

# The **C**OMMUNITY **E**DUICATION **W**ORKER PROGRAM

## EVALUATION REPORT

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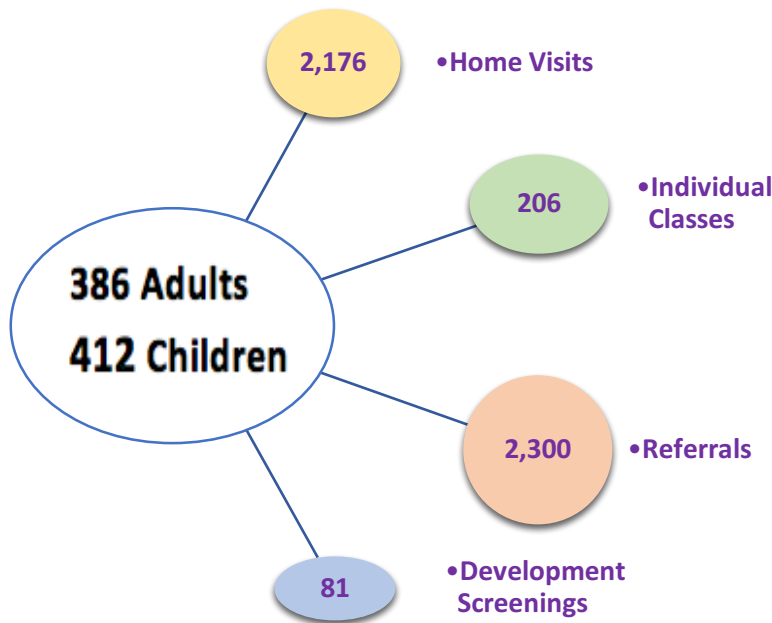
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## Executive Summary

The Community Education Worker (CEW) Program is a community-generated response to inequities in kindergarten readiness. The Program is a partnership between four culturally specific community based organizations, several funders, and the Community Capacitation Center (CCC) at the Multnomah County Health Department. Staff and interns from the CCC used qualitative and quantitative methods to assess program process and effectiveness, and changes associated with the program among several groups of stakeholders. It focuses on activities/services occurring between 2014 and 2017. Below are key findings.

### Participants Served and Activities Conducted



- Program Strengths and Successes**
- Program Model
  - Incentives that facilitate participation
  - CEWs’ positive attitudes
  - The role of the CCC
  - The Steering Team
- Program Challenges**
- Funding capacity and structure
  - Staff changes
  - Lack of communication with school staff
  - Location and lack of space for group meetings
  - Low numbers of participants in group activities

### Changes Associated with the Program

| <i>In CEWS</i>  | <i>CEW families</i>   | <i>In Participants</i>  | <i>In communities</i>   | <i>In schools</i>  | <i>In systems</i>  |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| A) Increased awareness;<br>B) Increased knowledge;<br>C) New sense of responsibility; and<br>D) Professional and educational advancement and development. | A) Increased awareness and knowledge; and<br>B) Changes in family practice. | A) Increased awareness and participation;<br>B) Increased appreciation for the value of education;<br>C) Increased interaction between parents;<br>D) Parent’s and children’s behavior changes/skill development. | A) Increased awareness;<br>B) Increased participation/ utilization; and<br>C) Community building. | A) Collaboration between schools and CBOs;<br>B) Increased awareness of the CEW model. | A) Increased awareness of the program;<br>B) Popular education visible at the system level; and<br>C) Inclusion of community member voice. |

## Background

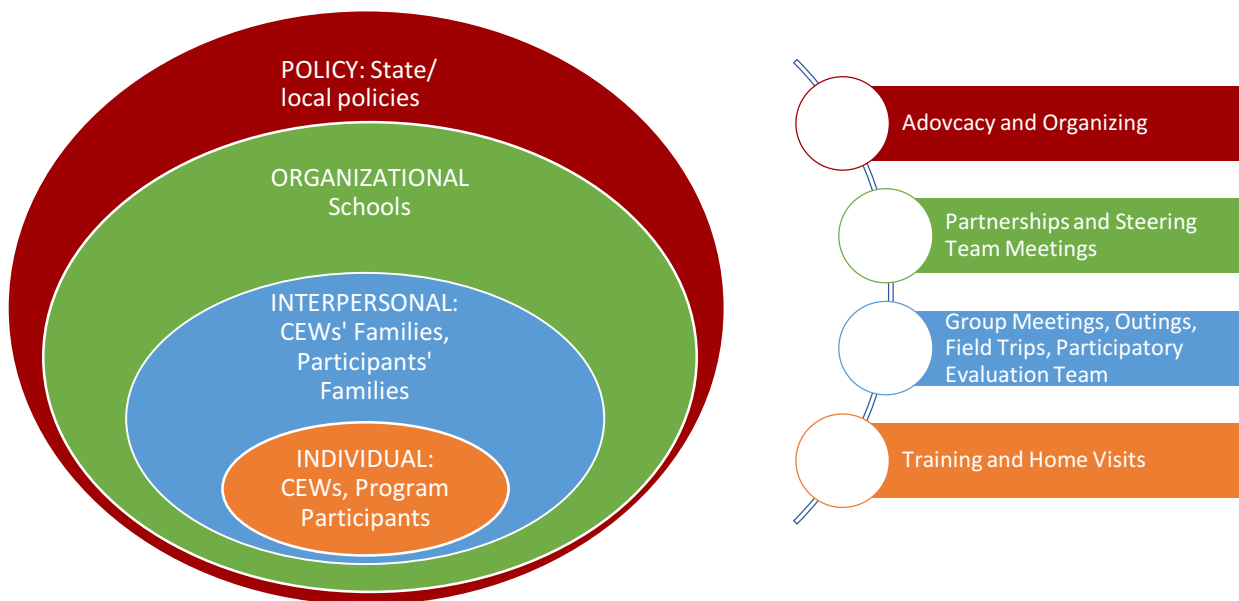
The Community Education Worker (CEW) Program is a community-generated response to inequities in kindergarten readiness affecting low-income children of color in the Portland metropolitan area. It is a partnership between Latino Network, Urban League of Portland, Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO), Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA), Multnomah County Health Department's Community Capacitation Center (CCC), and three funding organizations: Early Learning Multnomah, Social Venture Partners Portland, and the Northwest Health Foundation Kaiser Permanente Community Fund.

The CEW program is grounded in the Community Health Worker model, which focuses on community and family empowerment and addressing the social determinants of health. The program builds on the CHW model with a strong focus on early childhood education and parent/child learning. It also leverages existing resources such as the Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN) Program and existing models such as Juntos Aprendemos (Together We Learn) to improve kindergarten readiness.

## Conceptual Framework

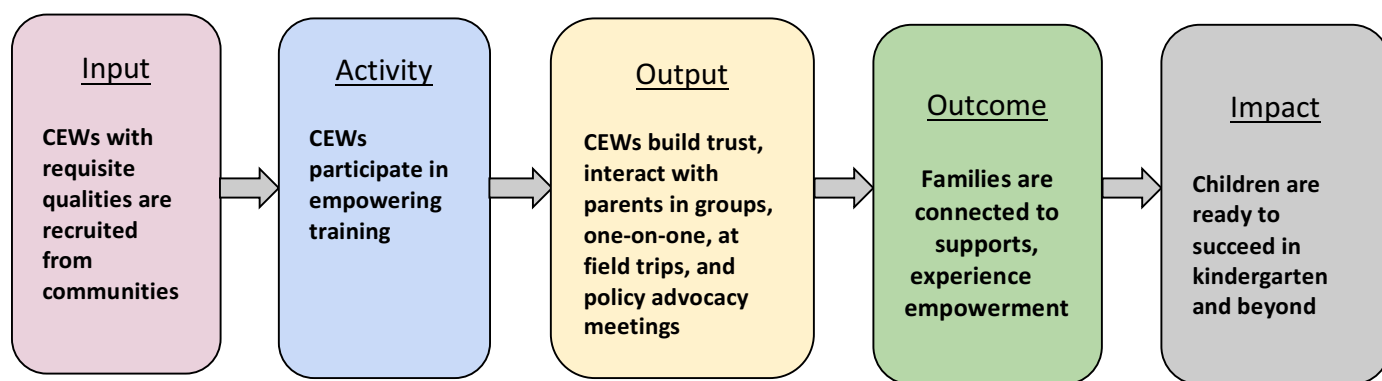
Our evaluation framework is informed by our view of Community Education Workers (CEWs) as trusted community members who participate in training in order to address educational inequities in their own communities. They combine experiential knowledge and community wisdom with academic knowledge of early childhood learning and development.

Figure 1. The Social Ecological Model (left side) and Corresponding CEW Program Approaches (right side)



Adapted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), The Social Ecological Model: A Framework for Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/overview/social-ecologicalmodel.html> (Retrieved June 10, 2017).

