

Cradle-to-Career Data Governing Board Staff Report

Date Report Issued: August 7, 2026
Attention: Members of Cradle-to-Career Data Governing Board
Subject: **Update, Discussion, Public Comment, and Possible Action on the Cradle-to-Career Data Budget Change Concept and 12-month Work Plan (Agenda Item Seven)**
Staff Contact: Lesley Taylor, Director of Operations

At this meeting, the Governing Board (Board) will receive an update on the budgetary resources for the Office of Cradle-to-Career Data (Office) and have the opportunity to provide feedback on a budget request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2027-28, to discuss and formalize the Board's resource priorities, and to approve a new annual 12-month work plan for the Office.

Requested Action:

For this item, Staff recommends the Board approve the following motions:

- ❖ **Motion 1:** Move to approve the proposed budget change concept as specified in the staff report, and authorize the Office to finalize the request in collaboration with Government Operations Agency (GovOps) leadership and the Department of Finance (Finance) and to make any related changes to the final request; and to endorse the resource priorities and adopt the related resolution as written by the Office.
- ❖ **Motion 2:** Move to approve the 2026-27 annual work plan as presented.

Background:

Per [Education Code Section 10866 \(d\)](#), “the Board is responsible for providing “oversight of the data system and operational direction to the managing entity to ensure the data system is serving its intended purpose”. This includes “adopting an annual strategic plan and reviewing and revising that plan as needed” ([Education Code Section 10866 \(d\)\(1\)](#)) and “approving budget requests for inclusion in the [Board's] annual budget requests” ([Education Code Section 10866 \(d\)\(2\)](#)). At the first meeting of the fiscal year, the Board has the

opportunity to deliberate and take action on the annual work plan and budget requests.

Prior Year Budget:

For the prior year, the Budget Act of 2025 allocated \$15.249M ongoing to the California Cradle-to-Career Data System (C2C). The Office also received one new Research Data Specialist position and \$500,000 one-time from Budget Request [0511-021-BCP-2025-MR](#) to advance the development of the Career Passport, including connecting relevant workforce and earnings data.

Current Year Budget:

For the current year, the Budget Act of 2026 allocated \$15.251M ongoing for C2C's operating budget. The Office also received \$1.337M one-time from Budget Request [0511-016-BCP-2026-MR](#) for additional workload related to establishing new workforce and earnings data linkages pursuant to the Workforce Pell Grant program.

Workload Budget Request:

[Education Code Section 10860 et seq.](#) provides the statutory charge for the C2C Data System and the Office. Each year, the Office reviews the fiscal resources (funding) and human resources (positions) needed to achieve this charge to inform the development of a budget change concept for the following fiscal year.

Finance issued [Budget Letter 26-05](#) to assist departments in planning for 2027-28 budget development and [Budget Letter 26-10](#) setting forth interim policy guidelines. In November, Californians will elect a new Governor to take office on January 4, 2027. The Governor-elect and Administration may identify their specific priorities and policies that would supersede Budget Letter 26-10.

Since this is an Administration transition year, Finance will only consider workload budget and necessary technical requests that maintain current service levels for existing authorized services.

Assessment of Resource Needs:

While the Office maintains that a multi-year phased approach to growing the C2C staff team and operating budget would be the most effective in meeting statutory mandates, the context of a transition year requires a targeted workload-only request. The most mission critical staffing needs for the Office are for existing legal and information technology workload. These needs are detailed in Attachment A, the Office's proposed budget change concept.

Next Steps:

With the Board's action, the Office would finalize the workload request in collaboration with GovOps leadership and Finance, a regular activity during the annual build of the Governor's proposed budget. The Board would receive an update on the Office's fiscal resources, including any budget request, at its November 2026 meeting.

Resource Priorities for the Next Administration:

Based on the Board's previous discussions on scaling the impact and reach of the C2C Data System and its tools, the Office has drafted a policy paper and resolution to support the Board in articulating its priorities for ensuring the Office has the resources needed to achieve the goals and objectives in the Board's [2026-31 Strategic Plan](#). The policy paper is provided as Attachment B.

Annual Work Plan:

The Office has developed an annual work plan for FY 2026-27, which can be found in Attachment C. The updated structure of the 2026-27 annual work plan intentionally aligns with C2C's goals and objectives outlined in the newly adopted 5-year strategic plan to ensure clarity and leverage continuity.

