Bay Area Transition-Age Youth Workforce Initiative

A Guide to Local Action

Expanding Workforce and Career Development Pathways for Opportunity Youth

COYN California Opportunity Youth Network

New Ways to Work

OYC L.A. Opportunity Youth Collaborative

Alliance for Children's Rights

Expanding Workforce and Career Development Pathways for Opportunity Youth

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This guide is a key component of the Bay Area Transition-Age Youth Workforce Initiative. The initiative is a joint effort of the California Opportunity Youth Network (COYN) and New Ways to Work (New Ways) in partnership with Pivotal and John Burton Advocates for Youth. It builds on work conducted by the Alliance for Children's Rights and the Los Angeles Opportunity Youth Collaborative (LA OYC) and is supported by the Tipping Point Community and the Walter S. Johnson Foundation.

This Guide to Local Action was written by Lauri Collier of the LA OYC, Steve Trippe of New Ways and Sean Hughes of COYN and is based on original materials created by New Ways and the LA OYC. It was designed by Mindy Lee.

THE ALLIANCE FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Clearing barriers to stability and opportunity, the Alliance for Children's Rights advocates for children, young adults, and families impacted by foster care, so that they can access the support and services they need to thrive.

allianceforchildrensrights.org

THE CALIFORNIA OPPORTUNITY YOUTH NETWORK

The California Opportunity Youth Network (COYN) works to transform systems, policies, investments, and narratives to ensure all youth and young adults in California have the opportunity to flourish in adulthood. COYN facilitates statewide communication, organizing, and policy advocacy to remedy systemic inequities affecting Opportunity Youth across California.

www.caloyn.org

THE LOS ANGELES OPPORTUNITY YOUTH COLLABORATIVE

The LA Opportunity Youth Collaborative (LA OYC) is building a community of organizations working in concert to ensure that every youth is served in a holistic way with a coherent array of complementary services. We are building and strengthening bridges among more than 50 public agencies, service organizations, educational institutions, and employers to better connect youth with education, jobs, and opportunity.

laoyc.org

NEW WAYS TO WORK

For over 40 years, New Ways has worked effectively with people and organizations across the country to help communities better prepare youth and young adults for bright futures, regardless of where they come from. Cities and communities across the nation have benefited from the expertise, tools and relationships New Ways provides to increase young people's access to the future workplace. New Ways draws on a history of building systems that support transitions for the economically disadvantaged, those in foster care or engaged in the criminal justice system, those with disabilities or those who are simply out-of-work and out-of-school and need better opportunities to succeed.

www.newwaystowork.org

PIVOTAL

Pivotal helps young people in and from foster care realize their career goals through access to education and employment opportunities that ensure equal opportunity for success. Over 400,000 kids are in foster care. Their education and employment outcomes are among the worst in our country. Pivotal is changing that through impact-generating models that focus on high school and college-aged foster youth.

www.pivotalnow.org

JOHN BURTON ADVOCATES FOR YOUTH

Improving access to education, housing, health and economic security. John Burton Advocates for Youth improves the quality of life for youth in California who have been in foster care or homeless by advocating for better laws, training communities to strengthen local practices and conducting research to inform policy solutions.

jbay.org

To download or request a copy of this guide, visit newwaystowork.org/library or send us an email at COYN@newwaystowork.org

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The objective of the BAYTAY Workforce Initiative is to expand workforce and career development opportunities for opportunity youth by identifying the barriers these youth are currently facing; discovering and supporting the implementation of innovative strategies that address those barriers; and advancing policy and programmatic changes to improve access to services and support for opportunity youth.

The California Opportunity Youth Network (COYN) and the project partners are collaborating with the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) to implement a recently approved state-wide waiver which provides relief from key regulatory elements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act that can serve as a barrier to serving opportunity youth while they are still in school. The waiver builds on one utilized across the seven workforce boards in Los Angeles through the LA P3[1] project in partnership with the Los Angeles Opportunity Youth Collaborative[2]. This new waiver allows foster youth, youth involved with the justice system and homeless youth regardless of their school emrollment status to be counted as Out-of-School Youth for the purposes of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act's (WIOA) youth expenditure requirements, providing for a greater percentage of WIOA youth dollars to be focused on these populations before they leave school, exit programs and become disconnected. These dollars serve as the primary resource available to local workforce boards to help address barriers to employment for disadvantaged youth populations.

This guide contains adaptations of original materials created by LA OYC, New Ways and COYN. The purpose of this Guide to Local Action and its frameworks is to help guide communities, and in particular Workforce Development Boards and their system partners, in expanding access to and improving the quality of workforce and career development services provided for opportunity youth. It also seeks to provide a roadmap for communities that seek to go further and develop a collaborative infra-structure that promotes access to services, support and opportunities across programs and sectors both in and around traditional workforce development and educational systems. Using the guide's frameworks as a roadmap, the work itself is best conducted by a team of committed and willing stakeholders representing multiple sectors and interests in the community. Efforts are most successful if led by a trusted team leader, a neutral intermediary partner and/or an outside facilitator – familiar with the community, the population and change processes.

To learn more about the initiative or get involved, please contact: **COYN@newwaystowork.org**

1 The Los Angeles Performance Partnership Pilot (LAP3) is a leading effort of the City of Los Angeles, the County of Los Angeles, Los Angeles Unified School District, Los Angeles Community College District, local Cal State Universities (CSU 5), Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, Los Angeles Housing Service Agency, and over 50 public, philanthropic and community-based organizations to improve the service delivery system for this disconnected young adult population and improve their educational, workforce, housing and social well-being outcomes.

2 The Los Angeles Opportinity Youth Collabortive (LA OYC) is an intermediary effort spearheaded by the Allinace for Children's Rights in collaboration with UNITE-LA and John Burton Advocates for Youth. The LA OYC includes over 100 public agencies, community based services organizations, educational institutions, young adults with lived experience of systems, and employers who work together to build cross-sector partnershps to improve the outcomes for transition age foster youth: www.laoyc.org/about-the-oyc/ .

Expanding Workforce and Career Development Pathways for Opportunity Youth[3]

PART ONE

CONTEXT

Introduction 1

About this Guide 4

What are We Building on? 5

PART TWO

CREATING A VISION AND COMMON AGENDA FOR OPPORTUNITY YOUTH

What does a Fully-implemented Cross-sector System do for Opportunity Youth? 8

- Promote Success in High School, Post-Secondary Education and Training
- Provide Early Experiences in the Workplace and Build Awareness of Career Paths
- Create Connections to People, Services and Community
- Nurture Self Awareness, Leadership and Confidence
- Deliver Services, Support and Opportunities through a Comprehensive and Connected Cross-Sector System

PART THREE

ACTION FRAMEWORKS

How do you Build a Workforce and Career Development System for Opportunity Youth? Functions and Action Steps for Workforce Development Boards 12

- Convene Local Leadership, Youth and System Partners
- Coordinate, Connect and Improve Youth Services, Support and Opportunities
- Measure Quality and Impact of Local Efforts
- Promote Policies to Grow and Sustain Effective Practices

Key Elements to Support Cross-System Work 16

- Youth Centered Design and Empowerment
- Start with Data and Measure Success
- Engage Leadership and Invest in Staff
- Prioritize Services to Opportunity Youth and Implement Progressive Policies
- Build the Operational Infrastructure and Implement Quality Practices

A Stages Approach to Implementation 18

- Discovery
- Design
- Incubation
- Growth
- Integration

PART FOUR

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Supplemental Materials 22

- The Los Angeles Model "Reimagining Los Angeles Youth Workforce Systems"
  - i. LA Workforce Systems Signed Regional Operation Agreement
- The BAYTAY Youth Workforce Initiative
- Resources, Initative Framework, and Tools
- The Los Angeles Opportunity Youth Collaborative
  - i. 2021 Impact Report
  - ii. LA Opportunity Youth Collaborative Strategic Plan
- Los Angeles P3 Strategic Plan
- CA Workforce Development Board Waiver Request to the Department of Labor
- US Department of Labor Approval Letter
- California Econonmic Development Department Waiver Request
- US Department of Labor Approval Letter:
- California Econonmic Development Department Waiver
- FAQ for CA Workforce Board Waiver
- CA Workforce Devleopment Board WIOA Checklist for local board application to utilize WIOA Waiver
- Employment Considerations for Youth with Disabilties

3 Opportunity Youth: Defined as those 16-to 24-year-old youth and young adults who are disconnected from both school and work as well as those who have experienced foster care, the justice system or homelessness. These populations are under-represented in California's Workforce Development Systems, yet are most at-risk of not successfully achieving gainful employment and income stability as young adults.

