

Frequently Asked Questions P20 Cradle to Career Partnership Framework

1. **Who are the Cradle to Career stakeholders?** All community members are stakeholders of this project. The initial focus is on Multnomah County, but ideally, these efforts will encompass the greater Portland area and beyond. Critical stakeholders include the pre-k to 12 system, the community colleges and universities, the non profit community, local government, businesses and foundations.

2. **Who owns the agenda of the Cradle to Career effort?** No one entity “owns” Cradle to Career. The Leaders Roundtable and Portland State University’s Graduate School of Education are providing staff support for Cradle to Career. There will be opportunities for engagement and participation by stakeholders. The Leaders Roundtable members, which include education, government and business leaders, are working on a governing structure.

3. **What is the Cradle to Career Partnership Framework? Give me tangible examples.** Cradle to Career is modeled on a very successful partnership called STRIVE, which began in Cincinnati in 2003 and is replicating around the nation with support from Living Cities. Cradle to Career is a vision for how separate entities can work together more efficiently to support children and families. We call it a partnership framework because separate organizations connect to the framework in different ways. The framework maintains its connections by measuring youth outcomes around established indicators and then using that data to make decisions on how to further improve outcomes for youth.
 - If one indicator is that children enter kindergarten ready-to-learn, and only 45% of children meet this indicator, one strategy may be a coordinated effort to increase the number of free or low cost slots available at quality preschool programs. If research shows that low income families often place children in the home of a relative, community-based organizations might be funded to disseminate to those families, a preschool curriculum that will help those children become ready for Kindergarten.

 - If one of the indicators is that college students graduate in five or fewer years with a bachelors degree, yet the data show that only 34% of students meet this indicator, the Oregon University System may replicate a proven mentoring program between faculty and students identified as being at risk of dropping out of college.

4. **When will the process start and end?** The Leaders Roundtable decided to pursue a Cradle to Career framework during the summer of 2009. The Cradle to Career Partnership Framework is a “process” and, as such, it will not end. Currently, a work team is identifying and proposing which indicators should be measured. The production of a community report card with baseline data is expected in the fall of 2010. The leaders of this effort realize that the process will not be perfect from the beginning, but with time and effort, it will continually improve.

5. **How will the indicator data be collected? How will it be disseminated?** Once there is agreement on the best indicators to measure, the organizing group will look at the best way to collect the data. For school systems, this may require some standardization across districts. For non profit partners, this may mean changing some of the data they collect and report.
6. **How will the indicators be used? The indicators will be used to understand** and focus on what works for children and families. For example, too often children are not ready to learn when they begin school. Consequently, they fall behind their classmates and then the school system has to help them catch up. It is less expensive to make sure that they are ready to learn before starting school. Indicators will inform the community on the social supports and educational strategies that have the best return on investment. This should improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the systems in place that support the social, emotional, and intellectual development of our children.
7. **How will Cradle to Career Partnership Framework affect non profit organizations that provide services to children and families?** The model highlights the importance of meeting the basic needs of children and families in order to improve academic performance. Non profit partners are critical to providing food, shelter, health care, caring adults, recreation and enrichment activities. Non profit partners should be able to show how their efforts are evidence-based and improve the indicators of the individuals they serve. As the alignment of the partnership framework unfolds, non profit partners may be able to count on increased operating support from foundations and corporations, as well as greater private donations from citizens, as awareness of the Cradle to Career indicators increases.
8. **Why is this effort underway?** The Cradle to Career Partnership Framework exists to support our system of education in producing graduates with the skills and knowledge to successfully enter the work force. In Multnomah County, the achievement gap has not improved in decades. In staggering numbers, our young people are not graduating from high school, not enrolling in post secondary education, not graduating from college, and not entering the work force with the skills they need to succeed. Rather than blame any one entity, this effort seeks to build alignment between all of the good work that is being done. And, where there are gaps, provide the services needed to support student success.
9. **How will this affect my child and his/her school?** Once the Cradle to Career Partnership Framework is in place, you will see a better alignment of resources and more collaboration across systems. Test scores should increase and the drop out rate should decline. This does not jeopardize your child's school because this is not an effort to redistribute resources among schools, but to create better use of existing resources to help children.
10. **My children are grown; how will this effort effect me?** The public dissemination of indicators will give citizens objective data on how the education system (broadly defined) is performing. Data will highlight strengths and weaknesses and returns on investments. Successfully educating all young people results in a healthier community and better economic development. There will be more jobs and a higher quality work force. Citizens, not just parents, must claim their young people and help them succeed for a community to be economically viable. The societal costs associated with school dropouts, teen parenting, juvenile and criminal justice costs, will also be reduced.