

California Cradle-to-Career Workgroup Meeting Summary

July 30, 2020

The California Cradle-to-Career Data System Workgroup, which is comprised of partner entities named in the authorizing legislation, provides recommendations to the Governor's Office regarding data system development.

This document provides a summary of the key points that emerged from substantive discussion over the course of the July 2020 workgroup meeting. More information about the meeting, including support materials, a recording of the meeting, and the PowerPoint, are available at <https://cadatasystem.wested.org/meeting-information/workgroup> (click on "Meeting Materials").

The following workgroup representatives attended the meeting:

Thomas Vu, Association of Independent California Colleges & Universities; Michael Marion, Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education; Ben Allen, Cindy Kazanis, Sarah Neville-Morgan, and Mary Nicely, California Department of Education; Akhtar Khan and Natasha Nicolai, California Department of Social Services; Tim Murphy, California Department of Technology; Elaine Scordakis, California Health and Human Services; Jeanne Wolfe, California Labor and Workforce Development Agency; Amy Fong, California School Information Services; Ed Sullivan, California State University, Office of the Chancellor; Patrick Perry, California Student Aid Commission; Barney Gomez, California Community College Chancellor's Office; Sara Pietrowski, California State Board of Education; Teri Clark, Commission on Teacher Credentialing; Amy Faulkner, Employment Development Department; Joy Bonaguro, Government Operations Agency; Chris Furguele, University of California, Office of the President; and Ben Chida, Governor's Office.

Managing Entity Organizational Structure

The facilitator provided an overview of the two workgroup meetings held earlier in the month to examine options for the managing entity organizational structure, including presentations from national experts and a report from the Legal Subcommittee that all options on the table were viable provided that the appropriate governance structure and authorizing legislation are created, the vote to approve a list of responsibilities for the managing entity, the adoption of a rubric for examining organizational structures, and repeated polls that showed that the group had not reached a consensus regarding the best approach.

Therefore, the partner entities participated in a survey that asked them to clarify two items: whether the managing entity could leverage structures beyond state infrastructure and rankings for six possible managing entity options.

On the first question, partner entities largely supported a hybrid approach, with eleven indicating that the managing entity should be a state entity that delivers services through all available organizational structures including partner entities, non-partner agencies, nonprofits, academic institutions, and private entities. Three workgroup members voted to only use state infrastructure, and one voted to use a nonprofit auxiliary that could contract with private, academic, and nonprofit institutions.

Workgroup members ranked the six organizational options as follows (where 1 was the most desirable and 6 was least):

- *New state entity*: Strongest weighted outcome, with five listing it as a 1 (80% ranked as a 3 or higher)
- *Existing entity that is not a data contributor*: Most common second choice (60% ranked as a 2)
- *Existing entity that is a data contributor*: Greatest polarization, where it is the top choice for three, ranked lower for half, and many ranked it as last choice (50% ranked as a 4 or lower and 20% ranked it as a 6)
- *Nonprofit auxiliary*: Spread of rankings across options, with most in the middle (most common rank was 3)
- *JPA*: Not prioritized by most (80% ranked as a 4 or lower)
- *Joint Venture*: Spread of rankings across options, with most at the low end (70% ranked as a 4 or lower)

In addition to the participating in the survey, the workgroup members asked a homework team made up of a subset of the partner entities to develop a proposal for the full workgroup to vote on at the July 31 meeting. However, before moving on to the proposal, the facilitator asked for clarification about the desired characteristics for the governance structure, which has a strong inter-relationship with the managing entity organizational structure. The facilitator proposed the following list, based on discussions at prior meetings:

- Guaranteed representation for partner entities
- Opportunities for non-partner entities to have a say
- Governing board sets the direction that the managing entity implements
- Subcommittees, made up of partner entities and others, support implementation (such as technical, legal, and research aspects), with the opportunity to create and retire subcommittees based on governing board priorities

Workgroup members indicated that they felt this list was accurate, although Ed Sullivan of CSU, Tom Vu of AICCU, and Chris Furgiuele of UC expressed concern that these characteristics might not endure if the mission changed over time.

As a member of the homework team that had developed the proposal for the managing entity structure, Cindy Kazanis of CDE outlined the following:

- Assume that the managing entity will leverage resources from partner entities, non-partner agencies, nonprofits, academic institutions, and private entities to deliver the strategic objectives
- In the planning process over the next year, determine how and where it would be appropriate to integrate those resources
- Allow the specifics of the managing entity structure to evolve in tandem with the development of the governance structure
- Consider the possibility of incubating the managing entity using one organizational structure and then moving to a different structure at a later phase

- Based on the ranked choice survey results, narrow the options to: A) a new independent state entity or B) a new office or program with the Government Operations Agency (GovOps)

Another homework team member, Patrick Perry of CSAC, explained that the final two choices were driven by the survey results, which showed a lack of agreement regarding using an agency that is a data contributor. In prior meetings, some partner entities had expressed concerns that a data contributor might be perceived as biased. The small group had then considered all non-contributing state agencies and only GovOps seemed like a reasonable fit.

