Practice & Operations Advisory Group Meeting Summary
December 10, 2020

The Practice & Operations Advisory Group provides a means for the public to offer recommendations to the California Cradle-to-Career Workgroup about how the data system could address improvement efforts at the institutional and regional level, support a case management approach to service delivery, and create tools that would be useful to students, families, and teachers.

This document provides a summary of the key points that emerged from a half-day meeting to provide input on the draft legislative report that provides recommendations about the structure, purpose, and components of the data system. More information about the meeting, including a recording, materials referenced during the meeting, and the PowerPoint, are available at https://cadatasystem.wested.org/meeting-information/practiceoperations-advisory-group.

The following advisory group representatives attended the meeting:

Attendees: Craig Hayward, Bakersfield College; Sara Arce, Campaign for College Opportunity; Susan Savage, Child Care Resource Center; Rick Miller, CORE Districts; Laurie Scolari, Foothill College; Anthony Dalton, Futuro Health; Michele Bowers, Lancaster Unified School District; Roneeta Guha, Linked Learning Alliance; Catalina Cifuentes, Riverside County Office of Education; Marcy Lauck and Nabil Shahin, Santa Clara County Office of Education; Lange Luntao, Stockton Unified School District; David Rattray, UNITE LA; Kristin Clark, West Hills Lemoore College; Tyler Wu, uAspire

Overall Reactions

Several advisory group members expressed support for the report, highlighting that it captures the work conducted over the year and is easy to understand.

Tyler Wu of uAspire expressed concerns about the fiscal impact and wondered if a lower-cost option could also be proposed. He encouraged the report to be more explicit in describing the value of the data system so that advocates can articulate why it should be prioritized during the budget crisis.

David Rattray of UNITE-LA stressed that the data system is an investment that will yield value over a long time period. The report should address why it is important to have a long-term vision in the midst of a crisis.

Rick Miller of CORE Districts indicated that the price tag was reasonable and would yield many positive returns for children.

Roneeta Guha of Linked Learning Alliance suggested listing how the information in the data system could address decisions that are being made in the state right now. Sara Arce of the Campaign for College Opportunity concurred.

Marcy Lauck of the Santa Clara County Office of Education noted that the return on investment should be called out in the executive summary and Kristin Clark of West Hills Lemoore College agreed, noting that it could include a problem statement, such as the need to increase efficiency between sectors and leverage existing resources. Anthony Dalton of Futuro Health recommended that the value of the data system should be further addressed in the Purpose section of the report, to clarify how each action solves a specific problem.

The group brainstormed examples of the value of the data system, such as:

- Identifying how many students are receiving free or reduced price meals
- Learning from other school districts about interventions that work
- Proactively identifying students with housing and food insecurity needs and their eligibility for state-funded services to tailor supports and reduce drop-out rates
- Identifying which students had incomplete college applications to coordinate support both for the initial deadline and when college application deadlines were extended
- Identifying where childcare programs were open or closed, both due to COVID and over time
- Identifying when school-aged children are in childcare due to COVID
- Identifying which students had access to supports
- Better understanding the drop offs in financial aid applications and college-going rates, and which students are most affected to target outreach (both at the individual level for students within a district and at the broader trend level)
- Revealing changes in postsecondary enrollment patterns across the state and whether there is a change in the characteristics of people attending college
- Understanding which students intended to go to college and whether they complete a degree
- Using information on the number of students who desire to go to college to establish appropriate postsecondary funding levels
- Determining if students who do not enroll in postsecondary are more likely to receive state benefits
- Gathering information on social service status through administrative data matches rather than through student surveys
- Improving the regional understanding of social service and employment trends for students, and how the efforts of various state agencies intersect to create support networks
- Reducing need for individual institutions to cobble data sets together to get a more comprehensive understanding of their students' outcomes
- Understanding where people are enrolled in college to build specific skills to support job recruitment
- Making equity gap information readily accessible to support racial reckoning and advocate for resources

David Rattray of UNITE-LA argued that licensure data should be explicitly included in phase one, as these credentials are critical for employment. He hoped that licensure information could be included as part of the expansion of workforce training information, leveraging the involvement of the Department of Consumer Affairs through its oversight over the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education. Roneeta Guha of Linked Learning Alliance agreed. Sara Arce of the Campaign for College Opportunity concurred and thought the Legislature should be alerted about how important this type of information will be. Kristin Clark of West Hills Lemoore College noted that this information would be especially helpful for postsecondary programs that train for occupations that require licensure.

Several advisory group members offered resources to support implementation. Anthony Dalton of Futuro Health noted that the cost of cloud hosting can be contained by coordinating timelines for data processing. Susan Savage of the Child Care Resource Center offered to support efforts to align data

definitions on early learning and care. David Rattray of UNITE-LA shared a model for technology development that helps to identify and reduce risk.

Governance

The group discussed the Policy & Analytics Advisory Group's recommendation that the report include an alternative vision for the governing board that includes an equal number of data providers and public members.

Susan Savage of the Child Care Resource Center indicated that she had a similar concern about the need to broaden the governing board and supported the proposal. Sara Arce of the Campaign for College Opportunity agreed.

Rick Miller of CORE Districts wondered whether practitioners would have sufficient recourse if the governing board did not want to make data broadly available.

David Rattray of UNITE-LA agreed with the proposal because data providers will naturally be inclined to be conservative and stronger public representation would grant the data system credibility. However, he was concerned that the board would be too big.

The group voted to join the Policy & Analytics Advisory Group in advising an expansion of the governing board to 24 people, split evenly between data providers and public members. However, Kristin Clark of West Hills Lemoore College disagreed, noting that it boards of this size are hard to manage and make it less likely that individuals will provide meaningful contributions to meetings.

Specific Suggestions for the Report

The group discussed the Policy & Analytics Advisory Group recommendation that the timeline should be removed from the body of the report. They disagreed, noting that the timeline was critical for building the confidence of the Legislature. A project of this scale needs to have a specific plan for operationalization. They noted that the introductory language could clarify that this plan is based on the current understanding of the development process, acknowledge the challenges that are likely to influence the timeline, and note that the proposed deliverables are guiding benchmarks that can be reevaluated on a regular basis.

The advisory group also noted that deliverables could be rolled out at multiple points within each year, with a focus on the information that is most critical for the state or low-hanging fruit that demonstrates the feasibility of the data system. They noted that the pilot project could demonstrate how this iterative approach could be implemented. They recommended that the pilot—which Susan Savage of the Child Care Resource Center recommended renaming a proof of concept—address a current, pressing concern.

Other suggested report edits included:

- Document the kinds of information that the data system would produce and how it would benefit California both immediately and in the long term
- Spell out opportunities for costs savings and efficiencies
- Refer to costs as investments to evoke the long-term benefit of the data system
- Add suggested additional data items on K-12 industry academy information and licensure data
- Reference the importance of aligning with recommendations from the California Workforce Pathways Joint Advisory Committee related to K-12 to postsecondary pathways

- Note that the managing entity could examine trends in questions asked through the data request process to identify ways to improve the data system