



REPORT
June 2023

MENDING THE PATH

THE CENTRAL ROLE OF INTERMEDIARIES IN BUILDING EQUITABLE PATHWAYS FROM EDUCATION TO WORK



EQUAL
MEASURE

FINDING
PROMISE
FUELING
CHANGE

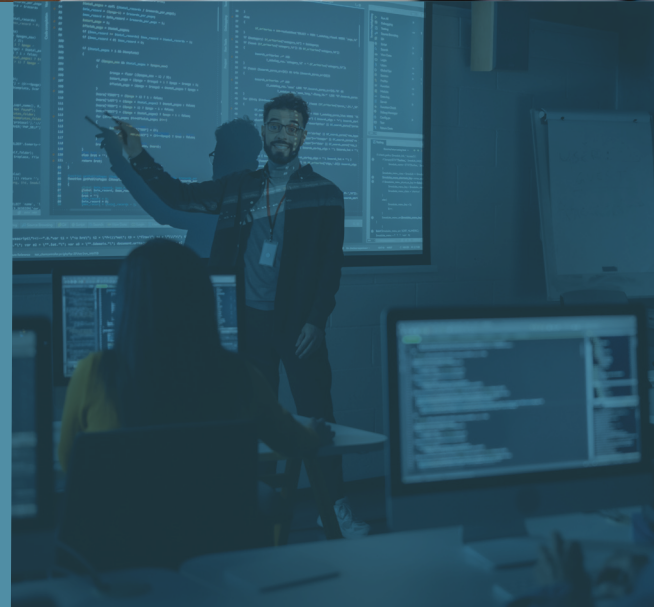




TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
About Building Equitable Pathways	5
Definitions of Key Terms	6
Intermediary-led Pathways: A Roadmap for Advancing Equity.....	7
I. Intermediary Activities	8
II. Shifts Among Sector Partners and in the Pathways Ecosystem	18
III. Improved and Equitable Learner Outcomes.....	23
Critical Junctures: Roadblocks and Openings.....	26
Data Collection and Use	26
Learner Engagement	28
Employer and Postsecondary Partner Engagement.....	29
Sustainability.....	30
On the Horizon: A Vision for Stronger Intermediary-led Pathways	30
Connected Data Systems	31
Meaningful Learner Engagement in Pathways Development	32
Deep Engagement of All Sector Partners.....	33
Financially Stable Intermediaries	34
Conclusion.....	35
Acknowledgements	38
Appendices.....	39
Appendix A: Data Sources, Methodology, and References.....	39
Appendix B: Equitable Pathways Intermediary Framework and Survey	43



INTRODUCTION

Stories of pursuing the “American Dream” often involve a seamless, predictable transition from school to college and, ultimately, to a well-paying, family-sustaining career. But across the United States, the links between K-12 schools, postsecondary education, and employment are fundamentally broken. Too many young people – particularly learners of color and learners experiencing poverty – are failed by fragmented systems and policies that do not support their transitions from high school into adulthood.

Virtually every step along the education-to-career journey showcases the barriers raised by our country’s history of systemic and structural racism. These gaps in access contribute to inequitable outcomes in both college completion and employment. A few examples:

- Learners of color and learners experiencing poverty tend to have less access than learners who are white and from higher-income families to **early college opportunities**, like Advanced Placement and dual enrollment courses, which support college-going.¹ Later on, underserved students are less likely to **enroll in postsecondary programs** and **earn degrees**.
- The opportunity gaps persist after college. White college graduates are more likely than Black and Latine² graduates to be **employed** after program completion, and they tend to earn more once hired.³
- The COVID-19 pandemic has widened racial disparities in learner outcomes. In 2020, just under five million young people between the ages of 16 and 24 were “**disconnected**,” neither enrolled in school nor working. This accounted for 12.6 percent of young people in that age bracket – an increase after a decade in which the youth disconnection rate steadily fell. These rates are worse when disaggregated by race: Native American youth’s disconnection rate topped 23 percent and the rate for Black youth was just under 20 percent.⁴

The school-to-work system needs to be reimagined so that all young people have access to equitable opportunities and experiences. Many institutions offer interventions and supports to learners along their education-to-career path, but they are too often siloed in one part of the system and do not consider transitions between systems. Young people need career pathways programming that connects their education and training with local job markets while system partners (K-12 schools, postsecondary institutions, and employers) need guidance and support to implement them.

Organizations across the U.S. are imagining communities in which all learners obtain skills, credentials, and networks that allow them to thrive in school, the workplace, and beyond. These organizations, known as **pathways intermediaries**, build partnerships across K-12, postsecondary, and employers to create sets of integrated structures and supports for helping learners successfully navigate from high school to a career with upward mobility.

- » Pathways intermediaries may be nonprofit organizations, workforce development boards, higher education institutions, and other entities that provide leadership and management capacity to enable sector partners to execute their individual and collective roles in pathways programming.



Pathways intermediaries play a central role in forging a new system in which K-12, postsecondary, and workforce partners collaborate to create conditions that lead to more learners of color and learners experiencing poverty completing education and securing good jobs.

The report synthesizes Equal Measure’s learnings over the course of our evaluation engagement conducted between 2019 and 2022. Our project sought to elevate the work of intermediaries and their influence on local, regional, and state pathways ecosystems. We aspire to make clear the essential activities intermediaries lead to advance systems change within their ecosystems, as well as the expected impact of these activities. Among other sources, our findings draw from the Equitable Pathways Intermediary Framework, a document created with intermediaries, and from the results of a 2022 survey administered to intermediary staff and their partners.⁵

The report is organized into three sections which present our evaluation findings and propose a vision for stronger intermediary-led pathways, including how funders, technical assistance providers, and evaluators can support that vision:

- I. Intermediary-led pathways: A roadmap for advancing equity**
- II. Critical junctures: Roadblocks and openings**
- III. On the horizon: A vision for stronger intermediary-led pathways**

The work of our thought partners, including Jobs for the Future (JFF), the Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness (CREC), Evan James Consulting (formerly Square Button Consulting), the Center for Innovation in Education, and Education First, intersects with our investigation, and we have integrated many of their insights into this report. This report is intended for funders, technical assistance providers, evaluators, and researchers who are supporting pathways intermediaries, as well as intermediaries and their partners who may find the insights useful as they reflect on their own efforts.



