



# The Road Map Project

Year-end Formative Evaluation Report

December 2013



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## Introduction

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The focus of this formative evaluation is on documenting the work of the Road Map Project (RMP) and identifying where progress is being made and where challenges still exist in realizing the RMP goal. Specifically, the evaluation aims to provide the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and the Community Center for Education Results (CCER) with:

- An assessment of the extent to which the RMP is (1) mobilizing change by publishing and disseminating results data and promoting data-informed decision-making and continuous improvement, (2) building public will and support to improve students' educational opportunities and outcomes, and (3) encouraging the alignment of funding resources and organizations' actions with the RMP goals and indicators of student success.
- An assessment of the way the RMP functions as a whole and whether and how project implementation produces the organizational and system-building actions and strategies needed to double the number of students on track to earning credentials.
- Actionable and regular evaluation feedback to help inform strategy implementation and needed course corrections in achieving RMP goals.

To fulfill the annual deliverable for the evaluation contract, this year-end report provides an overall assessment of the RMP's progress and its successes and challenges based on data collected in 2013. Evaluation activities included spring surveys of 93 organizational partners and 324 broader stakeholders, summer interviews of 45 key leaders within CCER and across the RMP, and ongoing observations of RMP meetings and events.<sup>1</sup>

We organized this end-of-year report to align to major components of the RMP's theory of change. First, we examine RMP's key strategies in action and provide evidence of the extent to which these strategies are supporting RMP work. We then describe how and in what ways stakeholders and institutions in the region have come together to meet the RMP goals. We also include evidence of the extent to which RMP strategies are starting to produce changes within partner organizations and across regional systems. In the second section of the report, we summarize feedback specific to CCER's role as the backbone organization for the RMP. Each subsection throughout the report concludes with recommendations for further supporting the work in that area.

Appendix A provides a summary of the data collection and analysis methodology. Appendices B and C include lists of the highlights and concerns that came up most frequently in the interviews.

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<sup>1</sup> A shorter summary brief designed for external audiences is being drafted and will be shared with BMGF and CCER in early January.

# I. Strategies

RMP developed the “kapow” model (see below) to provide a visual illustration of the project’s theory of change and core elements. In this section, we describe stakeholder perceptions about the current status of the three foundational elements of the kapow model: strong data capacity, powerful community voice, and aligned funding. We then assess progress related to the next two implementation focused tiers of the model: aligned organizational actions and systems building strategies and actions (including emerging system changes across the RMP region). We note where the foundational elements are supporting implementation efforts and identify recommendations where additional supports are needed.



We define the foundational elements as follows:

- **Strong Data Capacity:** Collecting, analyzing, and disseminating data to mobilize action, inform decision making, and develop shared accountability.
- **Powerful Community Voice:** Increasing public will and support for RMP goals and engaging partners, community members, and parents to improve education attainment in our region.
- **Aligned Funding:** Aligning funding to the RMP goal, indicators, and action plan elements, particularly for private funders.

- **Aligned Organizational Actions:** Individual partner organizations or systems aligning their own policies and practices with RMP goals and metrics.
- **Systems Building Strategies and Actions:** Organizations coming together to create and/or strengthen policies, practices and/or systems and to implement RMP efforts across multiple districts, multiple organizations within a sector, or across sectors.

Please note that the evaluation team did not explicitly ask stakeholders about system level changes in this first year of data collection; therefore, the results reported here on this part of the kapow framework are limited and tentative. The evaluation team will more specifically investigate systems change in the coming year.

## Strengthening the Foundation: Strong Data Capacity

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Stakeholders highlighted the great strides that the RMP has made in building data capacity and encouraging partners to adopt common metrics. Further work is needed; however, to support effective data use for improving policies and practices.

### Organizations are adopting the RMP measures and indicators

The RMP established a clear, measurable goal and indicators. Many stakeholders across the region have bought into this goal and indicators. Districts, post-secondary institutions, funders, and community-based organizations (CBOs) are increasingly starting to align their metrics with the RMP indicators and are using these indicators to track progress of their own work.

*We refined all of our data collection around what the Road Map Project collects ... Now we collect, disaggregate, and analyze 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading, 4<sup>th</sup> grade math, 5<sup>th</sup> grade science, and we have intentionally aligned our data collection points with the Road Map Project so that as that project continues to develop, we are tracking the same data points they're tracking. (Government stakeholder)*

The RMP work groups have also supported the expansion of data capacity and use into new sectors. For example, the Community Network Steering Committee developed three parent engagement indicators based on research and community input and will collect baseline data on these indicators in late 2013 and early 2014. Similarly, the Youth Development work group's work on "non-cognitive" indicators enabled CBOs to identify common goals within the sector and better describe how their work supports school engagement.

*I think naming it is really good field building, and I think it gives youth development organizations a feeling that they have a place at the table, which may or may not have had a place at the table before, but until you see your stuff in there, I think it's hard to see where you fit. Now that we have some stuff in there it makes it clear that it's not just about more traditional academic settings. (CBO stakeholder)*

The development and pilot of aligned surveys regarding student skills and beliefs for use in both schools and CBOs expands the data capacity of both sectors while reinforcing the value of aligned actions. Stakeholders said that there was a greater awareness of non-cognitive indicators among educators and, in turn, a greater use of academic indicators by community-based organizations. For example, the push to align with RMP indicators means that non-educational organizations are setting up data sharing agreements to obtain academic data (e.g., obtaining DIBELS and MSP data to track grade 3 reading).

*We are giving more attention given to nonacademic indicators. The narrow focus on academics previously was due to NCLB. But there's more to it than that! Non-cognitive*

factors such as student attitudes, parent engagement are now seen as important. (K-12 stakeholder)

### Efforts to increase access to data have been highly successful

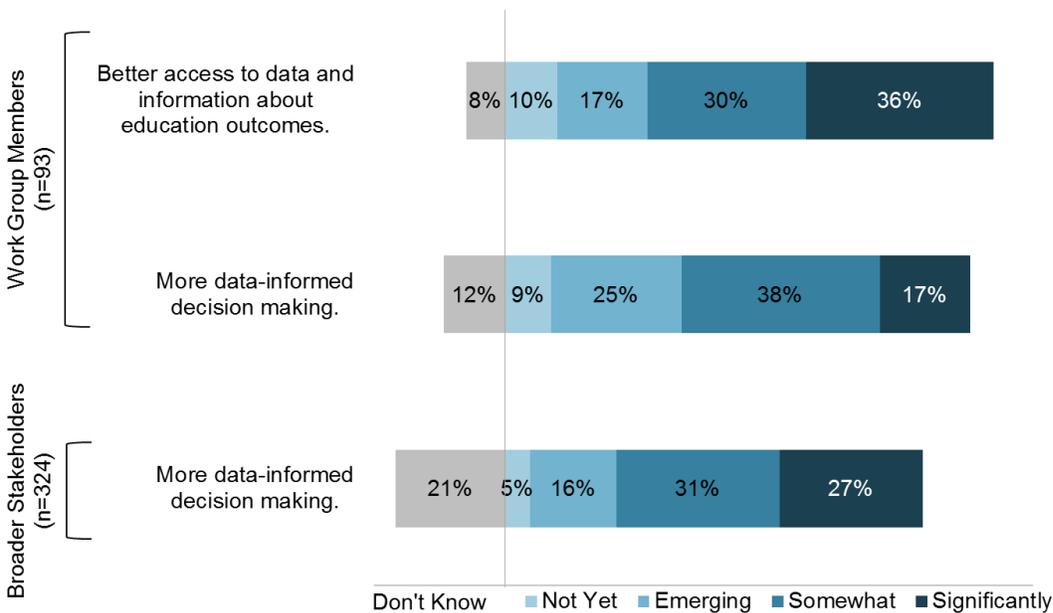
Another key success is the wide and public sharing of regional data on RMP indicators. Key examples include the 2011 Baseline Report and 2012 Results Report. The RMP encourages data use by putting data in people’s hands in an understandable format.

