prepared. And, most of all, it will take parents and supportive neighborhoods to protect, supervise, channel and cherish the young so they can believe schooling is a match for their personal identity.

Holding all this together requires a strategy, consistently applied over time, to take the assets to the level where they create an exponential impact against a very tenacious problem. In the next section of the plan, we present the strategy document developed by close to 100 stakeholders, leaders, and community members committed to the dream of this proposed system.

The opportunity for access to a quality early learning experience is not only a financial barrier...it is a facility barrier as well.



SECTION 3

Strategic Plan: The Preschool Bridge to School Achievement

Section 3: Strategic Plan—The Preschool Bridge to School Achievement

3.1 Inputs and Process Methodology

3.1 A Structure of the Planning Process

The Santa Clara County Early Learning Initiative was organized as an open, inclusive, and collaborative planning process, inviting the participation of all major local stakeholders in early learning and interested parties from the community at large. The hallmark of the planning process was to build upon the prior work and experiences of the county as the foundation for forward-thinking systems development. Guided feedback activities allowed participants to produce outputs that formed the resulting work plan.

The planning process was organized into a series of four public meetings, beginning in February and ending in November 2009. Each meeting began with one or two short presentations, followed by polling questions, group activities, report outs, and afternoon workgroup sessions.

While broader community themes and system-wide policy were addressed during the morning sessions, the planning initiative organized six workgroups to focus attention on critical policy areas where the capacity for implementation capacity needed to be considered. Those workgroups were Workforce, Quality, Parent Engagement, Articulation and Alignment, Data Management and Facilities, led by co-chairs who were drawn from the diverse group of Santa Clara stakeholders.



3.2 Community Visioning

The Santa Clara County Early Learning Initiative opened with a visioning exercise to develop a conception of Santa Clara County ten years *after* the implementation of an early learning plan. The visions for what an ideal early learning system could do for Santa Clara County include:

- The academic achievement gap among at-risk populations is dramatically decreased, or even eliminated, boosting high school graduation rates and college attendance.
- The playing field for education is leveled, benefiting not only the students, but also local employers and the community as a whole.
- The business community is catalyzed to provide greater support and engagement in developing and preserving the success of Santa Clara County's children.
- Parents are actively engaged in their children's education from birth through college.
- Santa Clara County's inclusive dual language preschool program proves to be the keystone to high school graduation rates.

These visions of the future reflected many of the foundational values that have been expressed in past reports and programs. However, the visioning exercise went one step further to express how the community would be transformed by the presence of a well functioning early education system.

Working from a template activity called "What's Your Headline," stakeholders developed an issue of a local newspaper or news magazine to profile the changes that had occurred in Santa Clara County as a result of the early learning plan. These "headlines" were to illustrate how ten years from now, a universally accessible, high quality early learning system could transform other sectors of the county. Some of the headlines were:

- National Association of Teachers honors Santa Clara County for dual language approach to compete in global economy
- Business invests in future workforce through support of early learning movement
- Detention centers close in Santa Clara County - prison population way down
- Santa Clara County competes globally with outstanding student achievement
- Santa Clara County has offered the nation a multi-faceted solution for every child and family
- 100% of Santa Clara County's preschoolers will graduate from high school

Building toward these lofty goals, Santa Clara County's business, philanthropy, education, and early learning communities began to knit together an image of where we are now, and where we want to go.

3.2 A Building on Shared Knowledge

After working together to create a shared vision of an ideal future, participants turned their sights to making pragmatic and realistic projections for what a new plan could achieve. Each workgroup was asked to develop Strategic Mission Statements. The statements developed in this process were crafted around specific metrics of success that are designed to outline what is actually achievable for each work domain and for which population.

As the planning process drew to a close, the group outlined the steps that would ensure the Santa Clara County Master Plan would be able to achieve its potential. Those steps were to:

- Continue planning and coordination to sustain existing efforts that are foundational to the plan;

- Embark on new paths of development that would expand civic engagement in early education and implement the strategic mission statements of each work group;
- Continue efforts to widen the circle of engagement beyond the child development community, with a specific emphasis on engaging business and philanthropy;
- Give serious consideration to peer models of early education (like the Harlem Children’s Zone and Montgomery County, Maryland) from other parts of the country that might be applicable for adoption/adaptation in Santa Clara County;
- Support ongoing projects as well as foster an atmosphere for continued innovation;
- Create and ensure that parallel projects and agencies conjoin their efforts toward the super-ordinate goals of the Santa Clara County plan; and
- Develop an organizational infrastructure that keeps information flow continuous, and fosters collaboration, while promoting individual and agency accomplishments throughout the community.

3.2 B New Consensus Ideas

A qualitative analysis of the all the content that emerged from the planning process—ranging from the briefings, participant-produced content from the plenary and work group sessions (including group activities and Case Statement™ Question results)—revealed that the group achieved consensus on several policy goals. These consensus statements build on the foundational policies and practices of the county, provide direction and context to the ongoing work of current projects, and outline new program dimensions through the seven-year plan.

- i. *Preschool serves as a bridge for children’s early development; providing a developmentally appropriate transition between the infant/toddler years and the primary grades K-3*

As noted earlier, early learning organizations in Santa Clara County have long shared an aspiration to be responsive to the developmental continuum of children’s advancement. While this perspective has been widely shared, it has yet to be translated into operations in a systematic way. One of the key developments of the planning process was to conceptualize preschool as a bridge connecting the experiences of early child development, providing a developmentally-appropriate transition from the intensive adult-child nurturing of the infant/toddler years to peer and community expansion of the preschool years, to the more formalized didactic instruction of the primary grades.

The implementation of this concept will be challenging, and requires the facilitation of closer relationships between the three sectors that provide services to children and families during the first eight years (infant/toddler, preschool, K-3) of life. The key elements of a successful transition are straightforward: all sectors should work from the common perspective of the child, interweaving roles and responsibilities to ensure that the child and the family experiences continuity at every juncture.

ii. *We embrace multiple, innovative approaches to dual language learning*

When the group was polled about dual language learning for all children, many raised questions about feasibility, but not desirability. However, when polled whether “We should support different models of dual language learning to promote competence in language acquisition,” 79% of participants agreed. These findings suggested that given the strong overall support for research and innovation around language acquisition and development, a new workgroup or task team on dual language learning should be formed during early implementation to identify and test models in the coming years.

iii. *Building on our innovative history through pilots and other place-based initiatives will strengthen Santa Clara County’s future through information-driven planning*

Santa Clara County has shown an inclination toward place-based strategies and “going deep;” thoroughly addressing an issue from multiple angles, over “breadth of service.” We can see this sentiment through past and current work, many of which are comprehensive pilot projects.

This all works in concert with our cross-disciplinary approach to funding, planning, and service delivery. Also, while it was not formally presented at a consensus item, the Program Quality workgroup proposed early on that Santa Clara County make their desires known to the California Early Learning Quality Improvement System Committee that they want to be a pilot for implementing the state’s proposed quality assessment plans.



iv. *Quality and access will be pursued simultaneously*

While there is a consensus around increasing the number of children who have access to care, there is simultaneously a strong commitment to building the quality of existing care and ensuring that all newly available care is of quality. This came out through the comments in many of the case statement open-ended comments. Workforce and professional development are seen as hallmarks to improving quality. A supportive, improvement-oriented quality rating system is being proposed as one of the county’s first new activities to come out of this plan.

v. *A mixed delivery system should be available for preschool services, with consistent quality standards for all*

An early Case Statement™, asserting that “we can serve more children effectively if we unify and build on the diverse provider base,” was affirmed by 92% of respondents. In a subsequent statement, 82% of participants agreed that “in a diverse delivery system, (providers) would agree to shared goals, quality standards, and principles.”