Discussion for the August Board Meeting:

This agenda item will be broken up into three sections for member deliberation. Questions to consider for discussion include:

Section One: Workload Budget Request

- ❖ Given Finance's Budget Letter guidelines for budget requests in transition years, do you have any input or clarifying questions for the Office's process on this request?

Section Two: Board Policy Priorities

- ❖ Does the drafted resolution (Attachment B) communicate strategic and impactful opportunities for resource investments that would scale C2C's reach?
- ❖ How might these resources support C2C's mission, vision, and strategic plan? How would California's data and evidence landscape change if these investments were realized?

Section Three: Annual Work Plan

- ❖ Do the projects outlined fulfill C2C's statutory charge and align with the Board's recently adopted strategic plan? How does the work plan address the needs of California's diverse population and various audiences?
- ❖ What potential risks might hinder the successful implementation of the work plan? What contingency plans should we consider and how can we be proactive in addressing what is preventable?

**GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AGENCY
BUDGET CHANGE PROPOSAL
CONCEPT PAPER**

Department: Government Operations Agency

Title of Proposed Change: Cradle-to-Career Data System: Legal and IT Workload

Estimated Cost: \$500,000

Positions: 2.0

Problem:

The Office of Cradle-to-Career Data ("C2C" or "Office") is responsible for building California's Cradle-to-Career Data System, which links data from 16 state entities and non-state entities and makes it actionable. This longitudinal data system links tens of millions of Californians' records from early learning to higher ed, and from labor market earnings to social services.

C2C has 27 established positions. In FY 25-26, C2C had an overall vacancy rate of 1.61% and a 0% vacancy rate for 214 days of the year. The Office is organized into four primary verticals—Data Infrastructure, Data Programs, Engagement, and Operations—each led by a director. The vertical directors, General Counsel, and Executive Director comprise the Executive Team. Within C2C's position authority, internal legal and information technology capacity are two gaps that pose significant organizational risk.

C2C has one established position for the dual role of General Counsel and Chief Privacy Officer. To mitigate the risk posed by key person dependency, C2C has utilized an Attorney IV retired annuitant (RA) since October 2023. The RA bandwidth has provided essential support on standard legal workload (e.g., contracts, conflict of interest, Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act), freeing up the General Counsel to focus on the most complex and nuanced legal questions facing the Office, including interpretation of state and federal privacy law and use cases for leveraging C2C's Participation Agreement and Master Data Exchange Agreement. The RA has also been a critical backstop during absences of the General Counsel when they occur. The long-term need for RA capacity demonstrates that an established position would be a more effective solution for solving key-person dependency. The workload for the legal team has also increased dramatically. Since the General Counsel

position was authorized in 2021, both the Office staff and number of data providers have doubled.

C2C receives enterprise technology services from DGS via an interagency agreement. The sole IT position for the Office was swept pursuant to Control Section 4.12 of the 2024 Budget Act. Despite building a highly visible technology project for the state, the C2C Office (enterprise) currently lacks even one authorized IT position. This has left C2C without the bandwidth to provide the necessary IT service desk for its 16 Data Providers who submit data on tens of millions of Californians annually using complex data security protocols. It has also left C2C's Director of Data Infrastructure (CEA Level C) to triage time-sensitive IT issues for the team, which is a non-strategic use of senior leadership time.

Proposed Solution:

Approve 2.0 FTE, reclassification of 1.0 FTE, and approximately \$500,000 ongoing funding to increase C2C's internal legal and information technology capacity:

- 1.0 Attorney IV to serve as Chief Privacy Officer and provide permanent bandwidth to support the General Counsel to fulfill the breadth of legal responsibilities of the Office, and to act on behalf of the General Counsel in their absence.
- 1.0 Information Technology Specialist I to provide permanent internal systems administration and information technology support capacity and to run a Service Desk for the 16 C2C Data Providers who need to navigate the complex data security procedures in submitting data to C2C.
- Reclassification of 1.0 existing CEA Level C to Chief Counsel I, CEA to comport with the complexity of legal and privacy analysis assigned to C2C's General Counsel and to associate the position with the same bargaining unit as the requested staff attorney position.

