Community Engagement Subcommittee Meeting Summary

January 21, 2021

This document provides a summary of key points that emerged over the course of the meeting. More information about the meeting, including materials, the PowerPoint, and a meeting recording are available at https://cadatasystem.wested.org/meeting-information/community-engagement-subcommittee.

The January 2021 meeting had the following goals:

- Clarify the recommended scope of the Cradle-to-Career Data system and the process used to develop that recommendation
- Describe the goals and activities of the Community Engagement Subcommittee
- Share effective practices in user centered design
- Develop personas to support the user centered design process

The following representatives attended the meeting:

Advancement Project, Karla Pleitez-Howell
California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE), Steven Sterling Mitchell
California College Guidance Initiative (CCGI), Maya Ramos Clayton
California EDGE Coalition, Anna Alvarado
California School Information Services, Amy Fong
California State Board of Education, Zaid Fattah, (Monte Vista High School)
Californians Together, Xilonin Cruz-Gonzalez
Children Now, Stephen Blake
Concordia University Irvine, Lizz Mishreki
Del Norte County Office of Education, Jeff Harris
Fresno Unified School District, Heather Allen, Executive Director
Growing Inland Achievement, Sorrel Stielstra
High Tech High Graduate School of Education, Ben Daley
Imperial County Office of Education, Denise Cabanilla
Jobs for the Future, Mara Lockowandt
Moreno Valley Unified School District, Esperanza Arce
NAACP Pomona Valley Branch, Jeanette EllisRoyston
North Orange County Chamber of Commerce, Theresa Harvey
Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE), Patricia E. Chavez and Lucero Chavez
San Bernardino City Unified School District, Rose Gonzalez
San Diego State University, Center for Equity and Postsecondary Attainment, Lauren Owen
Student Senate for California Community Colleges, Gerardo Chavez
University of California Office of the President, Jenna Allen
Vista Murrieta High School, Eric Peterson
Washington Unified School District Board of Trustees, Jackie Wong

Overview of the Cradle-to-Career Data System

The meeting opened with Kathy Booth of WestEd providing an overview of the planning process and recommendations for the Cradle-to-Career Data System. Then she reviewed the core responsibilities of the subcommittee, which will be to develop recommendations for a legislative report regarding how to:

- create mechanisms for strong feedback loops with data users
- support evidence-based decision making and analytical capacity
- ensure equitable access to actionable information

Subcommittee members asked clarifying questions, including:

Will nonprofits be able to access the college eligibility tools? This would require that the district participating in CaliforniaColleges.edu provide permission for specific nonprofit staff to have access.

Will the operational tools address ways to scale up concurrent and dual enrollment? Work is underway to transmit information on dual enrollment courses.

Will student participation in pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs be included? This information will be provided through the Department of Apprenticeship Standards.

Will the data system be able to track students who are in enrolled in specific support programs (i.e., Umoja, Promise Scholars, AVID)? AVID students will be flagged, but not the other categories.

Will the data system include information on whether students are involved with the justice system? This data set was not included in the original scope of the planning process. However, the value of this information was flagged during the planning process and the legislative report included a recommendation that this type of information be included in a future phase of development.

Will plans for professional development differentiate between the needs of various types of users? This is a topic that will be expressly addressed at the March subcommittee meeting.

Will the information be available in languages other than English? This question has been raised at several points during the planning process. This subcommittee can help to weigh in about when and how resources should be translated.

Will the tools be designed to be mobile-friendly? CaliforniaColleges.edu is mobile responsive, but does not have an app. When designing the analytical tools and for the rebuild of eTranscript California, needs for access via phones will be taken into account.

How will the tools be accessed by populations that may have limited broadband access or data literacy? These topics will be addressed in the February subcommittee meeting.

Will the Cradle-to-Career Data System replace other data sharing agreements? No, it will be a source of information to augment existing agreements.

Who are the intended users of the data system? It is geared at a variety of users, ranging from students to policy makers. This subcommittee meeting includes time to brainstorm types of users. Some tools may be focused on specific populations—for example the college eligibility tool would be used primarily

by students, families, high school counselors, and high school administrators, whereas the query builder would mostly be used by researchers, policy makers, advocates, and those who have a high level of data literacy.

How will the data system keep users coming back? This will be a key discussion point of this subcommittee. In the planning process, participants have noted that the sustainability of the system will be predicated on its utility.

User-Centered Design

Maura Keaney of Collaborative Communications provided an overview of how user-centered design can be implemented to ensure that data tools provide useful information to intended audiences. She noted that user personas are one mechanism that helps to clarify various intended audiences and their specific needs. She also emphasized that user-centered design is iterative, such that tools can evolve given feedback both during development and after the initial launch. Finally, she provided examples of how user centered design had been implemented in the context of housing and health services.

