Partnership Name: Shaping Student-Centered Pathways

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Fiscal Agent: Community Center for Education Results

1. Why are the partner organizations that are or will be included in this work the ones that came together to address educational attainment through place-based work in your region?

The College and Career Leadership Institute is a partnership among fifteen high school partners across six school districts within the Road Map Project region and the Community Center for Education Results. The CCLI community has worked collectively to "support the collective Road Map Project goal of increasing equitable policies and practices in our education systems and dramatically improving outcomes for children and youth, from cradle through college and career". The aim of CCLI is to support schools to improve college and career support and significantly increase the number of low-income students and students of color that enroll in an apprenticeship, technical, 2-year, or 4-year college. CCLI has filled a critical gap within the region by providing an opportunity for school teams to review school data, identify school needs, and address these needs by building systems, adopting quality practices, and testing solutions. Through the College and Career Leadership Institute (CCLI), school-based teams have had the opportunity a) to network and learn best practices from their peer schools, b) to engage in planning time and c) to focus on the integration of high-quality college and career content and support. As a result, school teams have increased staff knowledge of college and career topics, shifted adult beliefs about student postsecondary aspirations and expectations, and developed a strong data sharing culture. While CCLI has served this critical role for many years, there are several contextual factors that hinder implementation of CCLI at the school level. These include varying levels of commitment among school and district leaders, mindset misalignment and buy-in of staff members, lack of sufficient time to meet and follow-through on desired efforts. The partner organizations included in this work have come together to re-assess, identify and reimagine what it takes to address systemic barriers and to better prepare and support students' ability to pursue their post-secondary goals.

2023-2024 CCLI High School Partners

Auburn School District	Seattle Public Schools	Federal Way	Tukwila	Kent School District	Renton School
Auburn Senior High	Chief Sealth	Decatur	Foster	Kent Meridian	Hazen
Auburn Mountainview	Cleveland	Federal Way		Kentlake	Lindberg
Thomas Jefferson				Kentridge	Renton High
				Kentwood	

2. How is or will the partnership be structured?

Recognizing that major disruptions to the current structure of CCLI may lead to increasing fragmentation of the college and career support system, this partnership will adopt a similar structure. In doing so, this partnership will continue to focus on adult learning by offering monthly learning opportunities, bi-annual workshops, and opportunities for school-based teams to meet, reflect and strategize. Within this structure, school-based teams maintain a peer-to-peer support network, the opportunities to share best practices across sites. While the structure of this partnership will retain its form, the content and activities will be drastically different than previous iterations of CCLI. Two major differences include a more structured approach to the monthly team's meetings and intentionally designed curriculum that reflects a liberatory approach to data, research and school transformation. Another feature of this partnership structure that is important to note is that CCER will be conducting a multi-tiered exploratory research project that will utilize every other monthly meeting to concurrently collect data about school and district level contexts

such as, staff perceptions, current policies and practices that interfere with effective college and career, advising, planning and programming,

3. How have or will the partner organizations learn from each other, and the communities served, and how does or will the partnership incorporate this learning into ongoing work?

Cross-school and cross-district collaboration has been a primary focus of CCLI. Participation in CCLI grants members access to school-specific reports on postsecondary readiness outcomes, and student and staff survey results. Structured workshops and monthly team-lead meetings enable school teams to review and discuss these results in role-alike and cross-role settings where they can discuss challenges and share successful strategies.

Over the past several months, CCER has undergone major restructuring. Changes in our organizational structure have resulted in combining or merging our College and Career department with our Opportunity Youth department, that is housed under our new strategy, **Shaping Transformative Futures:** *Student-centered approaches to educational justice and post-secondary pathways* (abv. Transformative Futures). By combining these functions within our organization, we have been able to create greater alignment across our primary bodies of work. Our Transformative Futures workstream is intentionally designed with multiple tiers of engagement and intentional overlap and collaboration between tiers. Tier 1 represents our intensive practice partnerships, and Tier 2 focuses on network engagement across our high school and district partners (which is inclusive of this proposed body of work) and our reengagement partners. Our Tier 2 community will be set up as a community of practice through multiple routes of learning and engagement, such as topic-based workshops, Street Data discussion and highlight best practices within the learning community. Tier 2 will also serve as a community sounding board for our Tier 1 participants, who will be doing more intensive Street Data strategy planning and implementation. For instance, in our OY Street Data pilot, our Tier 1 participants have presented their plans for a student survey to our Tier 2 community. Tier 2 participants asked questions, offered feedback, and in doing so, also learned more about the Street Data possibilities. Because the Street Data framework follows a continuous cycle of uncovering findings and implementing small acts of transformational change, our tiered communities will bear witness to the testing and results of program change efforts, within their tier community and across tiers.