These affirmations match the development of many other counties who also see the logic and efficiency in working with the existing provider base to implement their early learning planning goals and to expect that all providers, regardless of type, provide services within a universally acceptable quality framework. Adhering to quality standards aligns with the county vision of developing an early education system that will work to eliminate the achievement gap, while families can select programs that are right for them.

Diversity in the delivery system is also inherent within our blend of publicly and privately funded programs. Federal, state and local funds are used primarily toward early learning opportunities for low-income children. However, the majority of the care provided within the county is through private family fees. These private programs also vary widely in funding structure, with many faith-based and corporate entities providing in-kind resources to facilities while others facilities vary in philosophy and curricula. This diversity is integral to our community in meeting the values of parents and children we serve.

vi. *Plan for universal coverage; provide services in priority order: The county will serve the highest need first, while planning for all*

Stakeholders consistently expressed a desire to eventually implement a universal preschool delivery system, including not only all types of licensed providers, but all providers willing to participate in a county system. Some comments stressed the value of mixed income groups within preschool settings, and also cited the need of many middle income families needing assistance with preschool costs, even as public policy focuses on the poor and low-income families. Other comments suggested that greater public will could be generated by a delivery model designed to serve everyone, and a small number of participants felt that the very poor were already being served.

Thus, an early Case Statement™ testing stakeholders’ willingness to focus initial services in highest-need areas revealed a reluctance to support any planning efforts that did not call for county-wide plans and have a broad definition of need. While stakeholders broadly supported prioritizing access for low-income or at-risk children, there was concern about *limiting action to that arena*.

At the next meeting we ran a different Case Statement™: “While public policy dictates that we serve children with the greatest need first, the overall goal is to serve all children.” This statement, which called for a broad based system, including subsidizing children with high needs, garnered 94% support of planning participants. We interpret this Case Statement™ as a signal that county planners are appropriately able to be pragmatic and deal with state policy precedents, but that Santa Clara County’s local planning ambitions are inclusive of all children in the county.

vii. *Coordination and communication of the plan implementation will be convened by SCCOE*

This plan will not move forward successfully without sustained attention to implementation, which requires both resources and skill. The Case Statement™ used to elicit consensus on ownership of the convening role was:

“The Santa Clara County Office of Education is in a good position to coordinate overall implementation efforts.”

72% of respondents agreed that this responsibility could be managed by the County Office of Education. This forthright endorsement was accompanied by comments concerned about the adequacy of resources to manage a continued process of coordination and communication. There were also concerns that the coordinating agency should have the appropriate “bandwidth,” meaning access to the right people with the right skills to do the work. Accordingly, during the course of the planning process, the County Office established the Early Learning Services Department, headed by a senior level professional. This start will seed the infrastructure for future staffing and programmatic additions as the plan moves into implementation.

viii. *FIRST 5 Santa Clara County is the logical partner for the essential connection to infant-toddler services*

Another dimension of preschool bridging early learning experiences is having a continuing and consistent nexus with infant-toddler systems development. If preschool is the bridge connecting each end of a developmental continuum from birth to age eight, then there must be an active coordination or nexus between entities responsible for age cohorts across the entire continuum. FIRST 5 Santa Clara County has a mandate and a deep engagement in birth through five services. This agency is the logical lead partner and collaborator with the SCCOE for both vertical and horizontal integration of services.

3.3 Planning Initiative Outputs and Consensus

The culmination of outputs from the four collaborative, public meeting sessions provided a rich texture for outlining program goals, organizational features, and the character of a new countywide early learning system. However, to ensure the success of implementation, it is important to articulate a succinct vision of what this work will achieve for the community, and a well-defined strategic mission, with metrics, to assist stakeholders and the public keep the plan on track.

By consolidating the work products of meeting stakeholders, and assessing the capacity of Santa Clara County’s programmatic infrastructure, what follows are aggregate Vision and Strategic Mission Statements for the community early learning plan. While these statements are not facsimiles of every individual small group’s work, they express the combined essence of the group’s overall sentiment, affirming the plan’s direction and working toward the community’s shared super-ordinate goal.

3.3 A Vision: The Ideal for the Future

Families, educators, and community and business leaders will together support and sustain an early learning system that ensures every child birth to age eight has the opportunity to learn in an environment of such high quality that each child's ability to succeed is secured, the achievement gap is eliminated, and students, families, the community, and the local economy benefit.

3.3 B Strategic Mission Statement: How We Get There

By 2017, Santa Clara County will have a well aligned collaborative early learning system that bridges the period from infancy through the elementary grades, creating a developmental continuum from birth to eight years old.

We will measure the success of this system through the accomplishment of the following identified goals:

- Infrastructure priorities for facilities, equipment, and systems development are addressed with equal emphasis to designing programs;
- Program standards are high, consistent with a Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) and all providers can seek support in improving quality;
- 90% of parents are able to describe the attributes of a quality program and understand ELQIS;
- 100% of families are valued, nurtured, and relied upon as reciprocal partner's in their children's learning and healthy development;
- 90% of parents have an understanding of their role in setting family expectations, aligning themselves with the process of learning and consistent school attendance, and supporting program quality through their engagement;
- 100% of the teachers are well educated, committed to high performance, and compensated adequately for their work;
- Data management is continuous and on-going and produces well documented evidence of program success and public communications to keep early learning top of mind in the community;
- Curriculum will be aligned from infancy through preschool to third grade, and language rich for all children including models specifically designed for dual language learners who comprise close to a quarter of all students;
- All schools are "Ready Schools" because there is systems-wide alignment from birth-3rd grade that ensure children have the opportunity to perform successfully in school;
 - 100% of children have regular and meaningful assessments of developmental progress in academic, language and social emotional skills, and school readiness assessments;
- A mixed delivery system offering parents choices of settings and philosophies (while meeting uniform quality standards) will be available;

- Infant-toddler services are organized through a connected system of participatory collaborators that include parents, government, business, community organizations, faith-based institutions, related service sectors and others who are convened and coordinated by FIRST 5 Santa Clara County Commission (a collaborator with direct management responsibility for its own programs);
- Program attributes include full inclusion for children with special needs and providers are supported in meeting those; and
- The preschool services are organized through a connected system of participatory collaborators that include that include parents, government, business, community organizations, faith-based institutions, related service sectors and others who are convened and coordinated by the Santa Clara County Office of Education (a collaborator with direct management responsibility for its own programs).

The process of strategic planning requires systems-oriented, visionary thinking, anchored by action-oriented plans and timelines. This was promoted by purposefully balancing visioning time with time for pragmatic thinking about outcomes. In the next section, the output of each workgroup, inclusive of both visionary and practical thought, is presented.^{ix}

These outputs outline a roadmap for action that should take the county forward for the next seven years. Like any navigational tool, there may be more than one route to achieve a goal, though the goal itself may not change. In that vein, the workgroup outputs are the core of a living, breathing plan that has identified all the right goals. But the intermediate and incremental steps and/or the timing to achieve may flex depending upon fiscal, environmental or policy constraints.