*[A success of the Road Map Project has been] actually getting data into the hands of people in a systematic way and from a systems perspective. This is a new way for us to think about data. (K-12 Stakeholder)*

Two thirds of organizational partners surveyed said that access to data and information about education outcomes had improved at least somewhat since 2010 (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Data Access and Data-informed Decision-making**

*To what degree have the following changes occurred in the region since 2010?*



Source: Organizational Partner Survey (n=93) and Broader Stakeholder Survey (n=324)

Stakeholders identified the Baseline Report and 2012 Results Report as milestones for disseminating data and beginning to track progress over time. Stakeholders also said that CCER was helpful with providing support around data access, interpretation, and even collection “that we weren’t able to do ourselves.”

*Andrew is open and willing to think through quandaries and provide data when we need it. (K-12 stakeholder)*

## **Data use for decision making is becoming more widespread**

Three quarters of organizational partners and broader stakeholders said that there has been at least some movement toward more data-informed decision-making (Figure 1). Stakeholders said it was helpful to share the data with their staff, communities, and even the legislature. The indicators and goal serve as “proof points” to document progress and to justify “why we’re allocating resources like this.” They noted that there were more conversations about data than there had been in the past.

*I think that there’s so much conversation about educational outcomes for kids. In the three years I’ve been here, I’ve seen a tremendous change ... I go to meetings all the time and people are talking about student achievement. (Government/public stakeholder)*

## **More work is needed to support effective data use to improve policies and practices**

Some challenges remain in building data capacity and encouraging use across sectors. Data capacity and use of data is strongest among the seven districts and the Puget Sound Educational Service District. For example, implementation of early warning systems will further advance data use in high school settings. The data work is less fully formed in some sectors, including birth to age 3, community college/postsecondary, and among some CBOs. Members of these sectors were afraid that because RMP is so data-driven and because their data are “messy” or “perhaps even a little backwards,” that they would be “forgotten” or left out of the project.

## **Recommendations**

*One area of future focus worth exploring is helping RMP stakeholders to use data for project accountability practice improvement and midcourse corrections.* People seem unsure about the “what’s next” on the data front now that indicators are in place and data is being shared publically. Stakeholders had questions about interpretation: how to make meaning of the data and use the data to inform action. There were also concerns about whether institutional support for data alignment and sharing may diminish if indicators show declines. Many partners do not have processes in place to use data for accountability or to drive changes in behavior. As one interviewee expressed, “it’s been all kumbaya up to this point,” but what happens when the indicators show no progress or progress that has not been rapid enough?

*It’s easier to think it’s a good idea [alignment of measures and strategies] and be committed nominally—and then actually changing practices of your organization and strategies is a much different thing ... There is a honeymoon period with something like*

*this, where people say, "Yeah, we are all behind it!" Then when you really get down to it, are we achieving the indicators and milestones along the way? While really we are still a group of disparate organizations doing disparate things, yet with more focus, but is it enough? (Funder stakeholder)*

## Strengthening the Foundation: Powerful Community Voice

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Knowledge of the RMP and buy-in to RMP goals are high; however, there is “more work to be done” to ensure that all stakeholders are engaged in the RMP in a meaningful and influential way.

Focusing on the core sectors engaged in the RMP (early learning, K–12, higher education, CBOs, government, and funders), we examined how interview participants described 1) *awareness* of RMP within their sector, 2) *support* for RMP within their sector, and 3) the *commitment* of sector leaders to take action and make investments around RMP strategies. In line with survey results, we found that awareness and support was strong, with commitment somewhat less strong.

### **Institutional leaders within key sectors are aware of the RMP, support the RMP goal, and demonstrate commitment by investing in RMP strategies and aligning with RMP indicators**

The RMP is a space where diverse local stakeholders are brought together. The RMP provides a vehicle for people to convene and participants appreciate being included, in terms of having “a rare seat at the table,” alongside institutional leaders and the opportunity to influence decisions.

*I definitely feel like Road Map Project pays attention to our opinion and includes us.  
(Early learning stakeholder)*

*I feel things are pretty good for us in terms of the support that they give to us as participants; they are not just looking at us as a funder. (Funder stakeholder)*

Stakeholders reported that RMP is “on the radar” of key sector leaders and that the collective impact approach is becoming part of the culture of South King County. Some said that support for RMP was particularly strong among local grant makers.

*[The Road Map Project is] the driver right now. Many organizations like us have heard from their funders that this is what they want to fund so it's critical that we get on board.  
(CBO stakeholder)*

Stakeholders demonstrated a clear understanding of RMP goals and typically described these goals as resonant with the mission of their own organizations. There is growing appreciation for the value of taking a collective impact approach to supporting young people within the region. There is also a good degree of “buy-in” for working across organizations and districts now because “people are ready to come together.”

*I think they've done a great job of helping people understand this Road Map and helping involve people in the development of the map itself and the indicators so there's a sense of*

*ownership across these seven districts. I think that's been a huge development. (Early learning stakeholder)*

*At least the people that I'm familiar with, they see it [the Road Map Project] as a very positive thing. They think it's a very powerful thing and I think people also see it as a well thought out strategy for facilitating change collectively. (K-12 stakeholder)*

## **The RMP is receiving some national attention and local media visibility**

Many interview participants highlighted the public visibility of RMP. In addition to noting that the RMP drew public attention to educational disparities in South King County, participants commonly suggested that RMP increased awareness of issues such as college readiness and early learning.

*One of the things about the Road Map Project that has come out from their attention and investment in South King County is raising the issues of what South King County looks like; about what the schools are like, what the kids are like, and what the reality of the fact that most of the kids in South King County are not doing that well, and this is a place that needs investment and attention. (Advocacy stakeholder)*

*I think that there's so much conversation about educational outcomes for kids ... I've seen a tremendous change ... I go to meetings all the time where people are talking about student achievement. (Government stakeholder)*

Participants also said that RMP illustrates the promise of collective impact, especially through highly visible activities such as College Bound Scholarship and Education Results Network meetings. These activities introduce collective impact “in a tangible way” to a broader audience. RMP offers a local example of what collective impact looks like in action and is prompting stakeholders to look at other issues (e.g., health, homelessness) through a collective impact lens. Several participants also cited the “national exposure” gained through the inclusion of RMP in the book *Confronting Suburban Poverty in America* as validation and an example of how the work in South King County may influence communities around the US.<sup>2</sup>

*As that book gets out [and] they start doing the work around it with their national tour and people start having the conversations, there's no doubt in my mind that they're going to start getting phone calls from other places asking about what are you doing and want to visit. I think it's one of those things that's a milestone, but I'm not sure if people are recognizing how much of one yet. (K-12 stakeholder)*

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<sup>2</sup> Kneebone, E., & Berube, A. (2013). *Confronting suburban poverty in America*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press. For more information, visit <http://confrontingsuburbanpoverty.org/the-book/>

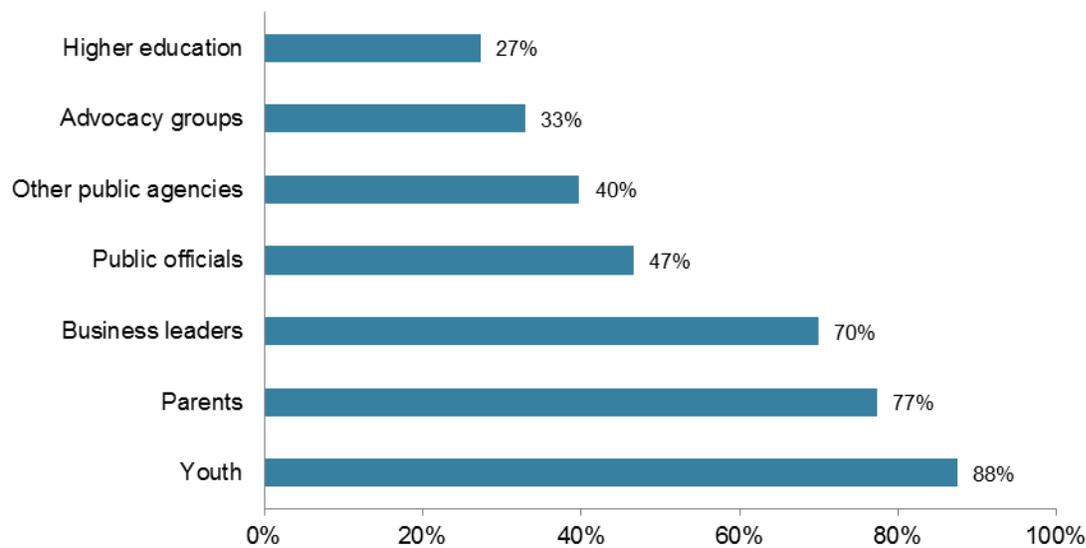
## There is “more work to be done” to ensure that all stakeholders are engaged in RMP in a meaningful and influential way

A minority of interview participants cited gaps in stakeholder awareness or suggested that there was not consistent support for RMP within their sector.

