California Cradle-to-Career Workgroup Meeting Summary

April 29, 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 April 2020 workgroup meeting. More information about the meeting, including support materials 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; Cindy Kazanis, Sarah Neville-Morgan, and Mary Nicely, California Department of Education; Brenda Bridges Cruz, 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; Michele Perault, Commission on Teacher Credentialing; Amy Faulkner, Employment Development Department; Joy Bonaguro, Government Operations Agency; and Chris Furgiuele, University of California, Office of the President.

Welcome and Updates

The meeting opened with an update from the Governor's Office about the status of the project in the context of the pandemic. Ben Chida noted that the crisis has redoubled commitment to the data system. Connecting information between state agencies allows policy makers to use an evidence basis for emergency responses and recovery policies. Given the fiscal constraints that are likely, the workgroup should focus on developing a design that addresses long-term goals and includes clear prioritization for the first phase, based on what is feasible.

Ben Chida reminded the group of core concepts that were outlined in the California Cradle-to-Career Data System Act, which should inform planning for the data system. The system should link existing data between agencies, with an initial focus on mapping the K-12 to postsecondary education pipeline. Other data sources—which will be vital to supporting Californians holistically—can be integrated over time. For example, one tangible way to address the economic, health, and emotional challenges of the pandemic is to prioritize structures that help Californians transfer critical educational and social service records when applying to college. Finally, wherever possible, existing systems should be leveraged rather than building out new structures.

Next, the facilitator outlined the recommendations from the advisory groups, public comments, and a community survey regarding tools that would help to implement the three use cases identified in the February workgroup meeting. She indicated that the use case documents had been updated to reflect

these recommendations, with the new versions posted to the project website and emailed to partner entities on April 22, 2020.

In response to a concern raised by a workgroup member about the difficulty of getting community input regarding the tools during the pandemic, the facilitator clarified that a community engagement campaign will be launched in late summer with the support of Collaborative Communications.

Public Comment

Ben Duran, the Executive Director of the Central Valley Higher Education Consortium, who was speaking on behalf of intersegmental coordinating bodies in both the Central Valley and Inland Empire, expressed support for scaling the California Colleges Guidance Initiative as part of phase one of the state data system.

P20W Data Set Use Case

Discussion on Overall Scope

The facilitator provided a more in-depth overview of the proposed scope and tools for this use case:

- **Purpose:** publicly available information to inform equity analyses, support program planning, and provide focused information to the community about the cradle-to-career pipeline
- **Participating segments:** CDE-managed early education, K-12, public and private postsecondary, California Student Aid Commission, employment and earnings data
- **Data types:** student characteristics**,** education experiences, financial aid, employment, institution
- **Tools:**
  - **Public Dashboard**
    - Offers information on key policy issues, beginning with the topics identified in the legislation
    - Includes three levels of functionality: infographics, more complex charts where users can see comparisons and disaggregated results, and the ability to export summary data on key issues
  - **Public Query Tool**
    - Query builder allows users to link together data tables
    - Results can be exported as charts or Excel/CSV files with de-identified, summary information

In discussing the proposed scope, the conversation began with a question about the early education data that would be included. Cindy Kazanis from the California Department of Education (CDE) noted that, currently, her agency has not linked their early education data to their K-12 data set. Sarah Neville-Morgan, who oversees early education at CDE, underscored the importance of including early care data from a variety of sources in the state data system. CDE and the California Health and Human Services Agency (CHHS) are working together on three related efforts, all of which include a data component: Early Care & Education Master Plan, preschool development grant, and Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS). Regular meetings have been set to coordinate these efforts with Cradle-to-Career planning. Several participants noted that, while early care data is valuable, the P20W data set should be limited to data that are vetted and of high quality in phase one—this will help to build trust and secure early wins. *(note: this topic was discussed again later in the meeting)*

Another participant indicated that it would be important for the dashboard and query tools to only provide linked data. It will cause confusion if the Cradle-to-Career dashboard presents information that is also shown on agency-specific dashboards, particularly if the numbers do not align. Several participants concurred, and Paige Kowalski, a national expert on intersegmental data systems from the Data Quality Campaign, clarified that other states have limited their data systems to linked data.

Two workgroup members noted the risks of dashboard data being misconstrued and the importance of careful design to support interpretation. Another noted that differences in interpretation is a constant challenge, which is why it is important to have staff who can assist with addressing how others use the information.