4. Who are the focal population(s) in your partnership's work, and what assets do learners and families in these populations bring to their educational journeys?

Among the nearly 23,000 students enrolled at high schools participating in CCLI, 76% of identify as Black, Indigenous or people of color (BIPOC), and 51% as first-generation. 56 percent are low-income, and 20 percent are English-language learners. BIPOC students from South King County stand upon a rich heritage and long legacy of local activism. In particular, the region's Black communities include not only African Americans, but also brothers and sisters from Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Ghana, Haiti, and Jamaica, plus a growing mixed-race community. Our Black communities continue to challenge the same institutional practices and barriers faced by the African American community generations before. BIPOC students are artists, creators, innovators and aspiring entrepreneurs.

BIPOC caregivers and families know the educational context and challenges that BIPOC students contend with. They also, are committed to ensuring that education systems "do right" by them. During a listening session, an African American from Seattle stated, "Our children need to be valued and we need to make sure — and ensure — that our children will be valued. And know that they have someone in the background rooting for them and standing up for them."

5. What is the geographic region where the focal population(s) that would be served by this investment live?

The Road Map Project comprises the region of South Seattle and South King County, Washington as defined by the boundaries of the following school districts: Auburn School District, Federal Way Public Schools, Highline Public Schools, Kent School District, Renton School District, (South) Seattle Public

Schools, and Tukwila School District. This region is home to 120,000 K-12 students with 76% identifying as BIPOC.

6. What are some of the systemic barriers that learners and families in your focal population(s) encounter?

Among the 19,730 students who responded to the 2022-23 CCLI Student Survey, 94% want to pursue a postsecondary pathway and 91% *expect* to pursue a postsecondary pathway. Yet only 50% of Road Map Project students who graduated high school in 2021 *directly* enrolled in a postsecondary institution. Looking at the graduating class of 2017 six years after graduation, 70% had enrolled in a postsecondary institution, and only 34% had completed a 2-or-4-year postsecondary degree (this rate was 39% prior to the onset of the COVID pandemic). Barriers across the high school-to-college continuum prevent students from reaching their aspirations. Among students of color who answered the survey, 44% said that it was most helpful to learn about college from school staff. A few of these survey respondents provided greater insight into how educators could improve college and career planning support: First, *"Relate what we are learning to college and not just the workplace. We talk about college and such, but I have no idea about FASFA."*– Black/African American, 11th grader. Second, "Talking *about it more to students especially when they're just freshmen because that's the age where we need it the most for the future years."* – Latinx, Female, 11th grader. Third, *"Explain everything about applying for colleges, scholarships, and financial aid. Also maybe provide a packet for parents."* – Asian, Male, 10th grader.

Among a 2019 survey of 3,770 students, nearly half of the students of color say that they primarily rely on school staff for understanding the college-going process (CCER, 2019: Let Us Succeed: Student College and Career Aspirations - Road Map Project) . Additionally, Black students from our region have been asking for a "strong advising system, with dedicated staff support and time for students to develop postsecondary plans," and to "provide students with the information and opportunities to explore their postsecondary options and navigate the many steps to enrolling, such as financial aid, applying, and successfully transitioning" (Start With Us: Black Youth in South King County & South Seattle - Road Map Project). The Start with Us report shares stories from African American male high school students who were asked to design their own dream school. For example; *"I like how [my ideal school] has Black teachers that understand where we're coming from and where we grew up. But at my real school, none of that really happens."* Another student described, *"The school I created makes me feel like I can pass high school and go to college and become successful in whatever I do. It's different from [my current school] because I don't think I can pass and need more work."*

The systemic barriers continue to constrain student-agency and success even after they have enrolled in a post-secondary institution. For example, among 225 Road Map Project region CTC students who were surveyed, 1 in 5 said they wish they had known more about the assessment and placement process *prior* to enrolling in college (Inequity by Design: How College Placement Policies Perpetuate Institutional Racism - Road Map Project).

7. What work do you propose undertaking during the granting period?

During this granting period, our proposed work includes the continuation of survey administration, data processing, sharing and reporting that has been a valuable element of CCLI, Tier 2: Network learning and engagement activities among our high school partners and finally a multi-tiered research project. Altogether, this initiative seeks to increase post-secondary enrollment through a coordinated effort to redress fragmented systems of support that exist across school-based and district level contexts. Each aspect of the proposed work is described in more detail below.