*Road Map has had a huge impact, but in pockets. Not to everyone. (Government stakeholder)*

The work group survey also indicated gaps in stakeholder engagement. When asked to indicate how different groups are represented in the RMP, respondents could specify that a given group was represented in RMP leadership, planning strategies, and/or implementing action steps. While more than three-quarters of work group survey respondents saw clear roles for schools and districts, funders, and CBOs, many work group members did not know how other key stakeholder groups are represented in the work (Figure 2).

**Figure 2. “I don’t know how these groups are represented in the Road Map Project.”**



Source: Organizational Partner Survey (n=93)

Stakeholders noted that RMP leadership does not yet adequately represent the historically marginalized communities who live in South King County. A number of participants report that there is “skepticism” among local community members and grassroots leaders that the RMP is an “institutional” effort led by “White folks from Seattle.”

Some participants suggest that RMP has focused more on engaging the leaders of government and education institutions rather than more grassroots community leaders who have life experiences representative of the children and families of South King County. Participants note that the lack of deep engagement by these groups may pose challenges in terms of the ability of

Road Map to fully understand local conditions and develop innovative solutions that enhance outcomes for young people in the community.

*I think we need to spend some time thinking through how are we really getting into the community and really understanding the conditions for change in a more real way because I think we're going to miss out on a lot if we don't do that ... I'm hoping that parent engagement conversation will kind of help pieces start moving in that direction, so we're not just sitting doing our stuff over here totally divorced from that wagon wheel. It's a two-way conversation. (K-12 stakeholder)*

*I think this whole thing is about racial justice ... while the Road Map has done a terrific and tremendous job of trying to incorporate diverse voices, I think that there are still going to be people outside of that, and they should be because you cannot co-opt an entire group into one goal and not have people on the outside who can also contribute to that goal as their own ways of doing things ... you don't necessarily have to bring all those groups in. You just support them where they are to do what they do. The trick is making sure they are supported and lifted up as well without having to be co-opted into the same thing. (Advocacy stakeholder)*

Stakeholders identified concerns related to awareness and support for RMP on the ground within the K-12 system. First, they felt RMP is not yet connecting with school-level staff beyond the College Bound Scholarship. Stakeholders in particular expressed concern that the professionals who work most directly with young people and their families are not engaged in the planning of the types of practice changes that are being advanced through the RMP. A second concern was that RMP may drain resources away from other projects—both at the district and school levels—by making “their emergency everyone else’s emergency.” Finally, some K-12 stakeholders expressed frustration that RMP did not acknowledge the relevant work that was already taking place within their systems.

*I think for a lot of our staff, they don't see how it's relevant to their work because they don't have a direct tie to it. (K-12 stakeholder)*

*I just have a feeling from going to a couple staff meetings in our own district—I have concerns about our staff really understanding what it's all about and worried that they're seeing this as, when you hear the word initiative, they see that as more work; you're now asking me to do one more thing, and I don't feel like I have the supports to be able to do it. (K-12 stakeholder)*

*I am not sure we have yet done enough constituent-level work around teachers, parents, CBOs. It is unclear to me what level of awareness there is at that level and what opportunities are there for participation from those constituencies. (Funder stakeholder)*

Across sectors, participants reported that early learning, postsecondary, and CBO stakeholders feel less connected with the RMP. While they were supportive of RMP goals, they had concerns about the proposed strategies for getting there. Postsecondary and early learning stakeholders felt misunderstood and perceived that their projects were a lower priority for the RMP. CBOs (and some local government agency representatives) feel that the RMP strategies are more focused on school-day learning than addressing the whole child and families. Like some K–12 participants, CBOs expressed concern that RMP strategies may inadvertently direct resources away from other important opportunities and supports for youth (e.g., after-school programs).

*[There is] no way to sugar coat this: it feels like the agenda is about the project. When we're brought in, the conversation is about the Road Map Project. Not support for us ... We're doing things for it; it's not doing things for us. (Postsecondary stakeholder)*

*I think the support that is needed is about creating a place for early learning to be an equal partner, thinking more purposefully about the structure, the organizational development. How they are ensuring voice of all the parties, and in my case early learning, to be able to influence what happens. How can you not be in a position where you get told, ok you are going to do this with the leftovers, which is the way that it is felt. (Early learning stakeholder)*

A few participants also suggest that the project is not visible enough among the general public. A few participants proposed that there is a need to make RMP communications and events more accessible to a wider audience, including “the average Joe” in the community.

## **Recommendations**

RMP might consider how *the project might more clearly demonstrate its commitment to equity* and to bolstering the existing community and institutional assets across the region. There is an opportunity here to increase understanding around how the RMP relates to existing South King County organizations and institutions and communities. There is not a clear common narrative, at this point, beyond agreement that RMP is now an influential player in the region. A key part of this strategy may be to increase the capacity of grassroots stakeholders and professionals who work directly with youth and families to engage in the leadership of the RMP.

Future work could also *highlight the intersections of the diverse areas of work so that stakeholders from multiple sectors can more clearly see their role in the broader initiative*. Deeper exploration of whether the initiative intends to focus more heavily on K–12 systems rather than other sectors and the implications of these choices for stakeholder engagement and RMP goals may also be warranted.

## Strengthening the Foundation: Aligned Funding

Stakeholders reported that RMP goals and activities are supported through increasingly aligned funds from public and private organizations and through the Race to the Top (RTT) grant. Some participants are concerned; however, that non-RMP activities will lose funding opportunities.

### Funders are aligning their funding decisions to Road Map indicators

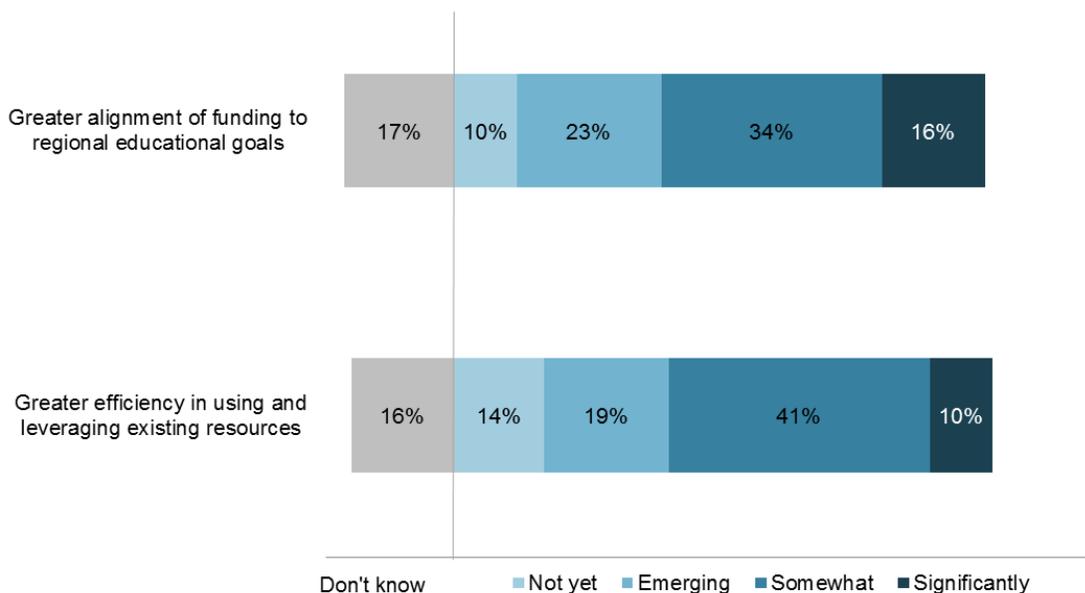
A number of private and public funders (e.g., College Spark, City of Seattle) reported changing specific funding criteria to align better with RMP indicators.