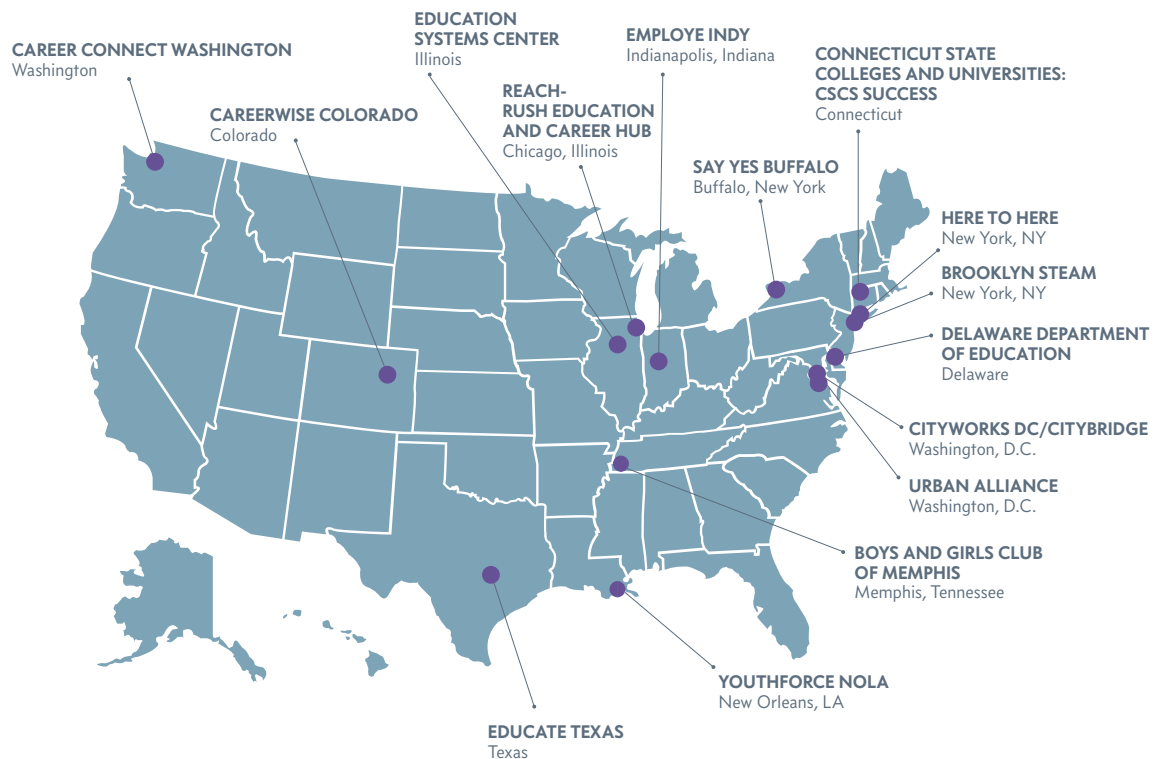
ABOUT BUILDING EQUITABLE PATHWAYS

Equal Measure’s work is situated in the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation’s Equitable Futures portfolio, which aims to increase access and participation in multiple high-quality local pathways that improve credential completion and drive positive labor market outcomes for learners who are Black, Latine, and/or experiencing poverty. To reach this goal, the foundation invested in the development, validation, and codification of exemplary models of pathways intermediaries that are connecting K-12 and postsecondary education with the private sector by coordinating and aligning education and career pathways. Equal Measure’s data collection and analysis examined intermediaries who participated in the Building Equitable Pathways (BEP) Community of Practice facilitated by JFF between fall 2019 and spring 2023. For more about the Community of Practice, visit <https://www.jff.org/what-we-do/impact-stories/building-equitable-pathways/>.

Who are the Building Equitable Pathways intermediary organizations?

A diverse typology of intermediaries has participated in the Community of Practice since 2019.

FIGURE 1
Participants in Building Equitable Pathways
Community of Practice





KEY TERMS

- **Equitable pathways:** The quality of pathways activities and system changes in working to disrupt organizational and institutional status quos and achieve fairness and justice for members of historically marginalized communities, including communities of color and low-income communities; the subsequent impact of these activities and changes in closing racial and socioeconomic gaps in education and career outcomes.
- **Intermediary/Pathways intermediary:** The non-profit organization, workforce development board, higher education institution, initiative within a larger organization, or other entity that provides leadership and management capacity to enable sector partners to execute their individual and collective roles in pathways programming. Pathways intermediaries sit at the center of an education and employment ecosystem, brokering partnerships and coordinating activities between K-12, postsecondary, and employers to increase equitable access to opportunities and paths to upward mobility for learners who are Black, Latine, and/or experiencing poverty.
- **Learners of color:** Individuals who identify as Black and/or Latino/a/x/e. Note: While the BEP initiative focused on learners of these two racial/ethnic backgrounds, the framework may apply to learners of other marginalized groups (e.g., Indigenous, Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander).
- **Learners experiencing poverty:** Individuals, ages 14-25, engaged in career and work-based learning pathways who experience difficulty accessing housing, food, health care, and other financial/wellness supports.
- **Pathways:** Sets of integrated, intentionally designed structures and supports for helping learners, regardless of their starting point, successfully navigate from high school to a career with upward mobility.
- **Pathways ecosystem:** The network of learners, frontline staff, system leaders, intermediary organizations, and sector partners who interact to advance their individual and collective interests.
- **Pathways programming:** The range of educational and career-related activities and supports that learners access and/or complete to obtain credentials and quality jobs.
- **Pathways system:** An intentionally designed sequence of aligned educational and work-based learning experiences that help learners explore, prepare for, and launch successful careers. (adapted from JFF, 2020)
- **Sector partner:** A sector-specific (e.g., K-12, postsecondary, workforce development, human services) individual or organization who works with the intermediary on pathways programming. For the Systems Changes section of the Equitable Pathways Intermediary Framework, “organization” refers to any entity (e.g., K-12 school, K-12 district, postsecondary institution, employer, non-profit organization, governmental agency) that is involved in the development, implementation, and/or funding of any pathways elements.
- **Systems change:** Shifts among the conditions—including structures, practices, policies, resource and communication flows, power dynamics, and mindsets—that produce educational and employment inequity. Systems changes should be in service to advancing equitable outcomes for learners through pathways. References to “learners” under the Systems Changes section of the Equitable Pathways Intermediary Framework relate specifically to learners who are Black, Latine, and/or experiencing poverty.



INTERMEDIARY-LED PATHWAYS: A ROADMAP FOR ADVANCING EQUITY

Before delving into the details of the Equitable Pathways Intermediary Framework and survey findings, we present three considerations:

» **Despite commonalities across them, no one-size-fits-all model exists for intermediaries.**

Each intermediary must respond and react to their local, regional, and/or state ecosystem's unique context. An intermediary may be a standalone nonprofit organization, workforce development board, a higher education institution, or another organization type. A landscape scan conducted by Education First determined "the structure and work of intermediaries are often influenced by the existing capacities and enabling conditions in a locality or state."⁶ JFF determined that an intermediary's role is influenced by both its own self-determined strategy and the ecosystem in which it operates.⁷ Internal factors include the type of organization the intermediary represents and its key priorities. Intermediaries consider their assets and strengths, other organizations operating in the ecosystem, and their areas of focus as they prioritize their resources and activities.

