

# California Cradle-to-Career Workgroup Meeting Summary

May 27, 2021

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 May 27, 2021 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 and Universities; John Hetts, California Community College Chancellor's Office; Mary Nicely, Sarah Neville-Morgan, and Cindy Kazanis, California Department of Education; Tim Murphy, California Department of Technology; Natasha Nicolai, California Department of Social Services; John Ohanian, California Health and Human Services Agency; Amy Fong, California School Information Services; Matthew Case, California State University; Patrick Perry, California Student Aid Commission; Amy Faulkner, Employment Development Department; Joy Bonaguro, GovOps; Jeanne Wolfe, Labor and Workforce Development Agency; Sara Pietrowski, State Board of Education; Chris Furgiele, University of California Office of the President

## Updates

Kathy Booth of WestEd alerted the workgroup that the legislature authorized some requested expenses from the remaining planning funds, including allowing GovOps to hire staff and WestEd to continue supporting planning and implementation for the next year. However, the other requests were not approved, including the proof of concept dashboard on teacher retention and upgrades to the CALPADS data system. The remaining planning funds will be discussed as part of the fiscal year 2021-22 budget negotiation.

Chris Ferguson of the Department of Finance described the May revision to the trailer bill, which did not substantially change the Cradle-to-Career Data System structure laid out in the original trailer bill and Governor's budget. The updates were largely technical edits, with some important clarifications, including: 1) BPPE will provide any available data they have; 2) AICCU is the representative for the independent colleges; 3) the data system will use a participation agreement, rather than the Interagency Data Exchange Agreement, for the legal framework; 4) language was added to ensure data exchanges will be allowable under federal law by including statements about the ownership of data (necessary for FERPA) and the intended use of financial aid data (to address Higher Education Act requirements). Chris Ferguson provided clarification that the language about ownership was intended simply to comply with federal law, not to go beyond it.

Cindy Kazanis of CDE asked whether the funds that were intended to support the participation of data providers would go to those agencies as opposed to flowing through GovOps. Chris Ferguson of the Department of Finance noted that as part of the final budget negotiation, these resources (roughly \$150,000 per entity) will be added to their allocations. In addition \$3 million will be set aside for GovOps related to data acquisition.

Sara Pietrowski of SBE asked how AB 99 relates to the trailer bill. Chris Ferguson of the Department of Finance replied that the primary difference between the two was the governance structure. While he was unsure of the current language in the bill, given recent amendments, he knew that Irwin intends for the bill to move forward in concert with the trailer bill.

Bruce Yonehiro of CDE noted that some members of the Legal Subcommittee felt that indemnification language should be included in the participation agreement and that GovOps' budget should include the funding necessary to address a response to a data breach. He wondered if Chris Ferguson would stay for that discussion. Kathy Booth of WestEd clarified that this topic would be discussed at the June meeting, as opposed to the May meeting.

Chris Ferguson of the Department of Finance noted that he was aware of the request and was following the ongoing discussion. He understood that the current recommendations include requirements that GovOps follow rigorous security protocols to reduce the likelihood of a breach. Kathy Booth of WestEd clarified that these were the policies that were approved at the March 2021 workgroup meeting. The June 2021 workgroup meeting will address additional recommendations for security policies and how these security requirements will be integrated into the legal agreements.

### Public Comment

Liz Guillen of Public Advocates expressed her appreciation for the composition and work of the Community Engagement Subcommittee. The subcommittee used an asset-based lens, rather than one that marginalizes, to bring forward the voices of the community. Their recommendations will help to ensure that the data system's governing and advisory board appointees will include community based organizations and those who work closely with parents and students. The recommendations also reflect a deep understand community needs, including the urgency of addressing language barriers and ensuring transparency on issues such as who is using and not using the data system and the rationale for data requests that are denied.

### Community Engagement Subcommittee

Kathy Booth of WestEd reminded the workgroup about the charge for the subcommittee and the specific documentation that they developed including 20+ personas for data users and a communications matrix that were approved at the March 2021 workgroup meeting, and a community engagement plan, communications approach, and governance considerations that will be considered next.

Kathy Booth of WestEd noted that the recommendations of the subcommittee serve to operationalize the focus on equity and actionability enshrined in the vision for the data system. Specifically, the recommendations addressed questions such as:

- Who are the change-makers in our society?
- What types of information do they need?
- Who gets to interpret the information provided by the data system?
- How will the way that information is presented affect the insights users gain?
- What will be necessary for all change makers to know about and effectively make use of the data?
- How will the information provided help California build a more equitable future?