^{ix} The workgroup outputs have been edited and refined for internal consistency across all groups and to conform to the required structure of a vision statement, strategic mission statement and program dimensions. The 2-, 5- and 7-year goals may have minor edits, and all the metrics embedded in the goals may change with shifts in external conditions (resource availability, public policy changes, structural and community changes) over time.

3.4 Workgroup Outputs

At a meeting preliminary to the launch of the planning process, the County Office of Education and Local Planning Council leaders identified the domains of work that would require a committee and also identified community partners with specialized expertise who would be willing to take responsibility for ensuring the work of each domain was completed. The Work Groups were convened in an open voluntary process and each produced seven year plans for Facilities, Program Quality, Family Engagement and Leadership, Workforce Development, Data Management, and Articulation and Alignment. A co-chair structure was implemented to promote shared responsibility for moving the process and work plan forward. The idea of having a separate committee on Inclusion of Children with Special Needs was discussed and it was decided that each committee should consider how to foster Inclusion within their work domain. This was among the first new consensus items identified through the Case Statement process.

Stakeholders fully expect that the underlying implementation strategies and timetables may shift and be refined.

The following pages document the work product produced independently by the members of each work group, refined and organized along comparable dimensions including a: Vision Statement, Strategic Mission, Major Program Dimensions, and 2-, 5- and 7-Year Goal Milestones with metrics. Additional work group output can be found in Appendix 2. This output is considered the initial guide through the next seven years of continued planning and implementation. While the strategic mission statements and goals will remain constant, the stakeholders fully expect that the underlying implementation strategies and timetables may shift and be refined given many unknowns that lie ahead.



3.4 A Program Quality

Vision Statement	Strategic Mission
<p>Santa Clara County has developed and implemented a quality rating and monitoring system to ensure the delivery of quality early education services in Santa Clara County. There is a public awareness of the importance and utilization of the system.</p>	<p>By 2017, program standards are high throughout the county, and 75% of Santa Clara County’s early childhood education programs serving 3- and 4-year-olds participate in a Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) that is inclusive of all sectors (public, private, corporate), that supports quality improvement and that the community is aware of and values.</p>

Major Program Dimensions

- Regional documents and PoP standards revised to reflect the current state of ECE standards
- Master standards document developed based on revision of existing resources for planning use
- Existing and new resources are leveraged
- Commitment letters of support signed by all sectors
- Engage school districts, business sectors, private providers and faith-based providers
- Public campaign launched and materials developed
- Information bank developed and utilized by practitioners and the public
- Reach consensus from the partnership on implementation process
- External presentation of Santa Clara County’s Early Childhood Education enhancement work
- Master coaching model document developed based on revision of existing resources for planning use
- Reach consensus from the partnership on Santa Clara County ECE coaching model
- QRIS pre-service and in-service trainings conducted and attended by community early educators
- List of operational sites selected
- Evaluation criteria developed
- List of expansion sites selected and begin implementation
- Coaches deployed at QRIS sites and areas of enhancement identified
- Santa Clara County’s QRIS standards are embedded and aligned with California standards, ELQIS and Water Cooler recommendations

2-Year Goal Milestones	5-Year Goal Milestones	7-Year Goal Milestones
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participate and provide input to the California ELQIS and Water Cooler quality committee ▪ Define Quality Standards [Year 3] ▪ Position Santa Clara County to pilot implementation of the CA QRIS system [Year 3] ▪ Plan for implementation of QRIS in Santa Clara County [Year 3, 4] ▪ Develop a coaching system [Year 3, 4] <p>See Appendix 2 for additional detail.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Roll out pre-service and in-service QRIS training ▪ Have operational sites ready for evaluation to assess level of quality [Year 6] ▪ Identify model sites and expand implementation/ participation ▪ Implement a coaching system [Year 6] <p>See Appendix 2 for additional detail.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have an established countywide QRIS for all sectors ▪ Public engagement and utilization of QRIS ▪ County programs will participate in a QRIS process ▪ 100% of publicly-funded ECE agencies have undergone a QRIS assessment through the County QRIS system ▪ All early learning` programs have access to quality improvement and coaching technical assistance <p>See Appendix 2 for additional detail.</p>

3.4 B Family Engagement and Leadership

Vision Statement		Strategic Mission	
<p>The Family Engagement and Leadership Collaborative provides inspiration and support to the entire Santa Clara County community to create partnerships where families are valued, nurtured, and engaged in children’s education and healthy development.</p>		<p>By 2017, all public agencies will inspire and support families’ hands-on engagement in each child’s education and development, in accordance with Collaborative guidelines. All families are valued, nurtured, and relied upon as reciprocal partners in their children’s learning and healthy development. Parents are empowered in supporting their child’s education and program quality through their engagement.</p>	
Major Program Dimensions			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A Collaborative to develop, promote and sustain initiative is formed ▪ Marketing campaign to promote the benefit of family engagement and to shift/change the value system of the county is rolled out ▪ Awareness and education campaign conducted ▪ Develop, review, advise and participate in legislation and policy development and revision ▪ Family summit held 			
2-Year Goal Milestones	5-Year Goal Milestones	7-Year Goal Milestones	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop collaborative to champion the initiative to foster and promote community consciousness of family importance and engagement charter ▪ Integrate family engagement and leadership into all early learning initiative committees ▪ Identify corporate partners, begin initial conversations with funders & businesses, engage funding community & develop a fundraising strategy ▪ Engage the funding community, create a platform for funders to define their methods of support ▪ Develop and distribute guidelines for family engagement and leadership ▪ Engage with all legislation that affects family engagement ▪ Develop PSAs, collateral and op-ed newspaper articles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify benefits (parents, schools, government, business, funders, children) of initiative through the lens of developmental continuum and achievement gap ▪ Commercials ▪ Social networking ▪ Train provider community including school districts ▪ Parent/family education/empowerment/training part of developmental and educational fabric ▪ Convene a Family Engagement & Leadership Forum (with parents and educators) as a means to collect expertise ▪ Align with funding terms and conditions (Title 5 & Title 22) ▪ Prenatal education alignment ▪ Annual summit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider and address the impact and effectiveness of the implementation of the of two and five year goals ▪ Create measurements & data gathering system which includes longitudinal studies ▪ Broadcast television show, radio and/or pod cast ▪ Integrate family engagement and leadership countywide through public forums ▪ If feasible, create a public assistance mandate ▪ Impact public policy development and implementation <p>By 2017 every publicly-funded preschool provider will have an active parent engagement plan, based on the guidelines of the collaborative.</p>	