» **The complex activities that intermediaries carry out require strong teams.**

While organizational size varies, intermediaries typically comprise teams of people with varied disciplinary expertise (e.g., K-12 education, data science, workforce development, policy and advocacy) to support multiple workstreams within and outside the organization. Influential organizations have leaders and staff who are known and trusted in the community for their thought partnership and resourcefulness. Effective intermediary leaders hone dispositions (e.g., systems thinking), skills (e.g., communication), and ways of working (e.g., collaboration)⁸ to convene and influence system actors. It is common for these leaders to have long histories of working in the community.

» **No single organization must lead all the activities identified in the Equitable Pathways Intermediary Framework at once.**

While the intermediary's unique role is to convene partners and forge shared vision and accountability to learners, all other roles and functions can be shared across organizations that participate in the pathways partnership. For example, one organization may be well-positioned to take on the role of data lead based on its track record for collecting, analyzing, reporting on, and helping others to use labor market information. Another organization might have a strong policy arm and can assume leadership in helping the partners to strategize around a policy agenda for creating equitable pathways.

The remainder of this section is organized according to the three components of the Equitable Pathways Intermediary Framework:

1. Intermediary activities
2. Shifts among sector partners and in the pathways ecosystem
3. Improved and equitable learner outcomes



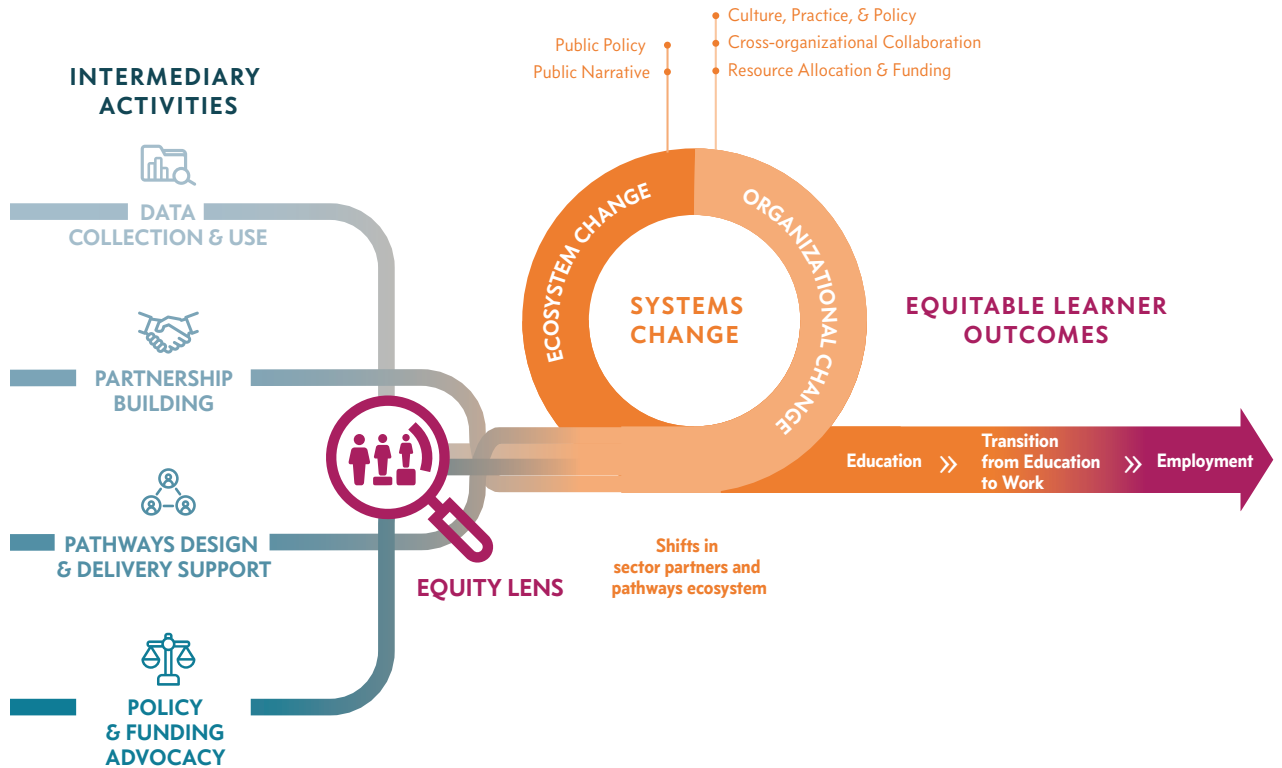
I. INTERMEDIARY ACTIVITIES

Intermediaries play a critical role in shaping and influencing pathways ecosystems. Across the field literature, several common roles and functions that intermediaries take on in their ecosystems have emerged.⁹ Perhaps the most prominent feature of intermediaries is the ability to convene cross-sector partners around a shared vision for education and career pathways. Intermediaries provide *connective tissue*, bringing together representatives from K-12 and postsecondary systems, local employers, and community-based organizations. They do this work because public entities that may otherwise coordinate cross-sector partners often fail in creating necessary alignment. By serving as a translator across sectors, intermediaries can help manage coordinating functions and bring greater alignment and transformation across systems.

The Building Equitable Pathways Intermediary Framework is a tool for understanding and advancing the work of pathways intermediary organizations. The Framework explores the multiple dimensions of intermediaries' work to enable systems change, conveying the essential activities for building pathways that prioritize learners who are Black, Latine, and/or experiencing poverty.

