

## **Cradle to Career Update: June 2011**

Dear Friends –

The momentum around the work of the Cradle to Career (C2C) partnership continues to grow. This month we launched the C2C Data Team, a working group reporting to the Steering Committee, which is focused on ensuring that our work creates measurable improvements for local students by keeping us grounded in the best data and research available. This dynamic team of cross-sector experts is co-led by the Portland Schools Foundation and Portland State University. The Data Team is currently leading the discussion related to improvements in the annual C2C Report to the Community and taking the lead on compiling actionable research to guide the selection of strategic priorities. For those less familiar with the C2C framework, strategic priorities are the large areas of focus such as early childhood, college readiness, or mentoring that are selected using criteria including: research, existing data, and community capacity and funding availability, positive impact on equity, and alignment with community values and aspirations. At its July 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, the C2C Council will name its initial set of strategic priorities and will begin in earnest to align community efforts and investments to build the C2C framework.

The Data Team roster is attached as part of a larger roster that includes members of the C2C Council, the C2C Steering Committee, and the Portland Schools Foundation Board of Directors—each of which serves a vital role in the success of C2C.

In Portland and Multnomah County we have a rich array of organizations and programs—both education and social service— whose dedicated staff are working tirelessly to meet the needs of our community's children and youth in and out of school. The convening of these organizations around the selected strategic priorities is where the rubber will truly meet the road in delivering an improved system, and as such, better outcomes for our kids. The partnerships formed around the strategic priorities are being called collaboratives and following the July 12<sup>th</sup> Council meeting we will host a series of workshops for potential partners to learn more about the collaboratives. We are thrilled to be getting the work of aligning the efforts of the community up and going.

Finally, this month we will also kick off the fourth summer of Ninth Grade Counts, a community-wide partnership to increase high school graduation rates by preparing targeted students for a successful transition into high school. More than 1,000 students transitioning between eighth and ninth grade will spend their summer earning high school credit and getting a much needed head start to their high school career. This partnership, which has demonstrated positive impacts on student achievement, is an example of how we envision the collaboratives—a group of dedicated organizations coming together, using data and continuous improvement processes to move the needle for our children and youth.

The recent progress made in bringing C2C to the community would not be possible without the support of visionary investors. Over the past several months, we have made wonderful progress bringing together a cross-sector group of initial pioneering investors who are helping to build the C2C framework. In just the past month, we have received grants from JPMorgan Chase (\$100,000), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (\$100,000), the Portland Children's Levy (\$100,000), and last week the City of Portland voted unanimously to invest \$235,000 in this work. These visionary organizations join Living Cities as initial pioneering investors who see the promise of our collective work to transform outcomes for children and youth.

Sincerely,

Dan

P.S. If you did not see the recent [sidebar article on Cradle to Career in the Portland Tribune](#), I encourage you to take a look. It offers a clear synopsis of our shared work and our vision for the future.