

**Community Engagement Advisory Board Report:
Proposal Outcomes and Feasibility Insights
May 20, 2026**

Background

The Community Engagement Advisory Board (CEAB) examines whether the Office of California Cradle-to-Career Data System (Office) is creating strong feedback loops with data users, supporting evidence-based decision-making, analytical capacity, and ensuring equitable access to actionable information. CEAB members are charged with making recommendations to the Office about the development and implementation of the data system, and the California Cradle-to-Career Data System (C2C) [Governance Manual](#) sets forth the proposal process that is followed by the Advisory Boards. All proposals can be found on the [C2C website](#).

Community Engagement Advisory Board Proposals

During the fall of 2025, CEAB members submitted proposals for considerations related to rule changes and activities tasked to the CEAB. In total, two proposals were submitted, composed by three CEAB members. These proposals were wide-ranging and aimed to transform both how the CEAB interacts with the data system providers and how the broader community can engage with the system through a train-the-trainer model.

Summary of Two Submitted Proposals

C2C Train-the-Trainer Ambassador Model: The proposal focuses on equipping our CEAB members with the right knowledge and skills for C2C. The hope is that CEAB members go out into the community as ambassadors and share what they know about the data system and its benefits to partners, community organizations, families, students, and community leaders. This train-the-trainer model not only increases engagement but it also allows C2C to standardize protocols for how CEAB members and community partners interact with the data. While establishing baseline metrics, consistent messaging, and best practices for community engagement.

Engagement Plans for Data Providers: The proposal focuses on deepening partnerships with the 11 data-providing agencies that hold seats on the C2C Governing Board (Board) to ensure their direct constituents—such as students and employees—are aware of and utilizing C2C tools, as well as how to ensure the tools being built are useful and actionable for the public.

The CEAB engaged in a two-part member deliberation. First, CEAB members presented their proposals for 10-minutes. This was followed by a discussion, where members shared reflections from the workbook that focused on addressing the questions in the VIN diagram comparison chart. Lastly, the CEAB addressed the questions in the big picture reflection chart.

Proposal	CEAB Discussion (October 24, 2025)	Result
<p>C2C Train-the-Trainer Ambassador Model</p> <p>Engagement Plans for Data Providers</p>	<p>Members uplifted that the data provider proposal is top down and the ambassador model is bottom up - envisioning both approaches are critical to expanding reach to data users and the general public.</p> <p>Connection points with data providers will be important to make data more user friendly. This can be integrated with a feedback loop protocol, where the C2C team develops how best providers engage with the tool and the data provided.</p>	<p>Members discussed and elevated a lot of overlap between both proposals - a complementary component on how to engage various audiences and stakeholders.</p>

The following table highlights some of the key costs associated with the two proposals.

<u>Key Costs</u>	<u>Ambassador Model</u>	<u>Engagement Plans for Data Providers</u>
<u>Start Up Cost</u>	<p>Startup costs would primarily consist of Office staff and CEAB member time, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Time of 2-3 CEAB members to participate in a working group, including time for meetings and to develop materials, Ambassador Model parameters, and accountability structures. ● Office staff time to identify and staff the working group, including educating working group members about the workplan, data system, and current engagement efforts. ● Office staff time to review materials, processes, and structures created by CEAB working group members. ● Board and Office staff time to amend the C2C Governance Manual. According to the C2C Governance Manual, the responsibility of the CEAB is to “examine whether the Office is creating strong feedback loops with 	<p>Startup costs for the proposal would be concentrated in Office staff time to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Further understand needs and opportunities for engagement; ● Develop processes, systems, and materials for the ongoing co-creation and engagement; and ● Determine necessary staffing to increase collaboration with data providers moving forward. <p>Startup costs would also include data providers' staff time to identify point-people beyond communications teams, participate in needs-sensing conversations with the Office, and develop internal processes for ongoing internal and external engagement related to C2C</p>

