

Communities and Schools for Career Success

Year 3 Implementation Evaluation Report Outcome Summary

Modeled after an approach first developed in Massachusetts, the California Department of Education (CDE) and the California Workforce Investment Board (CalWIB) support CS² in California. Since its inception in 1999, CS² currently includes a network of four California communities: San Diego, Yolo County, Sacramento and Petaluma. CS² is an approach to school reform that centers on two innovations. First, at the local level, change agents known as “School/Community Entrepreneurs” are trained and positioned to integrate and spur local educational improvement and school and community connections. Second, site teams of Entrepreneurs are supported by New Ways to Work (New Ways), the organization contracted by CDE to serve as the statewide capacity-building organization.



Representing a comprehensive focus on student learning in middle and high schools that includes academic learning, career development and youth development with the ultimate goal of improving student achievement, CS² sites are supported by New Ways through training, materials, on-site coaching, network meetings and annual planning retreats. The initiative is also supported by ongoing evaluation. In the Fall 2002, New Ways hired Public Works, Inc., a California-based non-profit consulting firm to evaluate the third year of implementation. This datasheet summarizes the analysis of Year 3 implementation (2002-03) conducted by Public Works, Inc.

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Student Academic Outcomes in CS² Schools



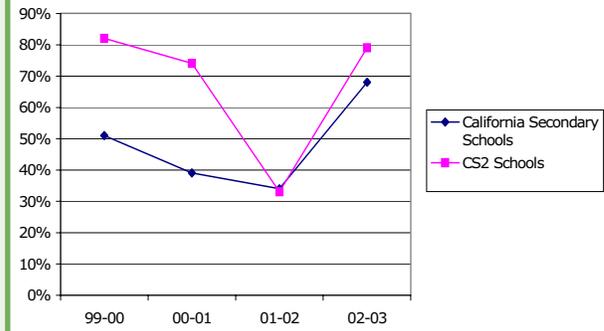
The **Academic Performance Index (API)** rates the performance of schools in California by computing a single composite score currently based on a school's scores on tests in the state's accountability system. Schools are responsible for meeting annual growth targets for the school as well as their subgroups.

CS² schools have consistently performed as well or better than the state's secondary schools, in which 68% of all California secondary schools met their growth target compared to 79% of CS² schools in 2002-03. The following figure shows the percentage of schools meeting API growth targets over time comparing CS² schools to California secondary schools.

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Academic Performance Index (API)

% of Schools Meeting API Growth Targets



California generates a **“Similar Schools” Rank** for all California schools based on their performance compared to schools with similar characteristics such as teacher qualifications and student ethnicity, mobility and socioeconomic status.

CS² schools are consistently raising the percentage of schools with a higher “Similar Schools” rank when compared to the schools' overall API ranks. Across sites, over a third (37%) of all CS² schools in 2003 had a higher similar schools rank than the statewide rank, compared to 33% in 2002, 23% in 2001 and 14% in 2000 (the baseline year of the initiative).

California tracks the percentage of students meeting University of California and California State University A-G requirements, those requirements laid out as the set of minimum course requirements for admission. This number is an important signal of the expectations that school has for its students and a vital aspect of ensuring that all student have equity of postsecondary opportunity.

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The percentage of students who are meeting A-G requirements varies considerably from CS² site to site—ranging from 4% to 86% in 2001-02, the latest year for which data is available from CDE, with some schools making a steady improvement over time and others experiencing

both increases and decreases over time. Some CS² sites have implemented strategies to improve A-G percentages including the approval of ROP courses and improving the reporting of data to CDE. However, attention to A-G requirements continues to be critical.

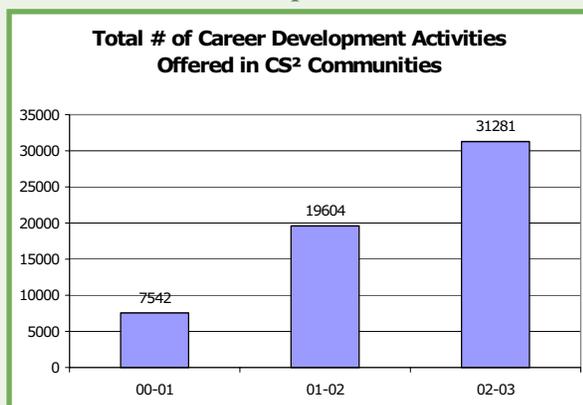
Developing and Enrolling Students in Career Pathways



CS² schools are undergoing a range of efforts to implement career-focused education through the use of career pathways, career academies and more general efforts to transform large, comprehensive high schools to small learning communities, a strategy which has shown promise and is the focus of much of the reform nationally related to high school education.