*Now you see a lot of organizations asking us for funding, often the outcomes they talk about measuring are those common indicators. They don't necessarily say that they are Road Map Project indicators; that's been great. I have started asking for alignment with the Road Map Project more particularly in early learning. How are you aligned to this effort and tracking these outcomes? (Funder stakeholder)*

In the survey, half of organizational partners said that alignment of funding and efficiency of using and leveraging existing resources have improved at least somewhat since 2010 (Figure 3).

**Figure 3.**

*To what degree have the following changes occurred in the region since 2010?*



Source: Organizational Partner Survey (n=93)

Stakeholders frequently mentioned that they appreciate direct funding. A few respondents said that they had a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) to do a piece of the work associated with RMP. Another organization secured funding because of its alignment with and support from the RMP. Others said that the Community Center for Education Results (CCER) gave them small grants; one district explained how much they appreciated this help:

*“That’s been very nice ... they’re very sensitive to how much work districts already have; when they ask for more, they know it’s not easy.” (K–12 stakeholder)*

### **The RTT grant provides funding to implement research-based practices across the region**

Although it is early in implementation, the RTT provides funding to actualize many of the RMP action plans. Stakeholders frequently said that they would not have successfully applied for or won the grant without the RMP-driven collaboration. To them, this demonstrated the value of a coordinated regional approach.

*I think that what the Road Map Project allows is the consolidation of resources to prime the pump. For example, by us working together, we’re able to do a Race to the Top thing. That would never have been possible without the Road Map Project. You get lucky, but you’re only lucky if you have great preparation. (K–12 stakeholder)*

### **Some CBOs are concerned that the RMP has diverted funding from direct services**

Some believe that these changes in funding priorities have prompted CBOs to alter their focus to receive funds. Some stakeholders believe there is a lack of resources for other local priorities and direct services that are not directly tied to the RMP goal.

*Funders have really been pushing and Road Map has done a really good job of making sure everyone knows about Road Map or at least the people out there, the funders for sure. All the [funders] know about it. We have been getting lots of pressure from [funders] to align with the Road Map Project. It’s actually kind of very frustrating. Funders are like, you should talk to the Road Map Project or now they actually supplant what they were giving into direct service and moving that to the Road Map Project or other direct impact type stuff, and I don’t think that is necessarily a good thing. (CBO stakeholder)*

### **Recommendations**

*If the RMP acted as a bridge with funders, it could benefit the project in the long run by building “strong, authentic involvement” from grassroots organizations. K–12, CBO, and advocacy*

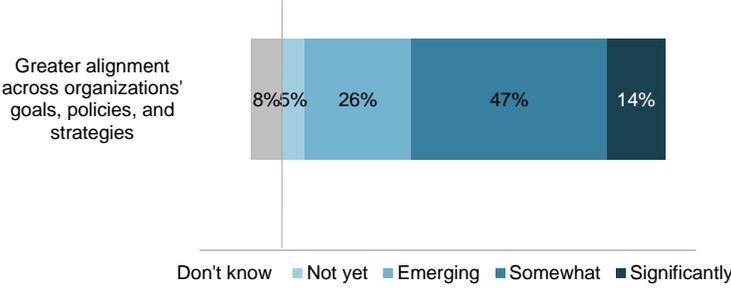
representatives stressed the importance of securing funding for staff to do RMP-related work, both for coordination and communication as well as for actual implementation of work group action plans. A CBO stakeholder noted that capacity building is more than a “small grant of \$5,000 so [we] can build out capacity a little;” it means increasing the ongoing, long-term investments in local projects. Facilitating these relationships and encouraging longer-term investments can help to build mutual trust between the community, funder, and organization.

*You know, it's all about the work and having enough people to get it all done ... we almost need a person or two to just work to provide some leadership and coordination with the Road Map Project ... That's the challenge, having the human capital to be able to sustain the multiple and very intense aggressive initiatives. (K-12 stakeholder)*

# Implementing the Plan: Aligned Organizational Actions

In spring 2013 surveys, work group members reported that there had been shifts to greater alignment across organizations’ goals, policies, and strategies (see figure at right). Those that emerged during interviews and observations are described below.

To what degree has the following occurred in the region since 2010?



## Organizations and institutions are individually taking action to align with RMP goals, indicators, and strategies

One way that stakeholders demonstrate commitment is through active engagement in RMP activities. Many interviewees were active participants in or leaders of RMP work groups. Several noted that their organization wrote RMP participation into their job description and budget. In another example of institutional commitment, many organizations invested staff time and resources in the College Bound Scholarship sign-up campaign, the Parent Forum, and the Let’s Read summer reading campaign.

Participation in RMP is also starting to translate into changes in the behavior of stakeholder organizations. Individual funders are supporting projects related to RMP goals (e.g., Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation funds for parent engagement). Both CBOs and districts are taking steps to align their goals and strategies around RMP indicators. For example, districts are demonstrating “more intentionality” around early learning and parent engagement. Auburn hired its first family engagement coordinator, Federal Way held a Family and Community Partnership Summit, and Kent hosted its Parent Academy for Student Achievement in nine languages.

Interviewees from across sectors said that RMP offers a useful “framework” for organizing their work in the region and a “reference” for tracking their progress.

*We have taken the idea of Road Map as part of our culture ... it makes all kinds of sense to have alignment with that work. (K-12 stakeholder)*

*We just reorganized our whole structure to align with Road Map ... It became immediately clear that the strength of partnerships — there has been so much work that has been done that is work we don’t have to do. We don’t need to pick which priorities, [they have in place] the relationships to access data. It was basically a decision of highest*

*and best use. We are going to align with the work that is already happening, we are going to partner with the people who are doing work around the same priority, and we are going to help them move the dial in the context of partnerships. (CBO stakeholder)*

### **There is less confidence around institutional commitment to engage in sustained collective action over time**

There was a high degree of concern across the sample about whether and how institutions will maintain “momentum” as they start to move from a shared vision to sustained collective action and systems change. Many participants expressed concern around institutional commitment to implementation. While a couple of participants observed that some institutions were more active in RMP than others (e.g., districts vs. cities) most of this concern was oriented toward sustaining the commitment of currently engaged partners over time.

First, there are concerns about whether partners will make the deep investments necessary to create change systems “at scale.” Noting that mechanisms for accountability are not clear, a number of participants questioned whether there was enough commitment to sustain engagement and enact change. They wondered whether key stakeholders — particularly school districts — would actually have the will and capacity to carry out the recommended changes in their structures, culture, and practices. There were also concerns about whether institutional support for data alignment and sharing may diminish if results indicate declines.

*The will and strategic piece is absolutely necessary, but there isn't a huge amount of attention and resolve put on where the work actually needs to be done: in schools with kids, with families. (K–12 stakeholder)*

*I think if we're going to actually sustain change that lives beyond 2020, we have to do our work differently in terms of actually talking about the institutional barriers and how we as a group need to do our work differently so we don't contribute to those. (K–12 stakeholder)*

Second, stakeholders are concerned that turnover issues may limit the sustainability of existing institutional commitments. There were concerns about two types of turnover. First, stakeholders are worried about the high degree of turnover in district leadership. Multiple stakeholders cited frequent superintendent change as a key barrier to sustaining district commitment to carry out the work sparked by RMP. Second, a few said that the project is too heavily reliant on CCER staff, with work group leaders and members doing minimal work between meetings. A related concern is whether the RMP region could sustain the engagement of key local leaders without CCER's strong leadership.