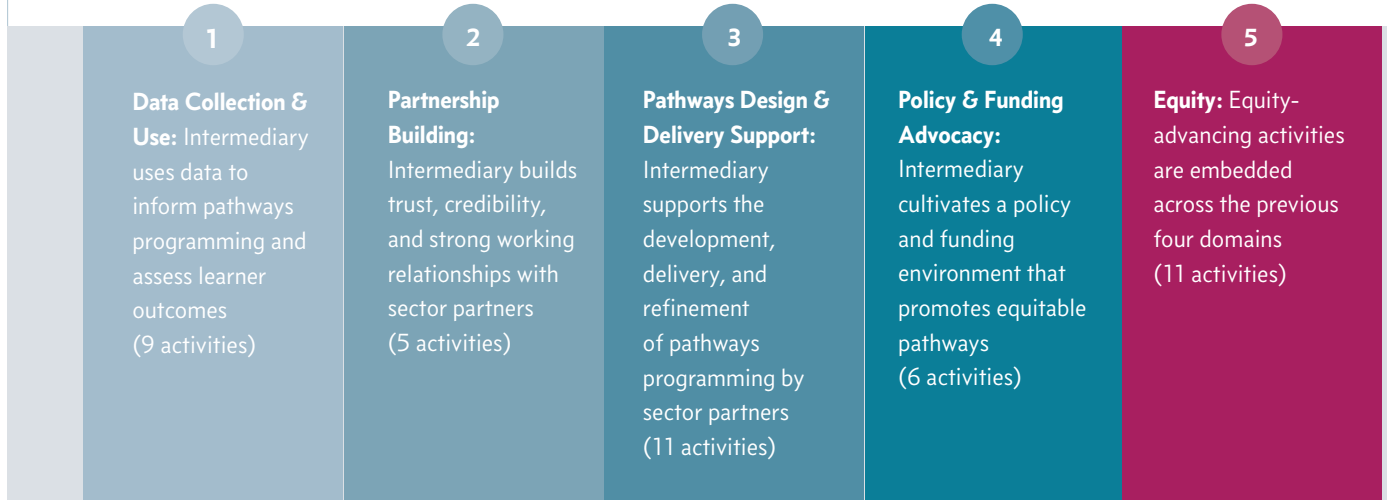
The Framework defines 31 intermediary-led activities that, in partnership with other organizations, may influence changes in those organizations and in the pathways ecosystem, contributing to equitable outcomes for learners. As the logic model in Figure 2 presents, intermediary activities and subsequent systems changes contribute to improved and more equitable learner outcomes.

FIGURE 2
Equitable Pathways
Intermediary Framework





Section I of the framework organizes the activities intermediaries lead and engage in across five domains or activity categories:



To better understand these activities, including their relevance to partners and intermediaries’ effectiveness in carrying them out, Equal Measure administered a survey to the staff and partners of a sample of eight BEP intermediary organizations during spring 2022 (Career Connect Washington, Careerwise Colorado, Educate Texas, Employ Indy, Education Systems Center, HERE to HERE, Urban Alliance, and YouthForce NOLA).¹⁰

In partnership with intermediaries, Equal Measure administered the survey to 210 respondents. The survey translated the 31 intermediary-led activities into 39 distinct items.¹¹ Respondents were asked to share their perspectives on the importance for the intermediary in leading each activity and the effectiveness of the intermediary in carrying out each activity using four-point scales.¹²

FIGURE 3
Response scales

INTERMEDIARY ACTIVITY RESPONSE SCALES		
	IMPORTANCE	EFFECTIVENESS
0	Not important	Not at all
1	Somewhat important	Somewhat well
2	Important	Well
3	Extremely important	Very well



Survey respondents identified 31 of 39 survey items across the activity domains as “core” intermediary functions. “Core” activities were collectively rated as most important, receiving an average score of 2.5 (out of three) or greater by respondents.

Nearly all (13 of 14) equity-related activity items in the survey (embedded across the four framework domains) emerged as “core.” Figure 4 presents the top three most important intermediary activities in each domain as rated by survey participants.

FIGURE 4
Top three activities identified as “most important” across each of the intermediary activity domains, intermediary staff and partner responses

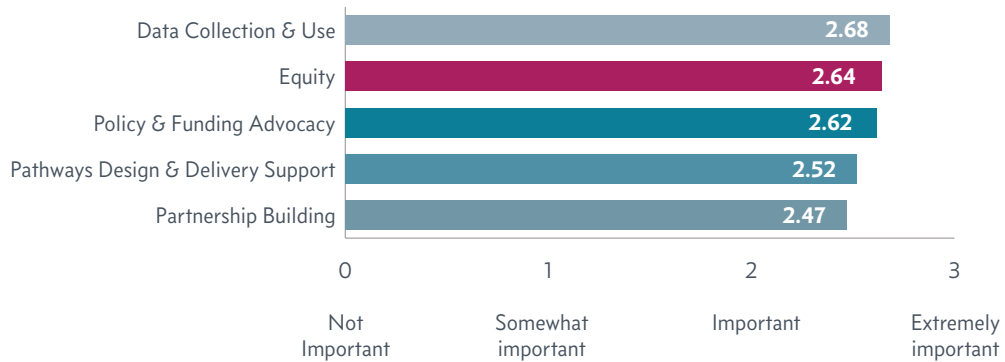
<p>DATA COLLECTION AND USE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses data to understand local labor markets and learner opportunities • Disaggregates data by race, ethnicity, and other relevant demographic characteristics to understand whether career pathways have an equitable impact* • Utilizes participant data to inform and refine program design
<p>PARTNERSHIP BUILDING</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulates a shared vision for enabling more learners of color and learners experiencing poverty to achieve educational and career success* • Articulates the value of collaborating with education and industry partners to my organization • Solicits feedback on its partnership from its stakeholders
<p>PATHWAYS DESIGN AND DELIVERY SUPPORT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designs career pathways programs where the identity and experience of all learners, including learners of color and learners experiencing poverty, are considered and valued* • Designs career pathways programming for learners with input from local employers • Designs career pathways programming for learners with input from learners of color, learners experiencing poverty, and their families*
<p>POLICY AND FUNDING ADVOCACY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocates for increased funding to support career pathways programs • Advances a policy agenda to support career pathways programs (e.g., to increase learner access, to address barriers that learners face)* • Builds relationships with champions (e.g., policymakers, state officials, policy advocates) to build support for career pathways ecosystems

*Included in the *Equity* domain



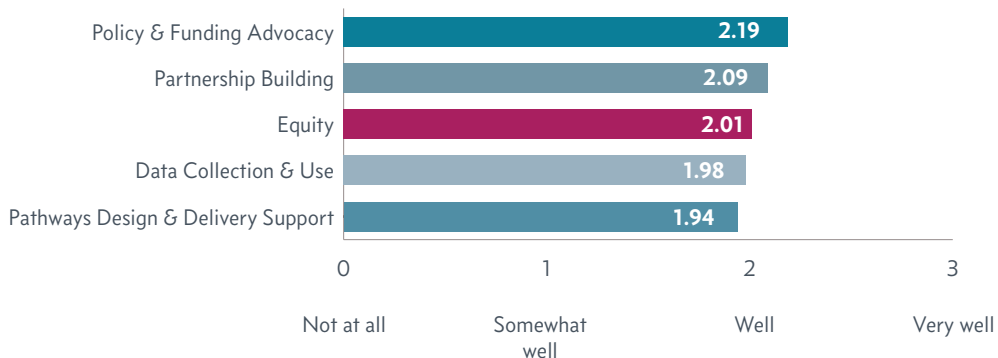
Data Collection and Use, Equity, and Policy and Funding Advocacy were reported as the most important areas of intermediaries' work. On average, intermediary staff and partners rated activities within each of the domains as relevant to the work of intermediaries (see Figure 5). Partners and intermediary staff placed high value on the work of intermediaries in each of these areas. Aggregate responses of importance of each domain varied between 2.47 and 2.68 (between “important” and “very important”) out of three. These findings are consistent across individual intermediaries as well as the full survey sample. Since 2021, “equity, data, and policy” have been the focus areas of the BEP Community of Practice, which engages 14 intermediary organizations around these topics as learning “strands.” These strands emerged through the first phase of the Community of Practice as levers intermediaries were using to move systems.

