

A Regional Approach to Closing the Workforce Skills Gap

June 28, 2017

Hans Johnson, Kevin Cook, and Marisol Cuellar Mejia

Supported with funding from the College Futures Foundation and the Sutton Family Fund



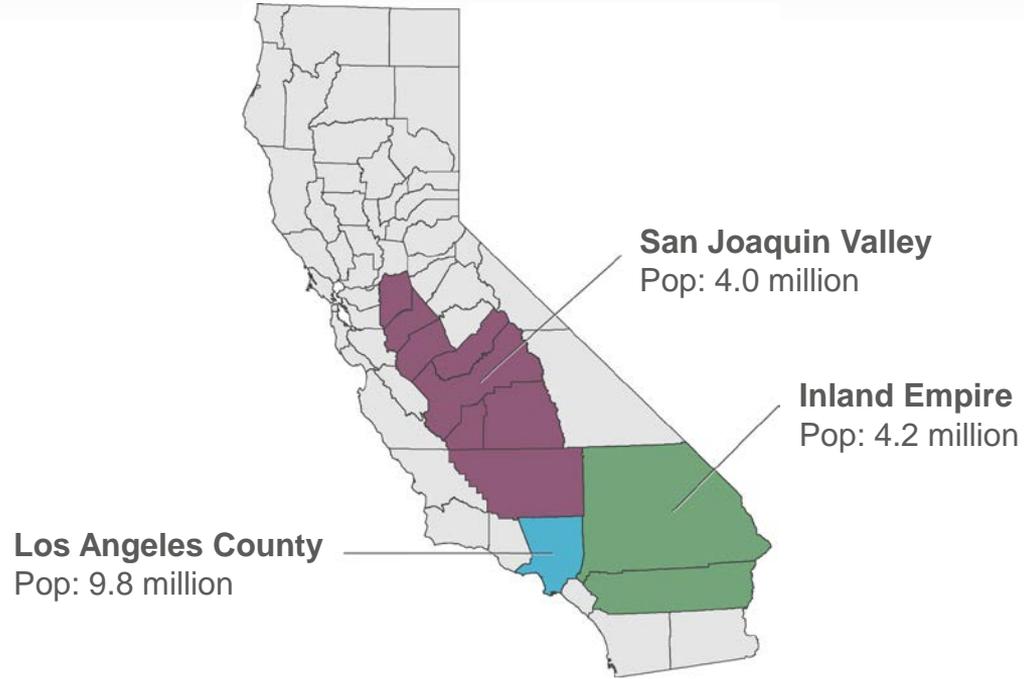
PPIC

PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

California faces a large workforce skills gap

- California's economy relies heavily on highly educated workers
 - By 2030, the state will need 1.1 million more college graduates—above and beyond the current pace
 - To meet the shortfall, the state must substantially improve college graduation for underrepresented groups
- Most students attend college close to home
 - Colleges must act *regionally* to improve outcomes