Vote on Overall P20W Data Set Scope

The workgroup then voted on the following question:

Should planning proceed with the P20W data set as outlined in the draft document?

note: the data types listed in the P20W document would be further investigated by the Data Definitions Subcommittee, which will develop recommendations for which specific variables should be included in public tools and how they would be defined. The Research Agenda Subcommittee will develop a list of potential information to appear in the dashboards and query builder.

Thirteen members voted "yes." An additional four voted "yes, with reservations:"

- Sarah Neville-Morgan, CDE
- Patrick Perry, CSAC
- Amy Fong, CSIS
- Joy Bonaguro, GovOps

The issues that caused the reservations included:

- additional early learning data should be included, particularly pertaining to federal reporting requirements
- information on mental and emotional health should be included
- the P20W data set should be derived from a larger underlying data architecture

Next, the workgroup considered three issues that had been flagged by the advisory groups: whether to include CHHS early care information, whether to include survey data, and whether to secure information from third parties to augment the data set. Each topic was discussed by a small group, followed by a report out, full group discussion, and vote. See below for each topic.

CHHS Early Care Discussion

The small group recommended that CHHS early care data be included in phase one, although more information is needed about the metrics that could be shared. In the full group discussion, one participant expressed concern that if CHHS information was not integrated initially, it might not be added later. Another suggested that the metrics could focus on very simple concepts, like whether an individual participated in a certain type of service.

Sarah Neville-Morgan from CDE and Elaine Scordakis from CHHS, who are helping to lead joint early care and education efforts, suggested that the planning process for the Master Plan for Early Learning and Care identify possible data elements and share recommendations back with the Cradle-to-Career workgroup.

The facilitator noted that integrating CHHS data requires a significantly different technical and legal architecture than the data that were initially proposed for the P20W data set. For example, it might necessitate that the Cradle-to-Career system be built using CHHS's infrastructure, which has already addressed the challenges that are specific to health and social service data. One participant suggested that it would be important to provide information on legal and technical implications back to the workgroup, given concerns about how information could be shared.

The workgroup voted on the following question:

> Should the data system include early care and childhood data from CHHS in public tools in phase one, and should CHHS and CDE work together to propose the elements most viable to include, as well as how to align this inclusion with the parallel Early Childhood Integrated Data System effort?

Twelve members voted "yes." Patrick Perry from CSAC voted "no." An additional four voted "yes, with reservations:"

- Thomas Vu, AICCU
- Amy Fong, CSIS
- Amy Faulkner, EDD
- Chris Furgiuele, UCOP

The issues that caused the reservations included:

- The inclusion of the additional data set may be too difficult
- The types of information to include are too unclear

Survey Data Discussion

The small group recommended that survey data be evaluated for inclusion in phase one, based on the topics that are prioritized in the research agenda and for public-facing tools. In the full group discussion, one participant noted that survey data is difficult to integrate with administrative data sets because it generally only covers a sample of the overall student population. Another noted that some data sets don't identify which students answered the questions, so it would be impossible to link responses to specific students. This led to a suggestion that survey results—such as summary findings from climate or alumni surveys—could be posted on the research library. One participant recommended that the state system only include survey data from instruments that it administers, and that those surveys be expressly designed to fill in gaps from available data sources. Another participant concurred, noting the risk of sharing surveys that only include some students or institutions, rather than the whole state.

The workgroup voted on the following question:

> Should the data system include survey data in phase one, and should the Research Agenda Subcommittee review and recommendation possible surveys and whether they should be included in public-facing tools to this group?

Seven members voted "yes." Ten voted "yes, with reservations:"

- Thomas Vu, AICCU
- Michael Marion, BPPE
- Cindy Kazanis, CDE
- Ed Sullivan, CSU
- Patrick Perry, CSAC
- Michele Perrault, CTC
- Amy Faulkner, EDD
- Jeanne Wolfe, EDD
- Joy Bonaguro, GovOps
- Sara Pietrowski, SBE

Data from Outside Vendors Discussion

The small group recommended that the data system include information on out-of-state college enrollments through a contract with the National Student Clearinghouse. In addition to providing information for the Cradle-to-Career system, the results should also be made available to partner entities. In the full group discussion, one participant suggested that it would be valuable to create a rubric that would determine when data should be purchased. The rubric might address whether the data would be used each year, could be tracked with similar levels of accuracy over time, or there are similar sources of information that are free. Another stressed that outside information should not replace information that is already collected by one of the partner entities—for example, National Student Clearinghouse data should not be used for institutions in California. The facilitator noted that a decision-making rubric could be created for both survey data and information from outside vendors as part of the governance process development.