3.4 C Workforce Development

Vision Statement		Strategic Mission	
<p>Every early educator in Santa Clara County will have access to a career path that is coordinated at the community level, provides individual support, is aligned and articulated across institutions, and that results in their ability to provide optimal learning experiences for children.</p>		<p>By 2017, Santa Clara County will have a workforce where at least 75 % will have achieved the completion of an education and training process appropriate to their position, are committed to their work, and are compensated adequately for it.</p>	
Major Program Dimensions			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase the level of education standards for the ECE workforce in Santa Clara County ▪ Develop and implement a high-quality professional development system in Santa Clara County ▪ Recruit, retain and appropriately compensate a high-quality ECE workforce in Santa Clara County 			
2-Year Goal Milestones	5-Year Goal Milestones	7-Year Goal Milestones	
<p>Outcome Goals: 40% of teachers/providers have a B.A.; 60% of teachers/providers have A.A.; 22% of assistants have A.A.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop individualized support plans for Institutes of Higher Education (IHE’s) ▪ Conduct an in-depth analysis of professional development in Santa Clara County. This includes opportunities, barriers, quality standards, certification programs, existing models, and mentoring programs. ▪ Develop an extensive data-based workforce development plan that includes strategies to recruit and retain a high-quality ECE workforce and address compensation <p>Please see Appendix 2 for additional detail.</p>	<p>Outcome Goals: 50% of teaches/providers have B.A.; 70% of teachers/providers have A.A.; 30% of assistants have A.A.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a professional development system, including quality assurance, a trainer certification system, aligning opportunities with California ECE competencies, and expanding opportunities ▪ Implement strategies to: increase the compensation of early educators (if feasible), increase the number and quality of people entering the workforce (focus on ROP programs, high schools, and training/ adult school), marketing, and increase public acknowledgement of field ▪ Continue community plan to provide appreciation events for early learning child care workers <p>Please see Appendix 2 for additional detail.</p>	<p>Outcome Goals: 50% of teaches/providers have at least a B.A.; 70% of teachers/providers have at least an A.A.; 30% of assistants have at least an A.A.; 100% of assistants have minimum of 12 units; 100% implementation of individualized support plans at IHE’s</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A wide variety of professional development opportunities that meet the needs of early learning workforce will be available ▪ Training standards will be in place and used to evaluate trainings ▪ A trainer registry and certification system will be used for Santa Clara County’s trainers ▪ Training opportunities will be aligned with the CA ECE Competencies. ▪ An analysis of the strategies implemented during years 1-5 will be conducted ▪ Adjust, develop and implement strategies as appropriate <p>Please see Appendix 2 for additional detail.</p>	

3.4 D Data Management

Vision Statement		Strategic Mission
<p>Every publicly funded ECE provider will utilize a data collection template, share aggregate data, and have access to data management support. The data management system will, in turn, support the work of the field by identifying and facilitating the collection of data essential to guide decision making, inform program improvement, and drive results-based planning.</p>		<p>By 2017, Santa Clara County will have a county-wide, web-based data management system used by all ECE agencies receiving public funds (county, state or federal) that is user-friendly and meets the planning needs and privacy precautions of the providers and county public agencies. The data management system will produce well-documented evidence of program success and publicly communicate with key stakeholders to keep early education visible and salient to the community.</p>
Major Program Dimensions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the development of a coordinated data system (inclusive of CALPADS and CALTIDES) Identify additional data variables specific to the early learning initiative Data system will produce reports to evaluate and inform the early learning initiative The system will coordinate collection of child, family, teacher, classroom, school/organizational, and community data in order to support the goals of the early learning planning initiative 		
2-Year Goal Milestones	5-Year Goal Milestones	7-Year Goal Milestones
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under the aegis of SCCOE, a data task team will work with strategic partners (e.g., representatives of 0-5, K-12, college/work) to identify necessary variables and develop data management plan (Year 1) SCCOE will secure signed MOUs which will include policies and procedures, protocols for information sharing and roles and responsibilities for a web-based data system By the end of Year 2 SCCOE and the partners will organize a small scale local pilot to determine if the data management system can “go live” The technical resource needs (i.e., computers, training, connectivity) of early care providers and others who will be gathering data as a part of the data management system will be identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on results of local pilot and recommendations of ELQIS and CDE, data system is refined Refined data system is tested further on a larger scale (e.g., across multiple schools, districts, and/or public/private sites) Revise and finalize components of web-based data system Ensure all participating entities are supplied with the appropriate hardware and software and technical support to participate in the data management system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize policies and procedures for data access for various users (e.g., public, SCCOE staff, strategic partners) Web-based data system goes live county-wide Data guides decision making, informs program improvement and documents results

3.4 E Articulation and Alignment

Vision Statement		Strategic Mission	
<p>Children thrive in Pre-K to 3rd grade classrooms that have seamless transitions, aligned expectations and individualized learning plans. Each classroom environment respectfully recognizes where the children are coming from, fosters seamless transitions between, and plans for children’s next educational steps.</p>		<p>By 2017, all Santa Clara County ECE and elementary schools are certified as “Ready Schools”. There is systems-wide alignment from birth-3rd grade that includes meaningful assessments, cross communication, curriculum alignment, and has all children performing successfully in school. Curriculum will be aligned from infancy through grade 3 and language-rich for all children.</p>	
Major Program Dimensions			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alignment of developmental and academic expectations that includes rubrics for child outcomes and school/program attributes ▪ Effective screening and assessment for all children birth through age 8 ▪ Each school and district has a Pre-K to 3rd strategy that is aligned with a “Ready School” rubric ▪ Every child has an electronic student record that is tracked by the program (from birth to graduation) ▪ Parents and community understand and support seamless transitions to and from early care and school ▪ New professional development approaches are used to facilitate Pre-K to 3rd ▪ Quality instruction is available and tailored for individual children 			
2-Year Goal Milestones		5-Year Goal Milestones	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish a READY SCHOOLS COMMISSION – new governance structure for oversight and accountability for early childhood education birth to age 8 ▪ Build superintendent (and other stakeholder) commitment to a truly aligned birth to age 8 early childhood education model ▪ Hold a kick-off summit to announce the commitment ▪ Complete the standards and expectations/rubric ▪ Launch pilots for implementation ▪ Identify community channels for information for parents and teachers—Triple P, screening practices, readiness expectations for schools, children and families 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developmental screenings are “institutionalized” ▪ Student databases are linked birth to grade 3 (and beyond)-School Readiness integrated into basic student databases ▪ All PK-3rd grade teachers have personalized professional development goals based on the standards ▪ All elementary districts have a detailed PK-3rd grade articulation and alignment strategy developed and integrated into their school improvement plans ▪ Implementing a strategic, on-going social marketing campaign with messages for birth-8 child development and school readiness expectations 	
7-Year Goal Milestones			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100% of children have regular and meaningful assessments of developmental progress in academic, language and social emotional skills ▪ Universal implementation of school readiness assessments – ▪ Ready child, ready family, ready schools ▪ 100% of schools have a coordinated PreK-3rd grade strategy and publish their “Ready School” evaluations ▪ 100% of teachers understand the expectations and can apply cycles of inquiry to improve instruction ▪ 90% of children are at grade level; 100% of children have ILP ▪ 90% of parents understand and support school and developmental milestones 			

3.4 F Facilities

Vision Statement	Strategic Mission
<p>The Early Learning Facilities Coalition of Santa Clara County (the Coalition) is a model system for ensuring a space that meets the quality, location, and other needs of every child 0 – 8 seeking services in Santa Clara County.</p>	<p>By 2017 a coordinated, integrated sustainable system exists to ensure the planning and funding needs for quality facilities are met for all children 0-8 in Santa Clara County. Infrastructure priorities for facilities, equipment, and enterprise architecture are given the same priority and addressed with equal emphasis as program design.</p>

Major Program Dimensions

A Coalition will be established, and it will complete: an inventory of facilities financing and development resources (both technical and financial); identification of barriers and plan for addressing them; and a detailed mapping of existing facilities and their facility quality.