*To me, the hardest thing is how does CCER sustain the momentum? ... There is an ongoing problem in education sector of a constant churn of leadership in districts. That's concerning. Even in time that Road Map has been in existence, there have been at least*

*three superintendent changes and a countless number of upper level management changes. That's a real concern, in terms of ongoing success. (Funder stakeholder)*

*The only problem with that is that when you have a personality driven initiative style, if something would happen to Mary Jean Ryan, god forbid, what failsafe processes can we come up with so that some of this work or these practices, these operational pieces become sustainable through embedding into policy? (K-12 stakeholder)*

## **Recommendations**

*Future work might focus on targeted capacity building for grassroots organizations and other RMP partners. Several interviewees (mostly CBOs and funders and one government/public representative) described "a real need" for capacity building within organizations that are "on the ground" at the grassroots level. These organizations "lack bandwidth" but are "community touchstones." They often do not have access to capacity building and professional development. The RMP can help develop capacity in order to implement research-based strategies and reach the RMP goals. Concern about capacity was also true for smaller school districts, who said "we just don't have staff to do this." They added that technical assistance, particularly in grant writing, would be helpful.*

*For nonprofits, many could increase their own professional development capacity by being able to participate [in the Road Map Project]. Use Road Map Project as springboard to help nonprofits with the training they need to reach the goals and implement the strategies. They don't otherwise have money or resources to do that. What do we need to learn, and know how to do, to reach the goals? What things can CBOs do to get you to the goal? What specific strategies can be done in after school programs that are research based and effective? (Government/public stakeholder)*

*There is a capacity building element at the community level that we haven't been able to wrap our heads around well. We are asking communities to get more involved in education, civic engagement, parent engagement ... Communities are already stretched thin; it is unfair to raise expectations for involvement while not seeding some capacity building. (CBO stakeholder)*

# Implementing the Plan: Systems Building Strategies and Actions

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Stakeholders appreciate the professional connections and access provided by participation in the RMP. Participants report that the regular RMP meetings encourage professionals to develop new relationships and shared understandings with colleagues from other sectors. This included developing relationships with key individuals and organizations in the region, as well as access to on the ground partners. Stakeholders explained that the RMP “has opened doors for us” and “helped support our community engagement.”

*Locally, Road Map has brought people to the table. That might sound easy, but in a region with such fractured governance and diffuse decision making, just getting them around the table is a huge achievement and can result in some low hanging fruit being picked off. (CBO stakeholder)*

## Stakeholders see increased collaboration within and across sectors

Almost half of stakeholders described an increase in within-sector and cross-sector collaboration as a key regional change that they had seen since the inception of the RMP. This was particularly visible across districts and community colleges. Thanks to the RMP meetings bringing these groups together, stakeholders said there were now “definite connections” between the systems, “an intentional focus,” and “a willingness to be creative” about how to work together.

*The main thing [the Road Map Project] has done is to open up communication between the K–12 superintendents and community college presidents. There used to be informal conversations, helping us understand each other’s challenges. We know more about each other’s systems now. (Postsecondary stakeholder)*

Stakeholders specifically described increased connections between early learning and K–12, K–12 and CBOs, and between government and all other types of organizations. Participants said that the RMP is “inclusive” of sectors and stakeholder groups that are not traditionally represented in education policy conversations. Sectors such as higher education, youth development, and early learning report that the RMP is a unique opportunity for them to interact with representatives from the K–12 system and to come together around common goals. The creation of work groups and indicators around each of these issues communicates that these sectors are an important part of the continuum of opportunity and support for South King County youth.

*I think that it’s helped change who’s at the table from an institutional perspective so that people are getting used to being at tables with other types of organizations that they*

*weren't used to being at the table with before. I think I'm seeing that in more places and outside the Road Map Project work specifically. I think that's a result of helping people understand what community impact means. (K-12 stakeholder)*

*I've also seen a political alignment where there has not been political alignment ... that schools and CBOs are sort of hanging on the same thing. There is a shared language piece that is a huge asset. When I go to a meeting, we are all speaking the same language now, and that's been a dramatic, dramatic change. (CBO stakeholder)*

There also has been an increase of collaboration within sectors. Many said this was true of the seven districts; that these districts are now “talking to each other,” which had “never happened before CCER.” They described how this led to an understanding that “your kids are my kids” due to mobility across the region and a new shared feeling of responsibility for their students.

*Last week alone I was in three meetings at the ESD with the other Road Map districts. Two years ago, no, I would have never been in meetings like that. (K-12 stakeholder)*

Finally, funders also said that the RMP provided a valuable mechanism for them to come together around the same table. Even though “we talk a lot anyway” they said “now we have a focused conversation about this area” and “we are all being more thoughtful about how our individual grants can add to the overall strategy.”

### **Stakeholders provided tangible examples of cross-sector, regional collaboration**

Interviewees reported a wide range of ways in which RMP partners are collaborating within and across sectors. Examples include the College Bound Scholarship sign-up campaign, college and career readiness efforts, the Let's Read! campaign, and expanded funding and programs to support ELL students.

#### **College Bound Scholarship sign-up campaign**

The most visible initiative to date has been the College Bound Scholarship sign-up campaign. The RMP campaign, particularly making use of data and leveraging relationships between K-12 and community partners, was critical for the dramatic increase in sign-ups. This involvement has a tangible impact and is visible to multiple stakeholders across the region, which in turn raises awareness of RMP. The success in increasing College Bound Scholarship sign-ups also demonstrated a broad interest in the program which helped prevent proposed cuts to the program by the legislature.

*We were slow and struggled to get the College Bound going for us. We had organization freeze. We had parent fear. We had all kinds of rules and regulations that made sense ten years ago that didn't make sense anymore. I'm pleased that we went from 40 percent*

*signed up to 90 percent signed up this year. I think that's an achievement. The Road Map Project was significant in making that happen. (K-12 stakeholder)*

*I think it was a part of seeing that push, accountability, sharing the data, the whole process that made you think that with other similar goals, that same thing could happen. (Government/public stakeholder)*

### **College and career readiness work**

Other examples of collaboration focus on college and career readiness. One example is the work on increasing Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate course taking among underrepresented students. Five of the seven school districts have partnered with Equal Opportunity Schools. As one key K-12 stakeholder put it “this opportunity wouldn’t have been available if RMP hadn’t done the referral.” Another example is the iGrad dropout recovery program that Kent School District and Green River Community College established. Through this program, students are also able to take classes at Green River for free. There is a second partnership with Renton Technical College that created a medical pathway for high school students in the district, enabling them to graduate with a medical certificate in addition to their diploma. “Through that infrastructure of relationships [created through RMP], we are branching out.”

### **Let’s Read! campaign**

Similarly, RMP’s involvement in the Let’s Read! campaign helped expand the reach of this previously existing program. RMP provided access to new partnerships for the King County Library System. It also raised awareness in the region about the importance of summer reading (“we’re all pushing summer reading,” “there is more conversation about what the need is”).

*Let’s Read ... was a good example of how a partnership could do things. We know how many kids and families we reached that we hadn’t before. We could do that—we had capacity—but didn’t have entrée to different programs and that was a good partnership [with the Road Map Project]. (Early learning stakeholder)*

### **Expanded funding and programs to support ELL students**

The ELL work group also demonstrates the power of collaborations across K-12 districts and with community partners. The ELL work group successfully advocated for increased funding from the state legislature for the State Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program (TBIP). Starting with the 2013-2014 school year, this funding enables districts to provide academic supports for recently exited TBIP students to help them reach grade-level performance in academic subjects. The ELL work group also expanded the World Language Credit program from a pilot in two districts to all seven districts. Using Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) funds to purchase language assessments, the program enables students, many of whom are ELLs, to obtain up to four high school credits for proficiency in languages beyond those

taught in their districts (e.g., their home languages). This change in practice means that students have the opportunity to earn the necessary credits for graduation and college eligibility.

### **Stakeholders are doing preliminary work to create a birth to third grade network**

The Birth to Third Grade work group has brought representatives from birth to age 3, pre-K, and K–3 together around the same table. Members of the work group said that a good variety of stakeholders have engaged in the work. They described their conversations as effective and collaborative. They said they “spent time processing” and had “aha’s along the way.” Now that these cross-sector conversations are underway, many said they were ready for “active work” and “not just sitting in a room together.”

*If we do all this great work pre-K to 3<sup>rd</sup>, it’s a missed opportunity to not build strong systems when you think about Birth–3 years old. (Early learning stakeholder)*

*We are beginning to see more conversation between the early learning provider community and the K–12 system. That’s just beginning and not happening everywhere by any means. (Early learning stakeholder)*

A tangible outcome from the work of the Birth to Third Grade work group is increased attention to alignment between pre-K and K–3. Those at the district level note, “Our focus on early childhood has become more pronounced.” Districts are adopting successful practices from each other, such as sponsoring days for early learning providers to convene with K–3. Inspired by RMP districts that already have preschool programs, other RMP districts are doing the same.

