

Road Map Region Race to the Top Grant 2017 Final/Annual Performance Report (FPR/APR) (Year 5) Executive Summary

Key Strategies & Goals

Road Map Region Race to the Top (RTT), a \$40 million grant awarded in 2012 now in its no-cost extension 5th year, supports students to *Start Strong*, be *STEM Strong*, and to *Stay Strong*. The Consortium's Plan enabled the region to make progress toward its goal, with the opportunity to impact students across the seven participating districts (Auburn, Federal Way, Highline, Kent, Renton, Seattle and Tukwila School Districts) with Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD) serving as the fiscal and management agent. Our continual intent has focused on strengthening the foundation of accelerating student achievement, teaching and building leadership capacity across the region by scaling what is working well in one district to the other across the Consortium.

At the start of the reporting 5th year, similar to previous years, our emphasis continued to be the high-need schools in the Road Map region, whose students represent the low-income socio-economic, ethnically diverse, and emerging bilingual and/or English Language Learners (ELL) population. This regional collective impact effort, for PreK through postsecondary, is to further its initial goal of doubling the number of students on track to graduate from college and/or embark upon a career credential by 2020.

The Consortium recognizes that districts have different capacities and are at varying stages in reaching the Road Map Project targets. To best achieve maximum regional impact, several Investment Funds were established, which allowed the Consortium to invest in well constructed, personalized and evaluated local work that met each district where they were and were fashioned specifically to scaffold the needs of those schools and districts.

Accomplishments & Highlights

Overarching Highlights

As Year 5th comes to a close, the Road Map Region Race to the Top grant galvanized around launching strategic sustainability plans which catalyzed efforts through our Investment Funds and other elements, **Start Strong** Pre-K-3rd education (Project 3A), **STEM Strong** Develop Common Regional Data Portal and Data Sharing Agreements (Project 2) and **Stay Strong** Create a Regional System for Career Awareness and Exploration (Project 5), and Foundational projects. We explicitly led this process with a racial equity lens, examining how each RTT personalized learning effort impacted ethnically diverse students, and engaged communities in shaping programs. In year 5, RTT Project Leads, in conjunction with their audiences (i.e. parent leaders, student advocates, community partners), wrote detailed sustainability plans identifying evidence of success, opportunity gap impact, milestones, risks and mitigation strategies.

As we come to a close to the grant years, the emphasis now is on implementation. Individually school districts engage in discussion on how to now integrate collaborative work into their systems, i.e., district Strategic Plans and Comprehensive School Improvement Plans. School leaders and PSESD remain committed to continuing collective impact initiatives, i.e., the Road Map Superintendent Consortium Learning Community, while explicitly leading with a racial equity lens, to advance what was started with RTT.

The Consortium collective action, in its developed stage, continues to be dedicated to integrating students, families, communities and district partnerships in the work ahead.

Start Strong

The Regional Kindergarten Registration Campaign, Pre-K-3rd education (Project 3A), currently in its third year, and all seven districts and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in the Consortium, share the same opening day of Kindergarten registration being the Tuesday following the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday. The 2016-2017 year marked a transition from initial planning and implementation to sustainability of the regional Kindergarten Registration campaign. Leveraging the infrastructure and community engagement work accomplished in 2015-2016, RTTT and district staff focused on refining data collection methods and continuing to build community partnerships.

In November 2016, PSESD facilitated a joint district-CBO data convening in which districts and their CBO partners reviewed registration data disaggregated by race, poverty and ELL status (provided by districts), reflected on registration trends overall and for key populations, and began planning for the 2017 registration campaign. Staff from all seven Road Map districts attended this convening, along with 15 community partners. Districts and their partners identified key populations that had disproportionately low early registration rates, and identified potential strategies for reaching out to those communities in partnership with CBO staff. This was the first time disaggregated registration data was used in planning, and districts have committed to sharing this data annually going forward.

These partnerships played a critical role in connecting districts to families who were not already part of the school system. CBOs are the trusted source of information for many key populations, and act as a conduit to connect families with young children to the district. To promote and support the development and sustaining of these partnerships, \$5,000 “mini-grants” were offered to districts and community partners during the 2016 registration campaign; these funds were distributed evenly to the district and their CBO partners at \$2,500 each.

All seven districts now have Early Learning Advisory Teams, bridging the early learning and K-12 sectors, and engaging community leaders and parents in PreK-3rd grade systems.

Additionally, all seven Road Map Districts were provided with an opportunity to send building administrators and central office staff to the University of Washington’s PreK-3rd Grade Leadership Institute. This 10-month program has been a transformational experience for building and district leaders throughout the region, and has been supported by Race to the Top. Five of seven districts utilized the funds to send staff to the institute.

STEM Strong

Personalized, highly-quality instruction for each and every student is the goal of the Develop Common Regional Data Portal and Data Sharing Agreements Project 2 (P2). Every district has different data capabilities to coordinate the collection of common data elements, facilitate the flow of that data from district to district and district to CBO as students move. P2 will enable a rapid and comprehensive transfer of educational student data when students move to a new district. To do this, P2 regional data system will connect isolated data sources and align data definitions across the region. P2 also increases data access for educators so they can improve programs and instruction for students.

The project activities for 2016-2017 focused on demonstrating the effectiveness and need for real-time data to community-based organization serving our youth in Seattle Public Schools. We met our goal of creating a Minimum Viable platform by April 2017 that would support real-time student data access to CBOs working with Seattle Public Schools (SPS).