We will seek a variety of pathways in supporting facilities to expand and improve access to quality facilities in all auspices, including business-sponsored, public and faith-based spaces through building new and converting existing facilities.

2-Year Goal Milestones	5-Year Goal Milestones	7-Year Goal Milestones
<p>The Coalition will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be created to develop an integrated, coordinated sustainable system that ensures quality facilities are developed and maintained to deliver early learning and education for all children in Santa Clara County ▪ Develop a work plan to guide the development and capitalization of the Santa Clara County Early Learning Facilities Fund ▪ Identify potential participants of the Coalition within the first year ▪ Develop 6 month objectives for the Coalition ▪ Create a recruitment packet for the Coalition ▪ Actively recruit members ▪ Convene in June 2011 to develop additional objectives and work in subcommittees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Facilities Coalition implements strategies to engage the private sector and school districts to ensure all quality facilities and unused land is available for facility development to ensure a fully inclusive universal system ▪ Coalition enlists a pool of infant-toddler and school-age experts to re-examine/develop facility needs for 0-3- and 5-8-year-olds ▪ The Santa Clara County Early Learning Facility Fund is established. A sustainable system exists for securing financial resources to support facility development in Santa Clara County. ▪ Tasks to be completed by 2015: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create Centralized TA System ○ Fund charter and capitalization plan ○ Inventory of resources ○ Asset mapping ○ List barriers and potential strategies overcoming them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ By 2017, there will be a quality early education space for 70% of the preschool-age population and 50% of school age children through age 8 ▪ The Facilities Coalition attracts new members from the business sector to begin implementing strategies for corporate facility partnership ▪ A new asset map and new target building plan is completed comparing population trends from baseline data completed in 2012

3.5 Planning Process Summary

3.5 A One Year Early Implementation Goals

Consolidating the wide ranging of inputs from a public planning process into a workable plan requires well executed coordination and collaboration, but also is dependent on generating an immediate sense of momentum once the plan is enacted. As a result, one of the final activities of the planning process was to outline a set of “early implementation goals” that could be accomplished in each of the workgroup content areas within a timeframe of one year.

Drawing from the direction of their outputs, the broad stakeholder group was presented with a set of 11 early implementation goals, and asked to rate them in terms of feasibility on a 5 point scale, ranging from “very likely,” to “very unlikely.” Through an analysis of responses (which can be examined in full in Appendix 3) we divided the results into 4 categories: Most Feasible, Feasible, Somewhat Feasible, and Unsure.

Most Feasible:

- Pilot 3 elementary school district “meet & greets” with ECE providers and their communities
- Convene a public forum on family engagement, with a focus on the importance of parental involvement from birth to age 8

Feasible:

- Create an inventory of potential facility capacity—and of capacity-building opportunities
- Develop a PR/Media packet to build local awareness of PreK-3
- Develop guidelines for providers for family engagement and leadership (with First 5 help)

Somewhat Feasible:

- Present Santa Clara County as a demonstration pilot for ELQIS
- Design and conduct cross-training of ECE and K-3 teachers on Articulation and Alignment principles
- Publish baseline standards for quality, incorporating ELQIS findings
- Develop a 1-year Data Management Plan
- Create a “High Impact Pilot Area” in SCC, similar to Harlem Children’s Zone

Unsure:

- Develop a pilot workforce development program using online counseling and peer support

3.5 B Cross-Walking Workgroup Goals

Even as stakeholders work to produce the early implementation accomplishments that will provide momentum to the plan, a small amount of work must be done to ensure that the goals and milestones of the workgroups align with one another, and with the goals of the overall plan.

The timeline of the Facilities workgroup outputs need to be reconciled with the system early implementation goals, as well as the time sensitivity required to conduct any sort of preschool program expansion that takes place within the plan’s 7-year scope. An inventory of available preschool facilities must be completed within two years in order to renovate, or build, new capacity before the end of the plan. Additionally, the large stakeholder group indicated that this activity was among the most feasible 1-year early implementation goals that could be undertaken by the group.

The work plan and needs for articulation and alignment efforts intersect with the future work of the Data, Workforce, and Quality content areas. The articulation goal of developing new professional development approaches for PreK-3 instruction will require significant coordination with the work of workforce development and the translation of quality standards from any new state guidelines associated with ELQIS. The desire to employ an electronic student records system to aid articulation and coordination efforts will require the administration of the county Data system. A prototype for that kind of database is being piloted in the Gilroy Unified School District by the SCCOE.



3.5 C Decisions and Responsibility Centers

The plenary body of stakeholders and the six workgroups produced very tangible goals and ample documentation^x to assist stakeholders in implementing a new system of systems in the county. Leaders in business, politics and education have agreed that closing the academic achievement gap between the county’s most and least resourced children is a top priority, and believe that forming a high quality developmental early learning system is integral to meeting that challenge.

^x All collateral information and additional content from the planning process is posted on the Santa Clara County Showcase Page of www.plan4preschool.

In order for Santa Clara County to remain a cutting-edge innovator in business, the education system must produce a talent pipeline of college graduates over the next two decades that exceeds even what the community has achieved so far. This will require sustained attention and reforms to the developmental experience of children from birth to adulthood, particularly by establishing a life-long foundation for learning through early education and school readiness.

In summary, the planning process outlined a broad set of policy goals including:

- **Ensuring that preschool bridges the transition from infancy to elementary school;**
- **Embracing multiple, innovative approaches to dual language learning;**
- **Implementing place-based initiatives based on data-driven planning;**
- **Pursuing early learning quality and access simultaneously;**
- **Maintaining a mixed delivery system, with consistent quality standards; and**
- **Planning for universal coverage, while prioritizing roll out according to need.**

Additionally, the broad stakeholder group identified key responsibility roles for coordinating the work and maintaining the momentum of implementation by declaring that:

- **FIRST 5 Santa Clara County will provide the essential connection to infant/toddler services**
- **Coordination and communication of the plan will be convened by SCCOE**

The Santa Clara County Early Learning Master Plan expresses a vision for the future, and proposes a plan for how to realize that vision. The Plan delineates the major elements of work that need to be completed, identifies key responsibility centers, and outlines the need to broaden the community interest in early learning. The Plan expresses the shared values of the early learning sector and points of consensus that should guide deliberations going forward.

Having embraced a fundamental philosophy that preschool can be a developmental pathway for children moving from family-based, nurturing care to the structured and group oriented primary grades, challenges still remain. They include determining the on-going structure of collaboration, developing accurate models for cost projections and deciding on models of education reform that will be compatible to the identity of Santa Clara County.