*We have struggled with the P–3 pieces, we have looked to Kent and Auburn and Highline for guidance. That really right there summarizes the strength of the Road Map Project is that we all have different things that we are good at, we can all take turns leading and drafting off someone else. (K–12 stakeholder)*

### **RMP is also doing foundational work to engage parents**

Stakeholders suggested that the RMP is increasing awareness of the importance of engaging parents in education, prompting K–12 systems to develop new indicators and make new investments in parent engagement.

*... holding the space for parent voice in a lot of the cross systems kind of work—I think Road Map is really great at that and could be even better. (CBO stakeholder)*

*Parents need to be primary partners ... we need to learn from them as much as we want them to learn from us. (CBO stakeholder)*

There is also some perception of increased access for parents due to RMP work group activities and public events. Several participants cited the Parent Forum as an example of how RMP is providing a new venue for engaging parents in policy conversations.

*I also am really proud of our Parent Engagement work, even though it is still unformed. Part of the reason is that we are at the cutting edge of research in the field. It feels great to do something that's a stumbling block everywhere and where we might be able to make progress. (CBO stakeholder)*

*[What has already changed is] the access and being able to lift up immigrant kids and their parents by virtue of convening the ELL work group ... [it makes] them feel that they have a stake in this and that they have a voice at the table. (Advocacy stakeholder)*

However, there are still challenges in authentically engaging and providing leadership opportunities for parents and youth. Engaging families from historically marginalized communities may require RMP to take a different approach that emphasizes partnership and relationship building. It will be important for the RMP to continue to build on the work of the Parent Forum and provide entry paths into the work to “do with” rather than “do for” the parents and youth that the project aims to serve.

*The Parent Forum was great. I think parent engagement, though, can't just be one-off events. It needs to be built in to a lot of the work we do ... Because there isn't much evidence, we tend to do a lot of feel good stuff. ... I think we really need to get underneath this issue in a much more disciplined way. (Government stakeholder)*

Some participants spoke of a difference between “outreach” and “partnership,” suggesting that while RMP is making efforts to “invite” families into the conversation, there is a need for greater investment in building the capacity of families to engage in an “ongoing” basis as true partners. Several participants suggested that closer partnership with community-based organizations that already have relationships with families should be an essential part of this work.

*Another thing is the parent summit they had. I think 1,000 people attended, which I think was a great success for them on the surface, but I'm very leery of this overall because it's not really an authentic engagement of communities. A lot of parents attend these summits, and that's not really how they work. They like to focus on their own individual neighborhood and school and spiral outward, than have a big summit and expect anything to really happen from it. The relationship building needs to take place the entire year, and it takes forever to do and it takes a lot of talking to people one on one being where they are. (CBO stakeholder)*

## Recommendations

Systems change will look different for different issues. For example, systems change in the Birth to Third Grade space is about *creating* a system that brings together birth to age 3, pre-K, and K–12 organizations and institutions. For existing systems like K–12; however, systems changes may involve *strengthening* established networks, *innovating* within the system, or *creating linkages* to other systems or sectors.

Systems change also takes time and is the outcome of a larger process. Short-term wins that involve lots of cross-sector and cross-organizational collaboration (e.g., the Lets Read! campaign) may serve as a launching point for more sustainable systems change.

*It's also important to be explicit in action plans about the specific system changes the RMP hopes to set in motion and how these relate to the overall RMP goal. Is the expectation a change in culture like getting people to collaborate around a common goal or to assume a mindset of collaboration instead of competition? Or is the expectation a change in structure like reallocating resources or enacting new policies? Clearly define these anticipated system changes and how these system changes go beyond smaller, short-term wins in their scope and sustainability.*

## II. Backbone Support

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Evaluation findings suggest that CCER fulfills each of the convener roles characteristic of a collective impact backbone organization: (1) guiding vision and strategy, (2) supporting aligned activities, (3) establishing shared measurement practices, (4) building public will, (5) advancing policy, and (6) mobilizing funding.<sup>3</sup>

*[We] provide the person-power and logistic and strategic thinking to be the conductor to the larger orchestra of people who are doing work in the region. (CCER staff)*

*They are a facilitator; they brought us to the table. (Government stakeholder)*

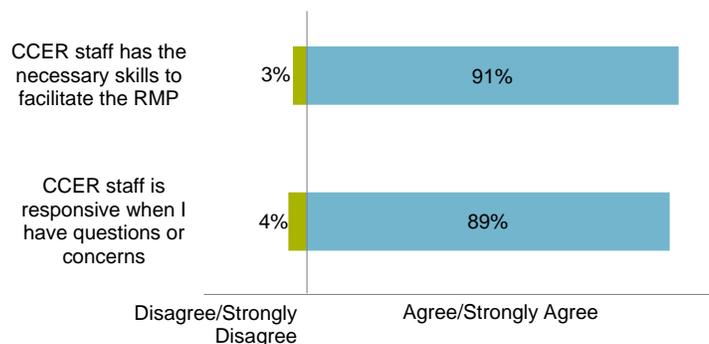
As such, CCER staff viewed themselves as driven by the stakeholders; specifically by the work groups and action plans developed by the work groups.

*CCER work should be dictated by the work groups. We are in responsive mode. If the right people are on the work groups or action teams, they should drive it and we should facilitate it. (CCER staff)*

### Stakeholders displayed a deep appreciation for the CCER staff team

Echoing spring 2013 survey findings (see figure at right), many interviewees conveyed a deep appreciation for CCER. These stakeholders said that CCER staff members were “responsive,” “available,” “open and willing,” and “smart.” They described them as “partners” with whom they had a “collaborative relationship.”

Stakeholders also viewed CCER staff members as connectors to other organizations, information, and resources.



*The CCER team, I love ‘em! They are great people with great intentions, they work hard, have great passion, provide good responses when asked. (K–12 stakeholder)*

*CCER have been there every step of the way. If we need data, they have it. If there is a missing puzzle piece, they find it. Every time something is missing, they are able to fill the hole. (Government stakeholder)*

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<sup>3</sup> Turner, S., Merchant, K., Kania, J., & Martin, E. (2012). *Understanding the value of backbone organizations in collective impact*. Retrieved from FSG website: <http://www.fsg.org/tabid/191/ArticleId/694/Default.aspx?srpush=true>

Stakeholders said staff members provided essential supports to the work groups, taking on much of the planning and work between meetings themselves. Co-chairs of work groups in particular said they felt “100 percent supported” by CCER staff. Further, they appreciated CCER staff members’ help thinking through new initiatives or data issues.

*I can’t say enough positive things about CCER, Mary Jean, and her staff ... [they help with] keeping an eye on the vision and ensuring that we are thinking strategically about who is involved, who is invited, whose voice to engage in different areas ... and doing whatever we can to find resources and support the work. (Early learning stakeholder)*

*When we are trying to figure something out about an initiative we might want to become involved in, they are great partners in coming together to discuss what they know about it. (Funder stakeholder)*

Some said they appreciated CCER staff members’ “community perspective.” For CBOs, having someone at CCER who could help them with questions or needs was a huge asset. Others appreciated that CCER staff “get it” about the importance of on-the-ground engagement.

Respondents also had respect and appreciation for CCER leadership. They described Mary Jean as a “strong leader” and valued the vision, energy, connections, and visibility she brings to the work.

*I think the only thing that could take us off our focus is a lack of leadership, and I don’t see that happening with Mary Jean, she’s providing that strong leadership. (K–12 stakeholder)*

*The strength of the Road Map Project is that we all have different things that we are good at ... Mary Jean is connected to everyone and relentless in her pursuit of equity. It’s a good formula. (K–12 stakeholder)*

### **Within CCER, decision making is described as a shared process**

Internal to CCER, all interviewed staff described a collaborative work environment where decision making can occur in several ways. When it comes to the work groups or projects that they lead, staff members felt they were personally accountable for “moving my part of the work forward.” They added that it “feels like I have a lot of autonomy,” “I have tons of influence [over this piece],” and “I probably make a lot of calls that I don’t even realize.”

