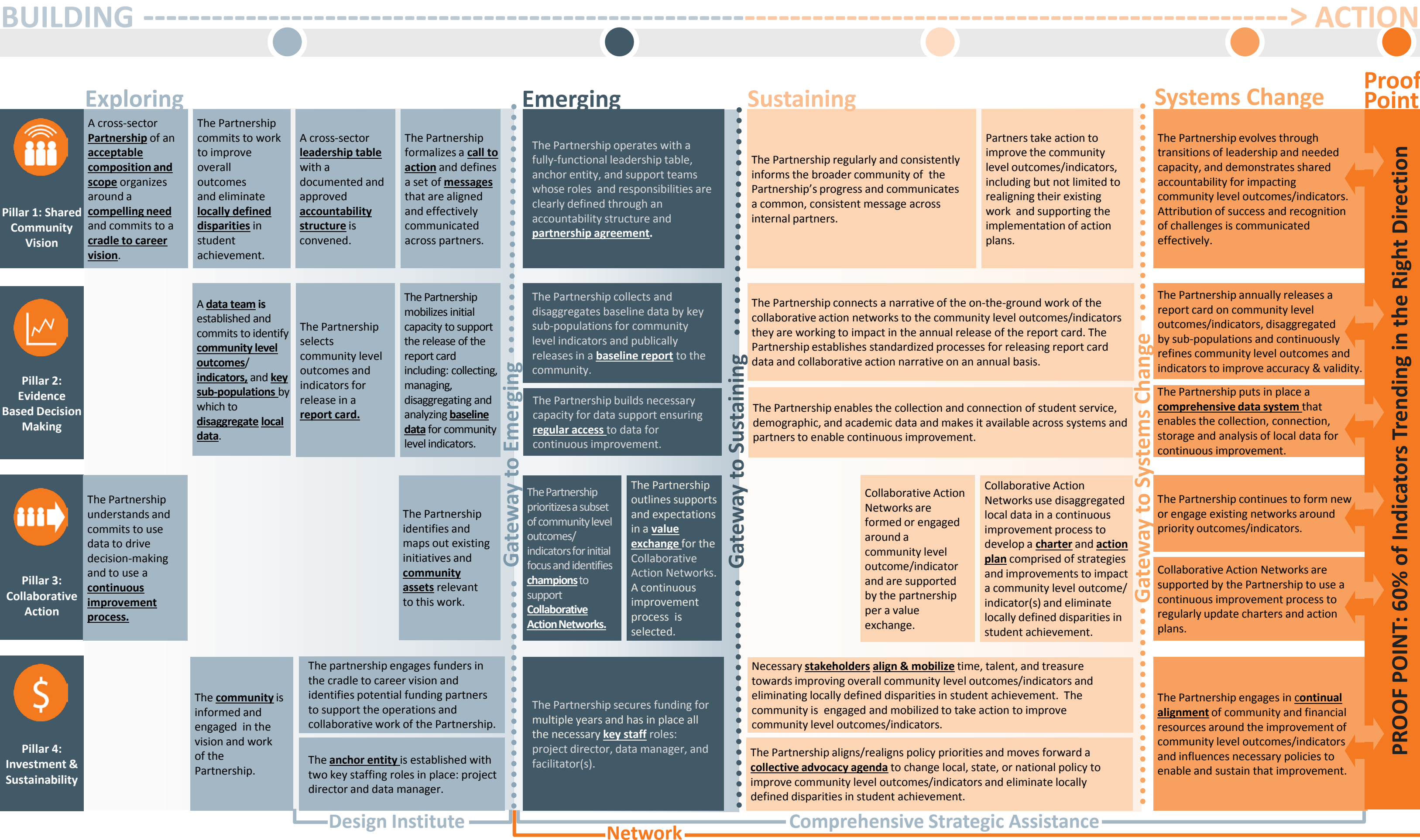


Strive Theory of Action: Creating Cradle to Career Proof Points



Definitions of Terms in the Strive Theory of Action

Exploring:

Shared Community Vision:

Partnership: A group of organizations, systems and stakeholders who come together to jointly move a cradle to career agenda in their community.

Acceptable composition and scope: At the initial stage of partnership development the partnership should be comprised of at least five cross sector **influencers** (one must be a district leader) from at least three different **sectors**. These cross-sector influencers must identify a **geographic scope** that is sufficient to impact population level outcomes and policy/funding decisions.

- Influencers: Individual who has power and authority to inhibit or enable funding, policy, organizational, or behavioral changes necessary to move work forward.
- Sectors: Parts or sub-divisions of a society or economy. Examples: education (including early childhood, k-12, and post-secondary), non-profit, philanthropic, business, civic, faith-based, and community
- Geographic Scope: Physical boundary in which the Partnership is focusing its efforts. Must be large enough to have population level impact, but manageable enough to produce tangible change.

Compelling Need: The community “case” for doing this work; should be driven by data and demonstrate a clear need for cross-sector action to improve education outcomes.

Cradle to Career Vision: A vision for improving education outcomes for students beginning at birth, continuing into and through secondary and into and through postsecondary schooling until they secure a meaningful career.

Locally-defined Disparities: Inequalities in student achievement defined by each Partnership using local data and context. Identified disparities could differ across partnerships. See Also: Key Sub-Populations

Leadership Table: Group of CEO-level members of the organizations participating in direction setting of the Partnership. See Also: Accountability Structure

Accountability Structure: The organizational framework that depicts the different tables/committees within the partnership and outlines the roles and responsibilities of each table.

Call to Action: Carefully crafted set of messages designed to encourage participation in Partnership and define what needed action looks like.

Messages: Formalized statements about the Partnership developed for a specific audience to effectively communicate a common understanding of the vision, purpose and work.