FIGURE 5
Average ratings of importance of activity domains to intermediary role, intermediary staff and partner responses



Intermediary effectiveness across the domains was rated highly. Respondents provided positive feedback on the work of intermediaries through their ratings of effectiveness, with all framework domains hovering around a score of two, signifying the activities being conducted “well” (Figure 6). Receiving the highest effectiveness score with a “2.5” was the item *articulating the value of collaborating with education and private sector partners to my organization* (Partnership Building).

FIGURE 6
Average ratings for effectiveness of activity domains, intermediary staff and partner responses

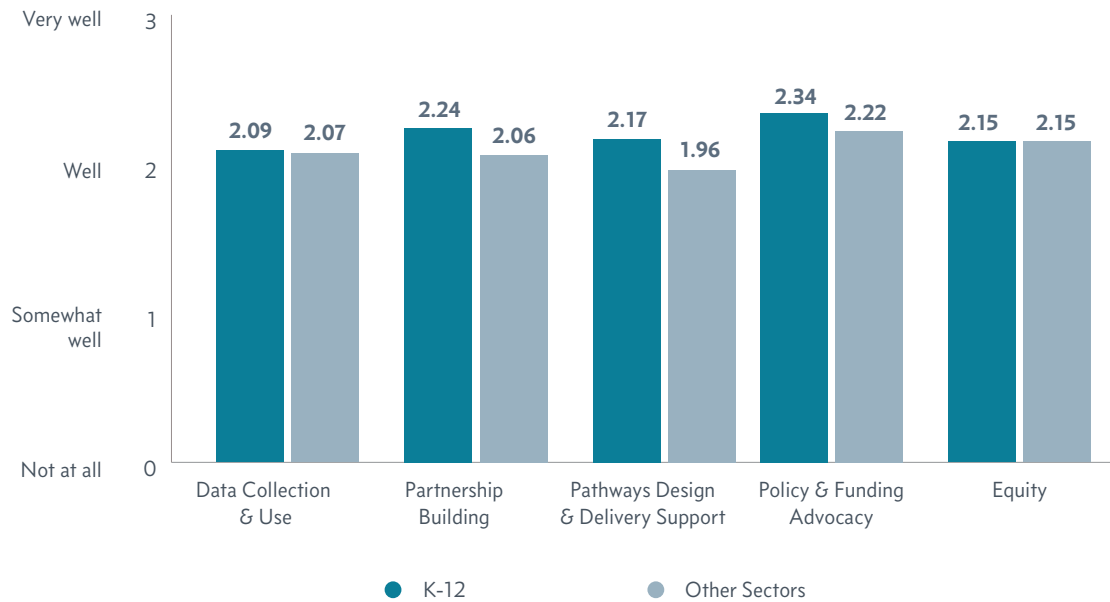




Effectiveness ratings appear to be influenced by partner type and geographic scope of the intermediary.

- K-12 partners typically provided higher effectiveness ratings than postsecondary and employer partners. K-12 partners, 71 percent of whom reported working closely or very closely with the intermediary, scored intermediary effectiveness higher than partners from other sectors along most domains (See Figure 7). Only 57 percent of partners outside of K-12 reported working closely or very closely with the intermediary. We suspect that degree of engagement – the extent to which the partner is familiar with the work of the intermediary and works regularly with intermediary staff – may influence a respondent’s effectiveness scores.

FIGURE 7
Activity domain effectiveness ratings by partners, K-12 versus other sectors



- Staff and partners of local and regional intermediaries rated effectiveness in all activity domains significantly higher than statewide intermediaries. Organizations focused on influencing local and regional pathways ecosystems (e.g., Employ Indy, HERE to HERE, YouthForce NOLA, and Urban Alliance) received significantly higher scores for the effectiveness of their activities compared to statewide organizations. One hypothesis is that regional intermediaries typically have deeper relationships with their partners than statewide intermediaries because they work in closer proximity to and more frequently with them. Closer proximity translates to partners being more exposed to the work of the intermediary and therefore more appreciative of the intermediary’s efforts. Another explanation is that activities at the state level may take longer to manifest into results than local and regional initiatives. More investigation is needed to explore this difference as well as the difference between K-12 and other sectors described above.



What are the features of strong and aligned partnerships?

In 2020, Equal Measure conducted interviews with intermediary staff and sector partners to understand the essential intermediary activities for building equitable pathways, and from those gleaned the qualities of strong and aligned partnerships between intermediaries and partners across K-12, postsecondary, and workforce development. Our understanding is codified through the five activities under the **Partnership Building** activity domain and the **Cross-Organizational Collaboration** systems change domain of the **Equitable Pathways Intermediary Framework**.

We learned intermediaries support cross-sector collaboration best when they can “speak the language” of partners and serve as a translator across sectors, when they take on project management tasks to coordinate partnership efforts, and when they identify and facilitate a range of meaningful engagement opportunities for K-12, postsecondary, and employer partners.

Partners are not just from organizations; they are also the learners who enroll in programs seeking education and career advancement. Many of the equity-specific activities in the framework call attention to building relationships with learners as critical partners in the building of pathways systems.

We learned external conditions influence strong and aligned partnerships. One condition is whether an educational institution or employer can articulate how their participation with the pathways partnership aligns with their own mission, vision, and values. Education partners and employers must view themselves as talent producers and co-designers in talent development, rather than simply talent consumers. Leaders and champions for accelerating the pathways work in the K-12, postsecondary, and employer spaces are also essential to the work.



EQUITABLE PATHWAYS INTERMEDIARY FRAMEWORK SPOTLIGHTS

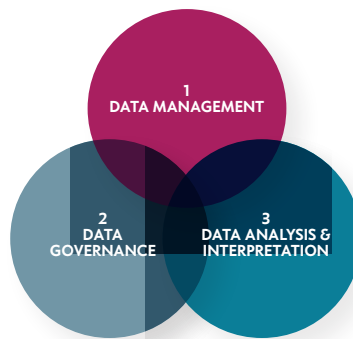
Below, we provide detailed takeaways on *Data Collection and Use*, *Equity*, and *Policy and Funding Advocacy*, which according to survey respondents, are the most important activity domains for intermediaries to conduct and are also focus areas of the BEP Community of Practice (CoP).