Akhtar Khan of CDSS questioned the recommendation that a data contributor should not be used, noting that data contributors would have the advantage of existing infrastructure and expertise that would benefit the state data system. Furthermore, this entity would be committed to supporting the data system.

Patrick Perry, Cindy Kazanis, and Amy Fong of CSIS indicated that a neutral entity would foster greater transparency and independence. Amy Fong noted that it was important to select an option that all data contributors feel comfortable with. Patrick Perry reminded the group that housing the managing entity within GovOps does not preclude using the infrastructure and expertise of the data contributors to support implementation.

Amy Supinger, a consultant working with WestEd, presented a case study of Covered California to demonstrate how the state data system could be created as an independent state and listed some pros and cons to this approach. Then she outlined possible ways to situate the managing entity within GovOps, depending on whether the entity would be a new department, in the way the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) is, or a program within GovOps, similar to the Office of Digital Innovation. Finally, she provided some baselines for staffing and operations costs at an independent entity, based on the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC), the Office of the Secretary of Education, and the State Board of Education (SBE) – each about \$2 million annually.

Patrick Perry reminded the group that CPEC, which is now defunct, had been structured in a similar manner to the proposed new state entity. He also noted that the operating costs shown for the independent entity do not include the full program costs, which will be much higher to accommodate the necessary technology.

Natasha Nicholai of CDSS noted that an attempt earlier this year to create a new Department of Early Learning and Care had failed, in part because it was too costly to create.

Cindy Kazanis indicated that charges can be flexibly distributed even with an independent entity. For example, SBE outsources some of its back office expenses to CDE.

Jeanne Wolfe of CLWDA wondered if GovOps might be restructured to make it more nimble, particularly given how many different IT projects it is running.

Joy Bonaguro of GovOps clarified that Secretary Yolanda Richardson and Undersecretary Julie Lee are supportive of hosting the managing entity, if that is the will of the workgroup.

Tom Vu of AICCU asked whether independent entities can receive grant funds. Amy Supinger noted that the ability to receive grant funds can be written into statute or the managing entity could create an

auxiliary to receive funds. Elaine Scordakis of CHHS reinforced that it is possible for a state entity to receive grant funds, particularly through statute.

Amy Fong inquired about which approach would provide stronger public oversight about whether data is used appropriately, in light of the recent scrutiny of large technology companies. Amy Supinger responded that in either a new independent entity or the GovOps options, breaches would be handled through the legal liability framework that applies to all data held by the state. The authorizing legislation for the data system could set a higher standard if desired.

Chris Furgiuele of UC asked for more clarity about how partner entities could be guaranteed representation on the governing board if the managing entity is housed at GovOps. Amy Supinger indicated that representation could be written into statute. Anything not codified in this manner would ultimately be the decision of GovOps.

Barney Gomez of CCCCCO asked whether GovOps would receive additional funding to serve as the managing entity and asked which option the Governor's Office preferred. Kathy Booth of WestEd clarified that GovOps would receive additional funds and that Ben Chida of the Governor's Office indicated that the governor is supportive of either option under consideration.

Public Comment

Colleen Moore of Ed Insights submitted a letter, which is posted on the website.

Rigel Spencer Massaro of Public Advocates expressed general support for the options being discussed but felt that the decision should be postponed so that the workgroup and the public have more time to digest the options.

Su Jin Gatlin Jez of California Competes noted her agency's support for the data system and stated that it will be important for the system to allow for the analysis of outcomes for populations with a small number of individuals. She also urged that the managing entity be independent, rather than a system controlled by the entities contributing data.

Vote on Managing Entity Structure

Akhtar Khan of CDSS expressed concern about voting on an option because there had not been enough time to digest the pros and cons.

VOTE: Six partner entities supported a new independent state entity:

- Tom Vu, AICCU
- Barney Gomez, CCCCCO
- Elaine Scordakis, CHHS
- Ed Sullivan, CSU
- Teri Clark, CTC
- Chris Furgiuele, UC

Ten partner entities supported a new office or program within GovOps:

- Michael Marion, BPPE
- Cindy Kazanis, CDE

- Mary Nicely, CDE
- Sarah Neville-Morgan, CDE
- Tim Murphy, CDT
- Patrick Perry, CSAC
- Amy Fong, CSIS
- Amy Faulkner, EDD
- Jeanne Wolfe, CLWDA
- Sara Pietrowski, SBE

Akhtar Khan of CDSS abstained and Joy Bonaguro of GovOps recused herself .