Introduction

Opportunity youth - defined as youth who are disconnected from both school and work as well as those who have experienced foster care, the justice system or homelessness - face significant challenges in reaching higher education and employment goals. Education, workforce development and the child welfare systems often lack the perspective and capacity to effectively address the needs of opportunity youth and, as a result, these youth face a myriad of obstacles in navigating the agencies and programs intended to provide them opportunities, support and services. Systemic and institutional barriers, including structural racism, siloed and isolated systems and a culture of low expectations for marginal populations combined with limited resources and staffing challenges limit our capacity to effectively inspire and support opportunity youth. These realities are frequently exacerbated by a young person's personal experiences within the system and at home - often isolating and negative. Many of these youth - who are disproportionately black and brown - lack support from trusted adults and are more likely to come from and live in underprivileged communities. As a result many of these youth and young adults are unprepared for the future, unsupported in their quest to get there and disconnected from work, school and services.

A recent study of California foster youth found that only 29 percent were enrolled in a two- or four-year college, compared to 43 percent of their peers[4]. Those that do enroll often lack the resources and support they need to persist and earn a certificate or degree. Meanwhile, only 54 percent of foster youth were currently employed working 10 or more hours per week, and earning only $12.48 an hour on average.[5] In comparison, the living wage in California for a single individual supporting themselves is estimated at $15 per hour.[6]

4 Courtney et al, Findings from the California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYouth): Conditions of Youth at Age 21, 2018, https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/CY_YT_RE0518_1.pdf

5 Courtney et al, Findings from the California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYouth): Conditions of Youth at Age 21, 2018, https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/CY_YT_RE0518_1.pdf

6 MIT Department of Urban Studies and Planning, Living Wage Calculation for California, 2020, https://livingwage.mit.edu/states/06

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is a federal law supporting workforce development and career readiness for our country including economically disadvantaged youth. Each year the federal government distributes several hundred million dollars in WIOA funds to California, including about $120 million through the Youth Program. These resources can be used by local workforce development boards (WDBs) to fund services including vocational coaching and navigation, workforce training, skill development and apprenticeship and internship programs to connect economically disadvantaged youth and young adults to employment opportunities and career pathways. Funds from the WIOA Youth Program provide critical opportunities for youth to build the necessary skills and experience to achieve long-term career success.

NATIONAL PARTICIPATION LEVELS

In 2018, of the 161,288 youth who accessed programming funded through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act[7] (WIOA) Youth Activities Program across the country, services were provided to just:

- 6,024 current and former foster youth, out of several hundred thousand who were eligible

- 16,346 youth who had been involved with the criminal justice system, despite the fact that on any given day tens of thousands of youth are incarcerated or in out of home placement, and several million youth are arrested every year

- 10,163 homelessness or runaway youth of several million youth and young adults recognized by federal programs as experiencing homelessness each year

Similarly, in California in the 2019/20 Program Year of the 17,213 youth served through WIOA in the state, just 1,211 (or 7%) of those served were justice involved youth; 2,079 (or 12%) were youth experiencing homelessness and only 1,339 (or 7.8%) were current or former foster youth. Just 26% of all youth served through WIOA programming across the state were from these vulnerable populations who most need services to support their employment readiness and expand their career connections.

The very low rate of access for systems-involved youth to WIOA programming is unacceptable considering widely available research demonstrating that these youth are at a very high risk of disconnection upon exiting the systems through which they are currently being served, and that they experience some of the worst long-term outcomes of any population in the country.

Consider the following...

FOSTER YOUTH

A recent report from the Annie E. Casey Foundation illustrates the low rate at which these youth receive critical transition services, finding that just 20% of the transition age foster youth in California received any federally funded employment programs or vocational training. [8] The California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH) - the nation's largest and most comprehensive longitudinal study of transition age foster youth - highlights their resulting extreme economic vulnerability, finding that at age 21: nearly half are unemployed; those who are working generally do not earn a livable wage; their total income leaves them far below the poverty line; they have almost no financial assets to rely on; and they are often unable to meet their basic needs.[9] The Midwest Study - a large longitudinal study tracking youth transitioning from foster care to adulthood - illustrated the extreme economic vulnerability of this population and recommends that systems address barriers to education and employment for these youth, including better coordination with programs funded through WIOA.[10] Foster youth who do pursue postsecondary education often struggle mightily during their first year in college, while those who are able to access support services and academic assistance benefit greatly, according to a new report from Educational Results Partnership and California College Pathways.[11]

7 Note: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) is described as landmark federal legislation that is designed to strengthen and improve our nation's public workforce system and help get Americans, including youth and those with significant barriers to employment, into high-quality jobs and careers and help employers hire and retain skilled workers. Administered though the US Department of Labor nationally and the Employment Development Department in California, services are delivered through Workforce Boards and their partners in local areas across the state and country.

8 The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2018). Fostering Youth Transitions: Using Data to Drive Policy and Practice Decisions. Baltimore, MD. https://www.aecf. org/resources/fostering-youth-transitions

9 Courtney, M.E., Okpych, N.J., & Park, K. (2018). Findings from the California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH): Conditions of Youth at Age 21. Chicago: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. Retrieved from https://www.chapinhall.org/wp-content/uploads/CY_YT_RE0518_1.pdf

10 Hook, J.L. & Courtney, M.E. (2010). Employment of Former Foster Youth as Young Adults: Evidence from the Midwest Study. Chicago: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. Retrieved from: http://www.chapinhall.org/research/coordinated-systems-key-to-employment-for-youth-formerly-in-state- care

11 Education Results Partnership, & California College Pathways. (2019). Pipeline to Success: Supporting California Foster Youth from High School to Community College. Retrieved from http://www.jbaforyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Pipeline-to-Success-report-web.pdf

YOUTH INVOLVED WITH THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Youth and young adults involved with the juvenile justice system typically lag behind their peers academically. A large longitudinal study of a cohort of 18-to-24 year old young adults involved with the correctional system found that more than half lacked a high school diploma or GED when exiting the system.[12] The study also found that the youth lagging academically experienced a recidivism rate almost twice as high as the other youth exiting the system, noting that the "vast majority of the recidivists were unemployed and less-educated." The authors note the importance of connecting this population to academic and career pathways to address "deficiencies in education and lack of adequate job skills" and prevent recidivism - 80% of which occurs within the first two years after youth exit the system. Meanwhile the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) highlights the importance of education to the long- term outcomes for this population, noting that youth who continue to progress in their education while incarcerated are more likely to continue with school after they are released, while those who continue participating in school after their release will have less chance of recidivism.[13]

HOMELESS YOUTH

It has been well documented that housing instability often results in school instability. Research from the Institute for Children, Poverty & Homelessness (ICPH) indicates that youth experiencing homelessness miss more days of school than their peers and are more likely to transfer schools, placing them at a higher risk of falling behind and repeating a grade.[14] ICPH found that just 50% of youth experiencing homelessness graduated on time, while they were almost 40% more likely to drop out than their peers. Research from Chapin Hall indicates that these youth were less than one-third as likely to be enrolled in a four-year postsecondary institution as their peers.[15] Chapin Hall also finds that youth who drop out of school without attaining a high school diploma or GED are four and a half times more likely than their peers who completed school to experience homelessness.