The workgroup voted on the following question:

> Should the data system include data from an outside vendor in phase one, and should the Research Agenda Subcommittee review and recommendation possible data sets and whether they should be included in public-facing tools to this group?

Thirteen members voted "yes." An additional four voted "yes, with reservations:"

- Thomas Vu, AICCU
- Ed Sullivan, CSU
- Michele Perault, CTC
- Chris Furgiuele, UCOP

Data Request Use Case

Discussion on Overall Scope

The facilitator provided a more in-depth overview of the proposed scope and tools for this use case:

- **Purpose**: support service delivery, evaluate state investments, conduct equity analyses, and identify effective practices
- **Participating segments**: all partner entities
- **Access through**: request process where an authorized entity would review requests, methodologies, and findings
- **Tools**:
  - **Secure Data Environment**
    - Role-driven access to authorized data
    - Ability to upload cohorts of individuals
    - Analyses conducted within a secure cloud environment
    - Can be used to generate data sets for authorized projects and tools
  - **Public Research Repository**
    - Methodology information
    - Research library that allows the public to download reports that have been produced using the California data system

In discussing the proposed scope, the conversation began with a question about the feasibility of creating a secure research environment. One participant suggested that instead of conducting research within an online enclave, the secure data environment could generate de-identified records that could be exported for the requestor. Another wondered how easy it would be to upload all of the information required for this environment.

In order to reduce friction for data sharing among partner entities, one participant suggested that the state system include a central database that could be accessed by the partners without having to submit a data request each time. Another participant suggested that this access should be provided to educational institutions such as individual colleges or K-12 districts. Elaine Scordakis from CHHS noted that these types of arrangements have already been made possible through the Interagency Data Exchange Agreement, which is active for her 13 departments and is now being expanded to other state agencies. The facilitator noted that the Legal Subcommittee is currently reviewing how this agreement could be modified to address the needs of partner agencies for the Cradle-to-Career data system.

The group discussed how research requests from outside entities would be evaluated and prioritized. One participant expressed hope that the public dashboards and query tools will reduce the volume of requests. Another strategy would be to grant access to the same centralized data set used by partner agencies to entities that complete a credentialing process, particularly those entities that have been hired by partners to expand their capacity. A third participant indicated that access to the centralized data set could also be extended to other parties such as the Senate Office of Research and the Legislative Analyst's Office. However, another participant expressed caution about giving blanket access to third parties. It will be important to include exclusion constructs in memoranda of understanding that clarify consequences for not abiding by the agreement terms. The group discussed a situation where an outside entity might leverage its relationship with a partner entity to get privileged access to data. This

scenario crystalized the importance of having criteria that focus on the types of information that will be produced, rather than on who is asking for access. The facilitator noted that those criteria could be created based on the priority questions that are being developed by the Research Agenda Subcommittee. Paige Kowalski from the Data Quality Campaign underscored the importance of having a publicly accountable governance process that ensures data are used to advance the interest of the state rather than any specific entity. Finally, one participant noted that as policies are developed, it will be important to evaluate cost recovery requirements from the state (see State Administrative Manual Section 8752.1).

Vote on Data Request Use Case Scope

The workgroup voted on the following question:

> Should planning proceed with the research request use case as outlined in the draft document with the following edits:
> - Determine what information would be available to partner entities and educational institutions without case-by-case review
> - Examine the feasibility of creating a secure data environment versus a secure environment for provisioning data
> - Establish clear rules for third party access, particularly when asks are made jointly by a partner entity and an outside organization
> - Include feedback processes that ensures the content of the public tools are informed by research requests, and research requests are vetted through the lens of what is publicly available
>
> *note*: the technical requirements for the secure data environment will be included in a request for information released this summer, to further evaluate whether this is a viable option, and the process for partner/education institution data access will be discussed over the summer as part of the governance process

All members voted "yes."