Evidence-Based Decision Making:

Data Team: A group of individuals with expertise in data analysis or ownership of data that come together to provide support for the data needs of the Partnership.

Community Level Outcomes: Academic points along the cradle to career education continuum that are proven to be key levers that need to be moved in order to achieve the cradle to career vision and goals. Non-academic community level outcomes may be selected in addition to academic community level outcomes. Community Level Outcomes are selected from across the cradle to career continuum and ensure accountability to the community. Example: Kindergarten Readiness

Indicators: The specific measures that are being used to track progress on moving the community level outcomes. Example: Students assessed as ready for Kindergarten upon entering school.

Key Sub-populations: Populations in which the Partnership determines a need for a more intentional focus in order to eliminate disparities in academic achievement. These sub-populations are determined using local context and data and could differ across partnerships.

Disaggregate: Data that has been separated, where possible, to identify the differing levels of academic performance of student sub-populations. In particular, this data is meant to identify populations with systematic and historic failures and to support the intentional work of the Partnership to eliminate these disparities.

Local Data: Different types of measures that help to understand local context and impact for the geographically defined scope of the Cradle to Career Partnership. Types of local data include:

- Outcome: Change in the desired end state (% of students graduating high school)
- Quality: Effectiveness in meeting the expectations of customers/ stakeholders. (e.g. % of satisfied parents)
- Inputs: The amount of resources needed to provide products or services (e.g. # of staff delivering a program)
- Outputs: The amount of products or services provided (e.g. # of students served)
- Efficiency: Productivity, cost savings, etc. (e.g. average cost per student)

Local data can be collected on the community level (e.g.: 3rd grade reading scores), the program level data (e.g.: # of students who attend a particular program, # of volunteers needed for an event, etc.) or when appropriate student level data (e.g.: student A scored a 28 on the ACT).

Report Card: A report to the community that highlights changes in community level outcomes and the sub-populations for which the outcomes are disaggregated and the contextual information around each data point including the strategies employed to improve that outcome. After the initial report, subsequent reports include year to year progress against time bound targets and baseline data.

Baseline Data: Data that is gathered at the beginning, as an initial report, that will be used later to provide a comparison for assessing improvement on community level outcomes.

Collaborative Action:

Continuous Improvement Process: The on-going effort to use local data to improve efficiencies and effectiveness of processes and action.

Community Assets: Resources that could contribute to improving the outcomes that the partnership is working to improve. Could be an organization, individual, service or program.

Investment & Sustainability:

Community: Individuals in the defined geographic scope who are directly affected by the quality of the education pipeline (e.g. students, parents, business and civic leaders), and therefore must be clearly understood, actively involved, and eventually satisfied by the impact of the Partnership.

Anchor entity: An organization or entity that commits to housing the partnership staff and ensuring its long term stability, specifically through committing resources and convening partners.

Emerging:

Shared Community Vision:

Partnership Agreement: Outlines operating principles among the cradle to career partners about how they will interact with each other, accomplish goals, and improve outcomes over time and defines the responsibilities of the anchor entity with core staff.

Evidence-Based Decision Making:

Baseline Report: Initial report to the community that provides recent data for each of the Partnership's community level outcomes and the key sub-populations for which the outcomes are disaggregated.

Regular Access: Evident through a process where access to data is not delaying the decision making or action-taking of parties relying on it to work effectively.

Collaborative Action:

Champions: Leadership Table members who have a special interest or expertise in one of the outcome areas and work to communicate and advocate for the work happening in that outcome area.

Collaborative Action Networks: Groups of appropriate cross-sector practitioners and individuals who organize around a community level outcome and use a continuous improvement process to develop an action plan with strategies to improve that outcome.

Value exchange: The value exchange can be defined as the "benefit" or "incentive" one group receives from another as a result of each group performing its specific role. In this case, the role or "value" the Partnership will provide to the Collaborative Action Network (e.g. staffing, capacity, access to data) is defined and the role or "value" (e.g. continuous improvement, action planning) the Collaborative Action Network will provide is defined. In other cases, a value exchange may be used to engage different sectors to participate in the Cradle to Career Partnership.

Investment & Sustainability:Key Staff:

- Project Director: A full-time dedicated staff person that provides leadership and management to ensure that the mission and core values of the Partnership are put into practice
- Facilitator: Supports continuous improvement action planning
- Data Manager: Supports analysis, management, integration, and reporting of data
- Communication/Community Engagement Manager: Supports internal and external communications and engagement of the broader community

Sustaining:

Collaborative Action:

Charter: A tool for collaborative action network members to hold each other accountable to shared measurements and action and to the Partnership as a whole to working on the agreed upon scope. This is a 'living' document that should be updated regularly and contains the following components:

- Purpose Statement
- Problem Statement
- Project Scope
- Membership
- Operating Principles

Action Plan: A document that outlines the strategies that a Collaborative Action Network will work on collectively during a given time frame. The Action Plan usually covers one year to allow time for the strategies to be implemented and new data to be collected. All subsequent network meetings will be based around the plan and progress against the plans elements.

Investment & Sustainability:

Stakeholders: Individuals, institutions, and organizations in the community with a vested interest in the education of children.

Align and mobilize: the redirecting or initiation of resources (including: knowledge, time, volunteers, skills, financial contributions or other in-kind services) towards improving a common outcome.

Collective Advocacy Agenda: Shared plan for influencing public policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic and social systems and institutions.

Systems Change:

Evidence-Based Decision Making:

Comprehensive Data System: System or set of processes that enable the collection, connection, storage and analysis of student and community level data across systems to drive the continuous improvement process.

Investment & Sustainability:

Continual Alignment: Initiating or redirecting resources towards evidence based solutions on an on-going basis, usually requires a shift in the way funding, policy, and behavioral change occurs.