



StriveTogether®  
Every child. Cradle to career.

# Theory OF Action™

Getting better results for  
every child, cradle to career

**ABOUT STRIVETOGETHER**

StriveTogether is a national movement with a clear purpose: help every child succeed in school and in life from cradle to career, regardless of race, zip code or circumstance. In partnership with nearly 70 communities across the country, StriveTogether provides resources, best practices and processes to give every child every chance for success. The StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network reaches 13.7 million students and has partners in 29 states and Washington, D.C.

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The StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network is guided by the Theory of Action™. Built on lessons from Network members, the Theory of Action™ helps communities build and sustain cradle-to-career civic infrastructure. The Theory of Action™ consists of six gateways: exploring, emerging, sustaining, systems change, proof point and systems transformation. Within each of the gateways are a series of quality benchmarks that are key to developing and sustaining a partnership.

Meeting the quality benchmarks in the first five gateways puts a community on a path to systems transformation and improved economic mobility.

### The Four Principles

Partnerships implementing the Theory of Action™ effectively demonstrate four principles as they move from building a partnership to impacting outcomes:

**ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY**  
The work of partnerships must be grounded in the context of the community. Partnerships engage a broad array of community voices through building awareness and information sharing; involving and mobilizing the community toward improvement; and co-developing solutions and strategies with community members.

**ADVANCE EQUITY**  
Systemic inequities and opportunity gaps are defined by each partnership using local data and context. A combination of qualitative and quantitative data is used to highlight inequities to shift mental models, change power dynamics and establish more equitable policies in the community. Partnerships ultimately work to eliminate disparities in achievement and change systems to advance more equitable opportunities.

**DEVELOP A CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**  
Partnerships use local data, community expertise and national research to identify areas for improvement in a constant and disciplined manner that ensures that partners invest in practices that work.

**LEVERAGE EXISTING RESOURCES**  
Partnerships build on existing resources in the community and align them to maximize impact.

## Gateways