Tools for Practitioners and Individuals Use Case

CaliforniaColleges.edu/California College Guidance Initiative (CCGI)

The facilitator provided an overview of the tool that could be scaled as part of phase one of the data system:

- Technical platform, technical assistance (curriculum and staff who support data clean up and implementation), and interface for students and practitioners
- Streamlines the college planning and transition process for students
- Provides K-12 districts with the tools and curriculum needed to systematize college and career guidance practices
- Provides higher ed and financial aid providers with clean, accurate, timely and actionable data with which to make key decisions about admissions, placement, guidance, financial aid, and supportive services
- Ability to also share information related to socioeconomically disadvantaged, first generation college-going, homeless, and foster youth (with student approval)

After reviewing preliminary recommendations from the advisory groups, community survey, and workgroup members, the workgroup asked clarifying questions about CCGI and raised items for consideration. One participant noted that it is most important to focus on the common infrastructure being developed across the state rather than the concept of scaling a particular project. Ed Sullivan from CSU, who has worked with CCGI, described ways that this service could address priorities for the data system, such as helping students plan for college, identifying interventions that make students more likely to take rigorous coursework and apply to college, and streamlining time and staffing requirements for transferring high school educational records. Another participant requested that there be an independent evaluation of CCGI regarding its ability to provide the desired services. The facilitator noted that workgroup members will be asked to provide questions that would guide this assessment. In response, one participant asked for a list of other entities that could provide similar functionality.

The workgroup voted on the following question:

>Should we set a goal that CCGI be scaled to serve all 6-12 grade students as part of phase one?

Thirteen members voted "yes." Joy Bonaguro from GovOps abstained. An additional three voted "yes with reservations:"

- Thomas Vu, AICCU
- Michele Perault, CTC
- Chris Furgiuele, UCOP

eTranscript California/CDSS Confirmatory Tool

The facilitator provided an overview of the proposed tool that would be scaled as part of phase one of the data system:

- Technical platform, under development by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
- Provides a consistent platform that streamlines application processes for students and institutions (note: this is compatible with CCGI)
- Allows students to authorize the sharing of social service records with colleges to identify supports they are eligible to receive
- Expands the types of records that can be shared to meet the needs of adults seeking employment such as competency-based credentials, experiential transcripts, e-portfolios, certifications, and badges

After reviewing preliminary recommendations from the advisory groups, community survey, and workgroup members, the workgroup asked clarifying questions. Michael Marion from BPPE noted that this type of a tool would be very helpful for for-profit colleges, particularly given the likelihood of college closures due to the pandemic. One participant expressed concern that colleges might not elect to use the platform because they have existing contracts with other transcript providers.

The workgroup voted on the following question:

>Should we set a goal that the eTranscript California infrastructure be built out and linked to social service data as part of phase one?

Ten members voted "yes." Cindy Kazanis and Mary Nicely from CDE voted "no." Joy Bonaguro from GovOps and Michele Perrault from CTC abstained. An additional three voted "yes, with reservations:"

- Sarah Neville-Morgan, CDE
- Amy Fong, CSIS
- Sara Pietrowski, SBE

Silicon Valley Regional Data Trust/Stanislaus Cradle-to-Career Partnership

The facilitator provided an overview of the proposed tool that would be scaled as part of phase one of the data system:

- Pilot regional technical platform and governance model
- Enables educators to coordinate care for their students with behavioral health, child welfare, and juvenile probation providers
- Ensures access to an individual's records is based on appropriate organizational role and documented consent
- Tests the concept of scaling a regional data-sharing mechanism for securely accessing real-time information

After reviewing preliminary recommendations from the advisory groups, community survey, and workgroup members, the workgroup asked clarifying questions. Several participants noted the importance of evaluating the Silicon Valley implementation before replicating in another region and were concerned that the project was too big a reach for phase one. Another wondered how a regional effort fits into the state data framework. Elaine Scordakis of CHHS noted that this was a highly valuable proposal because it puts health and child welfare data in the center of implementation.

Ten members voted "no." Barney Gomez of CCCCO and Elaine Scordakis of CHHS voted "yes." Michele Perrault from CTC abstained. Four members voted "yes, with reservations:"

- Amy Fong of CSIS
- Ed Sullivan of CSU
- Joy Bonaguro of GovOps
- Chris Furgiuele of UCOP