SECTION 4

The Roadmap to Implementation

Section 4: The Roadmap to Implementation

4.1 Moving from Planning to Action

As a community, Santa Clara County embodies a model of success that represents the new California ideal. It is diverse, affluent, self-made, entrepreneurial, educated and innovative in the very industries that have created a new world order; technology in all its permutations. Few other communities anywhere can claim the convergence of talent, intellect, and capital that characterize the Silicon Valley. Much of the success in the County takes root in the shared values of innovation and entrepreneurship. After all, if scores of young engineers and scientists had not made discoveries, tested their ideas, and risked the development of new industries, this oft-described “suburban suburb” would not have risen to become the center of the technological world that it is today. It was not just the value of the ideas or collaborative culture that drove development in Santa Clara County; it was the willingness to turn those ideas into action. There is a parallel to the achievement gap facing the community today. Santa Clara County leaders must come together with prodigious effort and sustained purpose for at least a decade to stall and reverse the achievement gap that is robbing children of their future and denying the local economy the promise of its talent base.

In this plan we have outlined the context for early learning in Santa Clara County, and made a compelling case for the importance of preschool as a front-line strategy for eliminating the achievement gap. We have positioned the Santa Clara County community in the context of its demographics, history, and local economy; and presented the findings and consensus generated during the Early Learning Initiative process. Now we need to look back at the totality of the work and discern what comes next.

We open by proposing a model for organizing the work ahead. The model is not hierarchal based on administrative control; it is based on the nature of the work that needs to be performed and the precedents established by the stakeholders in the past ten years of work. For each element in the model, that prior work will be referenced so the path to the approach is one that all can navigate. Values that we will sustain in the model are:

- **Respect for the accumulated knowledge, roles, and expertise of the stakeholders and their respect for each other;**
- **Voluntary participation in the effort;**
- **Working diligently with others in service to a super-ordinate goal;**
- **Preserving one’s autonomy and organizational ties without losing fidelity to the achievement of the super-ordinate goal; and**
- **Working to conquer the achievement gap through collaboration and innovation among people, organizations, and public entities.**

**Santa Clara County leaders
must come together...for at
least a decade to stall and
reverse the achievement gap.**

We begin with a description of the meta-organization and work our way down and out to the elements of the plan. This is somewhat the opposite process of the work that created the plan which facilitated decentralized work groups that fed ideas upward. The primary need now is to define the meta-structure that will keep all the independent ideas in one “place,” and track progress toward fulfillment of the Strategic Mission statements.

4.2 Building the Meta-Structure

We propose first, that the structure of the preschool effort be conceived of as a loose federation of interests that are committed to the super-ordinate goal of eliminating the achievement gap through an early learning system. The federation would be held together through the coordination of the County Office of Education. Two high level advisory committees would be formed to divide up the work; each with functions that relate to achieving specific groups of goals for the system. The two Advisory Committees might become one after the ground level foundation for the new system is secured, but through self-governance over time, this can be resolved.

The important concept to remember with these multiple nodes of activity is that this form of working together is **to create planned change, not to invent new bureaucracies.** We are preserving the signature innovation of Santa Clara County---the collaboration of independent entities to achieve broad goals. In other words, the early learning system is really a “system of systems,” tethered to the foundation of decentralized early childhood services that comprise the current “system.”

A schematic conceptualization of the top level roles and responsibilities is below.



Fig. 4-1. Leadership Model for Ongoing Implementation

	Civic Engagement Leadership Group	Program Development Leadership Group
Ongoing Charge:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the circle beyond ECE Develop Business Case 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Nexus points Track/coordinate information dissemination Track progress of system goals Contribute to system development
Workgroup Domains (subcommittees):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Parent Engagement Facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workforce Quality Articulation
Tasks to Develop:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent Input and Polling Fund Development Marketing Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Continuum-Alignment Inf-Pre-Kto3 Including Family Child Care Dual Language Learning Plans and Pilots

Fig. 4-2. Responsibility Centers for Ongoing Implementation

One Advisory Committee, the Program Development Group would be focused on the systems design, program operations and implementation, essentially completing the work of the quality, articulation and alignment and workforce committees. The committee structure used during the planning process need not be sustained “as is”. The internal methodology for getting the work done needs to be distributive and could coalesce around a series of projects that need to be completed or be sustained under the original committee “names.”

The charge of this overall Program Development Group would be to facilitate organizing the achievement of the early implementation priorities presented in Section 3, address the unfinished business of the planning process, which includes organizing a summit or other high level initiative on dual language learning, develop a plan for family child care inclusion, and create the task teams to propose ideas for the mechanics of system flow, staying abreast of child development program policy at the state and federal level, developing the nexus for the continuum—connections to infant-toddler stakeholders and connections to K-12 stakeholders, especially in target communities.

The second Advisory Committee, the Civic Engagement Leadership Group, would be focused on widening the circle of engagement, specifically to generate interest in early learning beyond the early education community and to follow through on tasks that need a great deal of support from outside the early education community. These tasks include a development plan for facilities (construction and upgrades), governmental affairs, public engagement and polling, data management planning, enterprise architecture, fund development, and business sector engagement. Basically these responsibilities are essential to soft and hard infrastructure around the domains of civic and public engagement, information flows and facilities development.

The specific tasks will involve jumpstarting a data collection and evaluation model, conceptualizing a public communications strategy around research findings, locating civic leaders and volunteer organizations that have an affinity for early education issues, outreach to the health care and social services arena, managing cross sector relationships, conducting the facilities and space inventory, exploring facilities development alternatives, developing community-wide parent engagement strategies, and create polling and other interactive tools that can sustain a visible presence for early education in the “top of mind” list of community concerns. The most important task of this Advisory Committee is to conceptualize and implement an enterprise architecture model for the federation so it has cohesiveness and the manifestation of a single physical presence in the community, even though all the elements are not subsidiaries of one organization.



This federation model takes collaboration to an even higher level, and implements an influential program by creating a “system of systems.” While “who” is participating is

important, just as important is how the many points of attachment to the whole system can be passively maintained through enterprise architecture. The whole truly is the sum of its parts. Instead of a static silo model, this model is a molecular network fueling a very powerful, living meta-system.

These lateral advisory groups will have four primary responsibilities moving forward.

- **Widen the circle of engagement with key talent to support successful achievement of the early implementation priorities**
- **Track and link ongoing projects**
- **Drive the development of early implementation projects within the next 2 years**
- **Address the “unfinished business” of the planning process**

Twice a year, the two advisory groups should convene for an “all-play” meeting with the community to provide a status report on the work of the system. This report should include matching program updates to completeness of overall system goals, facilitating new collaboratives based on perceived opportunities, identifying new resources to help achieve system goals, and consistently broadening the circle of participants to include new allies from other sectors of the community. Under no circumstances should having several

meetings be counted as accomplishments. In this system, the formation of groups to do work is a means to an end, not an end unto itself.

4.3 Ongoing Projects

As outlined earlier in the plan, ongoing collaborative projects should be featured at these “all-play” meetings, to inform stakeholders and the public of progress toward the goals being made through existing programs, and to identify opportunities for collaboration or replication of successful program models to other parts of the county. Some of the concurrent efforts that are already in motion include:

- **FIRST 5 Santa Clara County PoP programs and Family Resource Center Initiative**
- **SJ2020 – Citywide plan to close the achievement gap**
- **Gilroy Articulation and Alignment Pilot**
- **Gilroy Data Management Pilot**
- **Franklin-McKinley replication of the Harlem Children’s Zone**
- **Head Start and Early Head Start Expansion**

Any of these projects may guide county-wide replication, and in fact, working from a project base may be a strategy for developing the system of systems. Each project serves as a demonstration of an approach to honor more goals of the Master Plan, and as resources become available, it gets replicated or expanded to similar organizational or community contexts.