These particularly vulnerable populations are disproportionately represented by youth who are at risk of further marginalization, including youth from extremely low-income households and communities of color as well as youth identifying as LGBTQ and youth with disabilities. Despite their recognized disadvantages, collectively they represent just one in five of the youth currently being served with WIOA Youth Program funds. Despite the challenges and institutional barriers they face, opportunity youth are resilient and full of potential.

YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

It is important to note that while youth with disabilities are not the focus of this guide, at the same time youth with disabilities are less likely than their non-disabled peers to gradutate from high school, attend and complete post-secondary opportunities, and be employed.[16] The National Collaborative on Workforce Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth) has developed parrell assumptions[17] to those we describe in this guide as what these youth need in order to be be prepared and ready for careers.

- Access to high-quality standards-based education, regardless of the setting
- Information about career options and exposure to the world of work, including structured internships
- Opportunities to develop social, civic, and leadership skills
- Strong connections to caring adults
- Access to safe places to interact with their peers
- Support services and specific accommodations to allow them to become independent adults

The guideposts focus on school-based experiences, career preparation, and work-based learning experiences, connecting activities, youth development and leadership, and family involvement and supports. For more information, please visit https://youth.gov/youth-topics/disabilities

12 Lockwood, S.K. and Nally, J.M. (2017). Exploring the Importance of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (2014) to Correctional Education Programs for Incarcerated Adults. Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice. Justice Policy Journal. Vol 14, Number 1. Retrieved from http://www.cjcj.org/ uploads/cjcj/documents/workforce_innovation_and_opportunity_act_and_correctional_education.pdf

13 Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. (2019). Literature Review: Education for Youth Under Formal Supervision of the Juvenile Justice System. http://www.ojjdp.gov/mpg/litreviews/Education-for-Youth-in-the-Juvenile-Justice-System.pdf

14 Institute for Children, Poverty & Homelessness. (2014). A Tale of Two Students: Homelessness in New York City Public Schools. http://www.icphusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/ICPH_policyreport_ATaleofTwoStudents.pdf

15 Morton, M.H., Dworsky, A. & Samuels, G.M. (2017). Missed Opportunities: Youth Homelessness in America. National Estimates. Chicago: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. Retrieved from http://www.voicesofyouthcount.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/ChapinHall_VoYC_NationalReport_Final.pdf

16 U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy, 2013; Newman, Wagner, Cameto, & Knokey, 2009; Cortiella, 2011

17 https://youth.gov/youth-topics/disabilities

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The purpose of this action guide and its frameworks is to help guide communities, and in particular Workforce Development Boards and their system partners, in expanding access to and improving the quality of workforce and career development services provided for opportunity youth. It also seeks to provide a roadmap for communities that seek to go further and develop a collaborative infra-structure that promotes access to services, support and opportunities across programs and sectors both in and around traditional workforce development and educational systems.

The frameworks themselves are intentionally ambitious and recognize the need to develop partnerships over time with systems adjacent to the workforce and education systems to support enhanced recruitment and engagement of opportunity youth and to provide the wide range of comprehensive support needed to effectively serve the population. Systems change is thoughtful, slow, intentional and incremental. Holding up a bold community vision, defining broad functions for partners and key elements for the system itself can help keep all partners engaged and moving forward toward realizing that vision.

The guide designed to support a team leader or facilitator in supporting a group of stakeholders in crafting a community vision, assessing their progress in achieving that vision and defining priority actions in moving toward broad implementation of that vision.

What are We Building on?

The Los Angeles Model: "Reimagining Los Angeles Youth Workforce Systems"

These frameworks draw heavily on local practices gleaned from a successful pilot initiative conducted in Los Angeles, summarized in this section of the guide. (Note: to review the entire case study of the Los Angeles model, please see Supplemental Materials One).

The size and complexity of the Los Angeles region required a cross-system approach to improve the outcomes of opportunity youth. This program summary will explore the conditions that allowed Los Angeles to increase access to and success in workforce and career development programs for opportunity youth and builds on some very basic elements.

At the core of the Los Angeles Model is a partnership between local government with leadership committed to collaborative approaches and a neutral, trusted and inclusive collaborative intermediary that supports cross-system work. They are both aligned in prioritizing workforce services for opportunity youth - defined as youth disconnected from both school and work as well as those who have experienced foster care, the justice system or homelessness. We will refer to this population as opportunity youth throughout this document.

This summary examines how the Los Angeles region's robust system of public workforce programs available to opportunity youth overseen by seven independent workforce development boards (WDBs) — each of which operates one or more workforce programs accessed through more than 40 workforce centers locations in the region — results in a public workforce system that is often difficult to navigate not only for youth, but for social workers, caregivers, case managers and community-based organizations as well.

In response to the crisis among opportunity youth and the confusing array of organizations engaged in the delivery of workforce development services to the county's youth and young adults, the Los Angeles Opportunity Youth Collaborative (LA OYC) was formed in 2013 via the Aspen Institute Forum for Community Solutions. The LA OYC is a cross-system collaboration among government agencies, community-based organizations, youth, educational institutions and philanthropy aimed to support opportunity youth access to and success in workforce development programs and systems. The Alliance for Children's Rights serves as the backbone agency for the LA Opportunity Youth Collaborative, and the LA OYC is co-convened in partnership with John Burton Advocates for Youth and UNITE-LA. Additionally, the City of Los Angeles was awarded a Performance Partnership Pilot designation in 2016, which is an intergovernmental, cross-sector initiative focused on improving the workforce, education, housing and social well-being outcomes of opportunity youth and systems-involved youth in Los Angeles. The two initiatives aligned and developed the following shared vision in 2017.

> "All opportunity youth in Los Angeles will have the knowledge and skills to allow them to achieve economic mobility and flourish in their personal lives. A seamless service system of care between city, county, public workforce system, school districts, community colleges, colleges, and community-based agencies provide individualized services, support and opportunities to ensure opportunity youth success in the transition to adulthood with economic mobility, stable living arrangements and access to services and comprehensive support when needed."

The LA model leverages the work of two aligned initiatives, the **Los Angeles Opportunity Youth Collaborative (LA OYC)** and the **Los Angeles Performance Pilot Partnership (LA P3)**. Together they have worked to prioritize and provide access to a range of services and opportunities in greater Los Angeles through the creation and nurturing of a functional cross-system collaborative to support transition-age youth access to and success in workforce development programs and systems. The collaborative is an aligned effort between and an operational intermediary and an inter-governmental partnership that supports a wide-ranging collaboration in the region. Government investments are aligned, and the collaborative encourages and helps spread innovative practices across programs and systems to support youth success.