RESOLUTION NO. 26-03
RESOURCE PRIORITIES OF THE
CALIFORNIA CRADLE-TO-CAREER DATA SYSTEM
GOVERNING BOARD
August 12, 2026

WHEREAS, the Office of Cradle-to-Career Data (C2C) is established within the Government Operations Agency (GovOps) pursuant to Education Code section 10862 to serve as a neutral administrative body of the California Cradle-to-Career Data System to establish and maintain a longitudinal data system that provides a source for actionable data and research on education, economic, and health outcomes for individuals, families, and communities, and provide for expanded access to tools and services that support the navigation of the education-to-employment pipeline, and under the direction of the Governing Board established pursuant to Education Code section 10864;

WHEREAS, the Cradle-to-Career Data System is California's only neutral, cross-sector data infrastructure that can link siloed data across TK-12, higher education, workforce training, employment, and health and human services; and by connecting these systems, C2C provides answers to critical questions that policymakers, practitioners, and communities ask about what happens to Californians as they enter and exit education and training systems, and which pathways lead to economic mobility;

WHEREAS, the scope and scale of the data system doubled in March 2026 with the first ingestion of workforce and earnings data, allowing the system to map and cross-reference higher education outcomes directly with workforce training and apprenticeship participation, and jobs and earnings outcomes; and enabling C2C to demonstrate the incremental value of college and workforce training programs and thus provide the policymakers and the public with the insights needed to make informed decisions;

WHEREAS, Education Code section 10866 names the Governing Board as the

authority responsible for strategic direction and implementation of the data system, including but not limited to adopting timelines and submitting recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature on the data system's vision, mission, and strategic objectives; and

WHEREAS, the Governing Board on May 20, 2026, adopted the 2026-31 Strategic Plan, which articulates the Board's commitment to ensuring the data system's data, tools, and resources are useful, accessible, and responsive to user needs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Governing Board of the California Cradle-to-Career Data System as follows:

The Resource Priorities policy paper presented during the August 12, 2026 Governing Board meeting is endorsed as written.

CERTIFICATE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
(Attesting to Action of the Authority)
Sacramento, California

I, Mary Ann Bates, Executive Director of the Cradle-to-Career Data System, hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of Resolution No. 26-03, **RESOURCE PRIORITIES OF THE CRADLE-TO-CAREER DATA SYSTEM GOVERNING BOARD**, as adopted at a meeting of the Cradle-to-Career Data System held at 400 R Street, Sacramento, California 95811, on August 12, 2026, for which meeting all of the members of said Authority had due notice; and that at the meeting the staff recommendation was adopted by the following votes:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAINS:

ABSENT:

This resolution expires one year after the adoption date. Extensions must be approved by the Authority in a public meeting.

I further certify that the original minutes of said meeting and a copy of the original Resolution adopted at said meeting are on file in the Office of Cradle-to-Career Data; and that the Resolution has not been amended, modified, or rescinded in any manner since the date of its adoption, and the same is now in full force and effect.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have executed this certificate.

By:

Mary Ann Bates, Executive Director

Date

Cradle-to-Career Data System Resource Priorities Policy Paper

To fulfill the mission of the C2C Data System (C2C), the Governing Board (Board) sees a critical need for resources in the following areas:

1. C2C Jobs and Opportunity Hub

The Opportunity:

For the first time in California, C2C can connect data on employment and earnings to many different pathways including TK-12 education, higher education (public, non-profit, and for-profit), short-term programs, job training, and apprenticeships. This is possible because C2C has linked and brought together (and deidentified) person-level data from 16 state-level data providers.

Through a new C2C Jobs and Opportunity Hub, the state could create an efficient and scalable capability to create nimble, customized data reports on jobs and opportunity. Specifically, for people in Sacramento and across the state to make evidence-informed, data-driven decisions, they need not only the state-wide picture on jobs and opportunity but also regional analyses and customized data reports related to specific programs or initiatives. These customized data reports can be built only by C2C, which has built out its statutorily required function of connecting data on the state's comprehensive education and training paths to jobs and opportunity. The capacity created through the C2C Jobs and Opportunity Hub would ensure that relevant, timely data reports are responsive to current trends and policy changes in California.

What Would Be Built/Created?

The C2C Jobs and Opportunity Hub would release data reports and responsive custom data cuts that would address questions like these:

- ❖ How are Californians doing in the labor market, and how does this vary based on the degrees they received or the region where they live and work?
- ❖ How are these outcomes affected by the different education or job training paths they took?
- ❖ How much do Californians earn after getting specific degrees, including breaking this down by major and institution?
- ❖ What do outcomes look like for people who did not attend college? How do those paths vary over time?
- ❖ How does earnings growth and opportunity vary based on whether people stay with the same employer for a long time or work for many different companies over time?