The program activities (described in the graphic above), conducted mainly by CEWs, create impact across all levels of the social-ecological model. Among CEWs, activities work to a) increase the knowledge they need to serve the community, b) increase their confidence in their ability to serve the community, c) support their professional growth and advancement, and d) increase their psychological empowerment. Among children, they make sure that children a) are on track developmentally, b) that those who are not on track developmentally are referred for further assessment and services, c) are physically healthy, and d) are emotionally healthy. Among families, they ensure that they a) have social support and supportive networks, b) are empowered to advocate for child/family needs with the school system, c) are skilled and confident in supporting child's early learning, d) are able to influence policy related to early childhood, e) are physically and mentally healthy, and f) are providing nurturing, responsive, and predictable care and a supportive home learning environment. At the community level, activities support the broader community's increased awareness of variation in a) childhood development, b) parenting norms and styles, and c) methods for assessing childhood development. In schools, they a) make certain that schools are welcoming to and supportive of families who are diverse in all ways. At the policy level, they influence a) the implementation of the program statewide, b) the implementation of culturally responsive policies and interventions that promote prenatal and early childhood health and well-being, and c) the reduction in the educational equity gap.



According to our theory of change (above), CEWs who possess certain requisite personal qualities are recruited from within the communities they serve. They participate in training based in popular education philosophy and methodology, which creates an atmosphere where CEWs feel comfortable sharing their knowledge and perspectives. CEWs' capacity and knowledge increases, and their belief that they are able to bring about change in their communities is enhanced. They develop social support networks with other CEWs, training facilitators, and CEW supervisors, some of whom are themselves CEWs, which further demonstrates the capacity which already exists in communities. In turn, CEWs use popular education to build capacity among isolated families in their communities. Supported by CEWs, families are able to achieve intermediate outcomes such as having a primary care home, participating in parent advisory councils and other community groups, and increasing their ability to advocate for their children with systems. Research has shown that these intermediate outcomes are associated with more distal outcomes that cannot be measured during the initial phases of a project, such as increased kindergarten readiness and reduction in the equity gap in education (Children's Institute, 2016).

## Methods

Staff from the Community Capacitation Center used both qualitative and quantitative methods to assess program process and effectiveness, and changes associated with the program. The primary

quantitative tool was a pre-post questionnaire conducted roughly at baseline and after six months, or at program exit, by CEWs with program participants. Pre-post questionnaires assessed changes in access variables (such as connection to a primary care physician) that are associated with kindergarten readiness, psychological empowerment, social support, and ability to advocate for children. Other tools included activity tracking forms used by CEWs to track home visits conducted with families and group sign-in sheets. In compliance with HIPAA regulations, hard copies of forms completed by CEWs during home visits and classes were delivered monthly to the Data Manager at the CCC, who entered the data and ran periodic reports.

Data from pre-post questionnaires were transferred into SPSS statistical software (Version 22) and frequencies were calculated. Paired t-tests were conducted to assess changes from baseline to follow-up in continuous variables (i.e. variables related to empowerment, social support and ability to advocate, which were presented in Likert scale format). In addition, an empowerment scale was created by combining the items related to empowerment, and a social support scale was created by combining relevant items. Because we could not assure the data met the normality assumption necessary for paired t tests, we re-ran the analysis using a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test, which is not dependent on the assumption of a normal distribution of data. Statistics derived from the Wilcoxon Test reaffirmed the conclusions reported in “Findings,” below. In order to achieve maximum statistical power on the t-test, we used all valid responses, which means the total number of participants varies from 64 to 76 depending on the item. (In the tables, “df” stands for “degrees of freedom.” The degrees of freedom are always one fewer than the number of valid responses for the given item.) We set the criterion for statistical significance at  $p \leq .05$ . In layperson’s terms, this means that in only 5% of cases or less would a result that meets this criterion occur by chance. Results for both individual variables and scales are reported in the Results section and detailed in Table 7 in the Appendix.

Due to the inclusion of a “don’t know” option (along with yes/no options) for the variables associated with kindergarten readiness, testing for significant differences in responses would have required complex statistical modeling, which was beyond the scope of this evaluation. For this reason, a comparison of the frequencies at baseline and follow-up is included as Table 6 and explored in the Results section.

The primary qualitative methods included focus groups and in-depth interviews. Focus groups were conducted with program participants, two with the Latinx community (with 8 participants in group 1 and 12 participants in group 2), and one with the Somali community (n=5). Also, one focus group was conducted with CEW supervisors (n=4). Interviews were conducted with all CEWs (n=8), program participants from the Urban League of Portland, IRCO, and NAYA (n=11), and key informants who included funders, school staff, and others participating in educational equity efforts at the local or state level (n=5), for a total of 24 interviews.

Interviews and focus groups were conducted in Spanish and English. An interpreter was utilized when conducting interviews with program participants from the Burmese, Somali, and Zomi communities. All interviews and focus groups were audio recorded and transcribed by a professional transcription service. Only the English sections were transcribed from the interviews conducted with an interpreter. Translations from the Spanish transcriptions are by the MPH intern (Rodriguez Garcia) and Principal Investigator (Wiggins).

Data from the in-depth interviews and the one focus group were analyzed using thematic analysis. The Principal Investigator, MPH, and MSW interns read and re-read the transcripts. Then, they developed a

codebook and coded all transcripts independently, using a modified form of grounded theory methodology (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Next, the MPH and MSW interns came together to cross-reference and discuss discrepancies in their coding. Lastly, they developed and defined themes.

The plan for this evaluation was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board at Portland State University.

### **Evaluation paradigm and evaluator positionality**

The paradigm (worldview) guiding this evaluation was community based participatory evaluation (CBPE). CBPE makes a number of assumptions, including: 1) our view of “truth” is affected by our experience and our positions in social hierarchies, 2) people most affected by inequities are the experts about their own experience, 3) researchers and evaluators need to practice critical reflexivity, meaning they need to be constantly aware of and constantly questioning how their perceptions are affected by their social position, and 4) people closest to the phenomena being investigated need to be involved at every stage of the evaluation process, from identifying the evaluation questions to disseminating the findings.

During this evaluation period, the CCC developed a truly participatory evaluation. An email invitation was sent to program stakeholders including CEWs, CEW supervisors, CCC program staff, and funders. Since Fall of 2015, meetings of the participatory evaluation team have been held monthly. In these fully bilingual meetings, popular education has been used to build collective knowledge about: 1) the meaning of evaluation, 2) the range of evaluation paradigms, 3) how beliefs about truth, knowledge and values influence approaches to evaluation, 4) the role of evaluation questions, 5) evaluation design, and 6) data collection methods. For more information about the participatory evaluation, see Wiggins, et al. (in press).

Regarding my role (Wiggins), I was both Principal Investigator and part of the program staff. I assisted with the initial and on-going capacitation of the CEWs. I participated in the Steering Team and facilitated some parts of the agenda. I supervised the Coordinator and made suggestions for program improvement. My deep connection to the Program had several positive aspects. My knowledge of the program and relationships with participants allowed me to understand context and learn things that an outside evaluator would probably have found difficult to understand or learn. However, my relationship to the program also introduced potential challenges. My commitment to the program could have made me resistant to accepting ways in which the model or the program needed to change. My relationship to participants could have made them resistant to telling me things they perceived I did not want to hear.

I attempted to ally these challenges and practice critical reflexivity in several ways. First, I searched especially hard for discrepant examples of positive phenomena. Additionally, I encouraged participants in in-depth interviews to be as honest as possible, and not to worry about my feelings, since their absolute honesty was essential for program improvement. I perceive that in most cases respondents were honest, though there can be no doubt that a true “outsider” would have perceived things that remain hidden to me.

Regarding my role (Rodriguez Garcia), as the MPH intern and evaluation lead I conducted most of the focus groups and interviews. I initially participated in the participatory evaluation meetings as an interpreter and community member. My knowledge of the program and relationships with CEWs and supervisors allowed me to understand the context of the program and relationships among program stakeholders. My relationship to the program prior to conducting the data collection may have introduced challenges. My relationship to CEWs, the PI, and supervisors may have influenced CEWs to

feel hesitant in sharing concerns about supervision or other program challenges. Also, being introduced to program participants by their CEW, prior to the start of the interview, may have influenced program participants to tell me things that they perceived I wanted to hear.

To limit the impact of these challenges I made sure to verbally review participant's rights, give them a copy of a passive informed consent form, and answer all questions. Additionally, on various occasions throughout the interviews/focus groups, I reminded evaluation participants that their responses were crucial for program improvement.

## Findings

The evaluation included process and outcome evaluation. Process evaluation assessed what is being done or what occurred in the program. Outcome evaluation sought to measure changes that are associated with the program. Below, we report the findings, first from the process evaluation, then from the outcome evaluation.

### Process Findings: Participant Demographics and Activities Conducted

CEW program participants are families with children between the ages of 0-6 who are likely to face educational inequities: children of color, children of immigrants and refugee families, children of low-income families, and English language learners. Tables 1, 2 and 3 in the Appendix provide information about the race/ethnicity, languages spoken at the home, and annual income of participants who reported this information. Data for race/ethnicity and languages spoken at the home are first provided numerically and then as a percentage of the total participants. The tables are organized by fiscal years (2015, 2016, 2017) and include an unduplicated total. Annual income describes this unduplicated total. Since each community organization reported a different range of incomes, the table is a synthesis of median income for each of the ranges.

Table 1 makes clear that the largest percentage of program participants are Hispanic/Latinx (32.6%) followed by Black/African American (22.6%). This is to be expected as Latino Network and the Urban League of Portland have been participating in the program since Year 1, whereas this is the first year that IRCO has been part of the program. In addition, 58.6 percent of families speak a language other than English at home; Spanish is the second most common language (after English) spoken at home by program participants (36.3%). It is notable that 86.9 percent of program participants reported an annual income below \$25,001. Mirroring the results from the Year 1 evaluation, the program continues to serve almost exclusively families living in poverty.