As a result of our collaboration in Los Angeles, the partners have increased access for youth who experience foster care by 895% from 2014 to 2020. The LA OYC Young Leaders have advocated in partnership for $32.4 million dollars in funding for youth housing and employment programs in 2020; over 70 local community based organizations are now prioritizing college and career exploration in their programming and providing trainings to caregivers. The partners have increased their convening muscle by 372% in 2020, having hosted over 28 covenings for Los Angeles practitioners with 3,652 attendees in 2020. In addition, the partners held 64 convenings connecting young adults to systems leaders reaching almost 4,000 practitioners and young adults.[18]

18 https://laoyc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/OYC_ImpactReport_2020.pdf

LESSONS FROM LOS ANGELES: THE CONDITIONS

The conditions that allowed the practice to develop in Los Angeles included engaged political and public agency leadership, operational necessity and an existing collaborative intermediary.

Political Leadership

The Los Angeles Mayor's Office, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, the School Superintendent, Los Angeles Unified School District Board members, and Los Angeles Community College District Trustees all supported the development of a greater integrated system. All supported the application for LA P3, and subsequently supported the strategic plan and the implementation of the recommendations of the strategic plan.

Public Agency Leadership

Several key players in the respective bureaucracies took up active leadership roles in LA P3 and the LA OYC. Unlike other collaborations, there were no "Mandatory Partners" or "Appointed Designees". The partners who represented the various departments did so voluntarily, believed in developing a greater vision of partnership and were concerned with improving the outcomes of service.

Operational Necessity

For many of the public and community service agencies, the constant funding reductions and budget challenges did push agencies to leverage other resources.

Operational Collaborative Intermediary

With philanthropic support, the LA OYC was launched in 2013 out of the Aspen Institute's Forum for Community Solutions. Los Angeles adopted the Aspen model and focused its mission on implementing innovative, collaborative solutions targeting foster youth, as a sub-population of opportunity youth, with unique barriers to achieving self-sufficiency. The LA OYC has a dedicated staff, utilizes the co-convenor model and has built unprecedented trust to achieve collaboration.

LESSONS FROM LOS ANGELES: UNIQUE FEATURES

THE LA OYC AND LA P3

SCALE

LA OYC and LA P3 attempted a systematic approach for the great Los Angeles region.

AUTHENTICITY

LA OYC and LA P3 is not a response to external forces other than the need for the public sector and its community partners to do better.

RESEARCH-BASED

LA P3 was designed from the very beginning to have a third-party evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of an integrated approach to out of school workforce development and education attainment strategies. A "gold-standard" evaluation report was conducted by the California State University, Northridge, and Mathematica (Dr. Richard Moore, CSUN 2019).[19]

TARGETED INTENTIONALITY

LA OYC and LA P3 intentionally focused on the systems involved transition age youth previously in the foster, juvenile probation, and homeless care systems.

REPLICABILITY

LA P3 systemic approach was designed to be replicated throughout the LA region and created local regional collaboratives aimed at creating a local comprehensive support network of resources for workforce centers serving opportunity youth. In addition, the LA OYC supported the operationalizing of the local regional collaboratives.

LESSONS FROM LOS ANGELES: KEYS TO SUCCESS

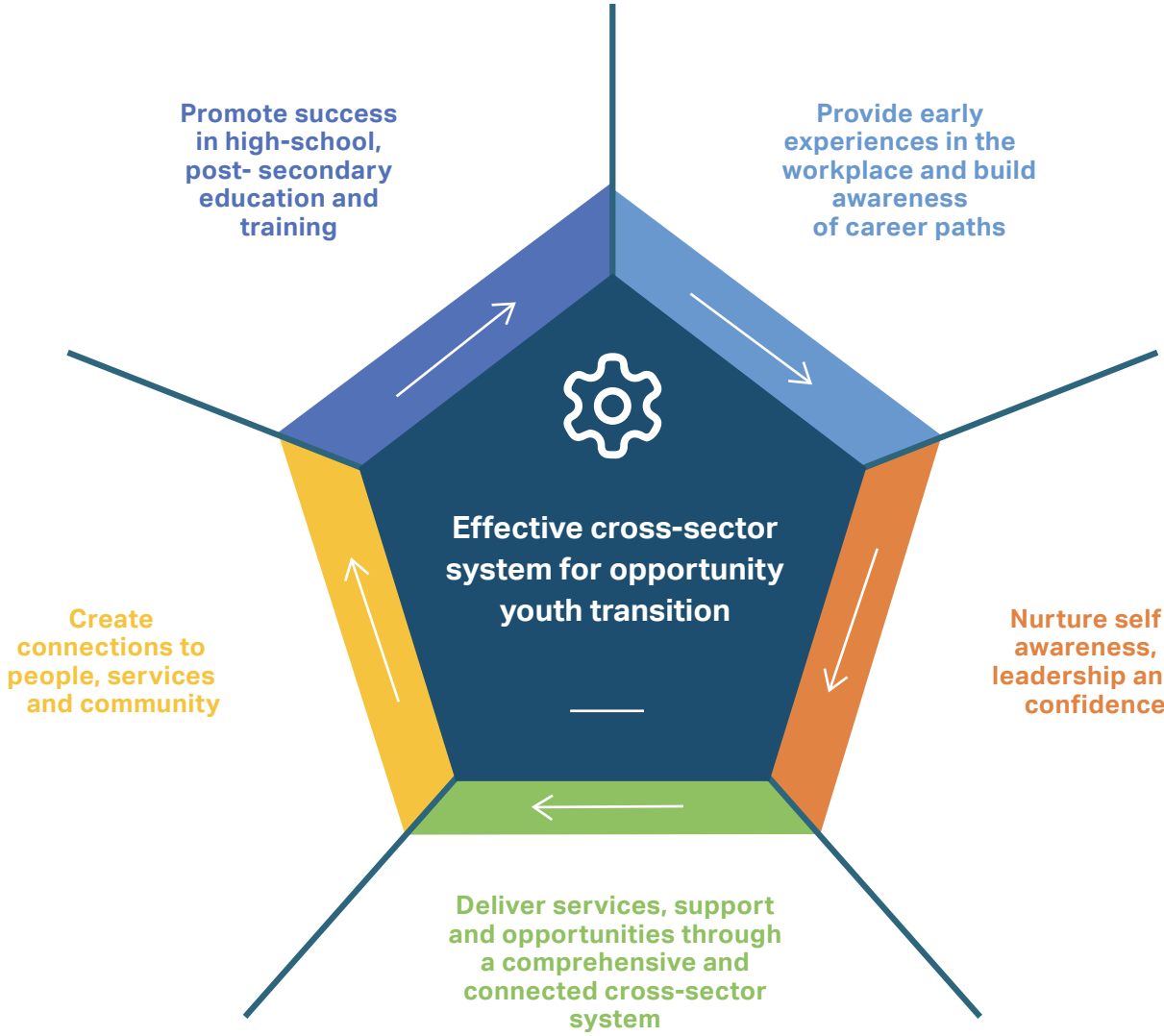
The Los Angeles partners also identified several "Keys to Success" to their ability to implement the initiative. These keys are described below.

- Create a Sustainable Infrastructure
- Start with Data
- Apply Integrated Approaches
- Engage Youth in the Process
- Expand Relationships and Partners
- Measure Effectiveness
- Create Leadership
- Support Risk Taking
- Build on what Exists
- Develop a Cross-System Collaborative

19 https://scholarworks.csun.edu/bitstream/handle/10211.3/214547/LA%20City_P3%20Final%20Impact%20Report%20Final.pdf?sequence=1

What does a Fully-implemented Cross-sector System do for Opportunity Youth?

To coordinate and connect opportunities and services for opportunity youth, all partners within a community first need to come together to better understand each other and work toward discovering a common agenda and developing a collective vision for what needs to be done to provide better support and ensure successful transitions for opportunity youth to life as happy, productive and healthy adults. **As described earlier in this guide, this framework is intended to be used by a team leader or facilitator to work with a team of engaged stakeholders as part of a process to develop a vision for the community.** The vision elements are intentionally ambitious. The five elements described below provide a template for an ultimate vision of a connected, equitable and accessible system. With that vision in place, communities can work together to build that system over time, addressing issues of race and class that affect opportunity youth.



