



July 20, 2016

## MEMORANDUM

To: Road Map Project Strategic Refresh Planning Group

From: CCER and StriveTogether Consultant Team

## RE: REFLECTIONS ON ROAD MAP PROJECT GOAL

### INTRODUCTION

All of the work of the Road Map Project has been in service of the 2020 Goal since the beginning of the Project. Over five years into the Road Map Project, it is important to acknowledge the progress made to date and the remaining system challenges, and to consider options for changes to the Goal that will best serve the region.

Considering changes to the Road Map Project Goal was a stated result at the beginning of the Strategic Refresh Process. We want to bring this discussion to the Planning Team at our July 27<sup>th</sup> daylong meeting. Ultimately, any changes made to the Goal will be informed by the entire Education Results Network and all Road Map Project work groups and key partners. For a broader Road Map Project audience, all of the context and background information needed to adequately frame this decision will be provided in a larger document and presentations given throughout the Project. These considerations include (but are not limited to) background information about how and why the Road Map Project Goal was developed in 2010, community feedback received about the Goal through the Road Map Project Formative Evaluation, current results on student-level indicators, consideration of progress made to date and the system-building work that may not be achieving student-level results yet. We invite your feedback on all aspects of this discussion, including how best to frame this discussion to the broader Project.

### ORIGINAL GOAL

*The Road Map Project goal is to double the number of students in South King County and South Seattle who are on track to graduate from college or earn a career credential by 2020. We are committed to nothing less than closing the unacceptable opportunity and achievement gaps for low-income students and children of color, and increasing achievement for all students from cradle to college and career.*

Originally we defined success as achieving the 2020 "on track" targets for all students and for each subgroup from school readiness through postsecondary credential completion. The targets were set such that attaining them would indicate that we had a higher performing cradle-to-college system that would produce "double the level of postsecondary attainment" than when the Road Map Project began. We wanted to see higher performance and gap closure at each stage of the education continuum so that we could ensure our focus was on a higher performing whole system, not just on one singular developmental milestone.

### PACE OF PROGRESS IS TOO SLOW

Given the current system performance and rates of improvement, we will not hit our 2020 targets for most indicators of student success, and we will not see race and ethnic gap closure. There are three

reasons for this: 1) when we set the original targets we used only indicators of student success (which tend to be lagging indicators) and we did not explicitly call out or track attributes of system change that would be required to bring about the desired improved student achievement and gap closure, 2) in looking only at changes in student performance, we did not look at whether adult behavior was changing and we did not adequately consider the time scales required for the level of system change that we are pursuing, and 3) the strategies implemented across the Project were not all strong enough to achieve dramatically improved results. Going forward, we need stronger leading indicators and greater focus on system change metrics and strategies that are more closely targeted to that level of change. And we need to clearly define roles and implement strategies that builds the capacity in the region so that changes made can be sustained.

## **PROPOSED ROAD MAP PROJECT 2.0 GOAL– THREE OPTIONS**

The following are three options for changes to the Road Map Project Goal.

All three options propose to keep the following components that are included in the original goal

- ✓ A commitment to closing opportunity gaps for low-income children and children of color
- ✓ A commitment to improving the entire education continuum, from cradle through college and career
- ✓ A commitment to the Road Map Region – South Seattle and South King County

All three options propose the following changes from the original goal

- ✓ The addition of system-level or adult behavior-change indicators
- ✓ Better disaggregation of data by race/ethnicity

As we add the focus on building stronger systems to better support our students; we should never take our focus off of student success. We should continue to report on all of our indicators (old and new) annually and expand our reporting to include other key indicators including better race and ethnic group disaggregation. Our work to improve student success across the continuum needs to be more rigorous and more explicitly focused on gap-closing. We should also be absolutely transparent in reporting progress on the system change indicators so that all involved can see what is happening and can help accelerate the pace of progress.

### **Option 1 – Stay with 2020**

Closing gaps and moving our region to a stronger cradle through college system that produces a much higher level of postsecondary attainment remains absolutely critical. Therefore, we could propose that the original goal should not be changed.

The Road Map Project should remain a time-limited regional initiative committed to accelerating progress through the 2020-21 school year. A lot can be accomplished by committed partners with five more years of hard work.

The 2020 targets should be revised so that the Project is focused on meeting key formative system change benchmarks and other leading student success indicators. These new targets need to be set and then tracked as we work through all the areas of the next phase of work. Examples might include:

- ✓ Growing the number of teachers of color in the region
- ✓ Growing the number of dual language programs

- ✓ Growing the number of districts implementing trauma-informed discipline practices
- ✓ Growing the number of students who receive quality supports from a college access provider

### **Option 2 – Extend to 2030 and Increase the Goal**

In recognition of the time it takes to make systemic change, and the magnitude of gap-closing that must be achieved, and in recognition of the increasing need for postsecondary credential attainment in our knowledge-intensive economy, this option proposes that we extend the timeframe of the Road Map Project and modify the goal and targets in several important respects:

1. Extend the timeframe of the Project to 2030.
2. Change the Road Map Project goal to 70% of the Road Map Project Region’s students earn a college degree or credential by age 26 by the year 2030 (on-track targets across the continuum would be set)
3. Specify that race and ethnic opportunity gaps and achievement gaps are closed, or on track to close, by the year 2030.
4. Add system-change targets that can be tracked.
  - a) Targets for leading indicators would be staggered in three phases of achievement, first for 2020, and then again for 2025 and 2030.

#### *Considerations:*

- A 70% postsecondary attainment goal is more aligned to the market labor needs.
- A 70% postsecondary attainment by 2030 goal will be announced this fall by the Washington Roundtable and may be adopted by the state as a long-term goal of the state's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan. It would be powerful for our region to step up to this aspiration and commit to being the first in Washington State to achieve the goal.
- It is healthy and honest to be open about the need for more time to achieve the goal, and to have a goal that is both audacious and attainable.
- It would be important to define strategies to maintain the sense of urgency even as we extend the project's duration.

### **Option 3 – “The Middle Path” – Same Goal in More Time**

Keep the original Road Map Project Goal for postsecondary attainment and gap-closing, but extend the amount of time to achieve the goal until 2025.

#### *Considerations for the time extension:*

- Acknowledges the time scales required for significant system-change.
- Takes into account the expected gains the region should begin to see as a result of Road Map Project momentum and Race to the Top implementation.
- It is healthy and honest to be open about the need for more time to achieve the goal, and to have a goal that is both audacious and attainable.
- Acknowledges the negative effect of the significant regional leadership changes that occurred from 2011 – 2015.

If the project timeframe were extended to 2025, it would be critical to set interim targets for 2020 in order to maintain a sense of urgency and to focus on system changes that impact the underlying conditions for change which are essential for improving student achievement.