Tables 4 and 5 in the Appendix provide information about participants served and activities conducted in fiscal years 2015, 2016, and 2017. Additionally, table 4 shows the unduplicated total. Between 2014 and the present, CEWs served 278 families and engaged in a variety of activities including 24 group series that included 206 individual classes; over 60 percent of families served attended groups. CEWs conducted 2176 home visits. During the 2017 fiscal year 2,300 referrals were made. Basic needs/anti-poverty services were the most common type of referral made, at 723. These included referrals for rental assistance, diapers, clothing, household goods and furniture amongst others. Referrals to other community organizations was second highest at 423. These included referrals to culturally specific organizations, other community based organizations and faith-based organizations.



## Outcome Findings

As mentioned above, the outcome evaluation sought to measure changes associated with the program. In the next section, we use results from analysis of qualitative and quantitative data to describe changes in CEWs, CEWs' families, program participants, communities, schools, and systems. We also provide information about the strengths and challenges of various aspects of the program, as described by evaluation respondents. To protect confidentiality, respondents are identified by the category of respondent (CEW, CEW supervisor, program participant, and key informant).

## Program Strengths and Successes

Based on data from the interviews and focus groups, strengths and successes of the program include the program model, incentives that facilitate program participation, CEWs' positive attitudes, the role of the CCC, the Steering Team, and work with families.

➤ **Program model.** The majority of respondents referred to the program model and its different aspects as a key strength of the program. Most often, CEWs and program participants talked about the fact that parents and children are at the center of the program. CEW shared that they ask parents about their goals for their children; according to CEWs this was important in giving parents control to make decisions. They also highlighted that the program fosters opportunities for skill building among parents and children, and interactions between the two. Some examples included parents learning how to navigate the school system, parents engaging in everyday U.S. activities including writing checks to pay bills, and increased parent-to-child interaction and communication, amongst others which are further described (below) in the section on changes in participants. This aspect was facilitated through the use of popular education (PE). CEWs often mentioned that not only did they enjoy using PE but parents also enjoyed it. One CEW shared her experience with PE based on feedback from a program participant.

*"I feel like that's what makes them come. Because, when you do lecturing and lecturing, people get bored. But, when you do fun activities, they will say, 'Oh, my god, we feel like relieving the stress. We feel like having fun. We are enjoying.' That's what I feel makes them come back to the class because they say, 'When I'm here, I feel no stress, no nothing. I'm enjoy and I play,' and, I'm like, 'Yeah, that's good.'" -CEW*

In addition, program participants shared that using PE validated their lived experiences and created opportunities for participants to learn from each other and create knowledge together.

Across all categories respondents agreed that the program being culturally specific was key because CEWs are from the diverse cultural communities that they serve. Consequently, CEWs have shared lived experiences with program participants and speak the same language, which aids the trust and community building process between CEWs and program participants.

*"So, every one of my folks – male or female – that come to me that I work with, I've been through what they're going through. Maybe not the way they're doing it. But I've been in that place. And it makes it a lot different to have been in that spot." -CEW*

Key informants and CEWs identified the flexibility of the model as important because CBOs have the ability to serve their communities in ways that meet their unique needs. CEWs appreciated taking part in developing a program that valued and considered people's culture and the varied needs of families.

*"I think a neat aspect of this program or a strength of this program is that the ... element of*

*cultural specificity is obviously not shoehorned in. Each community that has been represented is given the freedom to really develop a curriculum that is relevant and services that are relevant to their specific community. I think in so many other programs, “culturally specific” has a really vague meaning, but I think in this program, it’s that it’s truly developed for and by a specific community on a micro level, and I think that’s a strength.” -CEW supervisor*

*“[I appreciate] the flexibility of the program. Having the broad scope of being able to help families with not only helping sign up for pre-k or kindergarten, but I can also help you with finding housing and can devote an hour or two to driving you around to sign up for applications at different apartments, because I have some flexibility in my schedule.” –CEW*

Program participants mentioned the many program-provided resources and activities, which are essential to meeting unique needs of the families. Some included: information about nutrition and healthy eating; field trips in the African American community; guest speakers to learn about other community resources; and interpretation and translation to communicate with school staff and understand letters from the school and bills from healthcare providers amongst others.

The program-wide embrace of decolonizing methodology, emphasis on social justice, and having conversations about institutionalized racism were described by key informants and supervisors as another strength of the model.

➤ **Incentives that facilitate program participation.** Program participants appreciated program leaders and CEWs being intentional in supporting parents’ participation. To them this was a concrete example of the staff’s awareness of the challenges faced by the community. Incentives that facilitated participation included childcare, gift cards for transportation, and food at group meetings. One program participant acknowledged the influence of gentrification, which has forced some community members to move far away from historic population centers, and shared her appreciation of the fact that the CEW was able to increase her transportation voucher by \$5 to allow her to continue attending group meetings with her community members.

➤ **CEWs’ commitment and positive attitudes.** Program participants commended the CEWs’ commitment to their work, their creativeness, and their positive attitudes. Program participants mentioned that CEWs were not only welcoming and engaging with parents but also with the kids. Various program participants described looking forward to the days when they had home visits or group meetings and they knew their kids did too. CEWs also acknowledged their commitment to helping families to the best of their ability.

*“Yes. I realize that, especially being new to this, I don’t have all the answers, and I don’t pretend to. I tell my clients all the time, “I will never make a promise to you. I will advocate like the dickens for you, I will resource my tail off for you, but I will never make a promise because if I make a promise and I don’t keep it, that sets me and you up for failure,” and that’s what I tell them.” –CEW*

In addition, program participants referenced the availability and flexibility of CEWs across all programs. They mentioned that CEWs were good about returning calls or messages, and if CEWs were not able to meet in person they provided assistance over the phone when possible, for example in interpreting to the doctor’s office. They described communication with CEWs as honest and open.

➤ **Role of the CCC.** The role of the CCC was described as essential and a strength by key Informants and CEWs, because CCC staff provides technical support and coordinates multiple funding streams for the various CBOs involved.

*“I think that one characteristic of the program that doesn’t often get talked about is just the way Noelle and Arika have pulled together multiple funding streams. I mean like they’ve got you – that’s a resource... All of the community based organizations that are a piece of it there – they’re putting their own in-kind in. They’re starting to think about how they look for grants together. It’s complex, and there’s a layer of sophistication, perhaps, that you have to have to manage all of that,” -Key Informant*

Additionally, supervisors ascribed value to the fact that evaluation is built and managed by CCC staff.

➤ **Steering Team.** The steering team was praised because it fosters shared learning, relationship building, and shared leadership among all program stakeholders. Most specifically, supervisors and CEWs expressed the value of funders participating in the steering team because it allows for funders to be aware of why CEWs and supervisors do the things they do. CEWs also agreed that they liked and learned from taking part in the decision making. A supervisor described her appreciation for the transparency and flatness of management structures. Another pointed out that a success of the steering team may be the teams’ commitment to maintaining the integrity of the steering team by running everything by the group first.

*“Even when there’s a value of transparency, I think often in practice, it’s a very weird separation between upper-level management decision-making and on-the-ground folks who are carrying out the services, and I don’t personally agree with that. I think that creates really bad decision-making, so I think that the flatness of our management structure is on one hand, a really great accountability factor.” –Supervisor*

➤ **Work with families.** When asked about success in their work in the community CEWs provided concrete examples which were often related to changes in participants (further described below). They described being able to assist program participants in finding housing, supporting a mom to keep her children, getting kids into pre-K, and teaching parents how to write checks in order to pay bills, amongst other things. In addition, one CEW asserted that she rebuilt connections to her agency for community members. Lastly, CEWs shared that in the current political climate parents know they need to continue participating in activities for the good of their children and not hide (because of fear of deportation).

## Program Challenges

Program challenges identified in focus groups and interviews included the funding capacity and structure, staff changes, a lack of communication with school staff, the location and lack of space for group meetings, and low numbers of participants in group activities.

➤ **Funding capacity and structure.** According to respondents from all groups, there is a lack of resources both in terms of people and money. Program participants perceived that funding was limited because there seemed to exist limitations in the activities that CEWs could plan with them. Also, they mentioned having noticed or heard that CEWs caseloads are full. CEWs described that they did not have enough money to buy needed supplies, and that there aren’t enough CEWs to meet the needs of the current families. One CEW shared that families sometimes call at all hours of the day and night because they need assistance.

Supervisors were unanimous that inconsistent funding capacity creates high administrative burden on programs.

*“I think that one of the only pieces, really, that holds this model back from really, truly coming into its own is that so much of our time is spent trying to get, manage, and understand the*

*funding structure that we don't necessarily have the capacity to do that in the long term."*  
-Supervisor

Supervisors and key informants also described that although CEWs are doing the best they can with the current staff capacity, they are not able to serve the needs of all current families.

*"I think like with any program, if there [were] more flexible funds to help families stabilize with the crisis that people are experiencing, whether it's housing or whether it's the immigration stuff that's happening in our country...and in our state and city right now..."* -Key informant

Identifying an important connection, they shared that the current funding limitation makes it difficult to show program impact at the community level. Key informants mentioned that the funding limitation is at least partly due to the fact that the innovation of the program makes it challenging to figure out where CEW fits into existing funding streams within the bigger system.