## Community Engagement Strategy

Two subcommittee members, Amy Fong of CSIS and Karla Pleitez-Howell of the Advancement Project, walked through the content of the proposed community engagement strategy. Amy Fong began by noting that the data system will only be sustainable if GovOps, the governing and advisory boards, and community partners work together to build awareness and trust, ensure that the information is useful, and support people in taking action. This means that there will need to be many, intentionally cultivated participants in the design and implementation process that reflect diverse voices and using strong feedback loops. The data system must be built *with* and not just *for* Californians.

Amy Fong of CSIS and Karla Pleitez-Howell of the Advancement Project highlighted several key features of the community engagement plan:

- Using key roles and personas to clarify the communities being served, their motivations, and the type of information they need to take action
- Focusing on equity in professional development activities, to precipitate a change in behavior
- Stressing potential bias in how information is displayed and described, with opportunities for community members to share their expertise in interpreting results and making investments to further their goals
- Emphasizing assets and the student lens when displaying data
- Providing resources in plain language, multiple languages, visuals, and videos
- Leveraging partnerships to get the word out, with a focus on looking beyond the usual partners
- Pre-creating summaries that can be customized
- Identifying measures to ensure efforts are succeeding
- Embedding expertise in equity within GovOps, paired with hired experts

Joy Bonaguro of GovOps noted that the data providers will have their own community engagement processes and networks, which should be an integral part of the Cradle-to-Career Data System community outreach efforts. GovOps should not be solely responsible for outreach and its efforts should not get in the way of the work being done by the data providers.

Cindy Kazanis of CDE reminded the group that public data will not be available for 7-12 months and wondered what could be done to involve stakeholders in the interim.

Karla Pleitez-Howell of the Advancement Project suggested that GovOps could identify stories to pair with the numerical data to contextualize results.

Amy Fong of CSIS noted that the Community Engagement Subcommittee's work was an excellent starting place for the type of work that will be taken up by the Community Engagement Advisory Board, particularly related to user centered design. This work could continue in early months of data system development. GovOps could also work on building awareness about the data system before the data becomes available.

Sarah Neville-Morgan of CDE noted her appreciation for the recommendations, particularly the focus on multilingual resources.

John Ohanian of CHHS underscored the importance of strong feedback loops.

Karla Pleitez-Howell of the Advancement Project noted that the governance structure includes an explicit focus on feedback mechanism through the two advisory boards, as well as holding the

participants in the data system accountable through mechanisms like showing who requested data from the system, whether that request was approved, and a rationale if the request was denied.

Chris Furgiuele of UC wondered how action might be taken on the data, given that GovOps is a neutral data provider.

Amy Fong of CSIS responded that the types of action will vary by role, as outlined in the personas. If there are actions that would be appropriate for GovOps to take, it would come at the direction of the governing board, with the two advisory boards identifying potential actions to recommend.

### Communications Approach

Kathy Booth of WestEd briefly summarized the communications approach that was developed by Collaborative Communications to codify the recommendations of the subcommittee related to communications.

John Hetts of CCCCO flagged the use of the term “up-to-date” in the key messages, given that the analytical data set will not be real time. This term may need to be contextualized based on the audience and data tool being described.

Cindy Kazanis of CDE highlighted that a different communications strategy will be needed in the first year, before there is data available.

Amy Fong of CSIS suggested that a transitional communications plan be addressed at the first governing board meeting.

### Governance Recommendations

Kathy Booth of WestEd shared the recommendations from the Community Engagement Subcommittee on ways to optimize community voice in the proposed governance structure. Highlights included:

- **Ensure the right people are appointed:** include a diversity of perspectives, prioritize expertise in equity, select individuals who can support two-way conversations with intended audiences, and align appointments with the focus area for data integration within a given timeframe (such as when workforce training data is added)
- **Scaffold involvement of community members:** using a dedicated portion of the budget, provide orientation and mentoring to build a baseline understanding of issues, foster trust and a shared vision, and ensure equal treatment
- **Provide appropriate information for decision making:** share data from multiple sources (such as input from community members gathered intentionally through vehicles embedded in tools, public forums, and partnerships with community-based organizations, in addition to usage data and requests) and provide this information in a readily-digestible format
- **Create structural alignment:** cross-pollinate ideas across the governing and advisory boards, coordinate with related public governance efforts, provide transparency about deliberations, and set timelines so that input is provided in advance of implementation, legislation, and budget deadlines

Cindy Kazanis of CDE asked for clarification about how GovOps would provide the appropriate support to the board members. LeAnn Fong-Batkin of WestEd noted that GovOps will be posting a dedicated board liaison position in the coming week.

