### Core Concept

**Vision development and expansion**
- A clear vision for equitable cradle-to-career outcomes is co-developed by a cross-sector partnership — including Black, Indigenous, Latinx and Asian youth and families and those experiencing poverty.

**Partnership alignment and accountability**
- A diverse set of partners — inclusive of youth and family perspectives — are organized around a clear set of roles and responsibilities.

**Community-wide culture of data**
- The partnership identifies population-level indicators for measuring progress toward equitable cradle-to-career outcomes.

**Framework for collaborative improvement**
- Formal cross-sector workgroups, inclusive of youth and family perspectives, are established to advance equitable cradle-to-career outcomes.

**Scale and spread of institutional policies, practices and resources**
- Workgroups use data, including youth and family perspectives, to identify priority populations, underlying systems-focused factors and strategies to advance equitable outcomes.

**Development, advocacy and implementation of public policies and resources**
- The partnership engages with local, state and/or federal leaders who influence public policies and resources.

**Backbone operations and partnership talent strategies**
- A backbone is established and capacity to launch a cradle-to-career partnership is in place.

**Backbone and partnership fund development and sustainability**
- The partnership engages funders to support backbone operations and strategies to build civic infrastructure.

### Exploring

**Vision development and expansion**
- The partnership engages with organizations and residents from across the community to develop awareness of the cradle-to-career vision.

**Partnership alignment and accountability**
- Partners carry out their roles and responsibilities in support of the cradle-to-career vision.

**Community-wide culture of data**
- The partnership collects, analyzes and publicly shares data for cradle-to-career indicators — disaggregated by race, income, gender and other priority demographics.

**Framework for collaborative improvement**
- Workgroup members are clear about their roles and responsibilities in outcomes-focused efforts.

**Scale and spread of institutional policies, practices and resources**
- Partners take aligned action to shift policies, practices and/or power structures to advance equitable outcomes.

**Development, advocacy and implementation of public policies and resources**
- The partnership has the people, processes and technology to share and use data and technology enabled data sharing and use within and across partners.

**Backbone operations and partnership talent strategies**
- The backbone is equipped and staffed to support the long-term success of the partnership.

**Backbone and partnership fund development and sustainability**
- Multiple years of funding are secured to sustain backbone operations and strategies to build civic infrastructure.

### Emerging

**Vision development and expansion**
- The vision is championed by organizations across sectors.

**Partnership alignment and accountability**
- Community members are mobilized to advance equitable outcomes.

**Community-wide culture of data**
- The partnership publicly shares cradle-to-career indicators and systems indicators to assess progress, explore disparities and understand factors that affect cradle-to-career outcomes.

**Framework for collaborative improvement**
- Partners use data and collaborative improvement cycles to test and refine outcomes-focused strategies for adoption and adaptation.

**Scale and spread of institutional policies, practices and resources**
- Partners are equipped with capabilities to share and use data, including youth and family perspectives.

**Development, advocacy and implementation of public policies and resources**
- The partnership has the infrastructure necessary to develop and advocate for public policy change to advance equitable outcomes.

**Backbone operations and partnership talent strategies**
- The backbone is established and capacity to launch a cradle-to-career partnership is in place.

**Backbone and partnership fund development and sustainability**
- The partnership engages funders to support backbone operations and strategies to build civic infrastructure.

### Sustaining

**Vision development and expansion**
- A diverse set of organizations and community members demonstrate commitment to the cradle-to-career vision.

**Partnership alignment and accountability**
- Partners take ownership and responsibility for the partnership's successes and challenges.

**Community-wide culture of data**
- Youth and families are involved in cradle-to-career vision and strategy refinement.

**Framework for collaborative improvement**
- The partnership has the capacity to launch a cradle-to-career vision and strategy refinement.

**Scale and spread of institutional policies, practices and resources**
- Sharing and using data — including youth and family perspectives — is institutionalized within and across partners.

**Development, advocacy and implementation of public policies and resources**
- The people, processes and technology are sustained to facilitate data sharing and use within and across partners.

### Systems Change

- A diverse set of organizations and community members demonstrate commitment to the cradle-to-career vision.

- Partners take ownership and responsibility for the partnership's successes and challenges.

- Youth and families are collaborators in cradle-to-career vision and strategy refinement.

- Sharing and using data — including youth and family perspectives — is institutionalized within and across partners.

### Systems Transformation

- A culture of data use is alive and is sustained and spreads across the community.
A validated framework for place-based change: THEORY OF ACTION™

StriveTogether first released the Theory of Action™ in 2013 to provide communities with a road map for changing systems to improve outcomes for youth and families at scale. This framework for change is rooted in how the work happens in communities across the Cradle to Career Network. The framework evolves as network members learn together, building the civic infrastructure critical to getting better and more equitable outcomes for youth and families.

This latest iteration, the sixth revision to the Theory of Action™ since its launch, was informed by the experiences and perspectives of Cradle to Career Network members. It aims to provide greater clarity on the steps to building and sustaining civic infrastructure. The North Star for this work is putting more young people on a path to economic mobility, measured by population-level improvement across the seven cradle-to-career outcomes. To achieve this, communities must transform systems — making fundamental and institutionalized shifts in policies, practices, resources and power structures — so that Black, Indigenous, Latine and Asian youth and families and those experiencing poverty have the opportunity to reach their fullest potential.