System Partners Provide Experiences in the Workplace and Build Awareness of In-Demand Career Paths

Opportunity youth are provided skill development opportunities and experiences in the workplace and community. They are exposed to a range of activities that further their career awareness, help them develop personal career goals and build the skills they need to be successful in the future.

Opportunity youth are engaged in their learning in the workplace and community. Early and ongoing exposure to career and employment opportunities is provided to young people through their school and community-based workforce programs as well as other developmental opportunities through activities in boys and girls clubs, local parks, sports leagues and other community activities that address individual needs and promote a sense of belonging. Youth participate in quality work-based activities that support what they are learning in the classroom, beginning as early as the elementary school level and continuing throughout their high school and post-secondary experiences. Schools and community-based organizations have strong partnerships with government, local businesses and other workplace partners, who provide relevant and meaningful learning experiences for young people. These experiences address the individual needs of each young person and youth become aware of and understand their career options.

Opportunity youth are engaged in their learning in the workplace and community.

- Early employment exposure and experiences are provided.
- Quality work-based learning opportunities are in place.
- Community and workplace partners provide work and learning opportunities.
- Classroom learning supports career development.

Opportunity youth are experienced and ready for careers.

System Partners Promote Success in High School and Post-secondary Education and Training

Opportunity youth are engaged in their learning in the classroom and expected and supported to achieve high academic and career technical success at all levels of the educational system.

Opportunity youth are engaged in their learning in classrooms at all levels of our education and training systems, and services, support and opportunities are distributed equitably. Teachers, faculty and other practitioners hold high expectations for youth and apply instructional strategies that address the learning styles of each individual. Curriculum is designed to support standards-based academic achievement while also linking content to contextualized and relevant learning experiences that prepare youth for future educational and technical skills success. Programs and services support high academic standards and workplace experiences encourage excellence and success in school. Educators utilize a variety of strategies to support young people's educational success, specifically tailoring approaches to address individual learning and developmental needs and personal circumstance. When young people complete their education, whether at the high school or college level, they are prepared for success in their career and life and understand the range of options before them.

Opportunity youth are engaged in their learning in classrooms.

- Adults promote high academic and technical success.
- Workplace experiences support classroom learning.
- Multiple educational approaches address individual needs.
- Standards-based alternatives are available at all levels of education.

Opportunity youth are educated and ready to learn.

System Partners Create Connections to People and Community

Opportunity youth experience positive connections to caring adults and peers. They receive services in safe environments. Services and community support target and address individualized needs and promote a sense of belonging.

Opportunity youth receive individualized services and community support. All youth have safe and stable living arrangements and receive support from caring adults who see to their physical, developmental and emotional needs. Youth experience strong and enduring peer relationships and connections to at least one adult who will support them throughout their lives. Young people are prepared for adulthood, having experienced and practiced the life skills necessary to live independently and have access to a full range of culturally competent social services and supports to address their needs.

Opportunity youth receive individualized services and community support.

- Opportunity youth have safe and stable living arrangements.
- Opportunity youth have strong and enduring adult and peer connections.
- Opportunity youth receive life skills training and practice.
- A full range of social services is available.

Opportunity youth are connected to adults, peers and services.

System Partners Nurture Self Awareness, Leadership and Confidence

Opportunity youth are engaged and visibly active in leadership roles in the community and take an active role in designing and determining the activities and opportunities provided to them. They are inspired to dream and hold a vision of themselves in the future.

Opportunity youth are visible and active in leadership roles. They participate in decisions about their lives and play active roles in designing their individual service strategies. They provide the voice that drives policy and decision making. Adults encourage and support youth in leadership roles within their organizations and institutions, and opportunities for youth leadership are leveraged within communities and connected to broader, systemic change. As a result, youth grow up confident and ready for life.

Opportunity youth are visible and active in leadership roles.

- Youth actively participate in decisions about their lives.
- Youth voice drives policy and decision making.
- Youth are encouraged and supported in leadership roles.
- Youth leadership opportunities are leveraged and connected.

Opportunity youth are confident and ready for life.

System Partners Deliver Services, Support and Opportunities through a Comprehensive and Connected System

Facilitated by a neutral and trusted intermediary, a formal, networked system of institutions, providers and programs is in place and provides a comprehensive set of services that support successful transitions for youth over time. Youth development principles of thriving, learning, working, connecting and leading are infused throughout the system.

A formal network provides the foundation for an equitable and coordinated system that meets the needs of youth, facilitated by a neutral and trusted intermediary. Institutions and organizations that support young people apply a youth development approach in all their activities and services. Community leaders are engaged in efforts to support the lives of youth and promote effective collaboration between and among systems. Activities are intentionally sequenced and responsive to individual needs. Coordinated, resources are leveraged, and a connected, operational infrastructure is in place, supported by long term public and private investments.

A formal network provides the foundation for an equitable and coordinated system.

- All activities embody a youth development approach.
- Individualized, youth-centered plans guide programs and services.
- Engaged community leadership supports collaboration.
- Adequate resources are available and leveraged.
- Institutional barriers to engagement, enrollment and completion are identified and addressed.
- A quality system is responsive to individual and cultural differences.
- The community publicly supports a focus on youth issues.

A connected, operational infrastructure supports youth success.

How do you Build a Workforce and Career Development Services System for Opportunity Youth?

In a connected cross-sector system, workforce services - including those provided by community-based partners, the K12 system, community colleges, technical and trade schools and the workforce development system itself are leveraged, connected and sequenced. Social services, housing, child welfare, juvenile justice, mental health and public health systems are all engaged in supporting youth. These partners work together and prioritize access to and the delivery of quality and responsive services to opportunity youth across their systems. They identify and address institutional racism and barriers to engagement, enrollment and completion. Collectively, they provide multiple avenues for young people to learn about and engage in career-related services and opportunities and provide linkages to comprehensive support to ensure youth success in their programs.

System partners all need to define their role and identify the specific actions they must take to support effective implementation of a collective community vision. **This section of this guide describes the role a local Workforce Development Board can play as the convener and catalyst for system improvements that improve outcomes for opportunity youth, and lays out the elements of a comprehensive and connected cross-sector system.**

Functions and Action Steps for Workforce Development Boards

Workforce Development Boards play a pivotal role increasing access to (and the quality of) workforce development services for opportunity youth. Performing the functions of convener, coordinator, connector, data gatherer, vision keeper and policy leader, workforce boards can help prioritize services to opportunity youth, direct public resources to expand opportunities for the population, build public will for improving outcomes and promote and facilitate cross-sector approaches to ensuring successful transitions for current and former foster youth, youth involved in the justice systems and those experiencing homelessness.

Convene Local Leadership, Youth and System Partners

Coordinate, Connect and Improve Youth Services, Support and Opportunities

Measure Quality and Impact of Local Efforts

Promote Policies to Grow and Sustain Effective Practices

CONVENE LOCAL LEADERSHIP, YOUTH AND SYSTEM PARTNERS

To improve outcomes for opportunity youth, WDBs bring together key leaders and practitioners to help shape a local youth workforce development system that effectively engages opportunity youth and helps prepare a skilled and diverse workforce for the future. Convened as a Youth Council or formal Youth Committee of the WDB, these leaders are engaged in a forum that helps define improved service delivery, program change and local system building in the local youth system. Representation should be broad, diverse and engage youth in leadership positions. Youth participation in shaping the system is valued and adults actively support that participation.

