California Cradle-to-Career Workgroup Meeting Summary

May 28, 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 May 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; 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; Muhammad Akhtar, Employment Development Department; Joy Bonaguro, Government Operations Agency; Chris Furgiuele, University of California, Office of the President; and Ben Chida, Governor's Office.

Subcommittee Updates

The meeting opened with subcommittees updates, provided by the facilitation team and workgroup representatives who also serve on those subcommittees (complete meeting notes for the subcommittees are available on the California Cradle-to-Career Data System project website). Highlights from the discussion include:

- **Common Identifier Subcommittee:** In discussing the proposed Request for Information (RFI) for a master data management (MDM) solution, Joy Bonaguro from GovOps suggested that the workgroup should engage in interviews with respondents to solicit novel solutions. Given that the RFI is being handled by CDT, the facilitation team, Joy Bonaguro, and Brenda Bridges Cruz from CDT will meet separately to discuss how this type of input could be integrated into an evaluation rubric.
- **Technology & Security Subcommittee:** In discussing how data will be kept secure, the facilitation team clarified that the Technology & Security and Legal Subcommittees will work together to craft a deidentification policy, including how small sizes will be handled. They will also create legal agreements that address the level of data being provided, such as when personally identifiable information is being shared between entities, versus when different levels of deidentified data are provided or displayed.
- **Legal Subcommittee:** In discussing potential legislative changes that will be needed—particularly regarding data sharing and privacy rules—the agency lawyers requested more

granular information about the types of information that would be provided, to which parties, and for what purpose. As these issues get decided by the workgroup, draft legislative language will be written by the Legal Subcommittee.

- **Research Agenda Subcommittee:** The development of the research agenda will help provide the level of specificity needed for the Technology & Security and Legal Subcommittees to move forward with their work. Partner entities will review draft content that is specific to their segments, in advance of the proposal going to the full workgroup, to ensure that the proposed topics align with available data and existing agency-specific research agendas.
- **Operational Tools:** In addition to assessing whether California Colleges Guidance Initiative (CCGI) and eTranscript California—the two entities selected by the workgroup to implement the Tools for Practitioners and Individuals Use Case—address the functionality outlined in that use case, WestEd is working with CCGI and eTranscript California and the partner entities that will provide information to them to map out legal and technical data flows.
- **Communications**: Workgroup representatives were invited to review materials and a community engagement plan being developed by Collaborative Communications. The following individuals volunteered: Amy Fong, CSIS; Ben Allen, CDE; Cindy Kazanis, CDE; Joy Bonaguro, GovOps; Mary Nicely, CDE; and Sara Pietrowski, SBE.

Vision and Mission

At the April 2020 workgroup meeting, representatives indicated that they would like to include health and social service information in the first phase of the data system. Over the subsequent month, the facilitation team gathered information through subcommittee meetings and consulted with national experts about the implications of this choice. The decision to include health and social service data will have significant implications for the legal framework and technical structure, including requiring California to adopt a federated model. This means that data can only combined for clearly defined, specific purposes, by a neutral third party that has been delegated appropriate authority under both Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability (HIPAA) frameworks. Timing for data refreshes will be infrequent, exact alignment with data posted on partner entity websites will be impossible, and longitudinal comparisons will become difficult because information in the state data system will be single-point-in-time snapshots that may need to be destroyed after their stated use is complete.

The facilitation team also shared concerns raised by legislative staff that, by attempting to address the full range of desired data, the project would not be able to carry out a more discrete first phase that connects K-12 and postsecondary information that was specified in the Cradle-to-Career Act's legislation. Ben Chida of the Governor's Office underscored the importance of getting traction on a specific first step for the data system.

Workgroup representatives then filled out a poll to clarify whether and how they wanted to integrate health data into the Cradle-to-Career system. Most workgroup representatives indicated that the state data system should focus on the education-to-work pipeline, contextualized by health, social, and economic factors, as opposed to tracking whole-person progress toward health and economic outcomes, contextualized by education factors. However, there was less consensus about how health data should be included, with just over half feeling that health outcomes should be addressed

throughout an individual's life and a quarter indicating health data should only be provided in the context of early childhood.

Vision and Mission Statement

The group reviewed draft vision and mission statements and offered comments. A homework team will use this input to develop a revised draft for the June workgroup meeting. The homework team will made up of the following workgroup representatives: Amy Fong, CSIS; Chris Furgiuele, UC; Ed Sullivan, CSU; Joy Bonaguro, GovOps; Mary Nicely, CDE; and Michael Marion, BPPE.

Themes from the full group conversation included:

- The vision statement should be bolder, perhaps using language from the beginning of the draft mission statement.
- Data quality should be emphasized, using terms such as "accurate," "high quality," "actionable," "trusted," or "reliable."
- It would be good to emphasize the goal of building capacity to use data for decision making and allocating resources.
- It may be helpful to create a list of strategic goals to operationalize the vision and mission statements, rather than putting specific types of tools into these statements, which should be primarily aspirational.