	<p>data users, supporting evidence-based decision making and analytical capacity, and ensuring equitable access to actionable information” (page 9). The proposal would involve amending the Governance Manual to specify expanded expectations for CEAB members. Responsibility would need to be assigned to the appropriate parties to ensure that CEAB members fulfilled their responsibilities.</p>	
<p><u>Ongoing Cost</u></p>	<p>Ongoing costs to C2C Ambassadors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Time to receive training to serve as C2C Ambassadors, including demonstrating fluency in C2C vision, mission, workplan, and governance structures. ● Time to organize and host events, prepare presentations, and complete engagement activities. Time may also be needed to connect with C2C to share feedback, input, and relay any challenges. ● Financial resources to support the hosting of in-person C2C events, including space, food, and accessibility costs (such as ASL 	<p>Ongoing Costs: Costs necessary to maintain the proposed idea.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaboration with data providers currently requires significant staff time, particularly for coordinating communication efforts across multiple agencies. Tasks include managing relationships, aligning timelines, developing and revising shared content, and organizing public events. The Office's ability to expand these efforts is limited by staff capacity. Additional time and expertise would be needed to support deeper collaboration, customized

	<p>or Spanish interpreters).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical resources to host virtual events, such as access to a Zoom account. 	<p>training, and ongoing tracking of engagement activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Data provider capacity is similarly constrained, and therefore it is likely that additional staff capacity within the data providers would be needed to support regular, required engagement. •Office staff time is likely required for oversight and accountability. Data providers' current capacity for C2C-related engagement is limited and competes with other priorities. Additional Office staff time is likely to be needed to provide the support necessary to ensure follow-through.
<p><u>CEAB</u> <u>Member Cost</u></p>	<p>Ongoing costs to C2C Ambassadors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time to receive training to serve as C2C Ambassadors, including demonstrating fluency in C2C vision, mission, workplan, and governance structures. • Time to organize and host events, prepare presentations, and complete engagement activities. Time may also be needed to connect with C2C 	<p>No member cost was outlined.</p>

	<p>to share feedback, input, and relay any challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial resources to support the hosting of in-person C2C Events, including space, food, and accessibility costs (such as ASL or Spanish interpreters). • Technical resources to host virtual events, such as access to a Zoom account. 	
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Below outlined are the proposal discussions. The first set of discussions are the ones that took place on October 24, 2025, and the second discussion took place on April 8, 2026.

Summary of CEAB Proposal Discussion

At the **October 24, 2025 CEAB meeting**, members discussed both proposals. The key themes that emerged were:

General Reflections:

- There was strong alignment between both proposals, with interest in using both to deepen community engagement, user-friendly, and engaging data providers in ongoing feedback loops.
- Members share that both proposals complement each other to close gaps in knowledge building across data users and different audiences.
- Members acknowledged that C2C is a "small team" with a limited budget, which impacts the implementation of new proposals.
- Both proposals advance the mission and the vision of the work at C2C.

Proposal 1: Train the Trainer Ambassador Model

- CEAB members emphasized the "trusted messenger" piece, noting that local practitioners are essential for building the trust necessary to deliver data effectively to diverse populations.
- A major point of discussion was the need for "standardized" talking points and "plain English" to ensure data is accessible and not limited to

"academic language".

- There was significant feedback regarding the need for uniformity; members want structured training and templates to ensure all ambassadors represent C2C professionally and consistently.
- The model proposes a multi-year rollout, beginning with standardizing practices and training CEAB members, then expanding to broader community stakeholders.
- Members emphasized that this model combines data with storytelling to make information less intimidating for students, families, and practitioners.