This would meaningfully change the data and information Californians can use to inform their decisions about which education and career paths to pursue.

How Does This Improve Government Efficiency and Effectiveness?

Through C2C, the state can avoid reinventing the wheel of data sharing agreements and one-off data linkages. Typically, state entities share data with each other for specific, narrowly defined purposes in response to reporting requirements or legislation. This can lead to many layers of bi-lateral data sharing agreements that are burdensome to set up and where the resulting information can be used only for limited purposes.

C2C's charge in the Cradle-to-Career Data System Act envisioned C2C as a "shared utility" for the state, where C2C connects data comprehensively, so that it can be used in a flexible, nimble way for many purposes. Through C2C, many state departments and agencies share data with C2C via one unifying legal agreement, which enables stable, long-term data products across previously siloed data sources. C2C's strict privacy protections also avoid proliferating the most sensitive individual level data.

How Would This Be Built in Practice?

C2C's work over the past four years has already overcome the most challenging obstacles to building this capability: C2C's data partners have all signed the same legal agreements, and C2C built the data system infrastructure to securely ingest, link, and deidentify data in a secure, privacy-first environment. C2C can connect the State of California's official records on jobs and earnings to the comprehensive longitudinal TK-12, higher education, and workforce training data C2C has already linked.

Modest additional investments in C2C and resources for compute costs would enable the build of the C2C Jobs and Opportunity Hub.

2. C2C Data Insights and Research Gateway

The Opportunity:

C2C can serve as a flashlight to find wins for the people of California. C2C has already connected data from TK-12 and all of higher education, financial aid data, comprehensive social services take up data, workforce training and apprenticeship data, teacher training data, and job and earnings outcomes. This has created a rich treasure chest of potential data insights that need to be unlocked so that California can put that information to use.

What Would Be Created?

The C2C Data Insights and Research Gateway would have six connected components:

❖ Open Data Files for Public Analysis

C2C will take the data C2C has linked together across silos and make those available for the public. C2C has already piloted this approach by making the 9,000 cuts of data that power the C2C Student Pathways Dashboard available on the C2C website as aggregated, privacy protecting data flat files. These have already been used by PPIC and others to analyze policy questions. C2C expects that future files would be widely used by researchers at universities, policy research organizations,

state entities such as the Legislative Analysts Office, and advocacy organizations.

❖ Responsive Data Reports Based on Requests

C2C can be responsive to requests from Californians (via C2C's governance structure) to create public C2C data reports based on the data needed to address timely, current issues. C2C is piloting this approach in the current fiscal year by creating College and Career Data Files for more than 1,000 Local Education Agencies across the state. These were designed based on a data report proposal that advanced through C2C's Advisory Board process.

❖ Impact Evaluation at Scale Via the C2C Secure Data Enclave

While public dashboards provide descriptive information, often the most pressing questions are causal: did a program or policy have its intended impact? Why did (or did it not) work? Who benefited the most?

Often, the key reason impact evaluations are not done is because the entity that knows who received a particular program or who was affected by the policy cannot access the long-term outcomes data to measure the impact. With its overarching legal agreement and partnerships with its data providers, C2C can solve that problem at scale, while preserving privacy enabling analysis within C2C's secure environment instead of sharing data externally with researchers.

❖ Secure Environments for State Departments to Do Their Own Data Analysis

C2C can create custom gateways within the C2C Secure Data Enclave where departments and agencies can conduct their own data analysis for their own analysis and reporting.

❖ Linking Data to Unlock Resources for Californians

C2C has already connected data to unlock tens of millions of dollars in unclaimed CalKIDS scholarship accounts, by connecting data from CalKIDS to data from the California Community Colleges. Similar data linkages can reduce the administrative burden Californians face in

sending official transcripts or submitting information to prove eligibility for specific services.

❖ C2C Research Library Transparently Sharing Results

In its new 5-year strategic plan, the Board committed to Open Science best practices. This means that C2C will build a public research library so that anyone can learn from the studies that are done using the underlying C2C data. The general principle is that C2C will support openness and transparency around results from studies, regardless of whether the results were positive, negative, or null.

How Would This Be Built in Practice?