Spotlight on Data Collection and Use

Sector partners look to intermediaries for their ability to capture, analyze, and share information relevant to the work of both their individual organizations and the broader ecosystem. Data collection and use helps intermediaries identify and rally cross-sector partners around a shared vision for building equitable pathways and provide tools for charting their progress – effectively turning intermediaries into “mirrors” for their community. It is typical for intermediaries to publish reports to the community based on pathways data. For example, Education Systems Center at Northern Illinois University provides a webpage on its “Data Impact and Leadership” work.

The Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness (CREC) identified three data capabilities that intermediaries contribute to the pathways ecosystem: 1) data management, 2) data governance, and 3) data analysis and interpretation (See Figure 8). They note that these capabilities may be developed by other entities in the ecosystem and that “about half of the BEP CoP participants run their own programs or otherwise manage program data.”¹³ Pathways intermediaries typically have access to ample data, whether programmatic or public, yet they aspire to use it more effectively to tell compelling stories about what is happening in the pathways ecosystem and how to enhance partnership efforts to advance equitable learner outcomes.¹⁴

FIGURE 8
Data capabilities contributed by intermediaries



CREC’s findings reinforce what Equal Measure learned through its analysis. As noted in Figure 5, respondents rated *Data Collection and Use* as the most important activity domain for intermediaries.

“We aggregate data around performance... Right now, for youth apprenticeships, we’re building out a data dashboard that elevates and captures how the state is doing work-based learning and apprenticeships. Our goal is to support our partners in reaching their goals and have these types of data available across the entire state so people can measure outcomes and do better programs that are informed by data.”

—Intermediary Staff Member



Spotlight on Equity

Attention to equity must be deeply embedded across all activities to build pathways that uplift learners of color and learners experiencing poverty.

The Equitable Pathways Intermediary Framework and survey results draw attention to the necessity of intermediaries and their partners to adopt equity-centered mindsets and practices. Field partners, including JFF and Education First, assert that equity, defined in this context as closing gaps (e.g., achievement, attainment, income) such that race, ethnicity, or class do not predict one's success, must be prioritized in the work of pathways intermediaries.




“All of this [we do] through an equity lens. The system is working for high-income students; it’s working for white students. All of this is to support the students in [our state] for whom the system is not working, for students not getting postsecondary credentials...We’ve got a lot of work to do in closing those discrepancies.”

— Intermediary Staff Member

Equity should show up across all aspects of work – for example, in the shared vision of the partnership, the lens through which pathways are designed and partnership activities are led, and in staff conversations within the intermediary organization. According to JFF, “Early into the Community of Practice, it became clear that the racial equity lever must be prioritized within and across each lever to catalyze real change in pathways systems...[W]e reoriented our approach to better leverage data and policy as tools for amplifying racial equity in pathways.”¹⁵ Organizations engaged in pathways work, including intermediaries and their partners, technical assistance providers, and learning consultants, want to magnify the evidence that structural and systemic racism are at the root of inequitable outcomes – and that strategies to improve outcomes must be explicitly anti-racist. Figure 9 presents the 11 equity-specific activities in the Equitable Pathways Intermediary Framework.



FIGURE 9
What does it look like when an intermediary applies an equity lens?

<p>Data Collection and Use</p> 	<p>When developing local labor market pathways, intermediary applies understanding of the goals, assets, needs, and systemic barriers faced by learners of color and learners experiencing poverty.</p> <p>Intermediary disaggregates sector data by race, ethnicity, and other relevant demographic characteristics to identify needs and ensure career pathways have an equitable impact.</p>
<p>Partnership Building</p> 	<p>Intermediary communicates to sector partners the value of partnerships across K-12, postsecondary, and employers in creating more equitable pathways.</p> <p>Intermediary builds shared understanding about learner needs and commitment to prioritize learners of color and those experiencing poverty.</p>
<p>Pathways Design and Delivery Support</p> 	<p>Intermediary incorporates input and feedback from learners and families in the development of curricula, program design, and learner experiences.¹⁶</p> <p>Intermediary develops culturally responsive and equity-focused quality standards for career pathways programming providers.</p> <p>Intermediary provides culturally responsive and equity-focused training and technical assistance to sector partners.</p> <p>Intermediary connects partners to human service providers who can help learners successfully complete career pathways programs.</p>
<p>Policy and Funding Advocacy</p> 	<p>Intermediary implements a policy agenda to change local, state, and/or federal policies to improve equitable pathways for learners of color and learners experiencing poverty.</p> <p>Intermediary elevates the voices, experiences, and perspectives of learners of color and learners experiencing poverty to influence policymakers and policy advocates.</p> <p>Intermediary works to align public and private funding to strategies that advance equitable outcomes.</p>



JFF offers additional considerations for how intermediaries and their partners can embed equity:¹⁷

- Intentionally **locating the intermediary organization in communities that have been marginalized** and face barriers to academic and economic opportunities.
- Increasing **culturally responsive outreach, access, and engagement** for young people of color and young people experiencing poverty in opportunities such as dual enrollment, work-based learning, and college and career pathways.
- **Disrupting discriminatory placement of young people of color** in pathways that lead to low-wage jobs without career growth potential.

Spotlight on Policy and Funding Advocacy

In addition to emerging as one of the most important activity domains, Policy and Funding Advocacy was also rated the most effective area of intermediaries' work. The domain draws attention to the necessary structural change work that intermediaries lead to mend broken pathways. As Education First has noted, intermediaries are critical leaders in advocating for policies that incentivize and enable cross-sector collaboration. Sector partners lean on intermediaries to advocate for increased funding and advance a policy agenda to support career pathways programs. Influential intermediaries will also leverage their relationships with policymakers, state officials, and policy advocates to build support for career pathways ecosystems. Based on our survey results, staff and partners believe that intermediaries are delivering on these activities.

“At the state level...we set things up so that there is policy collaboration. One example is that when a state is writing a new definition of ‘pathway’, it aligns with something done in the past so things overlap and sync.”

—Intermediary Staff Member

Intermediaries play an important role in effectively advocating for equitable pathways policy and funding, drawing upon their partnership and collaborative strengths. Intermediaries' role in coalition building and cross-sector collaboration allows them to be uniquely additive to policy and funding advocacy efforts. These strengths include building relationships with influential decision makers, advancing a policy agenda to support equitable career pathways programs, sharing data and research with community leaders and decision makers to advocate for policy change, and influencing the allocation of funding toward organizations and efforts that advance equitable pathways. Some intermediaries hire dedicated staff members focused on policy advocacy while others partner with seasoned policy advocates who help to build and drive a shared policy agenda in support of equitable pathways within their state or region.