Lastly, supervisors pointed that the portion of funding allocated for supervision is too low and that there is a discrepancy between how much time they are spending on supervision and how much time they are paid to spend versus how much time is required to do the model well.

➤ **Staff Changes.** Five program participants, from two different organizations, shared that changes in CEW staffing have impacted the program. Program participants from one organization shared that a previous CEW had organized more opportunities for program participants to be politically involved (e.g. going to testify). Then, in another organization, respondents shared that sudden changes in staffing had lowered the number of program participants in the group. CEWs also described changes in supervisors as a challenge specific to the supervision they received; this is further described in the support and supervision section (below).

Changes in representation at the steering team meeting by one of the funding organizations was described as another challenge, primarily by supervisors.

*"I do a lot of the CEW work in-kind – I'm pulling from other programs to be here – and I feel sometimes it is not the most effective use of my time or the CEWs' time to explain the legitimacy of this program to people who are not particularly interested and who I'm never going to see again ... I don't know how long I've been on this project, over a year, and I think it's probably been four or five different steering teams that there's been some new corporate person in the room that we've had to sing and dance for."* -Supervisor

➤ **Lack of communication with school staff.** Key informants shared that although some group meetings are taking place at the schools, there is limited communication between CEWs and schools. Therefore, school staff is not well aware of the purpose or curriculum for the group meetings. The lack of communication and information limits how much school staff can share with other school staff and families about the program. Program supervisors identified the need to have marketing materials that succinctly explain the program to increase CEWs' power in interacting with school systems.

➤ **Location and lack of dedicated space for group meetings.** Program participants, key informants, and CEWs described this factor as limiting the number of program participants and posing a burden to CEWs carrying out their work. Key informants and program participants acknowledged that because groups are conducted on school grounds, the space is only available at certain times, which may limit group capacity and times the group can be held. CEWs and program participants shared additional concerns about CEWs having to carry materials back and forth between groups. For this reason, they

shared their desire to have groups in a different community location that was closer to participant's homes and where CEWs could leave their materials. Admittedly, doing so would work against the program goal of parents becoming more comfortable and familiar with the schools their children attend or will attend.

➤ **Low numbers of participants in groups.** Key informants identified that while some organizations have waitlists for their groups, others have low numbers of participants involved in their groups. Across all organizations at least five program participants also shared that their groups were small and they wished more people could be part of them to gain from the benefits they perceived.

## Capacitation/Training

Only CEWs were explicitly asked to assess the training they receive; however, supervisors also provided input when asked about program limitations. In this section, we first describe what CEWs liked or found useful (which included popular education, training topics, and the ripple effect), then how training could be improved (including the addition of more topics and changes in the schedule and logistics).

### Liked/found useful

➤ **Popular education (PE)** was unanimously identified as the aspect of the training that CEWs both liked and found useful. They liked the use of PE because it made topics easy to understand, created opportunities for all CEWs to participate, and facilitated building community among the CEW group. In addition, it facilitated their learning and gave them ideas and tools to apply to their work with families. One CEW described that it was useful because it convinced her that she could be a facilitator. Others CEWs highlighted that the use of PE encouraged them to stretch past their comfort zone and heal from past trauma. For various CEWs the use of popular education was key to the cross-cultural community building fostered by the training.

*“Just the way that it was presented, having everybody engage in their own level of [being] comfortable, and being asked to just take that comfortability and move it out just a notch, to try to challenge each person to let a little bit of their vulnerable side out. I think that that fostered a lot of healing because, often, CHWs come from backgrounds where they have felt it, they have lived it, they’ve experienced it, and they themselves, me included, may not have fully healed from it. So, by fostering an environment that allows for everybody to be comfortable, but also kind of stretch their comfortability to that slightly uncomfortable level, it brings about a “You’re not alone” feeling, and that this is a community issue, not just an individual-based issue, and that when we bond together, when we share ideas, when we bridge and share each individual’s cultures, it becomes, in essence, a community fighting multiple sides of the same problem with multiple different solutions.” -CEW*

➤ **Capacitation topics.** These were highlighted first because of their content, then because of the utility of each. CEWs agreed that trainings were focused, yet diverse. As a group, they highlighted specific topics that were responsive to the information needs of CEWs. These included PE; social determinants of health (SDoH); CHW history, model and roles; and topics about systems. Across the four culturally specific groups, CEWs agreed that the topics provided information, resources, and ideas that can be implemented in their work and other areas of their life.

*“And then, also, with my background already in the medical field, [I liked] seeing the social determinants of health, and the way that things are structured, and things that our community is going through, how that affects their health in the short term and in the long term, and how,*

*through popular education, through the voices of the people, through these community roles that the CHWs have played, we can help empower change and empower voices to be lifted [up so] that will ultimately, at least my hope [is], change the way we go about doing system policies, and maybe have the greater-picture systems look at how they do things, and not use that excuse, 'Well, we've always done it this way,' or, 'This is how it's been passed down,' or, 'This is how the structure is.'" -CEW*

➤ **The ripple effect.** Many CEWs shared comments or stories of the training increasing their awareness and skills; subsequently they engaged in self-reflection about their own behaviors, and they applied the knowledge and insights to their work with families. In addition, what they learn and practice with program participants, they also practice with their own families and friends. “So, any training that I go to, it hits me first. And I really take a look at it. I wouldn't say consciously. But what happens is I take a look at how maybe my parenting or things that I have done have affected my children. Think about ways that I could have done things different. And then I implement that in the curriculum that I create for parents to help them get that ‘aha’ moment or realize the things that I have realized. So that it doesn't have to repeat itself.” -CEW.

### **Suggestions for improvement**

➤ **Additional topics.** CEWs made requests for training topics to be added including sessions about a) how the U.S. systems work (e.g. rental assistance, electricity assistance, application for other social services), b) how to advocate respectfully and effectively, c) brain development in young children, d) grant writing, and e) practice sessions on how to conduct a home visit and workshop.

➤ **Change training schedule.** CEWs shared that due to the knowledge and skills gained, it is essential to make sure that all CEWs participate in the 90-hour CHW training prior to starting their work in the community. Also, they requested that the CEW training take place on one day regularly throughout the year instead of 1-2 weeks in the summer. Supervisors shared that they need CEW training to be offered more than once a year to support staff members who join mid-year.

➤ **Improve training logistics.** Additional aspects of the training that one or more CEWs mentioned as needing improvement included: allowing CEWs to take turns facilitating, better consideration for the comfort level of room temperature and chairs, and having more fidget objects. Additionally, CEWs mentioned that trainings can be improved by engaging CEWs in deeper reflection and conversation and focusing on how the training topics can be integrated into CEWs work.

### **Changes Associated with the Program**

Changes in CEWs included increased awareness, increased knowledge and eagerness to learn, new sense of responsibility, and professional and educational advancement and development. Changes in CEWs' families included increased awareness and knowledge, and changes in family practices. In participants, increased awareness and participation, increased appreciation for the value of education, increased interaction between parents, parent's behavior changes and skill development, and children's behaviors and skill development. In communities, increased awareness and increased participation/utilization, and community building. In schools, collaboration between schools and CBOs, and increased awareness of the CEW model. In systems, increased awareness of the program, popular education visible at the system level, and inclusion of community member voices. All evaluation respondents were asked about changes; therefore, the summaries below do not necessarily reflect only responses from the group we are describing.

### Changes in CEWs

➤ **Increased awareness.** CEWs described increased awareness about their own well-being and of their own capacity. A CEW who ordinarily works with the children found she could facilitate the adult group when the opportunity to do so arose.

*“I want to be a good mom, I want to be a good partner. But also, I matter, I need to nourish myself...” -CEW*

CEWs also described increased awareness of a larger and more inclusive world as a result of interacting with people from other communities. This led to CEWs describing themselves as being more open minded.

➤ **Increased knowledge and eagerness to learn.** CEWs unanimously agreed that they are excited to learn new things to be able to share with their community. Most specifically gaining new knowledge about brain development and perspectives on gender roles and division of labor was highlighted amongst the group. CEWs also expressed their renewed desire to continue learning. One CEW shared that for 18 years she had told herself that she did not need to learn English but now her perspective has changed and she is eager to learn.

*“Like...before [I] was conformist with what [I] knew, or conformist with..the knowledge [I] had. Right now, I’m really eager to learn.” –CEW*

➤ **New sense of responsibility.** Two CEWs realized that they have to be a consistently good role model. As they gain new knowledge through the program they are eager to apply it in their own life and share it with their families. CEWs who do not have young children expressed putting into practice what they are learning with their grown children and grandchildren. Consequently, their grown children have expressed noticing that CEWs are changing and this motivates them. CEWs agreed that if they are going to teach something to community members, then they have to practice it themselves.

➤ **Professional and educational advancement and development.** Four CEWs described their work as providing opportunities for professional and personal advancement. While some CEWs have gone back to schools, others expressed that this work has helped them define their career path.

*“I went back to school through the CHW program and other programs. I wasn’t planning on it. I was not sure what I wanted to be and what I wanted to do, but through [CEW] program, I am now a PSU student in the honors program in public health with a minor specifically in civic leadership for that policy change. And I have immersed myself in all of these different trainings so that I better understand, so I can better serve my community, but also so I’m more equipped to challenge those broken policies with factual data to back it up. So, it’s not just the stories and the outcomes, but it’s also that data to back it up. I didn’t know that was in me...” -CEW*

### Changes in CEWs’ families

➤ **Increased awareness and knowledge.** When asked if they have noticed any changes in their own families, CEWs shared that they have increased awareness and knowledge that promotes children’s success in school. Their families have learned ways to help children in school and have gained an increased awareness of the importance of education and getting their kids into Head Start.