Cindy Kazanis of CDE shared her organization's experience working with Collaborative Communications to implement a user-centered design process for the California School Dashboard. In response to earlier questions, she noted that CDE:

- Implemented different types of resources for different user types. For example, information about the data points is presented in plain language for parents on the website and through a 200-page technical guide for power users.
- Originally translated pages into Spanish, Tagalog, Mandarin, and Vietnamese using Google Translate but switched to human interpreters due to errors in key terms.
- Created a mobile app for the dashboard.
- Partnered with the state PTA to alert families, prepared targeted webinars, and recorded informational videos in both English and Spanish.
- Was willing to abandon features that were not useful and continue to see the dashboard as a work in progress.

The subcommittee discussed lessons learned through rolling out other technology tools. Insights included:

- Front-line workers and help desk staff often have useful information about usability
- Data literacy is a key need in broader society—perhaps the Cradle-to-Career Data System could be used in high school curricula to strengthen students' abilities to be informed consumers of information or to understand statistics
- The website will need to work with older technology and for those with limited internet bandwidth
- It will be important to provide guidance to support the roll out of the tools, particularly CaliforniaColleges.edu
- Parents should be invited to weigh in on the dashboard, both for design and communications
- Engagement on design can also serve as the first line of communications about the data system, including a careful review of language used
- Mechanisms should be designed that give intended users a reason to come back, such as embedding the tools into curriculum, alerting new groups of intended users, and attending to the frequency of communication

- Ensure the website indicates which portions are most relevant for specific types of users and what they could do with the information

Key Audiences

Subcommittee members brainstormed potential users of the data system, including:

Analyzers (those looking at trends and comparisons to evaluate systemic problems and opportunities)

- Policy makers in state, tribal, and local governments
- Researchers
- Advocacy organizations
- Philanthropic organizations
- Doctoral students
- Reporters

Institution/Program Leaders (those seeking to improve outcomes and implementation of interventions at the institutional or system level)

- State agencies
- Administrators of early learning and care programs
- Administrators in school districts
- Administrators in county offices of education
- Administrators in adult education providers
- Administrators in workforce training providers
- Administrators in colleges
- Curriculum developers
- College and career readiness centers
- After-school college readiness programs
- Foster care organizations
- Nonprofit service providers
- Social service organizations
- College access organizations
- Juvenile/probation system institutions
- Courts
- Employers
- Professional development providers
- Technical assistance providers aligning offerings across providers

Practitioners (those seeking to improve outcomes and implementation of interventions at the individual level)

- Early learning practitioners
- K-12 advisors
- K-12 teachers
- Postsecondary faculty (this would need to be broken out by segment)
- Postsecondary counselors (this would need to be broken out by segment)

Individuals (those seeking to improve outcomes for themselves or a family member)

- Parents (this will need to be broken out by other characteristics such as first generation, English learners, immigrants, age of children, home buyers)
- Students (this will need to be broken out by other characteristics such as high school, college, adult learners, dislocated workers)

Then the subcommittee members broke into small groups aligned with the four broad categories to develop one persona. This preliminary work will be expanded upon by homework teams that will develop the remaining personas.

Group 1: Analyzers

Blanca is the chief of staff for a state assembly member from the Central Valley. She is Latinx and bilingual. She is comfortable with data, but guarded because she knows how it can be manipulated to advance a cause. She needs to understand the impact of legislation and identify policies that can help her assembly member get re-elected. She wants to identify best practices on topics that she is passionate about, like ways to prepare students for emerging agriculture jobs, reduce high school dropout rates of English learners, and expand participation in early learning and care programs.

Group 2: Institutions/Programs

Latasha is the executive director of a nonprofit in workforce development. She is African-American and mid-to-late career. She is not familiar with technical terms used in education data. She needs information that she can include in presentations that show bright spots and gaps in education pipelines related to workforce needs. She wants to disaggregate this information to show differential outcomes for different populations and different career pathways.

Group 3: Practitioners

Erica is a counselor in a high school. She is white and lives in an urban environment. She has to juggle many competing responsibilities, particularly given the pandemic, which means that she doesn't have time to learn new systems. She needs information that is directly applicable to her students and is worth the investment of her time. She wants information that will help her communicate with students and parents, as well as insights that will help her support her school's Local Control and Accountability Plan.

Group 4: Individuals

This group did not develop a persona, but instead flagged key issues that pertain to students and families, such as ensuring that tools support first-generation college-goers and others with limited college experience, recognize the impact of the digital divide, are culturally responsive, use plain language, are disseminated using trusted messengers, foster data literacy and engagement, and are aligned with specific needs.