The Building Equitable Pathways Community of Practice is working on state-level policy advocacy.

JFF and the intermediaries currently involved in the Community of Practice have developed a state policy framework outlining 12 key policy issues that states can pursue to disrupt educational achievement gaps and occupational segregation.¹⁸ The 12 issues are grouped into three pillars:

1. Foundational conditions for uncovering and disrupting educational achievement gaps and occupational segregation;
2. Pathways policies for advancing equitable outcomes; and
3. Ecosystem enablers to foster regional collaboration toward racial equity.

The state policy framework includes examples from states that are engaging in these efforts. This is an example of research that intermediaries can share with state agencies and policymakers to encourage policy change in their regions.

By leading and organizing activities focused on Data Collection and Use, Partnership Building, Pathways Design and Delivery Support, Policy and Funding Advocacy, and Equity across sectors, intermediaries strive to influence system partners in ways that lead to more equitable outcomes for learners.

II. SHIFTS AMONG SECTOR PARTNERS AND IN THE PATHWAYS ECOSYSTEM

By engaging in the activities described in the Equitable Pathways Intermediary Framework, intermediaries facilitate changes among sector partners and in the broader pathways ecosystem.

Below, we detail the types of organizational and ecosystem changes intermediaries support, along with the assets and opportunities for growth demonstrated by members of the Building Equitable Pathways Community of Practice. Here, “systems change” refers to changes in partner organizations and in the broader pathways ecosystem.

Shifting Organizational Practices to Expand Access to Pathways

From schools and districts to colleges and employers, organizations play a critical role in how young people progress along their career pathways. Through their policies, resource allocations, and public communications, organizations and institutions can expand access for learners. At the same time, their practices can create new and perpetuate existing barriers for learners attempting to navigate employment options and opportunities. Unnecessary degree requirements for employment, unpaid internships, and limited transportation are examples of organizational practices and decisions that create barriers for learners’ participation in career pathways programs.

“We are re-imagining what our upper grade (11th and 12th grade) experience could be for students.”

— Intermediary Partner



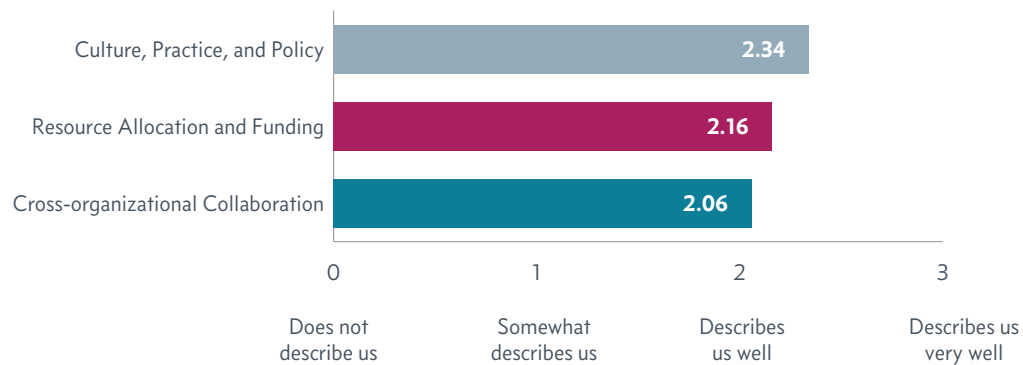
By working to shift organizational practices, intermediaries can address the impact of these gatekeeping practices. Intermediaries facilitate organizational change among sector partners in the following ways:

- *Organizational Culture, Practice, and Policy Changes*: Partners change their dispositions, beliefs, and ways of working to expand access for learners and increase learner participation in pathways.
- *Increases in Cross-organizational Collaboration*: Partners engage in new or increased collaborative efforts with other organizations to create a more aligned, cohesive, and equitable pathways ecosystem.
- *Changes in Resource Allocation and Funding*: Partners dedicate financial resources, staff, and other resources to better support pathways implementation and learners.

Sector partners reported progress related to indicators of organizational change, with *Culture, Practice, and Policy Changes* emerging as the strongest domain.

Through their survey responses, partners shared several examples of change they have experienced through their work with intermediaries (Figure 10). Examples include changes in practices (e.g., changing hiring practices, providing transportation to learners, and implementing feedback systems), *policies* (e.g., issuing credit for internships and loosening requirements for bringing on apprentices), and *narratives* (e.g., valuing equity and diversity and shifting ideas about their role in the ecosystem). Intermediaries also supported partners' capacity to engage in pathways work – including recruiting learners, sharing resources to support learners, and facilitating connections to other organizations. Intermediary partners rated all but one of the items within *Culture, Practice, and Policy Changes* as “describes us well,” signaling these organizational shifts among partners are underway.

FIGURE 10
Average ratings for indicators of organizational change by domain, partner responses





Partners indicated they have established organizational values and commitments to build equitable pathways. The most evidenced organizational changes among partners relate to *organizational beliefs and dispositions* (Figure 11). They include recognizing that *learners need both classroom and applied work* to be career ready (average partner score = 2.73), publicly *committing to making career pathways more equitable* (2.5), *articulating a responsibility in preparing learners for career pathway success* (2.48), and *undergoing cultural change to become a more inclusive environment for learners* (2.31).

