

Cradle-to-Career Data Governing Board Staff Report

Date Report Issued: November 5, 2025
Attention: Members of Cradle-to-Career Data Governing Board
Subject: **Cradle-to-Career Data's Future State and Strategic Planning Process (Agenda Item Six)**
Staff Contact: Gavin Payne, Chair and Roni Jones, Leading Resources, Inc. (LRI)

At this meeting, the Governing Board (Board) will receive a high-level overview of the key big picture concepts that have emerged from prior Board deliberations, how those big picture concepts are shaping Cradle-to-Career Data's (C2C) strategic priorities and guiding the work of the Office of Cradle-to-Career Data (Office), and how the Strategic Planning Process can use emerging patterns to inform collective priorities. This staff report is broken down into three main parts: section one, background; section two, strategic planning process and emerging patterns; and section three, C2C strategic planning process.

Requested Action:

There is no requested action for this item. This is an informational item only.

Section One: Background

Statute calls the Office "a neutral administrative body" ([Education Code Section 10862 \(b\)](#)) charged with "connecting individuals and organizations to trusted information and resources" ([Education Code Section 10860\(a\)](#)).

Specifically, per [Education Code Section 10860\(b\)\(1\)](#), "the data system shall be used to provide access to data and information necessary to provide insights into critical milestones in the education-to-employment pipeline, including insight regarding early learning and care to grade 12, inclusive, and into higher education, skills, training opportunities, and employment to better enable individuals to maximize their educational and career opportunities, and to foster

evidence-based decision making to help the state build a more equitable future.”

The C2C Strategic Plan is designed to promote alignment and accountability among the Board, the Executive Director, and staff by articulating a set of key objectives that specify desired outcomes, timelines for achievement, and designated areas of responsibility. This section provides a high-level overview of big picture concepts that have emerged from Board deliberations and how they are shaping C2C’s strategic priorities and informing the work of the Office.

Section One, Part A: Big Picture Concepts

The Board approved the current [C2C Strategic Plan](#) at the [August 9, 2023](#) Board meeting. With the current C2C Strategic Plan set to conclude on June 30, 2026, the Board Chair proposed a series of in-depth discussions related to the future state and work of C2C at the [May, August](#), and November 2025 Board meetings. Through these discussions, three big picture concepts emerged as central to C2C’s future priorities:

- ❖ Securing the Office’s position as a neutral source of trusted and reliable information
- ❖ Focusing on the prioritization of the most useful and necessary data
- ❖ Defining a broad understanding of the work of C2C and providing clarity on C2C’s current and future operational utility

At the [August 15, 2025](#) Board meeting, the Board approved the [2025-26 annual work plan](#), which aligns the Office’s priorities with the big picture concepts that emerged from Board deliberations.

Section One, Part B: Member Deliberation

Members should consider the following question when preparing for this section of discussion on this agenda item:

- ❖ How do these big picture concepts most directly support the [mission and long-term vision](#) of C2C?

Section Two: Strategic Planning Process and Emerging Patterns

[Education Code Section 10866\(b\)](#) specifies that the Board is responsible for “the strategic direction and implementation of the data system”, which, per page 18 of the [Governance Manual](#) includes “set[ting], revisit[ing], and amend[ing] the vision, mission, and strategic objectives for the C2C System, particularly related to opportunity and outcomes gaps and advancing common goals.” [Education Code Section 10866\(d\)\(1\)](#) specifies that the Board “shall provide oversight of the data system and operational direction to the managing entity to ensure the data system is serving its intended purpose” which includes “adopting an annual strategic plan and reviewing and revising that plan as needed.”

This section outlines the context for the upcoming C2C strategic planning process, key patterns identified across multiple inputs and Board discussions, and potential themes to address moving forward.

Section Two, Part A: Context and Emerging Patterns

C2C will undertake a strategic planning process to update C2C’s current strategic plan. Through a structured and participatory approach, the process will review the structure of an integrated, cross-cutting strategic plan, assess emerging opportunities and challenges, and identify strategic goals that will guide the agency over the next five years.

One goal for the C2C strategic planning process is to move to a more integrated, cross-cutting strategic plan. An integrated, cross-cutting strategic planning model is an approach to organizational planning that aligns goals, initiatives, and resources across multiple functions or departments, rather than treating them as separate, siloed efforts. It emphasizes shared priorities, coordinated implementation, and system-level impact, ensuring that all parts of an organization work together toward common outcomes. One of the first goals of an integrated, cross-cutting strategic plan is to develop core themes. Themes provide the connection between data, insights, and action - past, present and future.

Over the last year, LRI gathered input and information that can inform the strategic plan. These sources include the Board's annual governance survey, Governing and Advisory Board exit interviews, empathy interviews with Advisory Board members, and interviews with vertical leads from the Office. Emerging patterns across these multiple inputs and previous Board discussions are a foundational step for the development of the themes. These emerging patterns and potential themes to address in the strategic plan include:

- ❖ Neutral source of trusted information
- ❖ Accessible to all California
- ❖ Useful and necessary data
- ❖ Broad understanding of the work and future operational utility
- ❖ Governance and Office culture

Section Two, Part B: Member Deliberation

In reviewing these emerging themes, members should consider the following questions when preparing for this section of discussion on this agenda item:

- ❖ What opportunities do you see for integration or collaboration across themes?
- ❖ What types of goals or objectives might emerge from these themes?

Section Three: C2C Strategic Planning Process

Page 22 of the [Governance Manual](#) outlines the standing committees that have been established, including the Strategic Planning Committee (Committee). At the [November 14, 2025](#) Board meeting, the Committee will have the opportunity to approve the Committee charter, which outlines the timeline and key milestones in the C2C strategic planning process. The C2C strategic planning process will include a series of Committee and Board discussions between November 2025 and May 2026 to deliberate on proposed goals, refine objectives, and draft updated language for inclusion in the C2C Strategic Plan. Input and information will be synthesized from key Board and Committee members, C2C staff, and partners to ensure the plan reflects collective priorities and operational realities.