➤ **Family practices.** CEWs highlighted that their families respect CEWs’ needs to practice self-care

because CEWs share with them the importance of it. In addition, the family is more careful about how they express themselves so as not to offend people.

*“it’s a small ripple of change that has now gone from me to my family to my family’s friends, and that ripple is growing.” –CEW*

CEWs also, expressed that there is less use of physical discipline among their family and that they eat healthier food. One CEW observed that there is an increased sharing of family responsibilities between him and his wife because he gained a new appreciation for the work women do.

### **Changes in participants**

We used both qualitative and quantitative data to assess changes among program participants. In an important innovation over the Phase 1 evaluation, this year we had sufficient quantitative data to detect statistically significant improvements in key variables among program participants.

**Quantitative:** Table 6 provides information about changes in access variables that are associated with kindergarten readiness. As this table shows, the number of respondents replying “yes” increased from baseline to follow-up on every question where “yes” was the desired response. In some cases, the number of “yes” responses increased markedly. For example, the number of parents who reported their children had been screened for developmental delays increased from 36 to 60. The number of parents reporting they had attended an event at their child’s school increased from 35 to 62, and those who had participated in a group that makes decisions about schools increased from 19 to 41. Items where the increase was smaller were generally less amenable to intervention by the CEWs, such as access to insurance. There is still work to do; the fact that 18 parents reported at follow-up that their children had not been screened for developmental delays sets a clear goal for the future.

Table 7 provides information about changes in empowerment, social support, ability to advocate for children and confidence in ability to help children be ready for kindergarten. Whereas, in Phase 1, numbers of pre-post questionnaires were too small to reliably assess changes, that is not the case in Phase 2. As Table 7 shows, participants experienced **statistically significant improvements on every single variable**, with the exception of satisfaction with control and ability to influence decisions in the community (items 16 and 17, both of which are less amenable to change). In addition, improvements on both the empowerment scale and the social support scale were also statistically significant. Although we cannot say definitively that these improvements were the direct result of parents’ participation in the CEW program, the pre-post design is the most rigorous design possible in the absence of a control group.

**Qualitative:** Qualitative findings generally reinforced quantitative findings and revealed information about how these positive changes were achieved.

➤ **Increased awareness and participation.** Program participants reported gaining increased awareness about various topics including the school system, benefits men can gain from attending the group meetings, children’s behavior, available resources, and the important role they can play in their children’s learning. Therefore, more parents are now encouraging fathers to join the program and parents are participating in Parent Advisory Council (PAC) meetings because of the encouragement of their CEW. Two parents shared their increased confidence in expressing themselves, raising their voice at meetings, and asking questions. One participant in the PAC has had the opportunity to voice their



opinion on big issues that have come up.

*“And then [PAC leadership staff] take it back, and they present it to people, and ... our voice is heard, and that’s how we feel, like we’re actually heard. And it’s coming from parents, not just from the state, or something like that.” –Program Participant*

*“I feel like being a part of a group [meetings]...has made me feel comfortable to express myself. I feel like I’ve gained more confidence, being in this group. I feel like it’s good.” –Program Participant*

One parent described that she had been struggling to understand the resources that her child had a right to at school, until she started working with the CEW who helped her bridge communication with the school, resulting not only in better understanding but improved communication with school staff. Other parents shared that they are getting accustomed to the U.S. system and now know to check-in with kids about their homework.

*“Yeah, like I didn’t know that IEPs were different from when I was a kid and what the benefits are instead of it just being so negative. So now I understand that part more.” –Program Participant*

➤ **Increased appreciation for the value of education.** Various parents and CEWs described increased parent involvement in children’s schoolwork because they understood the benefit of education after attending the group meetings. One CEW shared her experience with a family that was initially not interested in sending their kids to school.

*“And, I had another family who was like, “No, I’m not going to take my child to preschool. They just want to play.” But, now, they want to take their kids to the preschool because they understand that their kids will benefit from school. But, just telling them their experience, sharing my experience, it’s good to take the kid. They will learn. So, all that kind was very helpful for them.” –CEW*

Another parent shared that she was working harder to teach her child after she was reassured by the CEW that her child could learn.

➤ **Increased interaction between parents.** Many parents across programs shared that they didn’t often leave their home; therefore, it was in the groups that they were engaging in interactions with other parents and learning from them. At least five parents reported that they are now connected to other parents through texting or Facebook, which they appreciate because they can connect with each other about questions, opportunities, or resources outside of the group meetings. Echoing the quantitative finding of increased social support, parents mentioned feeling more connected. Two CEWs explained that group leaders now address things with the other group members instead of asking the CEW directly.

➤ **Parent’s behavior changes and skill development.** There were an array of behavior changes that parents and CEWs described; these included: a) parents limiting the use of physical punishment with children, b) parents engaging in less yelling, c) parents with diabetes walking more as a result of what they are learning in the home visits, d) parents being less likely to pass all authority to the teacher, e) parents establishing routines with their kids, f) parents practicing new strategies for stress management, such as journaling, and g) parents being more creative while reading books. Lastly, as a result of putting into practice the knowledge gained in groups, parents consider that their families are

eating healthier.

*"... if you do not speak English, but [use] the drawings. You need to give it emotion to- to what is in the book ... if there are animals, try to, to give it a story, even if you don't know how to speak English, give it a story in Spanish." –Program Participant*

*"I feel like it changed my parenting skills and how I'm parenting. I'm still working on them, but I feel like the group made a big difference in me changing ... the way I talk, the less yelling, understanding them, asking them what it is that they want instead of just going out the back and yelling. I would build that trust with them." –Program Participant*

➤ **Children's behaviors and skill development.** Parents and CEWs attributed the following behavior changes/skills to their child's involvement in the program: a) being able to hold a pencil, b) sitting attentively in a circle for reading time, c) knowing the shapes, d) learning new ways to problem-solve, e) improving their speech skills, f) improving their ability to express feelings and emotions, g) further developing their autonomy, h) improving their interactions with other children, and i) improving their self-confidence. Parents highlighted the activities that CEWs organize for parent-and-child interaction and children alone time, including art and craft time, snack time, field trips, and play time as the facilitators for these new skills.

#### **Changes in communities**

➤ **Increased awareness and increased participation/utilization.** Program participants and key informants expressed an increased awareness not only of the CEW program but also of other community resources. This was a result of program participants sharing with others in their community what they're learning in the program, referring them to the program, and/or showing them how to access and use the resources. Both groups of respondents shared that there has been an increased participation in CEW groups; this is confirmed by the data in Graph 2.

➤ **Community building.** Many program participants talked about the isolation that their communities face due to the cost of living, not speaking the language, or not feeling safe in their neighborhoods. Therefore, the program has fostered community building and a space for communities to gather to share ideas and build trust with others in similar situations. In addition, this trust being built amongst the community has led to collective participation in testifying on community concerns.

#### **Changes in schools.**

➤ **Collaboration between schools and CBOs.** Key informants expressed that having a CEW at their school has allowed for increased communication between participating organizations and schools, leading to the beginning of collaboration between them.

➤ **Increased awareness of the CEW model.** Key informants shared that school staff is reaching out to families to encourage their participation in the program; in addition, there is more interest among school staff to know more about the program and how to improve referrals to CEWs. Two program participants expressed that the schools acknowledge the role of the CEW in supporting parents and this has resulted in improved communication with parents regarding concerns about their children. One participant shared the frustration she was experiencing because her child was getting in trouble frequently and she was getting various calls throughout the day from different people at the school. Then, the CEW accompanied her to talk to the school staff to share her frustration and concern and that improved communication.

*"I have one person calling me instead of seven people calling me. I get probably one or two*

phone calls a day instead of 13.” -Program Participant

### **Changes in systems.**

➤ **Increased awareness of the program.** Key informants highlighted efforts by the staff to bring awareness to the program through the steering team meetings and attending other partner meetings.

*“... the folks that we're working with around the state ... when we are talking about and focusing on culturally responsive practices related to kindergarten readiness, the community education worker model is part of the mix of things that we're talking about.” -Key Informant*

➤ **Popular education visible at the system level.** Key informants reported that because popular education methods are being used in meetings and when testifying at the state level, the visibility of the methodology is increasing in various systems. According to various respondents, the program has led to visibility of popular education at the systems level. They highlighted all program stakeholders using and engaging in popular education through shared facilitation in a variety of meetings.

➤ **Inclusion of community member voices.** Program participants and key informants agreed that one change is the inclusion of parent voices into system decisions about early learning and funding distribution.

*“And then at the macro level, I think the work that has been done -- somewhat in tandem between the CEW work, some of the culture specific work, and the work that we're really learning ... on the parent accountability council to infuse parent voice and choice as deeply into some systems decisions that are being made about where funds go -- I think is one of these things that will pay off much more in the long run, especially if it continues to be valued by system players because I think that's the long term play and a pretty big benefit out of all of this.” -Key informant*

*“Like I said, [the CEW program] brings that higher level of collaboration or a different form of collaboration ... or aspects of different populations that we haven't really been able to address effectively or engage in systems. And [the CEW program] does all of that with an emphasis on social justice that really talks about racial disparities and in a very upfront way.” -Key Informant*

## **Support and Supervision**

When asked about the supervision that they receive, CEWs responses differed based on the agency that they work for and thus, their supervisor. According to interview responses what works in supervision included the flexibility, support, supervisor's availability and accessibility, supervisor's knowledge and traits, and group supervision. Challenges to supervision included lack of orientation and support from supervisor, lack of support, lack of time for supervision, transition of supervisors, and lack of communication. The name of the organization and supervisor to which comments pertain have been omitted to maintain confidentiality.