Action Steps for WDBs

- Educate leadership on the needs of opportunity youth, the local youth system and the services provided to the population.
- Leverage and promote access to youth-serving resources in the broader workforce development system.
- Engage a council or committee of leaders, practitioners and youth themselves to take actions that promote the expansion of services to opportunity youth.
- Establish an effective communications structure.
- Formally engage and support youth in decision making activities, including paid leadership positions.

COORDINATE, CONNECT AND IMPROVE YOUTH SERVICES, SUPPORT AND OPPORTUNITIES

To improve outcomes for opportunity youth, WBDs seek to organize a range of programs and services, creating a seamless web of support for the youth of their communities. WDBs seek to align those programs and services funded with WIOA dollars with a full range of targeted programs and, eventually, all core services provided for young people in the community, including education, housing and social services. All services apply youth development principles in their programming and are responsive to issues stemming from generational poverty, systemic and institutional racism and low expectations.

Action Steps for WDBs

- Develop or adopt a data-driven framework and vision for successful transitions for opportunity youth.
- Identify and work with a convening intermediary (such as an opportunity youth collaborative) to leverage workforce development, education, housing and other comprehensive social services. Map all services available to youth in the community and expand access to these services.
- Determine and address gaps in resources and services. Include cross-sector partnership expectations in RFPs and contracts.
- Form intergovernmental partnerships with other agencies and systems serving opportunity youth.
- Intentionally link youth-serving organizations (including schools and social service agencies) as part of a seamless and integrated service delivery model to help ensure successful transitions to adulthood.
- Identify systemic and institutional barriers and build the capacity of the youth workforce providers, social workers, probation officers, community-based agencies and other stakeholders to engage and better serve the population.
- Identify and address barriers stemming from issues of race and class or bias.

MEASURE QUALITY AND IMPACT OF LOCAL EFFORTS

To improve outcomes for opportunity youth, WBDs set goals, establish standards for services and measure their effectiveness against those goals and standards. They utilize both external and internal evaluation tools and use data to inform program decisions and improve performance. All partners and the community have timely access to the results and the WDB publicly celebrates and communicates its success.

Action Steps for WDBs

- Gather both qualitative and quantitative data that describes the conditions facing opportunity youth. Use this data to help define the problems being addressed though key initiatives.
- Collect and disseminate data and information on opportunity youth and the programs that serve them.
- Assess the local youth workforce development system and refine and implement program improvement recommendations. Identify and address systems and process barriers to opportunity youth engagement, enrollment and participation.
- Use and apply data in program design and decision-making. Include customer data from youth themselves.
- Document, benchmark and share quality practices.
- Set quality standards, evaluate impact and hold providers and system partners accountable.

PROMOTE POLICIES TO GROW AND SUSTAIN EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

To improve outcomes for opportunity youth, WBDs develop and promote programmatic and public policies that ensure access to services and help sustain and grow a comprehensive and connected system. They regularly involve organizational, governmental and political leadership with other influential individuals in their work and seek to create a climate that actively supports the maintenance and growth of quality practices. Youth are intentionally engaged with adults to define and create policies together.

Action Steps for WDBs

- Guide the development of a local youth workforce development policy that prioritizes services, support and opportunities to opportunity youth.
- Target resources to serve opportunity youth, including both youth and adult workforce dollars.
- Engage youth in reviewing and revising policies and program approaches.
- Adopt progressive policies supporting opportunity youth participation and formally reflect in strategic plans, RFPs and contracts.
- Identify and promote policy priorities at the state and federal level that will serve to increase service levels and outcomes for opportunity youth,
- Educate leadership, system partners and generate public awareness.
- Catalyze the shift from disconnected programs to an effective and connected cross-sector system.

Key Elements Framework[20]

The framework on the following page provides an overview of the key elements to be addressed by communities seeking to expand workforce and career development services for opportunity youth.

KEY ELEMENTS TO SUPPORT CROSS-SYSTEM WORK

This framework describes the key elements communities should pay attention to as they seek to build a coordinated and connected system for opportunity youth.

- **Youth Centered Design and Empowerment**
- **Start with Data and Measure Success**
- **Engage Leadership and Invest in Staff**
- **Prioritize Services to Opportunity Youth and Implement Progressive Policies**
- **Build the Operational Infrastructure and Implement Quality Practices**

Youth Centered

PROGRAM DESIGN

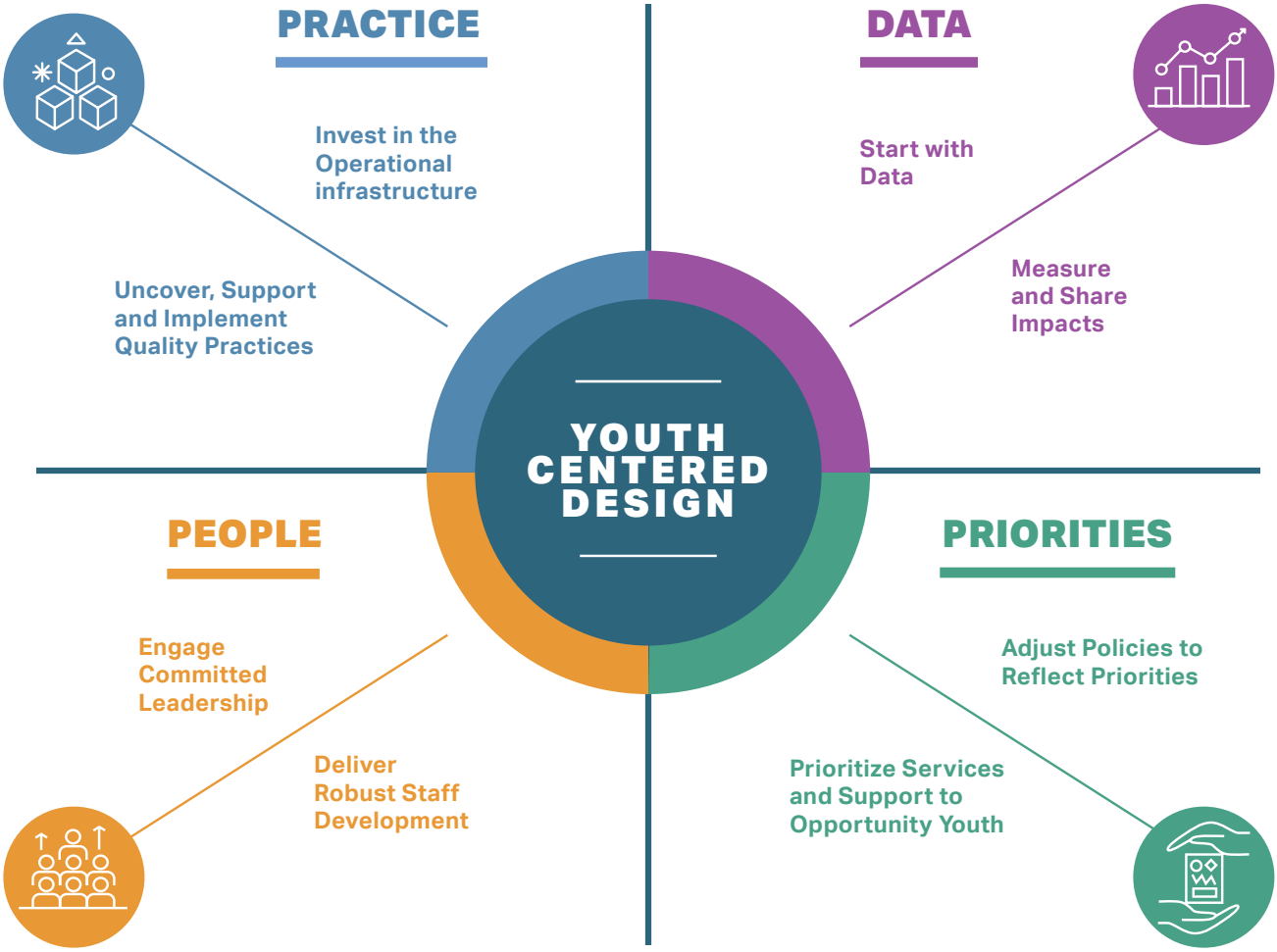
Program services, support and opportunities are tailored to the needs and aspirations of the individual youth. Age and stage appropriate activities address issues of race, class and personal circumstance. Individualized career development plans are created together with each youth, are revisited and adjusted regularly and guide all activities and experiences.