## **VOTE**

The workgroup members voted unanimously to affirm that the input from the Community Engagement Subcommittee, including the framing about operationalizing equity and actionability, community engagement plan, communications approach, and governance recommendations, should be adopted by the workgroup and included in the June 2021 legislative report.

### **Employment and Earnings Definitions**

Matthew Case of CSU described the work of a homework team that sought to develop a consistent definition for employment and earnings metrics, given that there is no standardized methodology. The group determined that there are a number of concerns about issues ranging from data quality to the lack of an evidenced-based approach for calculating earnings using the source data. Therefore, the homework team recommends that GovOps convene a group of experts to develop a new standard, with support from state and national experts, including individuals who work with the state wage file at EDD.

Chris Furgiuele of UC underscored the importance of addressing these unresolved issues to ensure that the data are truly usable, particularly given that the source data were designed for the administration of unemployment insurance rather than evaluating post-education outcomes.

Patrick Perry of CSAC encouraged GovOps to consult with Richard Moore from CSU Northridge, who has done a significant amount of work with the state wage file.

Joy Bonaguro of GovOps asked for clarification on the role of GovOps, particularly as it does not have a policy-setting role.

Kathy Booth of WestEd reminded the group that the governing board has the ability to create ad hoc committees to develop recommendations for the full governing board to consider.

## **VOTE**

The workgroup members voted unanimously to adopt the recommendation of the homework team to study how best to calculate employment and earnings measures for the Cradle-to-Career Data System before integrating these data points into public tools.

### **Data Points Provided by Each Partner Entity**

Kathy Booth of WestEd summarized the process by which each agency reviewed the 200 data points that will constitute the P20W data set and determine which they will provide based on the availability and quality of each data point. She reviewed some minor adjustment that had been made to the document that had been posted in advance of the meeting, including the removal of LGBTQ and disability services data points from UC (due to issues of data quality) and the addition of information on students' intended majors from the community college system.

Chris Furgiuele of UC asked about the points listed in the document as being used for matching only, such as address, and if those data points would ever be released. He also wondered if a specific address would be needed.

Kathy Booth of WestEd responded that they would only be used for the purpose of linking records and would not be available in either the data request process or the public-facing tools. Therefore, any address on record should be provided, as it may align with an address found in another data set and thus help to validate a match, even if it is not the student's current address.

Chris Furguele of UC further inquired about the nature of the unique student identifier. For example, would it be problematic if the student identifier were specific to an institution as opposed to at the state agency level?

Kathy Booth of WestEd clarified that the same principle applies as for addresses. Unique student identifier will be used to link records either within the same institution over time or across institutions. Even if the identifier was specific to one college, it could help to resolve inconsistent information, such as when students changed their last names after a marriage or a divorce.

Chris Furguele of UC asked if his office could create its own unique student identifier before submitting information to the Cradle-to-Career Data System.

Kathy Booth of WestEd indicated that, as long as the ID would be consistent across years and institutions, it would serve the intended purpose.

Matthew Case of CSU noted that his agency still uses individual identifiers that are specific to each campus, and so they cannot provide a single identifier across all CSUs. This context should be documented.

Kathy Booth of WestEd responded that the display options and data points were compiled by data experts from each data provider, who provided comprehensive information about the nature and quality of each data point. This has been compiled for GovOps and will serve as an important reference point as information is ingested and compiled for the P20W data set. In addition, WestEd will work with data providers over the summer to ensure that documentation is complete.

Cindy Kazanis of CDE flagged that the documentation does not specify the source data system within each data provider. Agencies often have multiple data sets that they draw from.

Kathy Booth of WestEd affirmed the importance of taking this extra step and indicated WestEd would undertake this work over the summer.

John Hetts of CCCC noted that additional work will be needed on the community college transfer preparation metric, as the definition is in flux. This was noted for work over the summer as well.

Chris Furguele of UC asked what types of gender identity variables would be included.

Kathy Booth of WestEd noted that for public-facing data sets, the options would be Male, Female, and Nonbinary, because there is a lack of consistency across data providers about the full list of gender identity categories. However, data providers can provide their full list of categories for the purpose of data requests. Also, given that gender identity elements have been expanded relatively recently in state data sets, the categories may change over time.

## **VOTE**

The workgroup member voted nearly unanimously to reference the revised spreadsheet of data points by specific providers for future IT planning and the participation agreement, including changes requested at this meeting.