Ben Chida noted that identifying a bold vision and naming the goal of actionability aligns with Governor's Office priorities.

Adult Learners and Transfer

In addition to expanding the vision of the California Cradle-to-Career Data System beyond education to explicitly mention health and social service outcomes, some workgroup representatives recommended that there be a greater focus on adult learners in the operational tools, particularly for those who may be seeking training for a different career after losing their jobs during the pandemic. For example, it would be helpful to include information on apprenticeship options and pre-apprenticeship programs. Also, the college and career exploration tools should be evaluated to see how appropriate they are for an adult seeking to change fields.

Others noted the importance of helping students to plan for transfer pathways, so they know how to move from community college to a four-year institution. Existing tools, such as ASSIST, which provide information on the transferability of community college courses to CSU and UC, are difficult to use and do not include information about independent and private colleges. However, it would be a big lift to address this need, so the group felt this feature should be part of a future implementation phase. In the meantime, it would be helpful to ensure that existing tools work well for understanding community college options.

Purpose and Scope

Based on the general agreement around the vision and mission for the state data system, the workgroup applied these concepts to make several decisions about the system's purpose and scope.

Inter-Agency versus Intra-Agency Data

The workgroup discussed whether and how information on progress and outcomes within a single partner entity would be shared by the state data system. After reviewing some pros and cons, examples, and input from various parties, that group discussion focused on:

- Having data that does not align across public dashboards would increase the workload of partner entities to explain why there are differences and could erode trust in data overall. However, the partner entities could identify data points that would be helpful to include in public dashboards to increase understanding of an issue, particularly in cases where this information is not available on agency dashboards. Also, providing clear disclaimers and notices on public facing tools could help to mitigate confusion.
- It would not be appropriate for an entity to request data on a single partner entity through the California Cradle-to-Career Data System. However, if a data request for a research study includes appropriate momentum points that are within a single agency as a way to clarify an inter-agency outcome (such as noting that more community college students are academically prepared for transfer but there have been minimal increases in transfer rates), the data request approval process could allow the release of both intra- and inter-segmental information.
- The question of whether information should only be displayed for individuals who appear in more than one partner entity's data sets should be examined by the Research Agenda Subcommittee and the Data Definitions Subcommittees.

The workgroup voted on the following question:

In the case of data requests, should the state data system only provide information that links data from two or more providers, and refer requests for information from a single agency back to that partner entity?

Fourteen representatives voted "yes." Three voted "no":

- Chris Furgiuele, UC
- Joy Bonaguro, GovOps
- Michael Marion, BPPE

Those who voted no did so because they either thought that partner entities should be able to delegate authority to the state data system to fulfil single-entity data requests or that it would be more user-centered to allow Californians to get the information they need from a single location.

Then the workgroup voted on a related question:

In the case of metrics displayed in the dashboard and query tool, should the issue be considered by discussing specific proposed data points identified by the Research Subcommittee with the partner entities?

All eighteen representatives present voted "yes."

Expanding the Research Agenda

Given the earlier decision to include health and social service data in phase one of the state data system, the group discussed whether the research agenda should be expanded to include additional policy areas. Currently the legislation only addresses education-to-career pipelines and financial aid. Key points included:

- In other states, the research agenda is a living document that is revisited and updated periodically.
- It is important to be realistic about the timeframe in which this data system will be built (no sooner than 2022) and to specify dashboards, query tools, and study questions that reflect data that the agencies currently have.
- While identifying topics beyond those listed in the legislation does not put the partner entities in any legal jeopardy, it will be important to clearly articulate why the workgroup is recommending a broader scope in the report to the legislature.
- Some of the partner entities are already sharing data on whether students have received specific social services, such as linking DSS and CDE data to identify foster youth. It would be easier to focus on these types of information rather than attempt to link health data in phase one. Other helpful data points might include whether K-12 and postsecondary students are accessing Medicaid and CalFresh. However, it will be important to clearly identify the specific purpose of sharing any social service information before it can be authorized.
- Some specific questions about access to social services could be embedded in the existing policy questions (such as whether receiving supports while in primary school has an impact on later educational attainment and employment outcomes), but many social service and health questions should be saved for a later phase of the data system.

The group voted on the following question:

Should the scope of the research agenda include questions about the impact of social service supports provided in early care and K-12 on educational attainment and employment outcomes, for discussion with the relevant partner entities?

Sixteen representatives voted "yes." Michael Marion of BPPE voted no, indicating this topic should be addressed at a later phase.

Operational Tools

The workgroup reviewed a draft assessment plan for CCGI and eTranscript California. The plan will begin with a literature review about best practices and documented impact of the following desired features: college and career planning tools with financial aid components, monitoring middle school and high school progress toward college requirements, providing electronic transcripts (including for nontraditional education artifacts), identifying potential eligibility for services, and improving underlying data. A subsequent report will indicate the degree to which CCGI and eTranscript California currently provide the desired features, align with effective practice, have evidence about current usage and impacts, and can be amended to provide desired features.

