

## SECTION 1. PROPOSALS OVERVIEW

Several proposals were submitted for consideration, each seeking to expand the Cradle-to-Career (C2C) Data System:

### 1. Digital Access to Learning

- Proposed by Member Borgen, this focused on whether C2C could include data on students' access to internet-enabled devices in schools and home broadband access to devices (e.g., type of connectivity, usage of federal programs like eRate) to evaluate correlations to digital learning or student success aligning to the state's Digital Equity Plan. Proponents saw this as an equity issue, noting that reliable broadband and digital tools can affect everything from K–12 performance to college readiness.
- Examples of potential data points included bandwidth speeds, the number of students receiving subsidized internet service, and device-distribution rates at the institutional level.
- While seen as valuable, the staff's deeper feasibility study highlighted that few existing administrative data streams capture this information, and new local-level data collection would be costly and burdensome.

### 2. Weaving Disaggregated Multilingual Learner Data

- Submitted by Members Orlick and Owen, this proposal aimed to refine how the system tracks different groups of English learners—for instance, distinguishing “Newcomers,” “At-Risk English Learners” (ARLTEL), “Long-Term English Learners” (LTEL), and “Dually Identified” students.
- Members noted that grouping all English learners together hides important nuances and can limit targeted policy responses.
- Staff concluded that some of these variables could be derived from existing data—e.g., length of time a student is designated as EL—but others (such as special “newcomer” status) would require new data elements or improved statewide definitions provided by current data providers (i.e., California Department of Education).

### 3. Student Debt at California Colleges and Universities

- Proposed by Member Schak, this sought additional detail in C2C on federal and nonfederal (private) student loans, especially distinguishing amounts borrowed by parents versus amounts borrowed by students.
- Proponents underscored how loan type and cumulative debt can influence student outcomes and argued that state-level data would help families and

policymakers gauge affordability.

- The feasibility study showed that, for many segments, partial debt data is already being collected (e.g., certain community colleges and independent institutions), but it is inconsistent. UC and CSU do not yet upload all debt categories into C2C. Staff concluded that more consistent reporting might require additional authority or a revised data specification.

#### 4. Other Proposals (Light-Touch Feasibility)

Three proposals did not receive a full feasibility study but were reviewed briefly:

- **Track Child Savings Accounts (CalKIDS):** Member Phuong proposed that C2C integrate data on CalKIDS (state-funded college savings accounts) to show usage across different regions and student subgroups.

The ScholarShare Investment Board (SIB) does have account-level data, collecting it at the individual level for C2C would require new data-sharing and matching processes. That being said, in the February 28th Governing Board meeting, SIB was added as a data-sharing partner.

- **Graduate School Completion Rates by Field of Study:** Member Schak proposed better tracking of graduate-level enrollments and degrees, including time-to-completion and field of study.

Proponents sought to measure how students in master's, doctoral, or professional programs fare by major or Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code. Staff found that basic data on graduate enrollment and outcomes is already tracked in certain segment databases, suggesting the potential to create dashboards (like the existing Transfer dashboards) for graduate programs. However, cross-segment consistency and the level of detail on specific fields are uncertain.

- **Including Internship & First-Destination Survey Data:** Member Phuong advocated collecting information on whether undergraduates had internships or career-focused coursework, plus linking "first destination" survey data (e.g., whether graduates were employed or in graduate school within six months).

Many colleges conduct first-destination surveys—tracking graduate outcomes like job placement or admission to further study—but response rates and data definitions vary widely. Similarly, data on internships or career-focused coursework is not uniformly reported to a central, statewide system.

Staff concluded that linking these data (for instance, from the National Association of Colleges and Employers First-Destination Survey) into C2C might be feasible but would require a standardized reporting process and broad agreement from the higher education segments.

Overall, the light-touch reviews underscored the potential value of these proposals but also highlighted barriers such as data consistency, new data-sharing agreements, and the Office's capacity to handle additional data integration efforts.

## SECTION 2. DISCUSSIONS KEY TAKEAWAYS

During the March 19 Data and Tools Advisory Board meeting, members engaged in active debate on the merits and complexities of each proposal:

- Digital Access

- Some members expressed concern over data quality: K–12 addresses often change, and local surveys about connectivity may be underreported or unreliable. Others emphasized the strategic importance of bridging the digital divide and using the C2C platform to highlight digital inequities.
- Several members pointed to potential “survey fatigue” and the risk of burdensome new data collections. Member Harlick brought up that additional data points (e.g., early education data) outside of the current data collection may also want to be added to a survey, which begs us to ask the question, “Which data is prioritized when adding to a survey?”
- Member Borgen questioned whether we needed individual-level data versus institution-level data. This opened up the broader question of whether institutional-level data is sufficient, accurate, and/or valid enough for C2C system users to make informed decisions.
- Despite these concerns, the group largely agreed that the concept of digital access as a factor in student success is “important” and that the Office could advocate for a consistent, statewide approach that may not be a survey.

- Multilingual Learners

- Members spoke about the potential to glean new insights by distinguishing among diverse English learner populations (e.g., newcomers, long-term English learners). They noted how combining data about language status with educational outcomes could elevate resource decisions.
- However, there was discussion about whether the necessary flags (such as “at-risk” or “dually identified”) are routinely tracked and how feasible it would be for school systems to submit them.
- The Board discussed using the terms that already exist and are used by the California Department of Education and California Schools Dashboard. These terms would be what families are already familiar with.

- Student Debt

- The Board recognized debt data as a valuable lens on college affordability and student success. Legal concerns were discussed about displaying sensitive and potentially identifiable debt figures and how easily some segments (e.g., private

lenders) can share data. There are also strict regulations about how the data can be used according to the ISIR (Institutional Student Information Record) Guide.

- The conversation touched on parent loans and the possible mismatch between data privacy constraints and the goal of transparency. Some participants felt that robust feasibility and legal analysis would help clarify how to safely include these data.

- **Other Proposals (Light-Touch Feasibility)**

- **Track Child Savings Accounts (CalKIDS):** No discussion.
- **Graduate School Completion Rates by Field of Study:**
  - The Board discussed that including this data may not accurately reflect the determinants that impact student success in Post-Baccalaureate education.
- **Including Internship & First-Destination Survey Data:**
  - Some members acknowledged that collecting local data—e.g., internship experiences or child savings account usage—could fill crucial gaps, but it remains challenging because many existing systems either do not track these items or do so only sporadically.

A few members stressed the importance of context surrounding student success and how those elements are currently missing from the data system. Participants stressed that the Office's role should not overextend into areas that require major new data collections that agencies are not already set up to manage.

## Key Considerations

Across the March 19 discussions and feasibility reports, the Data and Tools Advisory Board recognized the value in each proposal while also acknowledging the practical hurdles of expanding data submissions. Members emphasized:

- **Prioritizing existing data:** Where relevant data are already tracked by state agencies (e.g., UC's graduate school records, K–12's EL timelines, some aspects of student debt), new additions to C2C might be more feasible.
- **Balancing new vs. existing mandates:** If a proposal demands novel local data collection (e.g., broadband speeds, home addresses for connectivity checks, or campus-by-campus internship tracking), feasibility diminishes without additional legislation or targeted funding.
- **Further Legal & Policy Analysis:** Especially for sensitive topics (like parent loan amounts) or newly minted programs (like CalKIDS), as well as the need for statewide identifiable data around device and broadband access for digital learning purposes.