Continued survey administration, data processing, sharing and reporting includes ongoing efforts to understand Student and Educator Experience through (1) Administering the Student College and Career Climate Survey Administer Student College and Career Climate Survey with all participating high schools during November and December. Illuminate originally developed these student surveys to assess students' postsecondary aspirations they support they receive in reaching these goals. CCER and Illuminate continue to adapt and refine these surveys annually to ensure they are responsive to current

concerns, while remaining sufficiently consistent to track changes over time. We plan to connect Illuminate with each school's team-lead to and support the survey administration process at each individual school. Estimate 15,000 student response rate. (2) Administering Staff College and Career Climate Survey CCER and Illuminate have co-developed this staff survey to compliment student surveys that sheds light on topics such as school staff perceptions of student aspirations and how equipped staff feel in supporting students to achieve their aspirations (e.g. college and financial aid advising, etc.). We will work with Illuminate to administer Staff College and Career Climate Survey with all participating high schools, and work with each team lead to plan and lead the administration of the survey to school staff. (3) Processing Student and Staff Survey Data: Once schools have administered the surveys, our data and research team incorporate the data into Tableau dashboards and a set of graphs provided to schools and presented at the March workshop. (4) Data sharing related to postsecondary readiness, enrollment, and progression. This includes FAFSA Run Charts, Postsecondary enrollment, progression and completion dashboards, and college-ready course taking tools. To develop the FAFSA Run Charts CCER partners with participating high schools to collect and report on FAFSA submissions throughout the school year. This data collection and reporting process is conducted every two weeks, enabling school teams to review their ongoing run charts so they can monitor school-wide financial aid submission progress throughout the school year. To offer reports about Postsecondary enrollment, progress and completion, CCER provides schools with dashboards that allow them to see how many of their students directly (or indirectly) enroll into college after high school graduation, and where these students enroll. Further, they can illustrate how students who enroll in local community or technical colleges (CTC) progress in college within four years of enrolling into these CTCs. Finally, we hope to be able to provide reports on college-ready-course taking to high school partners. This grant could support our ability to test the utility of a suite of reports that show the proportion of students who are on track in their coursework to meet college requirements (e.g. CADRS, college-level math and English placement criteria). These reports could facilitate schools in their advising and scheduling practices. Additionally, this effort could have the added benefit of supporting course standardization, and potentially helping to inform the development of reports that could be implemented within the statewide High School and Beyond platform.

The second element of our proposed work, Tier 2: Network Engagement, includes facilitating monthly structured learning and engagements activities among our high school partners (former CCLI participants). Our Tier 2 participants will begin their work together through some grounding in the Street Data framework, including the core stances of Holism, Antiracism and Deep Listening. An example of this type of learning an engagement might encourage participants to identify some of their priorities for the year, by conducting an informal data landscape analysis, complemented by a discussion that centers what participants wish was represented in their data. These ground-setting conversations will support Tier 2's function as an effective learning community, a container for testing and observing program improvement, and a space for innovation.

The final element included in this proposed work is an appropriately scaled mix-methods research project that focuses more on understanding the local context and developing a new direction for the continuation of a more sustainable partnership. The aim of this research is to understand (within each district included in the partnership) the conditions, dynamics, boundaries relationships and roles (functional and perceived) across multiple perspectives within the college and career "system". CCER would employ various types of data collection methods at both the school and district levels, including stakeholder interviews/focus groups, surveys, observation, artifact reviews (such as organizational charts), listening sessions etc. The second aim is to uncover the underlying structures such as policies, practices, mindsets and power dynamics, that hinder schools and district's ability to create a cohesive and effective system of college and career supports for BIPOC students. By conducting a system-level analysis, we hope to better understand the complex nature of school & district relationships. Uncovering the building-level and district-level barriers to implementing effective and culturally responsive approaches to post-secondary planning will ultimately yield practical guidance and recommendations that prepares each school and district partner to implement a variety of change-strategies that redress systemic barriers.

8. How will this proposed work contribute to increasing educational attainment for the focal population(s) in your region?

The proposed work will provide an opportunity to address fragmented pathways to post-secondary success by highlighting major pinch points of the college readiness process will set the stage for educators to test strategies within those focus areas (course-taking, high school and beyond plan, etc), This work will also help establish a more sustainable infrastructure by providing insight and recommendations on which methods work to facilitate and ensure ongoing school ownership of practices that better support students to pursue their aspirations. Finally, training educators in deep listening and knowing how to gather street data may allow them to uncover previously misunderstood or unknown student barriers. Learning about street data framework will allow and prompt educators to make changes in real time vs. After a year of lag time when they see enrollment data