Two CS² sites have focused their efforts on the transformation of large, comprehensive schools to small learning communities for all high school students.

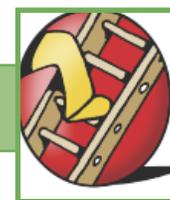
Career Development Activities



Under its Education for the 21st Century (E21) initiative, all Sacramento high school students are required to enroll in small learning communities in 2003-04 and enrollment for San Diego high school students in the five comprehensive high schools involved in CS² converting to small learning communities is planned for 2004-05. Across the four communities, CS² schools offer 91 career pathways, career academies or small learning communities.

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Career Development Activities



CS² sites record the number of students participating in Career Development activities using the following three categories: (1) career awareness activities including workplace tours and career days, (2) career exploration activities including job shadows, career mentoring or service learning, and (3) career preparation activities including paid work experience, internships and senior projects.

Entrepreneurs in CS² communities have organized and implemented a wide range of career development activities and programs in their communities. A few examples

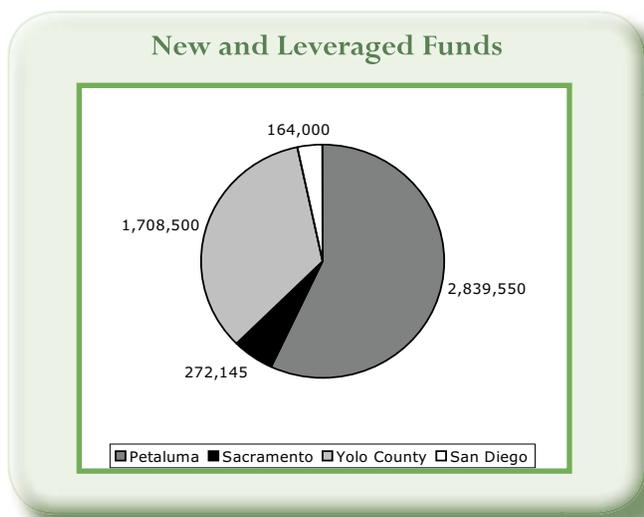
In total, CS² communities reported providing 31,281 [career development] activities and experiences in 2002-2003, up from 19,604 in 2001-02 and 7,542 in 2000-2001, the first year of the initiative.

include an after school program infused with service learning; numerous career fairs and youth leadership events; middle school career exploration curriculum, professional development and partnerships with employers, and a Youth One-Stop employment center. In total, CS² communities reported providing 31,281 activities and experiences in 2002-03, up from 19,604 in 2001-02 and 7,542 in 2000-01, the first year of the initiative.

Dollars Raised by Entrepreneurs



Making community connections and fund raising to support the launch of priority initiatives are an important role played by Entrepreneurs. CS² sites submit data with regard to the amount of funds raised by CS² Entrepreneurs using the definition of “funds raised for which the activities of Entrepreneurs have contributed substantially.”



Data submitted by the sites suggests that fundraising, grant writing and leveraging existing funds are an important component of their work and all sites are able to report success in garnering resources for their activities. ROP, Perkins, Americorps and VISTA, CalWORKS, Workforce Investment Act as well as specific foundation and grant funding sources such as the Gates Foundation and the Pupil Success Initiative are among the wide range of resources used by sites to sustain the initiative. In total, the sites reported nearly \$5 million in new and leveraged funding, representing five times the total \$960,000 invested by CDE in these sites through 2002-03.

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About Communities and Schools for Career Success (CS²)



CS² involves the entire community in developing and implementing plans to help students progress successfully from middle school through high school, and to make informed choices about post-secondary education. CS² reshapes the relationships between schools and their communities, improves academic achievement, and connects student learning more directly to the world of work and the broader community.

To view or download a copy of the Executive Summary or the Third Year Evaluation by Public Works, Inc., go to www.nww.org/toolchest.html or email info@nww.org to request a hard copy.

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