



CALIFORNIA CRADLE-TO-CAREER DATA SYSTEM 2026-27 WORK PLAN

DELIVERING ON THE 2026-31 STRATEGIC PLAN

AUGUST 2026

GOAL 1
**Neutral and Trusted
Linked Data**

GOAL 2
**Data Tools and
Insights**

GOAL 3
**Equity and
Accessibility**

GOAL 4
**Flexible and Secure
System**

GOAL 5
**Organizational and
Operational Culture**

THE CALIFORNIA CRADLE-TO-CAREER DATA SYSTEM'S plan for the year ahead, organized by C2C's strategic goals to improve outcomes for Californians. Each initiative in this work plan supports one or more of Cradle-to-Career's five strategic goals, as defined in the [2026-31 Strategic Plan](#).

 = BOARD REVIEW

GOAL 1

Be California’s neutral, trusted source of linked, state-wide data on how education and jobs shape opportunity and well-being.

For C2C’s data insights to be useful, Californians need to trust that the information was brought together in a transparent, neutral process.

OBJECTIVES:

- » Earn Californians' trust in our data stewardship by leaning on our value of transparency.
- » Build Open Science best practices and transparency into how the data system is built, data reports are run, and research data requests are handled.
- » Identify priority questions and data resources through Learning Agendas that draw on input from communities, Advisory Boards, and partners.
- » Maintain trust by continuing public governance processes for making decisions about the data system.
- » Embed privacy, security, and responsible data use into all operations.

PROJECT	FY 2026-27 ACTIVITIES	
5-Year Anniversary Campaign	C2C will mark its fifth year of implementation in FY 2026-27 with a yearlong campaign highlighting key milestones.	
Research Data Request Process & Secure Data Enclave	Pilot and improve the secure data enclave as a virtual environment that researchers and data partners use to conduct research and analyze data.	
Governance	Regular cadence of public meetings with C2C's Governing Board and Advisory Boards. (See Governance page 9)	

GOAL 2

Create data insights and tools that Californians count on.

The C2C Data System complements existing state data systems by creating user friendly products that display linked education, social services, and workforce data over time. Through user centered design, C2C makes data tools and resources for a variety of decision-making audiences, including the general public, practitioners, researchers, and policy makers. For each audience, C2C's aim is to make data readily available and easier to work with.

Objectives:

- » Use user-centered design to discover and create meaningful data products for the public.
- » Develop and release useful public dashboards and data reports that tell human stories about Californians.
- » Create and provide curated data sets for the public to solve specific problems in their lives and work.
- » Enable external research through a secure virtual environment, where researchers can do useful analysis that benefits the California public.
- » Help Californians move into college and careers by incubating and accelerating collaborative projects.

PROJECT	FY 2026-27 ACTIVITIES	
Student Experience Report*	Conduct the 2026 annual student experience report. The annual Student Experience Report informs C2C's work in developing and refining data-driven tools for all Californians.	
Transfer Outcomes Dashboard	Develop a multi-chart dashboard that enables the public to explore transfer outcomes of community college students.	
Teacher Training and Retention Dashboard	Develop a multi-chart dashboard that enables the public to explore data about teacher employment.	
College and Career Data Files	Develop aggregated research files that enables the public to explore and analyze linked data about postsecondary outcomes.	
Student Pathways Dashboard Maintenance and Operations	Refresh the Student Pathway dashboard with data from the most recent data import.	
Workforce Pell Data Linkages	Develop secure data management workflows across multiple agencies to support the implementation of California's first ever Workforce Pell data project.	
CalKIDS Student Outreach Report	Release the annual CalKIDS reports to support outreach and student access to CalKIDS funds.	

* [Education Code Section 10867\(b\)\(5\)\(A\)](#) requires the Office to conduct "an annual student experience audit related to navigating the transition from secondary education to higher education." The Office will use the term "Student Experience Report" on its public-facing documents and website.

GOAL 3

Provide equitable access to information and tools for all Californians.

The California Cradle-to-Career Data System links the people's data, and C2C must optimize the reach of its tools and resources by ensuring meaningful accessibility for individuals in the state. By tailoring and targeting tools and resources for the state's diverse communities, C2C works to advance data literacy — the ability to read, understand, analyze, and communicate data to make informed decisions and solve problems — for all Californians.

Objectives:

- » Tell a clear story about why data insights matter.
- » Regularly engage community partners to collaboratively design products that address needs throughout California.
- » Maximize reach, strengthen understanding, and expand community use of tools by implementing effective, community-driven delivery methods for California's populations.
- » Develop and implement data literacy efforts that address the diverse needs of individuals across California.

PROJECT	FY 2026-27 ACTIVITIES	
C2C Website Revamp	Revise the c2c.ca.gov website to address user feedback and create a more robust, streamlined experience.	
Data Provider Communications and Engagement	Collaborate with C2C data providers and partners to develop streamlined and effective communication and outreach plans for targeted communities in California.	
Data Dictionary Redesign	Release an improved data dictionary that meets the needs of different data users, including users of C2C dashboards and the secure data enclave.	
Data Academies	Advance data literacy through the use of C2C's tools through the development of curated, customized on-demand resources for communities in California.	
Communications	Implement external communications strategy through earned and acquired media in print, digital, broadcast, and radio, with a focus on ethnic and community media.	
Legislative Affairs	Develop and submit annual Report the Legislature. Provide information, updates, and education for legislative stakeholders: the Governor's Office, California Legislature and legislative staff, Legislative Analyst's Office, elected officials, and key interest holders across C2C's policy areas.	
Career Passport	Support CCCCCO with procurement and development of Career Passport as a shared state-wide tool through intersegmental and employer engagement.	
eTranscript CA	Support CCCCCO with procurement and development of eTranscript CA through intersegmental engagement.	