4.4 Early Implementation Projects

Each advisory group should organize a task team to focus on the development of their assigned Early Implementation Projects.

For the Civic Engagement Leadership Group, those are:

- **Develop a data management plan and system**
- **Develop marketing tools for the early learning plan effort**
- **Conduct a public forum on family engagement**
- **Conduct a facilities inventory to calibrate the need for new spaces for unserved children by zip code. This is an urgent priority if expansion of actual spaces and increased access to a preschool program is to be achieved for even small increments of the 5,000 children who would be eligible for preschool if the space were available.**

For the Program Development Leadership Group, they are:

- **Create a multi-district K-3/and ECE team to produce an articulation and alignment handbook**
- **Develop provider guidelines for family engagement**
- **Publish baseline quality standards**
- **Continue efforts to establish a Santa Clara County ELQIS pilot**
- **Establish a workforce development collaborative**

- **Expand implementation of kindergarten readiness assessments**
- **Take the lead on completing some of the pending projects related to planning listed below**

4.5 Pending Projects

While the Early Learning Initiative planning process produced a number of consensus policy statements for moving forward, a handful of very important policies were left unaddressed, and each should be the focus of one of the semi-annual all-play public meetings of the advisory groups or the focus of a special summit that could be convened and funded by an outside organization or new supporter of early education.

4.5 A Dual Language Learning

Over 25% of Santa Clara County’s children are English language learners, and research has made clear the importance that reading proficiently in English by the end of third grade makes to succeeding later in life. Abundant research on language learning also makes clear that vocabulary development and syntactical structure as early as age 3 is the platform for later reading proficiency. A joint task team should be formed,



including representatives of both advisory groups, to study the best practices for dual language learning and bring back a set of program/pilot recommendations the full group.

4.5 B Reflecting the Developmental Continuum in All Programs

One of the key values to emerge from the master planning process was that all three sectors of early learning, infant/toddler, preschool, and K-3, should be

responsive to the individual developmental needs of the child. While that value was universally shared, the idea was never considered in relation to the implementation of any specific programs and found no venue for its display.

4.5 C Including Family Child Care

Once other elements of this “system of systems” begin to be implemented, it is important that the group engage the family child care provider community and find pathways for their integration into the county effort. Both large and small group homes willing and interested in meeting the same quality standards could play a role in smaller group preschool, transitional preschool and special needs services. The homes can be organized into preschool networks for collaborative connections. Homes not providing preschool may be interested in serving stand-alone or in networks for supporting a supplement wrap-around experience for children who are enrolled in part-day programs.

4.6 Considering the Broad Strategies

4.6 A The “System of Systems” Approach

Early on in the plan we considered the idea of a “system of systems” because the planning process was alive with energy committed to a grand design, and the grandness of it did not mean a single public agency could or would have control over all the elements. This was going to be a new concept where one aspect of functional responsibility for a part of a system might belong to a public agency, while another equally important function might be delivered by a different sector entirely.

In considering a system of systems approach the most important thing to the end user is that it looks and behaves as one system, irrespective of the component parts. Nothing appears fragmented or incomprehensible. In recent years the tools of enterprise architecture frameworks have been borrowed from the military, aerospace and technology sectors to overcome this challenge and overhaul public agencies. In 1998, the Federal Government set a goal to develop enterprise architecture for each Cabinet level agency that would improve information and data flows within the agency, and increase transparency and user friendliness for the public. The result for electronic access to information, public research reports and answers to question from agencies that developed enterprise architecture is very positive.^{xi}

In Santa Clara County, the goal would be for enterprise architecture to mirror all the business processes of the system of systems, once each contributor has agreed to standards for all the elements. All the data that needs to be collected to describe the system, monitor organizational processes and children’s progress, workforce quality, etc., would be maintained within the system. In fact, everything relevant to comprehending the system would be maintained within the architectural framework of the system.

^{xi} Staff accessed two agencies, the Office of Management and Budget and Health and Human Services to extract tables, policy documents and other research matter related to completing the Master Plan with great ease and no glitches.

With enterprise architecture, as much or more attention is paid to the nexus points where the breaks in flow could occur as is paid to the general fabrication of an integral component. Linkages to another system, and especially an outside system, are recognized as an inherently weak spot and can cause a project to fail if not managed self-consciously. The equivalent metaphor for the early learning profession would be the notion of seamless operations. With enterprise architecture, the seam is acknowledged and it is paid attention to because that is where a communication breakdown will occur. Covering it over won't erase the seam, so make it strong enough that the connection can be taxed by many users and will not break down.

Similarly, an integrated system of early learning education for Santa Clara County would leave the integrity of individual funding streams and organizational lines of responsibility intact, coordinating the implementation of a number of programs in order to reach shared meta-goals for the community.

Operationally, this system of systems would:

- **Coordinate data collection**
- **Manage both internal (to the collaborative) and external (public) communications**
- **Track the progress of the overall system against intermediate and long-term goals**
- **Externalize communications and operations to the community at large through transparent easy to access and user friendly management information system**
- **Manage system level communications among the collaborators through a sophisticated intranet-type interface**
- **Foster positive branding of the system identity through its effectiveness in projecting a “whole” from disparate and decentralized parts**

4.6 B The Place-Based Strategy Approach

Through the PoP project, preschool programs entered a modified place-based strategy model, where the geographic location of the program site was specifically selected for the presence of several interrelated variables. In the planning process for the developmental early education system, one school district decided to adopt a well-known community to schools development model called the Harlem Children's Zone, created by Geoffrey Canada. This model is explicitly designed to serve two functions; to psychically and physically redevelop the social and physical community where the children live, and to provide a continuously managed developmental education experience for every child, from early childhood to college admission. It is designed to be a transformative experience on every level—emotional, social, and cognitive—and their results are inspiring to say the least. Test scores are up, children's community environments are markedly more secure, and through fund-raising the enrichment agenda is extraordinary.

Another place-based strategy that is worthy of consideration because it has been successful in actually reducing the achievement gap and it employs a school to community approach is the Early Success Program in Montgomery County, Maryland. Montgomery County has many characteristics in common with Santa Clara County; a diverse well-educated populace, affluent and very engaged with the public schools. The county also has had an influx of diverse new residents who are struggling with school achievement.

The county Superintendent of Schools, Jerry Weast, devised a Prek-3 approach to primary education, and met with teachers and parents to launch this project. Collectively the teachers, administrators and parents decided to intercept the achievement gap among a fast growing segment of the Latino and African-American child population enrolled in 60 schools.



Working backwards from the end goal to the preschool experience, the curriculum was revised and differential investments were made in the primary grades, kindergarten and pre-kindergarten programs. After four years results were demonstrable and both baseline and end of year test scores had increased with each year of participation in the program. There is no “fade-out” and the research indicates unequivocally, that a child’s achievement trajectory can be changed as early as kindergarten with purposeful, intentional, and developmental instruction. The gains are not only increased but sustained over 4 to 5 years.

For both Harlem Children’s Zone and Montgomery, MD, the true test of the model will come with college entrance, and both programs have about ten years to go to see how well their classes of 2016-2020 will fare.