*The same distributed leadership idea they are trying to create in the broader ecology is how she [Mary Jean Ryan] is trying to do things at CCER. Hire people you trust and let them make decisions and do stuff. (CCER staff)*

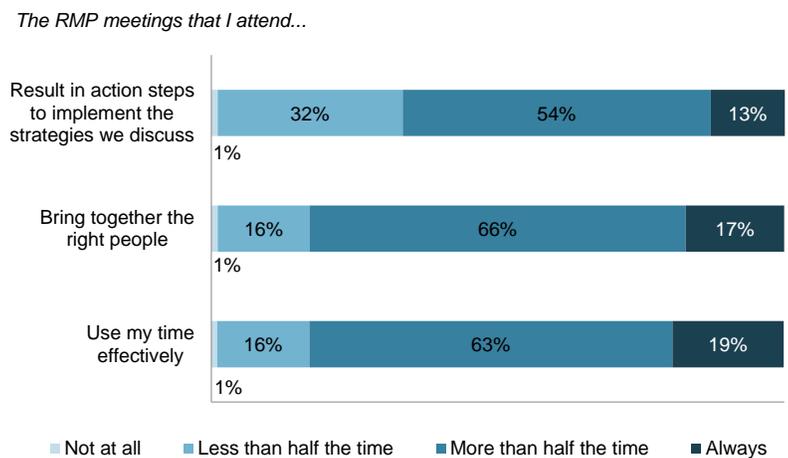
Decisions are made in consultation with other staff members and, sometimes, leadership. In CCER’s “flat structure” with a “high degree of trust,” “anyone can be a thought partner,” and colleagues regularly pull each other into discussions.

*There is not a strong hierarchy at all. Some things within CCER are team decisions, some things a couple of us might put our heads together and then go to Mary Jean and she provides useful insight. (CCER staff)*

Staff further said there might be “additional give and take” with CCER leadership and that Mary Jean would sometimes have “final say,” particularly if there were “political circumstances” and since “she has all the balls in the air in her head.” They added that they felt comfortable “pushing back” if they felt strongly the other way and that Mary Jean was “willing to listen.”

### Stakeholders appreciate work group discussions and CCER staff support

Feedback on spring surveys about RMP meetings was generally positive, but indicated that there was room for growth (see figure at right). Most work group members said that the meetings used their time effectively, brought together the right people, and resulted in action steps more than half the time—but not always. This is consistent with the interview responses; participants reported differences across work groups and strategies in the extent to which implementation projects are underway.



In interviews, stakeholders had many positive things to say about the work group(s) that they attended. First, they appreciated that the work group was interactive and that participants had a chance to contribute. This included discussion, solicitations for feedback, and effort made toward creating buy-in and consensus-building around action plans and consensus.

*There were a lot of interactions and feedback. Our feedback was solicited multiple times throughout the process, and you could see input was being taken into consideration and it shaped the work. (K-12 stakeholder)*

Several interviewees said that work groups have the right people at the table. This includes a “good variety” of stakeholders to whom there was a “thoughtful invitation” to participate and

an “openness” to new people being added. A few participants also said that the work groups bring people together across sectors and silos in an effective way.

Stakeholders said there is “great staff support” for the work groups, which includes CCER staff doing background work, conducting research, collecting data, drafting agendas, and generally front loading a lot of the work. It also included having materials posted on the RMP website. Particularly for chairs and co-chairs, these supports meant they did not have to create materials “from scratch” or “reinvent the wheel,” which helped them feel that it was a “productive use of time.” Participants said that meetings are “interesting,” “well organized,” a good use of time, and include agendas. Participants said that work groups are most effective when they have a concrete task, such as creating an action plan, vetting and implementing it, or making a decision about something. These tasks might include deliverables and/or be time-limited.

### **Work group communications and role clarity could be improved**

First, participants gave suggestions for improving work group management and communications. This includes having regular meeting times and agendas and establishing an annual plan “so we know if we are where we are supposed to be rather than making it up every meeting.” Suggestions for improving work group communications included making “e-mails easier to scan” and communicating more clearly about upcoming meetings. Some stakeholders said they struggled with figuring out which meetings to attend and would like more guidance in this area. One stakeholder suggested creating a schedule of meetings in advance, such as on a quarterly basis. Stakeholders also noted that going forward it will be important to communicate with the right people in participating organizations, making sure that those “on the ground” are kept abreast of what the work groups are doing, not just the organizations’ leadership.

*Many of the work groups have been super effective, bringing smart folks together who are experts on topics. But the challenge is keeping everyone up to date on it ... I think CCER is up to the challenge of trying to figure out what is the magical combination of providing information but not too much. (CBO stakeholder)*

*[Improving communication to those on the ground] could go a long way to get more buy-in for strategy rather than relying on the top down communication. Our superintendent has changed several times. If the expectation is that the superintendent is sharing this information internally, at any level, it's not happening. (K-12 stakeholder)*

Second, participants asked for clarity on the purpose of the work groups, their own roles as work group members, and how the work groups fit together. Members wonder what they are contributing, what their value added is, and how they could help the project more. Stakeholders also wanted to know more about how the different components of the RMP “fit together.” This includes identifying common threads and demonstrating more clearly how the many work groups and action plans coalesce into the big picture.

*ERN is helpful to keep people on track and informed. But what I wish we had at ERN was to do a quick zoom in on every part of the Project Hub diagram and do 3 bullets on what has happened since we last met. We hear about things, but what is lacking is that big visual of how it all fits together, especially for those who are 1 or 2 levels out. (CBO stakeholder)*

*I don't feel very in touch with what other work groups are doing, I think there could be some intentional mixing. You hear about it at ERN meetings, but it would be good to learn about more in an active work focused way: is there something where we should be working with the data group, for example? As opposed to once a quarter hearing about what they are doing? (Early learning stakeholder)*

Third, the distribution of the work across chairs, members, and/or CCER staff can be improved. Right now much of the work “falls on CCER staff.” Some question whether the co-chairs should pick up more of the work or if CCER staff should get more credit for doing the work. Others say that members can take on more tasks; it is “great” that CCER staff “can take on so much work,” but “we could get more done if they had tasks the rest of the members could do.” This suggests a need to delineate CCER’s role more clearly as a convener rather than an implementer.

## **Recommendations**

*Given the pressing nature of the project timeline, CCER might consider some of the suggestions from members for improving work group meeting productivity. The work groups are the vehicle for planning and, increasingly, implementing the RMP strategies, and there are many things about them that work well. However, our own observations of work groups echoed some of the concerns voiced by stakeholders about meeting management and effective use of time. Several meetings started late and/or ran out of time for all agenda items due to lack of time constraints delineated for each part of the agenda or lack of adherence to time constraints. Improving the clarity and targeting of communications to work group members and across the project may also help as the work groups ramp up implementation.*

*Increasing the representativeness of leadership may also help the RMP to gain additional traction across the region. A few stakeholders commented that CCER could use more diversity internally as an organization. There also is a push for more leadership opportunities in CCER and the RMP for people of color, as a step toward more authentic engagement of communities of color.*

## Appendix A: Data Sources and Methodology

In 2013, we administered two surveys and conducted interviews across the RMP to gather direct feedback from RMP stakeholders. We also attended RMP work group, Education Results Network, and Project Sponsor group meetings throughout the year to provide background and context for analyzing the survey and interview data. Table 1 summarizes the RMP meetings we observed in 2013.

*Table 1  
RMP Meetings Observed in 2013*

RMP Group	Meetings Observed
Birth to Third Grade	5
Data Advisors	2
Education Results Network	1
English Language Learner	1
High School to College Completion	3
Project Sponsors	2
Youth Development for Education Results	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

### Surveys

In March–April 2013, we administered online surveys to two groups: (1) “organizational partners,” which included individuals that are involved more directly in the RMP work and meetings; and (2) “broader stakeholders,” which included those who are less directly involved in the RMP work but have an interest in its outcomes. Ninety-three individuals involved in various RMP work and other groups answered the organizational partner survey (62 percent response rate). Three hundred and twenty-four (324) individuals who signed up for e-mail updates from CCER answered the broader stakeholder survey (27 percent response rate).