EMPOWERMENT

All partners engage with youth in planning and support them in creating recommendations for the systems that affect their lives and the lives of those around them. Youth are supported as leaders in informing programs and solutions to issues as they are uncovered. Partners treat youth as resources and adults respect young people as having something significant to contribute. Youth and adults make decisions together and share responsibilities for the program. All system and program design elements reflect the youth perspective.

20 Informed by the experience of Los Angeles Performance Pilot Partnership (LAP3), the Los Angeles Opportunity Youth Collaborative, quality workforce and intermediary practices and prior efforts to improve workforce services to opportunity youth ages 14-24. Information was gathered through review of available documents, reports, a scan of practices in the field, interviews with key leadership and targeted surveys.

Expanding Workforce and Career Development Pathways for Opportunity Youth



Invest in the Operational infrastructure

Systems partners identify and support a neutral, trusted and inclusive collaborative intermediary to build public support, change the narrative around youth, convene systems partners, align services and help adjust practices. The intermediary makes connections between organizations across sectors, builds practitioner capacity, catalyzes and enables systems alignment, promotes awareness of issues and opportunities and provides a forum for youth voice in relation to the programs and systems intended to serve them.

Uncover, Support and Implement Quality Practices

Systems partners engage with each other and apply quality practices to improve program performance and facilitate cross-system work, while providing capacity building support and tools to the field.

Engage Committed Leadership

System partners engage leaders and champions across sectors with a common vision and will to support and sustain collaborative efforts, while building support among elected officials, board members and others. Effective leaders exhibit the characteristics of political will, courage, perseverance and leadership. They direct and support investments to system solutions that support opportunity youth.

Deliver Robust Staff Development

System partners develop, deliver and provide technical assistance for deep and ongoing staff development activities for staff, agency personnel, agency leaders and other system partners. This assistance includes program strategies and a focus on trauma informed care, healing centered engagement and staff well-being.

Start with Data

System partners collect and apply data to help drive local policy and practice priorities. They gather and share information on the status of opportunity youth and current programs and systems using common definitions. They apply that data to inform and contribute to a shared common agenda.

Measure and Share Impacts

System partners measure impacts and share results with the community. They conduct external evaluations, identify system barriers to opportunity youth participation and develop policy imperatives for reform.

Prioritize Services and Support to OY

System partners set priorities to provide enhanced services to opportunity youth. These priorities are reflected in strategic plans and annual goals. Partners make formal commitments to provide comprehensive and connected services and opportunities across sectors for opportunity youth.

Adjust Policies to Reflect Priorities

System partners examine current policies and adjust them to reflect the opportunity youth priority. The priority is reflected in agency strategic plans, requests for proposals, contracts, staff development, activities, forms and documents. They apply new policy options that advance and enhance services to opportunity youth.

A Stages Approach to Implementation

This **five-stage process model is designed to help guide systems partners in building and sustaining a comprehensive and connected youth-serving system incrementally over time.** Based on effective organizational development practice, this systems model is designed to help communities identify current assets and gauge progress, offers a road map for how the system is built over time and describes a continuous improvement process to ensure continued growth and sustainability.

The following five stages guide the work:

Discovery

Initially forming a local team, and then analyzing the existing conditions and setting priorities for action.

Design

Planning for the implementation of strategies and activities addressing established priorities, bringing together core partners and preparing to conduct the work.

Incubation

Piloting strategies, services and programs.

Growth

Expanding activities and engaging new partners.

Integration

Institutionalizing the activities in a comprehensive youth system.

The Five Stage Systems Change Model

Discovery **Design** **Incubation** **Growth** **Integration**

This action guide is designed to help frame and support work in local communities to increase career and workforce development services and opportunities for youth and young adults who have experienced barriers as they work toward their transition to adulthood. With a grounding in the functions required from the Local Workforce System and the core elements of effective collaborative, cross-system practice described in the prior sections of this guide, communities can now turn to the task of building a connected cross-system collaborative that will more effectively serve opportunity youth in their community.

This **five-stage** model serves as a guide for communities in their efforts to leverage local resources and programs to provide an integrated continuum of services and opportunities for opportunity youth that will increase their access to workforce and career development services and opportunities and ensure their successful transition to adulthood. The heart of the model is grounded in partnerships with opportunity youth, as youth leaders and community members share valuable input, ideas and aspirations to shape the youth-centered solutions that are based on a shared understanding of what success looks like for young adults 16-24 years old.

The work itself is best conducted by a team of committed and willing stakeholders representing multiple sectors and interests in the community. Efforts are most successful if led by a trusted team leader, a neutral intermediary partner and/or an outside facilitator – familiar with the community, the population and change processes.

These five stages reflect a process of enhancing the capacity to deliver comprehensive and higher quality services over time. They highlight the important role that Workforce Boards and others can play in bringing partners together and facilitating collective work. Local Boards and their partners can adapt these ideas in ways that best help them identify priorities and develop appropriate action steps along the way. Users of this model should think of it in terms of a suggested progression or cycle of activities, rather than a strict set of steps to be followed.

In the section below, we describe the work to be conducted in the stage, what it looks like when a community is in a particular stage, the activities it can engage in to move to the next stage and the breakthrough indicator that signals completion of the stage and readiness to move to the next.

DISCOVERY

In the Discovery stage, team members come together to identify and build on effective local pockets of excellence, consolidate and coordinate existing efforts and move beyond a set of isolated activities in order to create a system to better serve opportunity youth. The nuts and bolts of the work builds on these discovery activities and is conducted through the next four stages: Design, Incubation, Growth and Integration.

DISCOVERY STAGE CHARACTERISTICS
(What a community looks like in the discovery phase)

- Uneven distribution of opportunities
- Lack of coordination and limited awareness of transition issues
- Disconnected activities driven by regulation
- Little youth involvement in planning and decision-making
- Pockets of excellence
- Low connection rates and poor outcomes

The first suggested activity in the Discovery stage is to build community awareness and recruit partners, youth and alumni to join the local effort. Teams then survey youth-serving organizations and the community at large to map existing resources and identify practices that offer insight into work in the Design stage. Gaps in services are identified, current practices and measurement systems are assessed and current policies affecting youth transition are examined. The capacity of each system partner to address the functions of an effective collaborative is identified. Finally, the team comes together to define a common mission and purpose.

ACTIVITIES TO MOVE TO THE DESIGN PHASE INCLUDE:

- Build community awareness
- Recruit partners, youth and program alumni
- Map and document current programs and service gaps
- Assess current practices and measures
- Examine existing policies
- Determine the capacity of existing partners to support the effort
- Define mission and purpose

The Discovery Stage is complete when a set of core and ready partners agree to take action. Team members and partners share the same expectations of the issues they will address in the Design stage, and they agree on the common purpose of their work together.

