

**Selecting Outcomes
and Indicators**

**Selecting Community Level Outcomes and Indicators**

**Community Level Outcomes**

Community Level Outcomes measure a change in a community’s conditions that is anticipated as a result of an intervention. Outcomes may be short-term or immediate (the direct result of program activities), or may be intermediate (achieved as a result of other short-term outcomes). They are measures on the partnership's progress in achieving the community's cradle to career vision and goals.

To avoid the risk of “boiling the ocean,” criteria are often established to narrow a larger list of outcomes that is brainstormed by the Partnership and the community. Common criteria for selecting community level outcomes include:

* Community Ownership
* Leadership interest
* Staffing Capacity to Lead Work Related to Every Outcome
* Availability of Data: Consistent, Reliable, Disaggregated

**Indicators**

Indicators are measures of achievement. They define the measurement of important and useful information about the performance of a program or initiative. They may be expressed as a percentage, index, rate, ratio, or other numerical measure that permits comparison. Indicators are monitored at regular intervals and are usually compared to one or more criterion.

When selecting indicators, it is really important to fully engage and achieve complete ownership of the indicators to the organizations and collaboratives who have the ability to impact them. The indicators will not be successful if the people who are doing on-the-ground work do not agree that it is an appropriate measure for the outcome. A way to help identify and create agreement around indicators is establishing a set of criteria.

**Criteria for Selecting Indicators:**

* Is a valid measure of the outcome
* Is easily understandable to local stakeholders
* Is reasonably similar across region and school districts
* Produced by a trusted source
* Is affordable to gather and report
* Is available consistently over time
* Is changeable to a significant degree by local action, and be useful in the day to day work of collaboratives that are working to improve student outcomes