4.7 Organizing the Work

Shepherding this process forward will require an organization with a robust organizational infrastructure, stable program funding to maintain consistent staffing, and the experience and stature in the local education community to forge connections and facilitate cooperation among local, state, and federally-funded agencies. Accordingly, the planning process stakeholders overwhelmingly agreed that the Santa Clara County Office of Education was well positioned to manage the coordination and communication of master plan implementation moving forward. To that end, the county office has already organized a department of Early Learning Services, and appointed a full-time director to both manage the department and engage the stakeholders of the plan in the early learning and K-12 sectors.

Additionally, planning stakeholders identified the need for an existing agency to provide the crucial links to the infant- and toddler-based care communities whose participation will help realize the vision of preschool as a key bridge in the developmental continuum. Overwhelmingly, stakeholders agreed that FIRST 5 Santa Clara County was best positioned for that work.

But even as these operational roles have been identified, ensuring the Master Plan is a success requires creating a new time line for the inauguration of the implementation process and developing a process for transitioning to the a new advisory structure. Developing a time line for implementation is somewhat administrative and easy to manage. Figuring out the key stakeholders for leadership on the twin advisory groups is more complicated.

We recommended a twin structure of advisory groups, each of equal standing because without key stakeholders and future allies who will invest in and support the overall goals of this effort, the legitimacy of the enterprise will always be second or third tier. Over time, perhaps within five years, we would expect the overlapping spheres of influence to merge and one policy advisory group would support the guidance of the overall system of systems.

4.7 A Participation in the Advisory Structure

We recommend that generally speaking, public discussion meetings are open to whoever wants to attend and participate in group activities. If the ground rules are clear and enforced, the floor is open only to those who are constructive and interested in building systems. The Chair of each task team or work group would comprise the Advisory Leadership Group on each committee. This group would have the subject matter knowledge in child development, workforce development, primary curriculum and teaching strategies to put the program together and frame it for evaluation.

The Program Development Leadership Group will include leaders in program implementation roles like the Assistant Superintendent and the Director for Early Learning Services at SCCOE, the heads of other groups charged with getting the system of systems up and running. For the Civic Leadership Group, charged with positioning the work of the master plan within the agenda of the broader community, SCCOE Superintendent and Executive Director of the First 5 Commission, and perhaps elected or appointed members of each Board

would be engaged. The majority of participants would be composed of leaders from outside the education field who have experience in real estate development, enterprise architecture, fund raising, politics, communications and the like. This group would be well networked within the local business, technology, and allied public sectors.

4.8 Demonstrating Leadership

One of most important aspects of the Santa Clara County Early Learning Master Plan is that it will be the first and closest approximation to the State Master Plan for School Readiness developed in 2002. The symbolism is important because that plan was developed by a broad base of statewide influencers who struggled mightily to create a developmentally continuous system of learning; a transformative change in the organization and delivery of public education in the state of California. Success in Santa Clara County could percolate up the inter-governmental pipeline to the benefit of children throughout the state.

Second, the development of a comprehensive, coherent, and well-articulated system of early learning is crucial to the success of Santa Clara County's future. As global economic changes continue to transform the nature of Silicon Valley's workforce, it is increasingly important that the community is able to develop a homegrown, highly talented workforce too. In a future where preschool is at the operational and philosophical bridge within the developmental continuum, we know that the achievement gap can be eliminated for all groups of students and Santa Clara County can demonstrate that true equity of high achievement in public education is indeed possible.

With a talent-rich workforce, a diverse populace, and a history of research developments, Santa Clara County is poised to lead the newest revolution in public education. By placing high quality, effective preschool at a pivot point in a child's early experiences, the successful establishment of this new education system can draw a direct line from early education to a well-developed adult populace. Silicon Valley led the first wave of technological innovation 4 decades ago, and changed the lives of people around the world through new uses and applications of technology in everyday life. In the same way, the successful implementation of the concept of preschool being embedded within an unbroken, continuous line of human development may change the way we think of education forever.



Letter of Appreciation



All of us at the Karen Hill Scott Company, want to express our deepest gratitude to the leadership and staff of the Santa Clara County Office of Education for an absolutely first rate client- consultant experience. We have to begin with the Santa Clara County Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Charles Weis, who is not only a strong and ardent believer in early education; he had the courage to back ECE among K-12 educators long before others truly understood that early learning is the bricks and mortar for the “House of Knowledge.”

Other SCCOE team members were amazingly helpful, supportive and just plain nice. Don Bolce was always available and organized with a team that made logistics second nature. Underneath that calm and easy going exterior is a sharp and well-organized mind that never misses a beat. Lisa Kaufman was our first responder on many issues and has an extraordinary capacity for multi-tasking, keeping track of all loose ends, and achieving her goals. She will be a very effective navigator for the Plan.

To the support staff that made sure there was enough of everything and didn’t blink an eye no matter how many or how large our handouts, we thank you for keeping the day on an even keel and being responsive to all the stakeholders and community leaders. You are true professionals.

And to the participants who developed much of the content that is in this document, we thank you for giving us the opportunity to get acquainted and to work with you. We are so appreciative of the spirit of true collaboration in Santa Clara County, but in equal measure are impressed with the knowledge base, motivation, and commitment to excellence in everything you do. We are very confident that whatever you set out to do here in Santa Clara County, you will get it done.

We feel very confident that if this group stays on task, and works for the change they outlined in their vision, not only will Santa Clara County be model for the state, the nation will be looking this way too.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen Hill Scott". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Karen Hill Scott, Ed.D. and the team at the Karen Hill Scott Company

John Harris, Melinda Felice, Christine da Silva, Dani Belisle, and Ariana Sani



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Appendices

The following appendices can be found online at <http://www.plan4preschool.org/site/county/santa-clara/> and <http://www.sccoe.org>. There you will find:

Santa Clara County Preschool Planning Initiative: Preschool Master Plan – Appendix

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Appendix 1: Public Policy Context of Santa Clara County

Appendix 2: Workgroup Outputs

Appendix 3: Case Statement Results and Comments

ⁱ **Figure 2-1** Funding Silos in Early Care and Education in Santa Clara County

Glossary of Acronyms in Figure 2-1 for publicly subsidized child development programs

Centers	Licensed Child Care Centers with a State contract	Full Day Preschool	State Preschool Program for 3-4 year old children for a full day session
Homes	Family Child Care Homes affiliated with network receiving State support	Pre-K	State funded half-day Pre-kindergarten program for 4 year old children
APP	State funded Alternative Payment Program of direct financial assistance to parents to pay for child care.	PoP	Power of Preschool: a program of early education enhancements funded by state and local First 5 Agencies
AP2	Federally funded Alternative Payment Program for welfare recipients in the workforce (Stage 2).	Migrant	Migrant Programs: child development programs for multi-ages that adapt to the seasonal employment needs of migrant families.
AP3	Federally funded Alternative Payment Program for welfare recipients who have transitioned off cash aid and who have been in State 2 for 24 months (Stage 3).	Head Start	Head Start Program: a federally funded preschool program for 3-4 year old children that also offers with comprehensive services for health, dental, family support services
Preschool	State Preschool Program for 3-4 year old children for a half-day session.	Stage 1 AP	Federally funded child care assistance funds for welfare recipients transitioning off welfare to work and not yet steadily employed.