DESIGN

In the Design stage team members are encouraged to explore and begin to define what a local, coordinated infrastructure to support their system-building efforts looks like. Priorities identified for action in the Discovery stage are refined, resources are aligned, and strategies are developed for implementation. Plans for the coordination of existing programs are made, the identification of new gap filling efforts are defined and the development of a set of common goals begins.

DESIGN STAGE CHARACTERISTICS
(What a community looks like in the design stage)

- Awareness of inequities and uneven services and opportunities
- Partners, youth and alumni are planning together and co-creating solutions
- Effective approaches have been identified
- Clear roles among partners are defined
- The community is aware of and discussing youth outcomes
- A set of approaches and service priorities have been identified for action

The first actions in the Design stage are to build a collective common vision for the future and to cultivate community support to address inequities and gaps in policies and resources. Teams analyze the data collected in the Discovery stage, specify measurable outcomes and indicators, garner commitments from core partners to help achieve the common goals and develop a plan to address the established priorities. Typically, a small and trusted task force or work group of core partner representatives work together to design a set of strategies and activities that address the priorities set by the group as a whole. The resulting design incorporates a variety of programs and services, providing a full range of developmental options for youth among and across a core group of ready partners.

ACTIVITIES TO MOVE TO THE INCUBATION STAGE INCLUDE:

- Develop a common vision
- Engage and cultivate community support
- Define partner functions
- Address gaps in policies and resources
- Specify measurable outcomes and indicators
- Create an action plan

The Design stage is complete for a particular strategy or activity when the partners agree to specific roles and actions. The system partners are clear on their respective roles and functions and have reached agreement on their collective and individual responsibilities as part of the system.

INCUBATION

In the Incubation stage, the pilot implementation of activities takes place. Strategies, services and programs planned in the Design stage are put into practice on a small scale among willing partners and operational systems are field-tested and refined. Collaborative structures and effective communication systems are put in place and staff of the partnering organizations and programs participate in common staff training and preparation. Youth help assess the effectiveness of strategies and contribute to the creation of improvement strategies.

INCUBATION STAGE CHARACTERISTICS

(What a community looks like in the incubation stage)

- Demonstration of coordinated and connected services
- Multiple-partner transition planning for youth
- Cross-system staff development
- Coordinated evaluation and improvement strategies
- Youth are visible and active in leadership roles

The incubation of new strategies calls for several actions. First, the system partners conduct a time-limited pilot, working with a small and manageable group of programs, partners and youth. The intent of the Incubation stage is to field-test programs, approaches and projects to refine them and gauge their impact. Operational systems are implemented, assessed and adjusted. All staff receive training and support, with particular attention paid to aligning goals, objectives and expectations across programs and systems. The effectiveness of the adopted design strategies is intentionally measured, and the data gathered is used to adjust work plans and improve program performance.

ACTIVITIES TO MOVE TO THE GROWTH STAGE INCLUDE:

- Conduct and assess pilot activities
- Evaluate effectiveness of system and measures
- Train staff across disciplines
- Share results and inform partners
- Adjust plans and approaches to improve performance
- Examine and influence policies

The Incubation Stage is complete when the partners agree to expand activities and practices to a broader section of the community. Data demonstrates the successful implementation components of the pilot and team members have a clear strategy and plan for expanding activities to reach a larger number of youth or engage a wider range of programs and organizations in the local system.

GROWTH

In the Growth stage the partners improve and expand their impact by first revisiting and evaluating the initiative's core operational strategies, assessing their practices and evaluating the effectiveness of their activities. Most often, expansion "downshifts" a community back into elements of the Design stage at a higher level that builds on the experience of the pilot, engages more partners and focuses on improving and expanding practices.

GROWTH STAGE CHARACTERISTICS

(What a community looks like in the growth stage)

- Resources are leveraged to serve more youth
- Clear evidence of youth impacts
- Increased number and range of partners
- Sequenced and coordinated activities
- Empowered working group includes youth

Growing operations that have been tested and refined during incubation to a larger scale calls for the completion of several tasks. The first is to refine the strategies tested during the Incubation stage and make the necessary adjustments to broaden scope and engage new partners in the work. Staff members across disciplines are provided additional training as needed and identified by the assessment of outcomes. New policies that support collaborative and sequenced services can now be put in place.

ACTIVITIES TO MOVE TO THE INTEGRATION STAGE:

- Expand existing activities
- Integrate new partners
- Evaluate effectiveness
- Adjust strategies
- Conduct additional training
- Craft new policies

The Growth Stage is complete for a particular strategy or activity when the partners agree to integrate and sustain the practice in the existing system. Team members and the system partners formally recognize the success and viability of their work in the prior stages and make commitments to integrate practices into the core systems of their community to ensure sustainability.

INTEGRATION

Through the Integration stage strategies, services, approaches and programs are institutionalized within the partner operations of the local system. As that happens, the core partners turn to the next set of priorities required to continue to improve key elements of the youth transition system. New priorities are set, and the system partners move on to a new set of challenges and actions.

INTEGRATION STAGE CHARACTERISTICS
(What a community looks like in the integration stage)

- Blended, braided and stacked resources address needs
- Policy and advocacy support systems improvement
- A collaborative system is sustainable and responsive
- Community is aware of transition issues
- Youth are fully engaged, connected and successful

The first major activity in the Integration stage is to document the effectiveness of the strategies that have been developed and implemented across the local system. Plans to sustain the work over time are put in place and resources are leveraged to ensure that key initiatives and programs remain active and viable in the local system. New opportunities are discovered and explored that serve to strengthen the work and inform a new set of priorities and policies. Results and achievements are publicly recognized and celebrated.

ACTIVITIES TO MOVE TO SUSTAINABILITY ACTIVITIES:

- Leverage additional resources
- Refine and document strategies
- Report results
- Publicly celebrate accomplishments
- Implement new policies
- Sustain the work through proven partners

The Integration Stage is complete when the partners agree to continue to improve the system and move on to the next set of priorities. Team members, system partners, youth and the community recognize that while successful with their initial efforts, new strategies and service plans must be addressed that respond to newly identified challenges and priorities.

At this point in the process, the system partners, including youth and the community engage in continuous improvement activities and prepare to move through the Stages cycle addressing a new set of priorities once again. In reality, the community will likely have a number of initiatives and priorities in play at different stages of development at any given time. The work is not linear but cyclic, with the frame of continuous quality improvement guiding the regular work of the system partners.

Our Next Steps

COYN and New Ways are working with several communities in the greater San Francisco Bay Area and across California to apply the approaches described in this action guide in order to help strengthen and build community-wide approaches to better serve opportunity youth.

To learn more or get involved, email:
COYN@newwaystowork.org

1. **The Los Angeles Model "Reimagining Los Angeles Youth Workforce Systems"**
    i. LA Workforce Systems Signed Regional Operations Agreement

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2. **The BAYTAY Youth Workforce Initiative**

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3. **Initiative Frameworks, Self-Assessments and Workplan Tools**
4. **The Los Angeles Opportunity Youth Collaborative**
    i. 2021 Impact Report
    ii. Los Angeles Opportunity Youth Collaborative Strategic Plan
5. **Los Angeles P3 Strategic Plan**
6. **CA Waiver Request Advocacy One-Pager**
7. **US Department of Labor Approval Letter**
8. **California Econonmic Development Department Waiver**
9. **FAQ for CA Workforce Board Waiver**
10. **CA Workforce Devleopment Board WIOA Checklist for local board application to utlitize WIOA Waiver**
11. **Employment Considerations for Youth with Disabilities**