Chris Furgiuele of UC expressed concern that scaling CCGI would preclude the partner entities from using the tool of their choice to evaluate transcript data provided in applications. Therefore, the assessment should determine how CCGI could integrate within an ecosystem of transcript-related tools.

Tom Vu of AICCU noted that understanding how CCGI and eTranscript California work with other platforms would be important for the independent colleges, given that they use a variety of application tools. The facilitation team suggested that, as a first step, they convene meetings with partner entities to flesh out specific concerns about how CCGI and eTranscript California would fit into existing application processes. AICCU, BPPE, and UC asked to be included in these meetings.

Next, the group discussed whether education entities should be mandated to use the tools, in the interest of providing a more seamless experience for students. For example, should all local educational agencies be required to use CCGI's college and career planning tools? Several workgroup representatives felt that the best route was to build solutions that are so attractive that education institutions will choose to use them. Emphasizing how these tools can improve data accuracy would be one selling point. Also, providing these tools for free could help K-12 districts that have not yet invested in college and career planning tools or electronic transcript services to provide these resources.

Based on workgroup discussion, the draft assessment plan was edited to address whether CCGI and eTranscript California align their data definitions with the partner entities, include information on apprenticeship pathways, help adult learners plan for career changes, and align with existing application tools and processes.

The group voted on the following question:

> **Is the proposed operational tools assessment process sufficient to evaluate whether CCGI and eTranscript California can fulfil the priorities of the state data system?**
>
> Sixteen representatives voted "yes."

Decision Making Model

As a first step in crafting the governance documents, workgroup representatives broke into small groups to discuss an on-going committee structure, the scope of responsibility for each committee, and appropriate membership. After reporting out on these conversations, the following ideas were raised in a full-group discussion:

- Until the workgroup determines which entity will host the data system and how it will be staffed, it is difficult to determine the appropriate make up and responsibilities of the committees. Therefore, the planned homework team that would write a draft governance committee structure, membership, responsibilities, and decision-making processes should be deferred until after the June meeting.
- Workgroup representatives differed on the appropriate make-up of the governing board. Some assumed it would include high-level individuals appointed by the governor and legislature, which could include non-partner entities. Others recommended that the governing board include the head of each partner entity, who would be empowered to appoint designees to meet on a quarterly basis. Several workgroup representatives recommended that this group should record decisions in a formal vote and that there should be a clear and transparent process for how decisions are made.
- In addition to the governing board, it would be helpful to have several committees to provide specific areas of expertise necessary to make ongoing decisions. These should align with the subcommittee structure for the planning process (which includes representatives from both

partner entities and other groups) but should be streamlined. For example, one committee should oversee topics currently being addressed by the Common Identifier and Technology & Security Subcommittees. After initial definitions and data policies are developed, further data questions should be directed to a Technical Committee or to a Research Committee based on the nature of the issue. The Legal Committee should be retained. For these committees, the current process of a modified consensus would be appropriate.

- The group agreed that communications expertise was important but did not have a consolidated recommendation for how it should be provided. For example, some thought communications topics could be handled by existing committees, and others noted they could be addressed in an ad hoc manner, such as when gathering input on the dashboards or when alerting Californians to the availability of information.
- If the committee structure is codified, only the main governance board should be mentioned, and should be given flexibility to convene other committees or ad hoc groups as needed. It might be more appropriate enshrine the structure in regulation rather than Education Code.

Releasing the Request for Information

The workgroup made several minor amendments to the draft RFI, including providing greater clarity about the scope of desired services, adding a question about the ability to exclude European Union citizens to comply with international regulations, and adding a question about the ability to correct errors in records.

The group voted on the following question:

> **The RFI, incorporating the edits made during the May 2020 Workgroup meeting, should be released in June.**

Seventeen representatives voted "yes." Jeanne Wolfe of CLWDA abstained because she did feel sufficiently informed about this type of data tool.

Future Homework Teams

The following workgroup representatives signed up for homework teams that will begin after the June meeting:

Governance Committee Structure

- Amy Fong, CSIS
- Ben Allen, CDE
- Ed Sullivan, CSU
- Joy Bonaguro, GovOps
- Patrick Perry, CSAC
- Sarah Neville-Morgan, CDE
- Tom Vu, AICCU
- CSIS designee
- UC designee

Managing Entity Scope and Staffing

- Chris Furgiele, UC
- Cindy Kazanis, CDE
- Martha Friedrich, CSIS
- Patrick Perry, CSAC

Data Requests Process

- Channa Hewawickrama, CDE
- Ed Sullivan, CSU
- Joy Bonaguro, GovOps
- Patrick Perry, CSAC
- Randy Bonnell, CDE
- Rima Mendez, CSIS
- CHHS designee

Community Engagement

- Amy Fong, CSIS
- Ben Allen, CDE
- Cindy Kazanis, CDE
- Joy Bonaguro, GovOps
- Mary Nicely, CDE
- Sara Pietrowski, SBE