The Student Success Link (SSL) data system is a critical infrastructure component required to support improved data-informed practices for community based organizations serving students in the Road Map region. SSL is built and is in need of technology maintenance to continue its basic operation with several community-based organizations (CBOs) in one school district (Seattle Public Schools).

In order for SSL to be at its full service, additional funding is needed to enable the on-boarding of additional CBOs providing services to SPS students. Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD), in partnership with outside agencies and/or grantors, will develop a new plan for SSL. The plan would include continuing and expanding SSL, along with funding support within the 2017-18 school year, and beyond, that would include detailed plans for its success.

Stay Strong

At the beginning of the reporting year, the contract for 2016-17 with Educurious, Create a Regional System for Career Awareness and Exploration (Project 5), was approved by the Executive Committee. Educurious delivered one year of Career-Connected learning to Race to the Top school districts and completed a number of contractual obligations including key sustainability milestones such as securing JPMorgan Chase funding for Career Connection, receiving a two-year \$400,000 grant.

The Educurious Summer Institute provided multiple ways for educators to provide students a firsthand look at a range of career possibilities, including: connecting with experts as students develop 21st century skills; addressing work-based problems with classroom mentoring support; conducting informational interviews; and facilitating links to classroom content and career awareness. The redesign of Educurious' Career Connection program was based on a core lesson of the 2016-17 year.

Educurious was featured in a *Crosscut* article that documented how Renee Poitras, a biology teacher at Kent-Meridian High School, integrates career-connected learning in her classroom. Ms. Poitras' students both collaborate in teams in order to simulate real-world career problem-solving and learn technology skills that are essential for career success.

Educurious participated in Governor Inslee’s Summit on Career Connected Learning on May 31, 2017. Sponsored by the National Governors Association, the Summit showcased Educurious’ work in virtual mentoring at Kent-Meridian High School. By facilitating virtual relationships with mentors around the country, Educurious could connect students and professionals in a wide range of fields. Preparations for the session highlighted key elements of this flexible and adaptive approach to mentoring and they are described below in lessons learned.

Foundational Elements

The collaboration with Community Center for Education Results (CCER) and PSESD’s Equity in Education to support the “Black Student Achievement Symposium” attracted City and District leaders, CBOs, and business from across the region to engage in conversations that highlighted promising practices and provided an opportunity for stronger connections and collaborations to build black student success.

The Deep Dive 3 work convened its first “Authentic Community-School Partnership Institute” which delved into the philosophy of, and had conversations about, changing the trajectory for ethnically diverse students’ educational experience with opportunity, and addressing gaps through community-school partnerships.

OneAmerica, one of the largest immigrant advocacy organization in Washington, launched its *Speak Your Language* campaign event to advance the fundamental principles of democracy and justice through building power in immigrant communities, and supporting bilingualism and retaining home language use with parents, students, educators and policy makers. The campaign seeks to promote the cognitive, social, and professional benefits of multilingualism, while distributing information about state resources for dual language learners for the purpose of closing the opportunity gap. <http://speakyourlanguage.org/about/>

Budget

In 2016, the no-cost extension 5th year, Puget Sound is expected to fully expend \$7,155,157 of allocated funding.

Lessons Learned

One of the most significant lessons learned in Year 5 has been the great power for change when a Consortium of Superintendents come together to support regional work, i.e., leading with racial equity and Kindergarten Registration. This process required a strong sense of vision, resolution and agreement to create a collective impact.

Second, the region learned tremendously about how to build authentic community-school partnerships, as described above. We expect to continue to learn more about how to facilitate partnerships in the coming year. It is essential to establish leading indicators of progress for community-school partnerships and teacher and leader professional development projects with hands on involvement from the beginning of the process.

Third, Districts are realizing that as beneficial as it is to have external partners to begin the work, building their own internal capacity of staff to continue similar work on its own will sustain the effort, both programmatically and financially.

Finally, coherence and deeper implementation happen when strategies are tied to district strategic or equity plans. A number of our districts have faced the challenge of losing key people over time who were charged with proposal implementation. As a way to counteract this reality, the majority of our districts have tied their proposals at their inception to either the district strategic plan or district equity plan. Also, districts that used a team approach rather than relying on one key person were more nimble in their approach to staff transitions.

Conclusion

Year 5 was a year of continuing sustainability planning for the Road Map Region Race to the Top grant. We prioritized ambitious yet achievable targets for decreasing the opportunity and access gaps for our ethnically diverse student population.

We now have detailed sustainability plans that are strategically incorporated into school districts' Strategic Plans and Comprehensive School Improvement Plans (CSIPs), and data is being used for evaluation and for planning and focusing work scopes to finish activities in the no-cost extension year and beyond. As our collective impact work continues, our theory of action for schools, CBOs, families and Road Map Superintendents continues to build on established projects.

As we close the grant years, the emphasis now is on the [Plan, Do, Study, Act](#) stages of the implementation process. Individually school districts engage in discussion on how to now integrate collaborative work into their systems, i.e., district Strategic Plans and CSIPs. School leaders and PSESD continue to be committed to continuing collective impact initiatives such as the Road Map Superintendent Consortium Learning Community, while explicitly leading with a racial equity lens, to advance what was started with RTT.