Ed Sullivan of CSU, Chris Furguele of UC, and Tom Vu of AICCU expressed concern that under GovOps, the data contributors would not have sufficient voice. Teri Clark of CTC noted that it is possible to go from an independent entity to housing a program under an agency, but that it is difficult to go the other way.

Gavin Payne of the Data Quality Campaign clarified that other states have established a role for data contributors within existing agencies—particularly agencies that are not data contributors—but that it is important to use legislation to outline this role. Baron Rodriguez of WestEd, who previously worked with the federal government to support state data systems, noted that in some states that placed the managing entity within a data contributor, there had been a perceived bias that threatened the sustainability of the data system.

VOTE: The group voted on the following plan: during August, a homework team will examine how governance could be established with GovOps hosting the managing entity, with a focus on ensuring that data contributors will have a voice. This plan will be brought to the August 31 workgroup meeting for a vote. If, at that point, no feasible governance structure can be created under GovOps, the group will revisit whether to create a new independent entity. All workgroup members supported this option except Akhtar Khan of CDSS who abstained and Joy Bonaguro of GovOps who recused herself.

The facilitator noted that the first homework team meeting on the governance process will be held on August 6 and will be open to the public. This session will feature an opportunity to gain a national perspective from Kathy Gosa, who is part of a federally-funded team of technical assistance providers for state data systems.

Ben Chida of the Governor’s Office joined the meeting and thanked the group for its careful deliberation on the managing entity. He stressed the importance of ensuring that all partner entities are comfortable with the option selected.

Natasha Nicholai of CDSS wondered if it is more important to discuss a broader plan for the underlying structures that will be used to match data across agencies, as opposed to the managing entity for the Cradle-to-Career system. Ben deferred to the workgroup and subcommittees to weigh in on design issues, so long as the solution will allow data to be linked and used to support the objectives for the Cradle-to-Career data system.

Chris Furgiuele of UC suggested that one way to ensure the Cradle-to-Career data system is able to achieve its mission would be to create a distinct line item in the budget, rather than subsuming funding in the overall budget for GovOps. Ben Chida indicated this is a sensible option.

Operational Tools

At the April workgroup meeting, the partner entities voted to implement five services as part of phase one of the data system, as a way to ensure actionable information is provided for students, families, and practitioners:

- *Electronic Transcripts*: Streamline the process for sharing both traditional and non-traditional learning artifacts
- *Eligibility Information*: Enable students to authorize information-sharing that would qualify them for support services, such as whether they are socioeconomically disadvantaged, first generation college-going, homeless, or foster youth
- *College Planning*: Provide K–12 districts with the tools and curriculum needed to systematize college and career guidance practices
- *College-Readiness and Transfer Monitoring*: Allow students, parents, educators, and counselors to monitor factors that influence college-going and retention rates, such as completion of a-g or community college transfer requirements, submission of financial aid applications, and eligibility for non-remedial math and English courses
- *Data Cleanup*: Identify instances where information is inaccurate in local student information systems and support educational institutions to correct this information

The workgroup opted to provide these services by scaling two efforts currently underway in California: the California College Guidance Initiative (CCGI) and eTranscript California. However, before finalizing the recommendation, workgroup members requested additional information on the efficacy of these types of tools, including research about the impact of planning, monitoring, and electronic transcript tools and more information about the specific ways in which CCGI and eTranscript California provide these services.

Therefore, WestEd developed three documents for the July workgroup meeting:

- *Report*: This assessment includes a) a review of the literature and examples from states that are using these types of tools on a regional or statewide basis; b) lists of practices and features considered to be most effective, as well as key implementation concerns for scaling; and c) a description of how CCGI and eTranscript California address key goals established by the workgroup and effective practices
- *Summary*: This chart summarizes current and proposed scale for CCGI and eTranscript California
- *Technical Charts*: These documents show how data would flow from local or state agencies for CCGI and for eTranscript California

The facilitator shared highlights from these documents and invited the workgroup members to pose questions to representatives from CCGI and eTranscript California.

CCGI

Cindy Kazanis of CDE noted that the cost quoted does not take into consideration the downstream effect of systems such as CALPADS.

Jeanne Wolfe of CLWDA asked staff about their greatest challenge and greatest value to the state data system. Tessa Carmen DeRoy of CCGI thought the greatest value is in streamlining the process for students and its biggest challenge is the data quality issues that make it harder to evaluate whether students are on target for their postsecondary goals.