C2C has the linked data, technical infrastructure, privacy policies, and legal agreements in place to create all six components of the C2C Data Insights and Research Gateway. The only limiting factor is C2C's bandwidth of data analysis staff and marginal increases in technology and compute costs.

Critically, C2C would continue and expand its partnerships with California's universities to leverage the bandwidth of researchers to conduct detailed data analysis and research. Such collaborations would preserve C2C's identity as a neutral source of trusted information and it would also avoid an inefficient use of state resources to try to replicate already existing research capabilities at universities.

3. C2C Data Privacy and Security Accelerator

The Opportunity:

C2C is positioned to pioneer more advanced privacy-protecting technologies so they can be used more broadly across state government.

As the state's "one-stop shop for cradle-to-career data,"¹ C2C has a statutory charge to ensure that "individual privacy is protected."² Via the initial build of the data system, C2C has already collaboratively advanced the use of privacy protecting approaches. This includes C2C implementing high data security and privacy standards at scale via the data ingestion process for all 16 of its current state-level data providers. (This includes strong procedures for encrypting sensitive information in transit and at rest.) C2C has also implemented strict privacy-protecting protocols for all of the data products it releases. This means C2C's data products display data only for sufficiently large groups of people. This prevents possible reverse engineering of personal information in C2C's data products.

The outcome of C2C's strict data privacy standards has enabled an unprecedented level of information to be connected via C2C.

What Would Be Created?

C2C can serve as a state-wide data privacy and security accelerator that enables more entities across the state to implement privacy enhancing approaches.

Specifically, C2C can bring the following approaches to scale in California:

- ❖ C2C Secure Data Enclave

Typically, when researchers receive state approval to use state administrative data for research, the state transmits the data to the researchers. Because the data physically leaves the control of the state, the data providing department must trust that the researcher will keep the

¹ [Education Code Section 10862\(b\)\(2\)](#) states "Ensure wide, appropriate, and legal use of the data system as a one-stop shop for cradle-to-career data to support policy researchers. In order to ensure individual privacy, and in accordance with federal law, control of the data available through the data system shall be retained by the data providers who contributed the data through their participation agreement, and disclosed to and by the managing entity only to the extent permitted by federal law."

² [Education Code Section 10860\(c\)\(2\)](#) states "Ensure that information contained, and available through, the data system is kept secure and that individual privacy is protected."

data secure on their own university or institution's servers, and that they will eventually securely destroy the data. Because of the risks inherent in that process, it is understandable that state departments typically give unitary data access only to a small number of trusted researchers who have access to significant resources to keep data secure. However, this status quo significantly limits the vast number of useful data analysis, studies, and impact evaluations that could be done to better serve Californians.

C2C is currently piloting a new C2C Secure Data Enclave. This is a controlled, secure environment where approved researchers will be able to do analysis on the underlying, deidentified data in the C2C data system. With the secure enclave, researchers come to the data, instead of having data shipped out to researchers. When their study is complete, the analysis and insights can leave the enclave (following careful privacy review), but the data itself stays put—it cannot be removed from the controlled environment.

C2C can scale and build out the Secure Enclave infrastructure it is piloting to serve as the one-stop shop for research data access at scale. This will have usefulness not only for the TK-12 and higher education policy community but also for many other policy areas connected to the data C2C has linked, including economic development and job opportunities, labor and workforce development, take up and use of social services, and services provided to people with developmental disabilities. More broadly, the enclave could enable studies and impact evaluation across any policy area where long-term outcomes such as educational attainment or labor market outcomes are relevant.

❖ Test and Scale Privacy-Protecting Data Release Approaches

C2C can pioneer more advanced privacy-protecting technologies so they can be used more broadly across government.

Examples include:

- Data suppression protocols (greying out data when there are too few people represented in a cell of a data table.)
- Noise infusion (injecting some “random noise” into public data reports so that information can be shared even for smaller groups of people while protecting privacy. This is particularly useful for rural areas of the state or for groups of people including tribal communities.)
- Synthetic data sets (public use data sets that protect individual privacy by being based on constructed information.)

❖ Pilot and Scale Data Linkage Technology that Reduces Reliance on Sensitive Personal Information

C2C is piloting technologies such as tokenization that can enable data linkages without proliferating or sharing sensitive personally identifiable information.

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	Pilot and improve the secure data enclave as a virtual environment that researchers and data partners use to conduct research and analyze data.	
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.		

	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