GOAL 4

Build a flexible and secure data system that continually adapts to the needs of Californians.

The C2C Data System is built in accordance with industry best practices of well architected systems that are scalable, reliable, performant, and flexible. The system also adheres to strict security and privacy practices to protect Californians' data. This enables the rapid development of new high-quality products, compliance with changing statutory and regulatory requirements, and assurance that the system is protected.

Objectives:

- » Build the data system for scale and flexibility so it answers questions today and in the future.
- » Adapt to changes in laws, standards, guidance, and industry best practices so the system stays compliant.
- » Routinely review and update security and privacy practices so the system is safe and secure.
- » Continually review and identify gaps in data access and availability.
- » Reduce the administrative, technical, and operational burden of sharing data between state entities.

PROJECT	FY 2026-27 ACTIVITIES	
Annual Data Submission	Annually ingest data submitted by Data Providers and external partners.	
Annual Data Mastering	Annually link the disparate sources of data submitted by Data Providers and external partners.	
Secure Data Sharing Augmentation	Augment the methods for Data Providers and external partners to share data securely, effectively, and efficiently.	
Data Validation Augmentation	Augment the methods of checking and reporting both data validity and data quality to provide flexibility with slowly changing data dimensions and timely reporting for Data Providers and external partners.	
Early Learning and Care Data	Achieve initial milestones for the future import of early learning and care data, including outreach to data partners and preparing the required file specifications.	
Data Encryption Enhancements	Develop additional encryption methods to serve the diverse set of Data Providers and external partners.	
Identity Access Management Augmentation	Augment the Identity Access Management (IAM) controls and workflows to ensure the right people and devices have access to the right resources at the right time while bolstering automation and orchestration, analytics and visibility, and governance.	

GOAL 4	Build a flexible and secure data system that continually adapts to the needs of Californians.		
PROJECT	FY 2026-27 ACTIVITIES		
Publicly Available Aggregated Data Files	Identify high interest data domains and develop aggregated research files that enable the public to explore and analyze linked data.		
Zero Trust Maturity Progress	Continue progressing toward advanced and optimal levels of the Zero Trust Maturity Model (ZTMM) published by Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), and in accordance with SIMM 5350-A / SIMM 5350-B		
Medallion Architecture Augmentation	Augment the flexible and scalable data models to enable high quality products.		
Privacy Preserving Protocol Augmentation	Develop adaptive privacy preserving protocols to enable the best balance of utility and privacy.		

GOAL 5

Optimize organizational and operational culture.

With a small team and a modest annual budget, C2C has to use resources effectively to achieve organizational objectives. This means getting the right people in the right roles, prioritizing spending, and meeting the administrative and legal requirements that apply to State entities.

Objectives:

- » Recruit and retain top talent on the C2C team.
- » Operationalize C2C's shared values.
- » Use current and accurate fiscal and administrative data to inform resource prioritization and decision making.
- » Make meaningful partnerships inside and outside of state government.
- » Define outcomes and measure what matters.
- » Manage risk within a complex compliance landscape.

PROJECT	FY 2026-27 ACTIVITIES	
Increase legal and information technology bandwidth	Make a State budget request for two new positions to provide mission critical legal and information technology capacity for the Office.	
Recruit and onboard new positions	Add staff capacity to implement Workforce Pell and address legal and IT workload.	
Maximize C2C's available funding through impactful contracts and procurements	Prioritize and execute spending requests from C2C verticals based on continuous collaboration and budget projections updated at least monthly.	
Minimize staff vacancies when they occur	Establish baseline and target metrics for time-to-hire with the goal maintaining an overall vacancy rate equivalent to less than one full-time employee.	
Develop a research fee schedule	Identify and initiate the procedural steps that would enable C2C to collect fees from researchers using the secure data enclave. Make a recommendation on proposed fees to the C2C Governing Board.	

GOAL 5	Optimize organizational and operational culture.		
PROJECT	FY 2026-27 ACTIVITIES		
Formalize policy recommendations of the C2C Governing Board related to Office resources and capacity	Collaborate to create a policy document of the C2C Governing Board that communicates resource needs for the C2C Data System and the Office to the incoming administration (Governor) and other key external audiences.		
Develop a Workforce and Succession Plan	Apply State models to develop a combined Workforce and Succession Plan for the Office that complies with Human Resources Manual Section 2901.		
Recruit and onboard fellows	Recruit and onboard an initial cohort of fellows who provide strategic bandwidth to advance the secure data enclave, privacy protecting data linkages, and data products that leverage workforce and earnings data.		

C2C GOVERNANCE

	July-September	October-December	January-March	April-June
Board chair	Elect and onboard Chair and Vice-Chair 			
Governance Manual Updates		Confirm Committee composition and charter 	Adopt updates 	
Executive Director Review	Confirm Committee composition and charter 	Committee convenes	Board review with ED 	
Strategic planning		Confirm Committee composition and charter	Committee convenes	Board Review of Strategic Plan 
Governance Culture & Ambassadorship			Governing Board Developmental Session	
	Onboarding for new Board members			
	Progress summaries discussed at Board meetings			
			Governing Board: Annual governance survey	
Advisory Board Recommendation Process	Advisory Board members submit proposals, discuss and prioritize proposals in Fall meeting.		Governing Board Liaison drafts report with Fall meeting discussions, includes all proposals, and links to the Office's light touch feasibility studies.	Governing Board Liaison report presented to Governing Board