### **What works**

➤ **Flexibility.** Two CEWs highlighted the flexibility in the supervision they receive. They recognized that it allows them to discover what they already know and in what areas they want to grow. This makes CEWs consider that their supervisor trusts them to do the work with minimal

supervision. From the supervisor's perspective, flexibility has been important to allow CEWs to do things their way the first time and give them the space to figure out other and easier ways to get things done.

➤ **Support.** Two CEWs also described that they appreciate the support they receive for desired training. They described that when they inquire about a training opportunity their supervisor engages them in a conversation, requesting that CEWs describe how the training promotes their professional development. CEWs appreciate this and perceived it as the supervisor wanting what is best for the CEWs. Additionally, supervisors identified that providing support for training and professional development is key to the purpose of their supervision meetings. Supervisors described constantly reaffirming CEWs' capacity and turning questions back to CEWs in order to emphasize their knowledge and support them in making decisions.

*"That's the gratifying part: other people's good work ... to be able to support it, and be a cheerleader, and give some input when needed, but mostly, it really came from them, and that's very exciting to be a part of." –Supervisor*

➤ **Supervisor's availability and accessibility.** CEWs highlighted their supervisor's availability and accessibility via different modes of communication, including text message, email, and phone calls. For some, this makes it possible to get questions and clarifications answered when the supervisor is not available in-person.

➤ **Supervisor's knowledge and traits.** Supervisor's knowledge of the CHW model was highlighted and described as a result of the supervisors' experience being a CHW. The supervisor understands the role and the work of CEWs. Other supervisor traits valued by some CEWs include their intelligence, humbleness, and ability to be realistic.

➤ **Group supervision.** CEWs described benefiting from group supervision because they are able to learn from one another. Supervisors also like their monthly group supervisor meetings because they don't deal primarily with compliance, as in other programs, but provide an opportunity for supervisors to learn from one another.

### **Challenges**

➤ **Lack of orientation and support from supervisor.** Contrary to an earlier comment that CEWs appreciated the flexibility to identify their professional areas of knowledge and areas of growth, two CEWs identified that they engage in on-the-job-training. The minimal guidance they received meant that they didn't know what they were doing, resulting in feeling stressed.

➤ **Lack of support.** Critiques of supervision practices were sensitive and organization-specific; they will be shared in ways that will not compromise confidentiality.

➤ **Lack of time for supervision.** Two CEWs shared the need for more check-ins and one-on-one meetings with their supervisor. However, their supervisors' workload seems to impede the time they can dedicate to CEW program activities. On the other hand, supervisors shared their concerns with CEWs not dedicating enough time to supervision as a result of being so busy.

➤ **Transition of supervisors.** This was described as a challenge because supervisors have different styles of work and communication. As a result, CEWs have had to adapt and at times make changes to how they are conducting their work.

➤ **Lack of communication.** CEWs expressed needing more and clearer communication from their supervisor, specifically about budgets. CEWs expressed their desire to be involved in their individual programs' budget conversations, something they are not currently included in. Supervisors described the challenges with CEWs not being accustomed to using electronic calendars for communication.

## Support from Program Administration

Based on data from the supervisor focus group, what works in the support from program administration is the role of CCC staff. Then, e-mail communication is a challenge.

### What works

➤ **Role of CCC staff.** Supervisors shared the role of the CCC was a success because staff is available for questions and CEWs trust and talk to CCC staff, and if something is going on, CCC communicates with the supervisor. Additionally, they shared that the CCC staff advocates for the program as a whole and for individual programs. Lastly, supervisors appreciated the fact of having a convener that is steeped in program evaluation and popular education and is not a funder.

### Challenges

➤ **E-mail Communication.** The only substantive challenge identified by supervisors was the quantity and complexity of e-mails received from the program coordinator. Supervisors acknowledged that they know the intention is to practice shared decision making yet they unanimously agree that the e-mails received have become overwhelming and result in supervisors failing to respond. Supervisors suggested that when there are too many questions to be included in an e-mail, a meeting would be preferable.

## CEW Program in the Future

Across the various groups, respondents agreed that the program should grow and continue to be available for more families. They shared reasons for its growth and ways to increase program awareness and participation.

### Reasons for growth

Although both program participants and key informants agreed that the program should grow, they provided different reasons and shared considerations to be kept in mind. Program participants simply provided reasons for program growth, while key informants provided recommendations about the ways in which the program should grow to continue improving. Recommendations made by key informants have been described in the recommendations section (below).

Key informants mentioned that the program should grow to meet the needs of families, to get families connected, and to continue educating families about the importance of early learning, a focus of the program. Program participants described specific benefits of the program for parents and children. Their reasons for growth included to empower more parents to know their rights and get more involved in their children's education, and to get families connected. For program participants, the program providing a different life perspective was also a reason for growth. They shared that it could positively influence more parents' perspective on their growth, their potential as parents, and their perspective on their children's future. There was a desire to increase program capacity to give more children the opportunity to learn and practice various skills, including autonomy, coloring, and being social with others. Overall, program participants were grateful for the knowledge, resources and skills that the program had provided them and they wished many more people in their communities to gain access to these.

*"I guess the rights that parents have – I didn't know about some of the rights that we have as parents and kids. I feel like that should be available to a lot of parents, because I feel like especially indigenous people and people of different nationalities don't know their rights. I feel*

*like if there were more programs out there to let people know about their rights, or even more about early education for their kids, I feel like there would be more people being involved in people's education, or speaking up for their kids." -Program Participant*

*"I just feel like if this program was out there, these parents would have more say and feel a little bit more confident, like I feel. I could engage a little bit more of my kids' education than how I felt before." -Program Participant*

### **Ways to increase awareness and participation**

Unanimously program participants and key informants agreed that word of mouth was the best way to increase awareness about and participation in the program. Having program participants, school staff, and CEWs share about the program with other families was described as the most appropriate method. It would allow for components of the program to be described in terms of how these benefitted a real person. Other recommendations by key informants and supervisors focused on having print materials, such as flyers, to describe the program, CEWs engaging in outreach by attending school, community, and faith-based organizations events.

Program participants also mentioned the need for updated printed materials but with the purpose of leaving them as informational material in specific locations, such as at the Women, Infants, and Children's offices and doctors' offices, and creating a Facebook group to share stories of impact with the faces of current program participants. Lastly, program participants from one organization highlighted that promoting the program through the radio may help get the attention of young parents.

*"I believe if people know how people really grow on this program, how people came into the program and then how did they prosper out of the program, what they got out of the program, if people knew what it really empowered, then they'd be like, "Oh, okay, I'll try it." -Program Participant*

## **Recommendations**

Based on the evaluation findings, a set of recommendations has been developed and is outlined below. All recommendations are based on specific input from respondents and/or summary data; because suggestions for improvement varied depending on respondent groups these are acknowledged in each recommendation listed. Please note that some recommendations are based on input from only one respondent; these are noted and should be discussed in the Steering Team.

### **General**

- **Create an orientation packet** for new CEWs (One respondent)
- **Hire more CEWs and make sure to hire at least one male CEW across all programs.** This recommendation is based on responses from CEWs and program participants. The need for more CEWs generally and male CEWs specifically was directly connected with current CEWs being at full capacity, and the need to increase the number of male program participants. Program participants shared that they would like more fathers to participate in the program; therefore, it is essential to have facilitators who reflect that population.
- **Expand and add to current activities.** Unanimously program participants shared how grateful they were for the group meetings and they wished group meetings would be available during the summer. They expressed that consistency of interaction with staff and other participants was key to what they and their children were gaining. In addition, they expressed the need for

English classes, increasing opportunities for political engagement, and interactive activities with food to implement hands-on what is being learned about nutrition.

- **Improve communication with school staff.** Develop and use printed materials as a tool for this. The need for increased communication with school staff was also highlighted in the Phase 1 evaluation; therefore, this finding deserves special attention from program staff.
- **Increase program funding.** Program participants expressed the need for additional and flexible funding to support the cost of field trips and outdoor activities and a van for transportation. Also, CEWs and supervisors expressed a need for funds for client assistance (e.g. electricity bill, buying adequate furniture for the home, diapers, etc.) In addition, more funding is needed to support sufficient supervision at each CBO.
- **Provide more cross-cultural events and opportunities to build stronger bonds across organizational and racial/ethnic lines between both participants and CEWs and other staff.** One CEW mentioned that the lack of interaction beyond a superficial level creates a sense of isolation and fear of speaking up within the group.

*“I would like to see ... the participants visiting other groups because I think it’s so rich what we learn from each other ... I feel like especially now, the unity of communities of color is very important, and in order to unify, we need to understand each other and understand each other’s cultures ... I think that being able to see the different cultures, seeing the differences, but also seeing similarities in each other’s cultures, I think will help with that unity, and coming together, and really bonding and fighting for social justice together.” –CEW*

- **Expand relationships and collaboration with other system players** (e.g. other home visiting programs, DHS- Child Welfare and self-sufficiency).
- **Dedicate time to long-term planning.** Key informants pointed to the fact that it is important to take time to consider and talk about how the program should mature. Additionally, according to this group the CEW program needs to gain more credibility; ways to achieve that should be a focus of the conversation.