Three regions will play a critical role in closing the gap

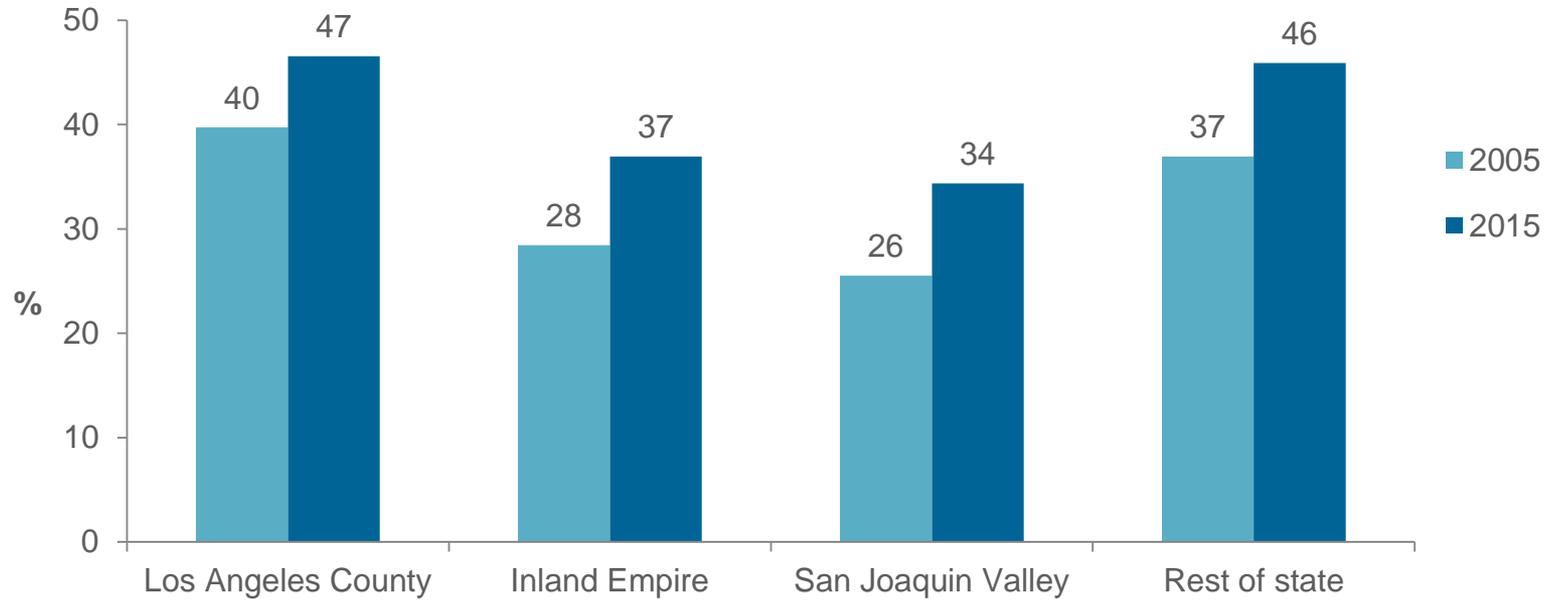


Median income is relatively low in each region

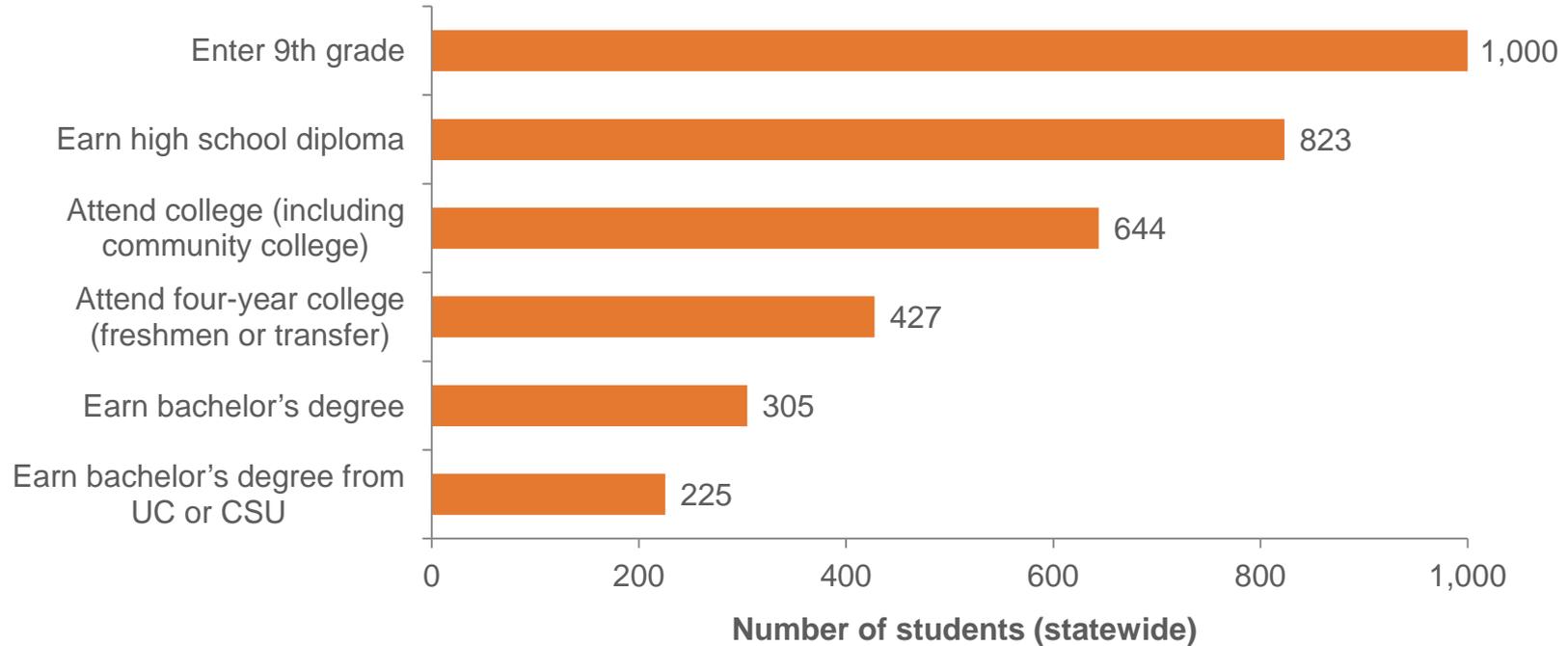


Each region has made gains in college preparation

High school graduates with college-preparatory courses



Students fall out of the higher education pipeline at critical transition points



Regions face different challenges

Region	Challenge in the higher education pipeline*
Los Angeles County	Lower high school graduation rates
Inland Empire	Lower rates of high school graduates attending two- or four-year colleges
San Joaquin Valley	Lower rates of high school graduates attending four-year colleges (as freshmen or transfer)

*Compared to statewide

How do regions close the skills gaps?

- Four overarching strategies:
 - Improve college readiness for graduating high school students
 - Raise completion rates for students already enrolled in college
 - Increase transfer from community colleges to four-year colleges
 - Enroll more first-time freshmen

Colleges face many barriers to improving outcomes...

- Capacity constraints
 - Physical vs. funded capacity
 - Geographical variation in access to four-year colleges
- Overcrowding at CSU
- Low four-year graduation rates
- Low transfer rates at community colleges
- Persistent achievement gaps

... but recent policy and program changes hold promise

- Increased state funding
- Renewed focus on improving outcomes for *all* students
- Satellite campuses and more involvement from local industry
- Efforts to improve student success at community colleges
 - Basic Skills Initiative
 - Associate Degrees for Transfer
 - Guided Pathways
- Our recommendations build upon these ongoing efforts

Policy recommendations

- Increase capacity at four-year universities
 - Continue efforts to boost four-year graduation rates
 - Use satellite campuses to help serve local demand
- Improve the transfer pathway
 - Focus on regional coordination and program alignment
 - Expand Associate Degrees for Transfer

Policy recommendations (cont.)

- Develop regional (not local) college promise programs
 - Grant priority enrollment to four-year colleges
 - Create regional referral pools for CSU
- Support regional data sharing and evaluation
 - Examples include Central Valley Higher Education Consortium and Growing Inland Achievement
 - State should play a role in coordinating such efforts

A Regional Approach to Closing the Workforce Skills Gap

June 28, 2017

Hans Johnson, Kevin Cook, and Marisol Cuellar Mejia

Supported with funding from the College Futures Foundation
and the Sutton Family Fund



PPIC

PUBLIC POLICY
INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

Notes on the use of these slides

These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

Kevin Cook, 415-291-4445, cook@ppic.org

Thank you for your interest in this work.