

Cradle to Career Update: February 2011

Dear Children and Youth Advocates,

The vision of success for all students from cradle to career has taken fire in Portland and Multnomah County. I'm writing today with an update on the Portland Schools Foundation's work building the civic infrastructure to focus and sustain this energy for the long haul.

The Cradle to Career (C2C) framework will engage all sectors of the community to tackle some of our most pressing challenges through coordinated action, advocacy, funding alignment, and data driven decision-making. The goals are clear and ambitions: that all students are prepared for school, supported inside and outside of school, succeed academically, enroll in postsecondary education/training, and graduate and enter a career.

I recently had the opportunity to travel to Washington D.C. with Portland Schools Foundation (PSF) and Portland State University (PSU) colleagues for a convening of the [National Cradle to Career Network](#). The inspiring gathering of cities from across the country left me with six words ringing in my ears: "We Are On the Right Track." Both locally and nationally, the new normal is all about doing more with less—and we can only succeed if we work together in a smarter and more coordinated way. Cradle to Career offers a road map for doing just that.

Since late November when PSF was formally endorsed as the backbone entity to move C2C forward in Portland and Multnomah County, we've made some great strides.

PSF convened a Task Force of community leaders to begin forming the Council that will guide this work. We are thrilled to announce that the Council will be led by Co-Chairs Gregg Kantor from NW Natural and Judy Pepler from Quest/2011 Broad Fellow. Our co-chairs along with PSF Board of Director's Officers will recruit a PSF Board-approved Council to be in place for the inaugural Council meeting on April 12th.

PSF has engaged local and national funders as part of a plan to assure the sustainability of the Cradle to Career framework; we have received initial support from the Living Cities Foundation, City of Portland, and Portland Children's Levy.

We have initiated a conversation among Multnomah County Superintendents about aligning the priority "milestones" of their respective districts with a unified Cradle to Career road map of student success indicators.

With leadership from Mayor Adams, PSF joined other partners to co-sponsor the second annual [Education Summit](#) focused on building communities that thrive to ensure success for all students, cradle to career.

A group of 20 partners from intermediary/convening organizations across the community gathered at PSF for a webinar on "[collective impact](#)" in order to begin building common language for the work ahead.

Over two years ago, the seeds for this work were planted by PSU, the Leaders Round Table, the Mayor and Chair's Education Cabinet, and other partners. In her column last Friday, *Oregonian* columnist, Anna Griffin, captured this progress and inspired us about the possibilities in [her](#)

[column](#). If you have not had the opportunity to read it, I hope that you will take the time to do so.

I am hopeful as we add people and systems to build this framework that we will all commit to being part of the same team, focusing on data to drive our decisions, and, ultimately, changing our behaviors as needed in order to move the needle for ALL kids. As we embark on this work, I am convinced that our own life experiences will have greater value than our current paid positions in providing insight to our efforts. I am certain that we can build a culture that will make this work.

Best,
Dan

P.S. – Don't forget the [Portland Roast Festival](#) coming up on March 3rd. We all need to take a break and laugh, especially at ourselves while supporting your C2C backbone organization, PSF.