### **CEW Capacitation/Training**

- **Create best practices guidelines** for number of hours of training per year.
- **Add specific training topics.** Per CEW requests they should include: how the US system works, how things get done in the US, brain development in young children, how to advocate respectfully and effectively, how to do grant writing, how to engage in storytelling, and how to work with marginalized communities in this historical moment.
- **Provide high quality interpretation** in Spanish for all training sessions and support CEWs in requesting high quality interpretation when they attend trainings through other organizations.
- **Make topics realistic and applicable** for all cultures, when possible.
- **Create opportunities for CEWs to practice facilitating during training sessions.**
- **Improve training logistics** (e.g. ask the group about comfortable room temperature and adjust accordingly, get comfortable chairs, have more fidget objects, provide online links to information for CEWs to follow up after training if so they desire). Please note that this recommendation is linked to the recommendation to increase funding, since to date the Program Coordinator has been responsible for curriculum development and training logistics in addition to her other duties.
- **Focus on how the training can be integrated into the CEWs’ work.**

### Participant Recruitment

- **Better promote the CEW program** amongst CBOs. Program participants and CEWs from two organizations mentioned that they wished their respective organization would promote the CEW Program better within their organization to increase awareness amongst community members
- **Intentionally recruit male participants.**

### Group Meetings

- **Provide a workbook** for group meeting participants to be used as a tool to organize handouts and take notes.
- **Find a larger space for group meetings**, for CEWs to store their materials and for children to play.
- **Open Somali program to all African families** as long as they can all use a common language. (One respondent)
- **Consider conducting groups in homes of extended family.** (One respondent)
- **Discuss the potential conflict of conducting group meetings in locations other than schools** during Steering Team meeting and seek resolution.

### CEW Support and Supervision

- **Create best practices guidelines** for number of hours spent in supervision, to assist both supervisors and CEWs in prioritizing supervision.
- **Encourage CEWs' career advancement.** This was often mentioned in terms of talking to them more about potential career pathways that their current job could lead to and providing CEWs support to become fully bilingual.

### Supervisor Support

- **Find ways to lessen the communication burden on supervisors** who are contributing much of their time in-kind to the program. One person suggested that on another project in which she is engaged, weekly check-in calls work well. Create a structure for communication that everyone agrees to (even if it varies from person to person). Create a list of "do's and don'ts" for email communication. Another supervisor suggested monthly conference calls just for supervisors, in addition to the monthly face to face meetings.

### Evaluation

- **Measure participant experience and changes in knowledge as part of evaluation.**

## **Conclusion**

In this Phase 2 evaluation, at least two categories of qualitative changes were identified among every stakeholder group -- CEWs, CEWs' families, program participants, communities, schools, and systems -- as a result of the program. Measured quantitatively, participants made gains on all the variables related to kindergarten readiness, including screening for developmental delays, having a regular doctor, and getting recommended well-child checks. Even more notably, participants experienced statistically significant improvements in empowerment, social support, ability to advocate for children and confidence in ability to help children be ready for kindergarten. All groups of respondents agreed that the program should continue growing. Recommendations for program improvement focused on the program in general, CEW capacitation/training, participant recruitment, group meetings, CEW support and supervision, supervisor support, and evaluation. As the CEW Program enters its fourth year, it is



clearly achieving the goals set out at its inception. Now, the task becomes bringing the program to scale, both in terms of funding and staffing, so that it can reach its full potential.

## References

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## Appendix

**Table 1. Number and Percent of Participants by Race/Ethnicity**

| RACE/ETHNICITY                                  | FY2015     |               | FY2016     |               | FY2017     |               | All (Unduplicated) |               |
|---|------------|---------------|------------|---------------|------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|
|   | Count      | Percent       | Count      | Percent       | Count      | Percent       | Count              | Percent       |
| African   | 7          | 3.6%          | 10         | 3.4%          | 92         | 19.8%         | 100                | 12.5%         |
| American Indian/Alaskan Native                  | 2          | 1.0%          | 31         | 10.5%         | 31         | 6.7%          | 49                 | 6.1%          |
| Asian   | 0          | 0.0%          | 0          | 0.0%          | 35         | 7.5%          | 88                 | 11.0%         |
| Black/African American                          | 45         | 23.4%         | 69         | 23.4%         | 104        | 22.4%         | 180                | 22.6%         |
| Hispanic/Latino                                 | 115        | 59.9%         | 122        | 41.4%         | 119        | 25.6%         | 260                | 32.6%         |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander       | 0          | 0.0%          | 1          | 0.3%          | 0          | 0.0%          | 1                  | 0.1%          |
| White/Caucasian                                 | 0          | 0.0%          | 3          | 1.0%          | 8          | 1.7%          | 15                 | 1.9%          |
| Multi-Racial (Please List):                     |            |               |            |               |            |               |                    |               |
| African/Black                                   | 0          | 0.0%          | 3          | 1.0%          | 1          | 0.2%          | 3                  | 0.4%          |
| Asian/Black                                     | 0          | 0.0%          | 3          | 1.0%          | 0          | 0.0%          | 3                  | 0.4%          |
| Black/White                                     | 2          | 1.0%          | 2          | 0.7%          | 5          | 1.1%          | 7                  | 0.9%          |
| American Indian/Black                           | 0          | 0.0%          | 3          | 1.0%          | 5          | 1.1%          | 5                  | 0.6%          |
| American Indian/Black/White                     | 0          | 0.0%          | 2          | 0.7%          | 3          | 0.6%          | 3                  | 0.4%          |
| American Indian/Black/Hispanic                  | 0          | 0.0%          | 3          | 1.0%          | 2          | 0.4%          | 3                  | 0.4%          |
| American Indian/White                           | 0          | 0.0%          | 4          | 1.4%          | 3          | 0.6%          | 4                  | 0.5%          |
| Hispanic/Black                                  | 2          | 1.0%          | 4          | 1.4%          | 5          | 1.1%          | 5                  | 0.6%          |
| Hispanic/American Indian                        | 0          | 0.0%          | 1          | 0.3%          | 4          | 0.9%          | 4                  | 0.5%          |
| Hispanic/White                                  | 0          | 0.0%          | 5          | 1.7%          | 1          | 0.2%          | 5                  | 0.6%          |
| White/Black/Hispanic/Am Indian                  | 0          | 0.0%          | 2          | 0.7%          | 0          | 0.0%          | 1                  | 0.1%          |
| Asian/Black/Hispanic/Am Indian                  | 0          | 0.0%          | 1          | 0.3%          | 2          | 0.4%          | 2                  | 0.3%          |
| Black/White/Hispanic                            | 1          | 0.5%          | 17         | 5.8%          | 1          | 0.2%          | 17                 | 2.1%          |
| Black/Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 1          | 0.5%          | 0          | 0.0%          | 0          | 0.0%          | 2                  | 0.3%          |
| Black/Asian                                     | 0          | 0.0%          | 0          | 0.0%          | 3          | 0.6%          | 2                  | 0.3%          |
| Asian/White                                     | 0          | 0.0%          | 0          | 0.0%          | 1          | 0.2%          | 1                  | 0.1%          |
| African/Black/White                             | 0          | 0.0%          | 0          | 0.0%          | 1          | 0.2%          | 1                  | 0.1%          |
| Unknown   | 17         | 8.9%          | 9          | 3.1%          | 38         | 8.2%          | 38                 | 4.8%          |
| <b>TOTAL PEOPLE SERVED</b>                      | <b>192</b> | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>295</b> | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>464</b> | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>798</b>         | <b>100.0%</b> |

Table 2. Languages Spoken at Home by Program Participants

| Languages Spoken At Home           | FY2015 |       | FY2016 |       | FY2017* |       | Total (Unduplicated) |       |
|------------------------------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|---------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| English                            | 31     | 47.0% | 56     | 51.4% | 69      | 39.9% | 109                  | 39.2% |
| Somalian                           | 0      | 0.0%  | 0      | 0.0%  | 20      | 11.6% | 24                   | 8.6%  |
| Spanish                            | 35     | 53.0% | 52     | 47.7% | 41      | 23.7% | 101                  | 36.3% |
| Languages of Burma                 | 0      | 0.0%  | 0      | 0.0%  | 27      | 15.6% | 27                   | 9.7%  |
| Languages of Africa (Not Somalian) | 0      | 0.0%  | 1      | 0.9%  | 10      | 5.8%  | 11                   | 4.0%  |
| Unknown                            | 0      | 0.0%  | 0      | 0.0%  | 6       | 3.5%  | 6                    | 2.2%  |

Graph 1. Languages Spoken at Home by Program Participants, FY2017 (n= 278)