Proposal 2: Engagement Plans for Data Providers

- Suggestions were made to improve or review the engagement role for data providers - leaning in to co-create a definition of engagement for the data to be more than numbers. It should be narrative building and/or messaging.
- For this to be successful, a framework should be created and utilized so there is a relationship component to the plan.
- Members uplifted the need for ongoing two-way communication so providers can share their experience, capacity, and constraints.
- This may be a long-term goal (3-5 years) as staff is small, and state budgets fluctuate versus a 12 month implementation.
- Members discussed possible restrictions on the role of data providers - to provide data only, and not provide a narrative or messaging.
- Developing data messaging in plain English so various stakeholders can access will make outcomes more impactful.

Summary of CEAB Proposal Discussion - Spring Meeting

At the **April 8, 2026 CEAB meeting**, members discussed both proposals. The key themes that emerged were:

General Reflections:

- The CEAB highlighted the evolution of the proposal process, moving away from "up-down" votes toward a synthesis of findings intended to inform future annual work plans.

- Members observed strong alignment and synergy between the two proposals, noting that they "go hand in hand" and complement each other to close existing knowledge gaps.
- Reflections emphasized that "high cost" ratings are primarily driven by the substantial lift in staff time required for relationship management, curriculum development, and ongoing training within a small team.
- The discussion framed these proposals as "seeds" for future growth, suggesting that they create a foundation for long-term impact and can be integrated into future "policy windows," such as the 2028 onboarding of new Advisory Board members.
- A central theme was the importance of humanizing data through storytelling and ensuring all messaging is delivered in plain English to make complex systems accessible and less intimidating for students and families.
- To address limited capacity and budget fluctuations, the CEAB advocated for multi-year rollout timelines (up to 3–5 years) to systemize engagement efforts and ensure they are built on a strong, sustainable foundation.

Proposal 1: Train the Trainer Ambassador Model

- Aims to empower CEAB members as "trusted messengers" who humanize complex data through storytelling and standardized messaging.
- Discussion highlighted the proposal's "high cost" rating, which reflects the intensive staff time required—estimated at roughly 180 hours based on similar past studies—to coordinate workgroups and develop training materials.
- Members also explored integrating this model into a 2028 "policy window" for new member onboarding, emphasizing that the approach would require careful training on the office's mandate for neutrality.
- Ultimately, the CEAB viewed this model as a complementary "seed" for future growth that would ensure data accessibility through the use of plain English.

Updates from Proposal Authors

- **Prioritizing Communications:** CEAB members clarified that the model should begin with a focus on internal and external communications before any curriculum is drafted. This involves standardizing practices and identifying "low hanging fruit" regarding existing resources.
- **Integration Window:** A "policy window" was identified for 2028, suggesting that the training could be integrated into the official onboarding process for a new cohort of Advisory Board members.

Proposal 2: Engagement Plans for Data Providers

- The **Engagement Plans for Data Providers** proposal aims to co-design frameworks with **11 agencies** to leverage their community credibility and transition away from transactional relationships.
- While many of these efforts are already in motion, the feasibility study recommended a **three-to-five-year implementation timeline** to accommodate the office's small staff and a fluctuating state budget.
- Deliberations emphasized supporting these providers with **toolkits and visuals** to foster two-way communication regarding their specific capacity constraints and data timelines.
- CEAB members also emphasized the need for **two-way communication** so that data providers can share their own capacity constraints and specific data timelines with the office.
- The CEAB agreed that these plans must prioritize **"plain English" messaging** to humanize the data and make it more actionable for various community stakeholders.

Updates from Proposal Authors

- **Timeline Clarification:** CEAB member Johnson uplifted that an iterative, long-term approach makes sense for deepening partnerships with data providers.
- **Systemizing Existing Efforts:** The update emphasized that the feasibility process "illuminated" that much of the work—such as providers promoting tools to their constituents—is already happening. The goal of the updated

proposal is to systemize these efforts and ensure data providers receive credit for their contributions.

- **Two-Way Communication:** Clarification was provided that the framework should foster two-way communication, allowing providers to share their own capacity constraints and specific data timelines with the office rather than having a one-sided, transactional relationship.