### Interviews

At the April 2013 quarterly meeting, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and the Community Center for Education Results (CCER) identified groups of RMP partners to guide interview sampling—advocacy, community based organizations (CBOs), early learning, funders, government/public agencies, K–12 institutions, postsecondary institutions, and backbone staff—as well as key stakeholders to interview from each group.

Between June and September 2013, Education Northwest conducted interviews with the identified stakeholders. Interviews were conducted in person or over the telephone; each took 30–60 minutes. Table 1 summarizes the groups represented in the final interview sample. In cases where an organization fell into multiple groups, we assigned the interviewee an organization type based on the individual’s primary role in the RMP.

*Table 2*  
*Interview Sample*

Type of Organization	Number of Interviewees
Advocacy	4
CBO	8
Early Learning	4
Funder	6
Government/Public	3
K-12	9
Postsecondary	5
CCER	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>

Data were analyzed using ATLAS.ti to code for themes within each topic area. We first created a priori codes based on a preliminary reading of interview notes and transcripts. During the coding process, we refined the initial codes and added others that emerged.

The lists of top highlights and challenges include an estimate of “weight,” to convey the number of interview comments behind each finding. These include counts of the

number of respondents who mentioned a particular theme, as well as the number of times it was mentioned.

Input from interviews with CCER staff is summarized in the Backbone Organization section and included in the ranked lists of highlights and concerns. The analysis in the remaining sections reflects only the interviews with external partners.

## Appendix B: Top Highlights

### What do stakeholders view as the key highlights/milestones of the RMP?

We asked the 45 interview participants to describe the key highlights/milestones of the RMP work so far. In ranked order, the top ten highlights discussed by participants are included in the table below. These responses reflect the views of the interview sample and may not be representative of the views of other RMP partners or regional stakeholders.

Highlight	Description	Number of Respondents	Number of Mentions
Race to the Top	Race to the Top is a huge win for the region and for the RMP. It is an indicator that the RMP is on the right track with regional collaboration. Race to the Top also provides funding to support activities from RMP action plans.	32	34
Collaboration	The RMP creates an opportunity for people to talk together across sectors, districts, and parts of the region. The RMP brings people to the table, fosters trust across stakeholders, and provides networking opportunities.	29	46
Collective Impact	The RMP is implementing an exemplar collective impact initiative. The RMP's success is gaining national attention and demonstrates the power of the collective impact model.	24	38
Public Will	The RMP has garnered public support and commitment across sectors.	24	32
Shared Goals and Indicators	The RMP established a clear, measurable goal and indicators. Stakeholders across the region bought into the goal and started to align their metrics with the RMP indicators.	22	34
College Bound Scholarship Campaign	The College Bound Scholarship Campaign has increased sign-ups across the region—a quick win for the RMP that is visible and tangible. The campaign also provided an opportunity for schools and districts to work together with outside organizations.	22	29
Partnerships	The RMP created an opportunity for different sectors, districts, organizations, and parts of the region to work together. Partnerships have evolved within the RMP or because of the RMP, leading to new activities and opportunities extending the reach of existing work.	20	27
Data Dissemination	The RMP encourages data use by putting data in people's hands in an understandable format. The Baseline Report and 2012 Results Report were milestones for disseminating data and beginning to track progress over time.	15	20
Strong Backbone Leadership	CCER staff members' passion, vision, and hard work have been key to the RMP's success to date.	12	15
Parent Forum	The Parent Forum in April 2013 had great participation and increased the visibility of the RMP.	9	9

## How do these highlights vary by sector?

The number of interviewees who reported each item appears in parentheses.

Representatives from **advocacy** organizations primarily mentioned collaboration (4) as a key milestone.

**CBO interviewees'** top highlights were collaboration (6) and collective impact (6). CBOs also commonly identified public will (5) and shared goal and indicators (5) as milestones.

**K–12 interviewees** primarily mentioned collaboration (6), Race to the Top (6), and the College Bound Scholarship campaign (6).

Among **early learning representatives**, the top highlights were Race to the Top (4) and public will (4).

**Funders and government/public representatives** most commonly identified Race to the Top (7) and public will (6) as milestones. They also identified collaboration (5), strong backbone leadership (5), the College Bound Scholarship campaign (5), and shared goal and indicators (5) as highlights.

**For postsecondary**, top highlights were collaboration (4), Race to the Top (4), and partnerships (4).

Among **CCER staff**, top milestones were Race to the Top (5), collaboration (4), and data dissemination (4).

## Appendix C: Top Concerns

### What are the top stakeholder concerns that might affect the RMP's success?

We asked the 45 interview participants to describe their key concerns for the RMP work. In ranked order, the top ten concerns discussed by participants are included in the table below. These responses reflect the views of the interview sample and may not be representative of the views of other RMP partners or regional stakeholders.

Concern	Description	Number of Respondents	Number of Mentions
<b>Race to the Top</b>	Participants said that the competitive nature of RTT goes against the collective impact model and might undermine the trust that has been established through the RMP; Race to the Top's district focus excludes sectors other than K–12; bureaucratic hoops and administrative work take time and staff; and that everyone wants some of the \$40M but "it's a thin layer of peanut butter."	15	19
<b>Sustainability</b>	Participants expressed several concerns related to sustainability: a need to ensure that RMP work becomes entrenched change rather than a series of discrete initiatives, questions about whether stakeholders can remain committed over the long term, and concerns about how staff turnover (in districts, RMP partners, or CCER) could affect RMP efforts.	13	16
<b>Community engagement</b>	There is not adequate and/or authentic involvement of youth, families, and grassroots organizations within the communities that the RMP is targeting.	10	19
<b>CBO engagement</b>	The RMP's K–12 focus keeps CBOs from being adequately and authentically engaged.	10	13
<b>Implementation</b>	There are concerns about how implementation will occur, who has the capacity to implement change, and who will do the work.	10	11
<b>Funding and staffing</b>	There are inadequate funds and staffing for stakeholder organizations, which affect their ability to do their own work as well as RMP-related work. There is pressure to align with the RMP to receive funds and some perceive that direct service funds are now going to the RMP.	9	13
<b>Workload</b>	There is a lot of work that needs to be carried through and implemented; how does the RMP ensure the work gets done? Who does the work: stakeholders or CCER?	8	11
<b>Institutional barriers</b>	Institutional barriers—such as unions, entrenched ways of working, policies—are an obstacle. Institutional changes take time.	8	8
<b>RMP as outsider</b>	The RMP is conceived of as an "outside" project run by the "same old" group of white professionals from Seattle.	7	9
<b>On the ground engagement</b>	There is not adequate and/or authentic engagement of those on the ground (e.g., providers, teachers) who work with the children and students that the RMP is targeting.	5	10

## How do these concerns vary by sector?

The number of interviewees who reported each concern appears in parentheses.

Representatives from **advocacy** organizations primarily voiced concerns about implementation (2), funding and staffing (2), and sustainability (2).

**CBO interviewees'** top concern was Race to the Top (5). CBOs were also concerned about implementation (3) and CBO engagement (3).

**K-12 interviewees** were primarily concerned about Race to the Top (6). These representatives also reported concerns about implementation (2), institutional barriers (2), and the view of the RMP as an "outside" project (2).

Among **early learning representatives**, the top concerns were Race to the Top (3), sector exclusion (2), community engagement (2), and parent and family engagement (2).

**Funders and government/public representatives** were foremost concerned with sustainability (5) and governance (3). Funders wonder how the governing structure of the RMP should balance oversight with something that is diffuse and community-based; the role of the Board; who is accountable; and who sets strategy.

**For postsecondary**, top concerns were sustainability (2) and institutional barriers (2).

Among **CCER staff**, the top concern was the workload distribution between CCER and RMP stakeholders (3). Next were communication (2), community engagement (2), CBO engagement (2), and parent/family engagement (2). Communication concerns included making data understandable and actionable; "taking data to the people" by "de-wonking" it; communicating with community members; getting word out about the RMP, and making best use of the RMP website and social media.