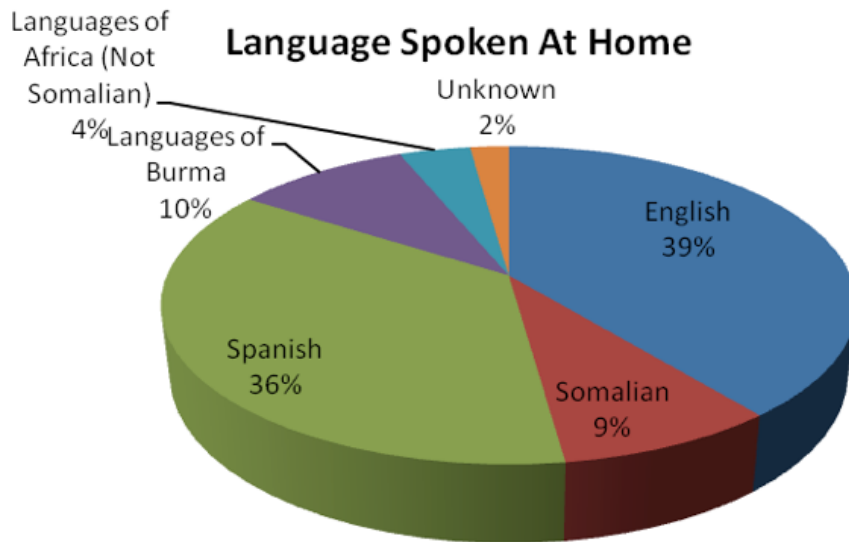


Table 3. Annual Income for Program Participants, FY 2015-2017

| Family Income     | n=184 |       |
|-------------------|-------|-------|
| \$1 - \$5000      | 23    | 12.5% |
| \$5,000-\$10,000  | 42    | 22.8% |
| \$10,001-\$15,000 | 35    | 19.0% |
| \$15001-\$20,000  | 28    | 15.2% |
| \$20,000-\$25,000 | 32    | 17.4% |
| \$25,001-\$30,000 | 5     | 2.7%  |
| \$30,001-40,000   | 15    | 8.2%  |
| over 40,000       | 4     | 2.2%  |

Table 4. Program Participation

| Program Participation                         | FY2015 | FY2016 | FY2017* | Total (Unduplicated) |
|---|--------|--------|---------|----------------------|
| Families Served                               | 66     | 109    | 173     | 278                  |
| Adults Served                                 | 96     | 136    | 245     | 386                  |
| Children Served                               | 96     | 159    | 269     | 412                  |
| Groups held                                   | 7      | 5      | 12      | 24                   |
| Families Attending Groups                     | 52     | 59     | 90      | 174                  |
| Home Visits                                   | 243    | 940    | 993     | 2176                 |
| Development Screenings                        | 5      | 31     | 45      | 81                   |
| Advocacy Provided                             | 38     | 303    | 261     | 683                  |
| <b>*2017 includes July 2016 to March 2017</b> |        |        |         |                      |

Graph 2

## Growth of Program

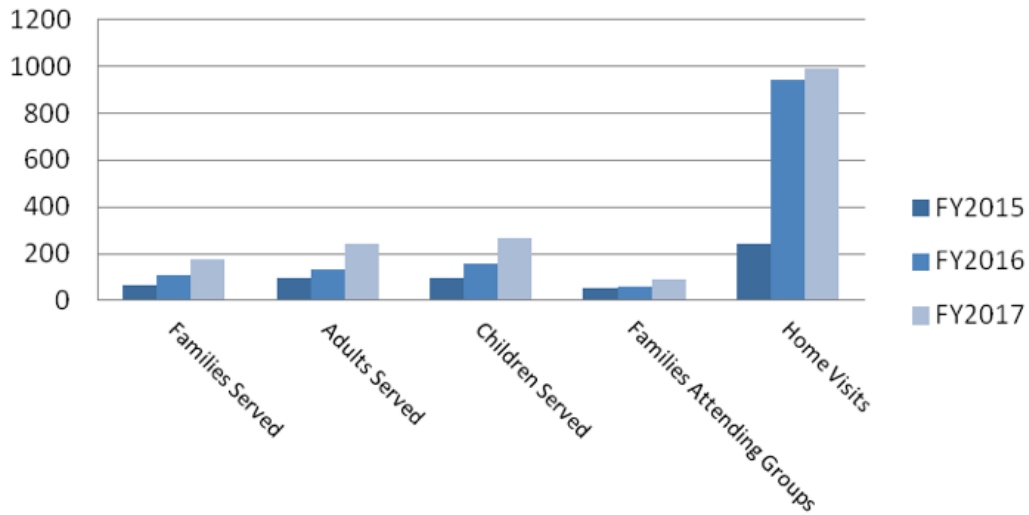


Table 5. Activities Conducted

|  | FY2015 | FY2016 | FY2017 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|
| <b>Referrals</b>   |        |        |        |
| Visits with referrals made   | 169    | 564    | 733    |
| # of referrals made  | 430    | 2007   | 2300   |
| Health (includes mental health, alcohol & drug treatment, dental, health insurance, medical homes, prenatal yoga, etc.)                      | 78     | 262    | 331    |
| Basic Needs/Anti-poverty services (Includes rental assistance, energy assistance, diapers, clothing, household goods and furniture, etc.)    | 70     | 515    | 723    |
| Education (may be for children-school events, Headstart, library or summer camps or for parents - GED, vocational or higher education, etc.) | 74     | 315    | 340    |
| Other community groups (May be culturally specific, community based organizations or faith-based organizations)                              | 70     | 282    | 423    |
| Parenting classes  | 51     | 267    | 134    |
| Other (includes referrals to a wide range of services and activities)  | 87     | 366    | 349    |

**Table 6. Results for Variables Associated with Kindergarten Readiness**

| Item  |       | Baseline  | Follow-up |
|---|-------|-----------|-----------|
| Do you have a regular doctor?   | DK    | 12        | 0         |
|   | NO    | 16        | 7         |
|   | YES   | <b>52</b> | <b>72</b> |
|   | TOTAL | 80        | 79        |
| Do your children have a regular doctor?   | DK    | 12        | 0         |
|   | NO    | 10        | 0         |
|   | YES   | <b>57</b> | <b>79</b> |
|   | TOTAL | 79        | 79        |
| Have your children gotten their recommended well-child checks?  | DK    | 2         | 1         |
|   | NO    | 25        | 3         |
|   | YES   | <b>53</b> | <b>75</b> |
|   | TOTAL | 80        | 79        |
| Have your children gotten their recommended immunizations?  | DK    | 4         | 0         |
|   | NO    | 9         | 2         |
|   | YES   | <b>67</b> | <b>77</b> |
|   | TOTAL | 80        | 79        |
| Do you have health insurance?   | DK    | 1         | 0         |
|   | NO    | 15        | 8         |
|   | YES   | <b>65</b> | <b>69</b> |
|   | TOTAL | 81        | 77        |
| Do your children have health insurance?   | DK    | 1         | 0         |
|   | NO    | 8         | 3         |
|   | YES   | <b>69</b> | <b>74</b> |
|   | TOTAL | 78        | 77        |
| Have all your children been screened for delays in their development?   | DK    | 10        | 1         |
|   | NO    | 34        | 18        |
|   | YES   | <b>36</b> | <b>60</b> |
|   | TOTAL | 80        | 79        |
| Have your children been screened for lead in their blood?   | DK    | 19        | 5         |
|   | NO    | 42        | 22        |
|   | YES   | <b>17</b> | <b>51</b> |
|   | TOTAL | 78        | 78        |
| Have you attended an event at your child's school?  | DK    | 1         | 0         |
|   | NO    | 38        | 10        |
|   | YES   | <b>35</b> | <b>62</b> |
|   | TOTAL | 74        | 72        |
| Have you participated in a group that makes decisions or gives advice about schools, such as a parent advisory council? | DK    | 3         | 3         |
|   | NO    | 53        | 27        |
|   | YES   | <b>19</b> | <b>41</b> |
|   | TOTAL | 75        | 71        |

**Table 7. Results of Paired T Tests for Empowerment and Social Support Items**

| Item   | t    | df | Sig.   |
|--|------|----|--------|
| 15. I have control over the decisions that affect my life.   | 3.12 | 72 | .003** |
| 16. I am satisfied with the amount of control I have over decisions that affect my life.           | .956 | 74 | .342   |
| 17. I can influence decisions that affect my community.  | 1.81 | 72 | .075   |
| 18. By working together, people in my community can influence decisions that affect the community. | 2.18 | 69 | .033*  |
| 19. People in my community work together to influence decisions on the state or national level.    | 3.60 | 69 | .001** |
| 20. I am satisfied with the amount of influence I have over decisions that affect my community.    | 2.99 | 68 | .004** |
| 21. I have others who will listen when I need to talk about my problems.                           | 5.71 | 75 | .000** |
| 22. I know where to go if I have trouble making ends meet.   | 7.01 | 73 | .000** |
| 23. If there is a crisis, I have helpful people I can talk to.                                     | 5.26 | 75 | .000** |
| 24. I feel able to advocate for the needs of my child/children and my family.                      | 5.93 | 73 | .000** |
| 25. I feel confident that I can help my child/children be ready for kindergarten.                  | 5.98 | 72 | .000** |
| Empowerment scale (summary of items 15-20)   | 3.33 | 63 | .001** |
| Social support scale (summary of items 21-23)  | 7.34 | 73 | .000** |

Note. \*p.05, \*\*p.01 (2-tailed). Participants were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 4 (1=Strongly Agree, 2=Agree, 3=Disagree, 4= Strongly Disagree), "Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with each statement." Statements are positive, so lower scores indicate higher positive attitudes. Psychological empowerment=items 15-20. Social support= items 21-23.





## EVALUATION FUNDED BY SVP Portland

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