John Hetts of CCCC voted “yes, with reservations,” citing the concern about finalizing the transfer prepared metric.

## Deidentification Policy

Kathy Booth of WestEd reminded the workgroup that the initial deidentification policy, which was based on CHHS's policy and federal guidelines for education data, was presented at the March 2021 meeting. The workgroup asked for further review of the policy. A homework team completed this review and made several edits to the document, including renaming it the Suppression Protocol.

Matthew Case of CSU described the changes, which included:

1) Clarifying this is specifically a suppression protocol for public-facing data, rather than a broader deidentification policy

2) Making the policy more rigorous by:

- Not allowing zero to be used for complementary suppression
- Requiring that there be at least 11 people across all suppressed categories
- No longer clarifying whether a figure is suppressed because its number is too small or a complementary suppression figure

3) Indicating that this is a preliminary recommendation that must be tested once the data system is built.

Chris Furgiuele of UC expressed his appreciation for the additional work on the policy. However, he was concerned about the possibility of reidentifying students when application and enrollment data are linked, even with the conservative minimum thresholds set in the protocol. A higher standard may be needed for data points with very sensitive outcomes—such as potentially revealing who had and had not been accepted by a college.

Matthew Case of CSU noted that the homework team had discussed this specific scenario and concluded that there may need to be some instances where variables are conditional or there are additional constraints on how data are displayed. This is why the homework team recommended that the protocol be refined once the data are linked. Overall, the feeling among homework team members was that the protocol walked the line of safeguarding individual data without removing so much detail that the dataset would be unusable. In addition, approaches to protecting identities is an actively evolving field, so it is possible that GovOps could apply other protocols over time. Amy Fong of CSIS concurred.

Cindy Kazanis of CDE noted that her colleague Randy Bonnell was part of the homework team and played a significant role in the development of the protocol. She felt that the work was helpful and could be aligned with existing policies within CDE.

John Hetts of CCCO agreed that the approach is both very rigorous and balanced. Given the need to be able to understand outcomes for disproportionately impacted groups, it will be important to maintain a balance between privacy and visibility.

### **VOTE**

The workgroup members voted unanimously to adopt the revised suppression protocol.

*Note:* John Ohanian of CHHS initially abstained, indicating he first needed to hear back from a colleague who was reviewing the policy. Subsequently, CHHS voted to adopt the revised suppression protocol.

## Next Steps

Kathy Booth of WestEd indicated that several partner entities had asked that the scheduled discussion on the legal templates be postponed until the June meeting to provide more time for review. The workgroup agreed to this change.

Kathy Booth of WestEd noted that the workgroup has addressed almost all of the items listed in the original legislation. The remaining items include finalizing the legal agreements and two additional security documents: the permission protocol and the incident response plan. All of these items will be discussed at the June 2021 workgroup meeting.

She also described the timeline for reviewing and submitting the final report to the legislature, which is due on June 30. It will be short, like the April 2021 Update Report, and document the recommendations from the final two workgroup meetings.

Next, Kathy Booth of WestEd noted that workgroup members will receive a draft job description for the executive director position later in the day, for review by June 4. Input has already been gathered from the advisory groups about priority skills for this position.

Finally, Ben Chida of the Governor's Office addressed the group. He highlighted the Governor's commitment to the Cradle-to-Career Data System and reflected on how the data system will be a critical component of centering public funding on the needs of the whole child. It will also be critical for evaluating investments being made to break down traditional silos. He thanked the workgroup for their thoughtful recommendations and noted the importance of coordinating with the legislature to ensure that the work of implementation can begin.

Ben Chida asked workgroup members to confer with their agency's leadership to identify representatives for the governing board, which is slated to meet for the first time in July 2021. Optimally, the representatives will be able to represent and communicate the priorities of their institution, as well as evaluate whether the data system is achieving its intended overall purpose. Rather than selecting someone with expertise in one component of implementation, such as IT, institutional research, or legal matters, this person should have a broad view of institutional interests and understand their application in all three areas of the data system, including analytical tools, operational tools, and community engagement.

Chris Furgiuele of UC asked whether there would be an official communication to the agencies regarding naming the governing board representative.

Ben Chida of the Governor's Office responded that a communication will be forthcoming from the Governor's appointments office, but he wanted to give workgroup members a heads up first so they can begin discussions within their agencies.

After expressing her thanks for the Governor's ongoing support for this process, Cindy Kazanis of CDE asked if the governing board members have the authority to appoint their representative, or if there is an approval process by the Governor.

Ben Chida of the Governor's Office indicated that this will be clarified through the final language enacted in the trailer bill.