Sara Pietrowski of SBE asked about how smaller school districts, which often do not have technical expertise, are supported. Tessa Carmen DeRoy described work that had been done in the Inland Empire, which is described in greater depth in the webinar that CCGI did for the workgroup in April.

Patrick Perry of CSAC asked for clarification about how the proposed budget (\$8.5 million to scale and about \$13 million annually to maintain) compares to the existing budget from the state. Tessa Carmen DeRoy noted that CCGI currently receives \$3.5 million from Proposition 98 funds, with additional funding provided through fees paid by districts, subsidies from other state agencies, and philanthropic funds. She also noted that the budget could be reduced if the timeframe for onboarding new districts is extended.

Cindy Kazanis of CDE asked if the overall cost to the state could be off-set by cost savings, for example by having local education agencies sunset contracts with entities that are providing some similar services, such as college and career planning tools. Tessa Carmen DeRoy indicated that the program would pay for itself over time both through shifts in contracts and cost savings due to efficiencies. Teri Clark of CTC noted that these efficiencies should not be created by reducing the number of counselor positions, and instead CCGI should provide efficiencies in streamlining the tasks assigned to counselors so they can better support individual students. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for counseling has increased significantly. Mary Nicely of CDE concurred.

eTranscript California

Tom Vu of AICCU asked what four-year institutions would need to do to participate, including whether any technology upgrades would be required and if there is a fee to participate. CCCCCO staffer Alex Jackl noted that, for traditional transcripts, eTranscript California will only require that participating institutions implement an adapter to access an API. However, additional work will be needed to accept nontraditional learner records. There is no charge to participate.

Patrick Perry of CSAC asked for several clarifications:

- *What would be covered in the scaling costs?* Barney Gomez of CCCCCO indicated that some will be for technology changes within eTranscript California. Alex Jackl noted that costs also reflect the impact adding all of the independent and most of the private colleges—which will double the size of the network.
- *How does the proposed budget (\$6 million to scale and about \$865,000 annually to maintain) compare to the existing budget from the state?* Alex Jackl indicated that he did not have current operating costs at hand but could get that figure.
- *Would eTranscript California move its budget and operations to the managing entity, and in particular, would Proposition 98 funds that are currently underwriting eTranscript California be moved to GovOps?* Barney Gomez indicated that the managing entity would take over governance. Proposition 98 money would still be directed through California Community Colleges Technology Center that manages eTranscript California. Kathy Booth from WestEd

noted that the governance structure was spelled out in the background paper and noted that this is an example of how the technology architecture of a data contributor could be integrated into the state data system.

- *Would K-12 transcripts also be included?* Alex Jackl noted that eTranscript California could pass K-12 transcripts, but the proposal has CCGI carrying out that function. CCGI provides information in a manner that is compatible with eTranscript California.

Joy Bonaguro of GovOps asked if all the items listed were of equal priority. Alex Jackl noted that all items listed are necessary to implement the use case outlined by the workgroup, but other potential features were not included, such as sharing records with employers. Tessa Carmen DeRoy noted that another potential future function would be to return information on students' dual enrollment status back to K-12 institutions.

VOTE: The partner entities unanimously agreed to proceed with scaling both CCGI and eTranscript California. Barney Gomez of CCCCOC abstained from the eTranscript vote.

Community Engagement Plan

The facilitator reviewed the draft plan and the process by which it had been developed by members of the workgroup and both advisory groups, with support from a firm called Collaborative Communications (which helped with the roll-out of CDE's School Dashboard). Cindy Kazanis of CDE noted that the process had yielded a robust discussion about the materials, which had gone through several rounds of review by a variety of stakeholders.

Ben Allen for CDE shared that he had some additional suggestions for engaging early care and education providers and parents of children with special needs.

Chris Furgiuele of UC suggested that the PowerPoint make clear that the products of the Cradle-to-Career system will be data and information (as opposed to programs and services) delivered through digital tools that one must access through a computer with an internet connection.

Ed Sullivan of CSU expressed concern that the PowerPoint was too long and suggested that print materials be created to reach individuals who are unlikely to participate in online sessions. Cindy Kazanis of CDE noted that the group had discussed this challenge, particularly given the current pandemic, and noted that they hoped to reach a broader range of stakeholders by partnering with community based organizations.

Joy Bonaguro of GovOps suggested that videos be created to build trust and understanding in the data system. Mary Nicely thought that radio spots might also help to reach a broader group.

The facilitator reminded the workgroup that there was no budget for communications in the Cradle-to-Career Act, so the materials shared for today's meeting reflects the full scope of an effort that had been funded by outside philanthropic sources. Any additional materials will need to be contributed by partner entities or advisory group members.

VOTE: The partner entities unanimously agreed to proceed with the community engagement plan.