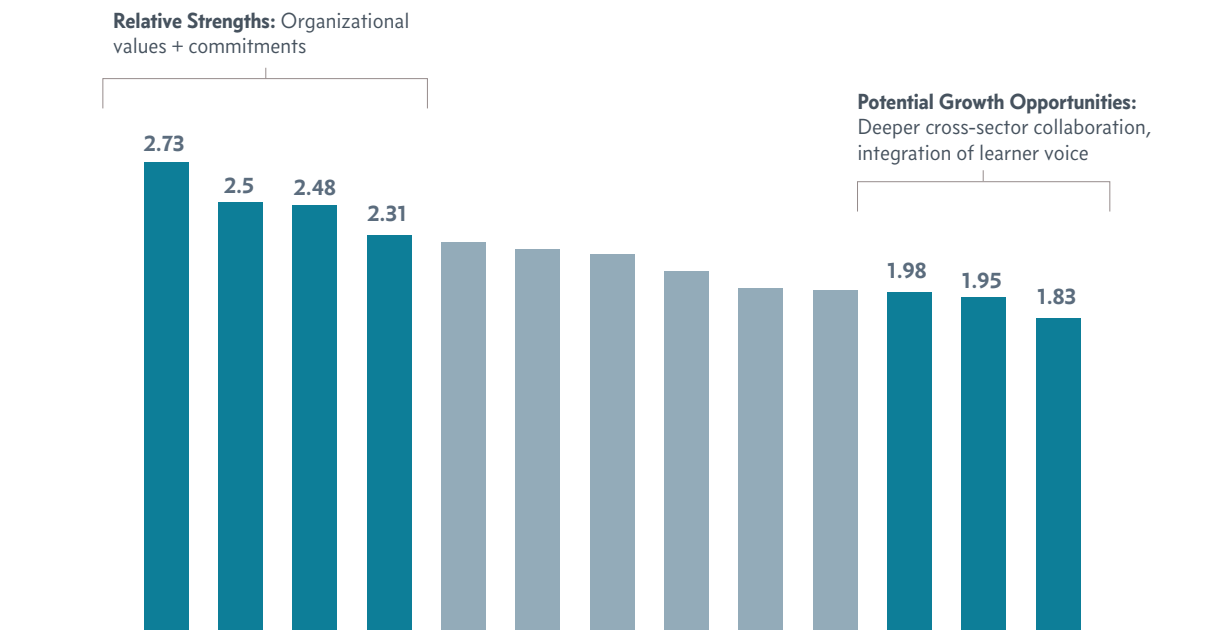
These shifts in narratives are important precursors to deeper systems change and may signal a readiness among organizations to not only examine their practices but also change them to expand access to learners of color and learners experiencing poverty. For partners, mindsets and commitments are more prominent than changes in practice, such as deep cross-sector collaboration and integration of learner voice. Partners reflected that intermediaries could facilitate collaboration among organizations and usher through a more coordinated pathways system. Through survey feedback, sector partners rated intermediaries as effective in *articulating the value of collaborating with education and industry partners* and in *articulating a shared vision around equitable pathways* – foundational elements of a coordinated pathways system.

“Our organization has a better understanding of what a youth apprenticeship is.”

— Intermediary Partner

FIGURE 11

Average ratings for indicators of organizational change: Strengths and growth areas highlighted across the 13 organizational change survey items

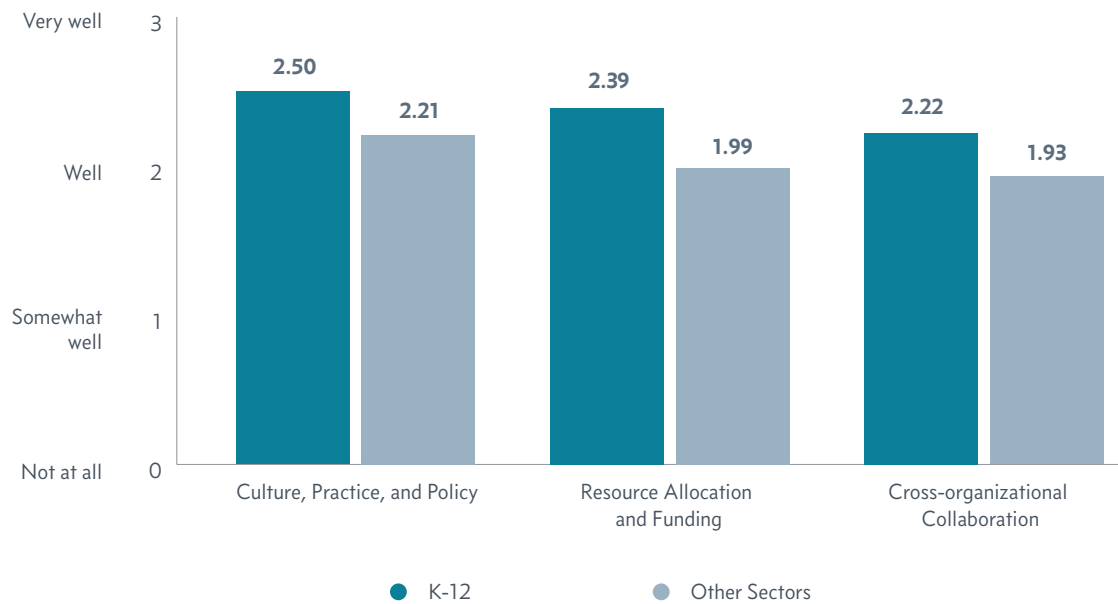




K-12 partners reported higher ratings for change within their organizations compared to postsecondary and employer partners.

Progress in organizational change indicators was not shared equally across the sectors with which intermediaries partner (Figure 12). Across all domains, K-12 partners reported greater evidence of organizational change than other sectors.

FIGURE 12
Organizational change ratings: K-12 in comparison with other sectors, partner responses



Intermediaries’ relationships with their sector partners may influence the extent to which partners recognize and realize change. Through deeper relationships with sector partners, intermediaries become more likely to understand their partners’ needs, challenges, and opportunities. As noted earlier, K-12 partners reported working more closely—and perhaps more purposefully—with intermediaries than partners from other sectors, a potential explanation for K-12 partners’ elevated scores.

“[The partnership] informed some of our approaches to CTE implementation... We have attempted to build in [work-based learning] more intentionally in the adult education space as well as the CTE space.”

—Intermediary Partner



Facilitating Ecosystem Change to Forge More Equitable Pathways

A pathways ecosystem represents the broader environment – including the social, political, and cultural context – in which the pathways work operates. By facilitating change in the broader ecosystem, intermediaries can help address racial and socioeconomic inequities at their historical or structural root. Intermediaries can encourage two types of ecosystem change to advance career pathways and opportunities for learners:

- **Public Policy Changes:** Public policies are modified or enacted that expand pathways opportunities for learners.
- **Public Narrative Changes:** Public perceptions shift about learners of color, learners experiencing poverty, and the broader system of access and opportunity as it relates to education and workforce development.

The relationship between intermediary activities and systems change—especially ecosystem change—is still emerging. Results from our analysis of survey data offer promising, yet early, insights on the extent to which intermediary activities may influence systems change. We conducted correlational analyses of the strength of relationships between intermediary activity effectiveness ratings and ratings for indicators of organizational and ecosystem change. **Intermediary activities showed a modest, yet still positive and statistically significant, relationship with several of the system change items.** In this early analysis, *Policy and Funding Advocacy* work presents the strongest link to systems change items. The *Policy and Funding Advocacy* domain shared a positive correlation with ten out of 13 organizational change items and all five ecosystem change items in the survey. This analysis was based on a small sample of eight intermediary organizations with 210 respondents. A more robust analysis would include a much larger sample of sites.

Intermediary staff and partners from all sectors reported low evidence of ecosystem change – although such changes take time to unfold. Ecosystems are complex and multifaceted. Efforts to shift ecosystems tend to require long periods to be realized and involve the efforts of multiple organizations and actors. **We should consider a longer time horizon when assessing intermediaries’ efforts to shift ecosystems.** Intermediary staff and sector partners rated each indicator of ecosystem change low, signaling a lack of noticeable change occurring in communities (Figure 13).

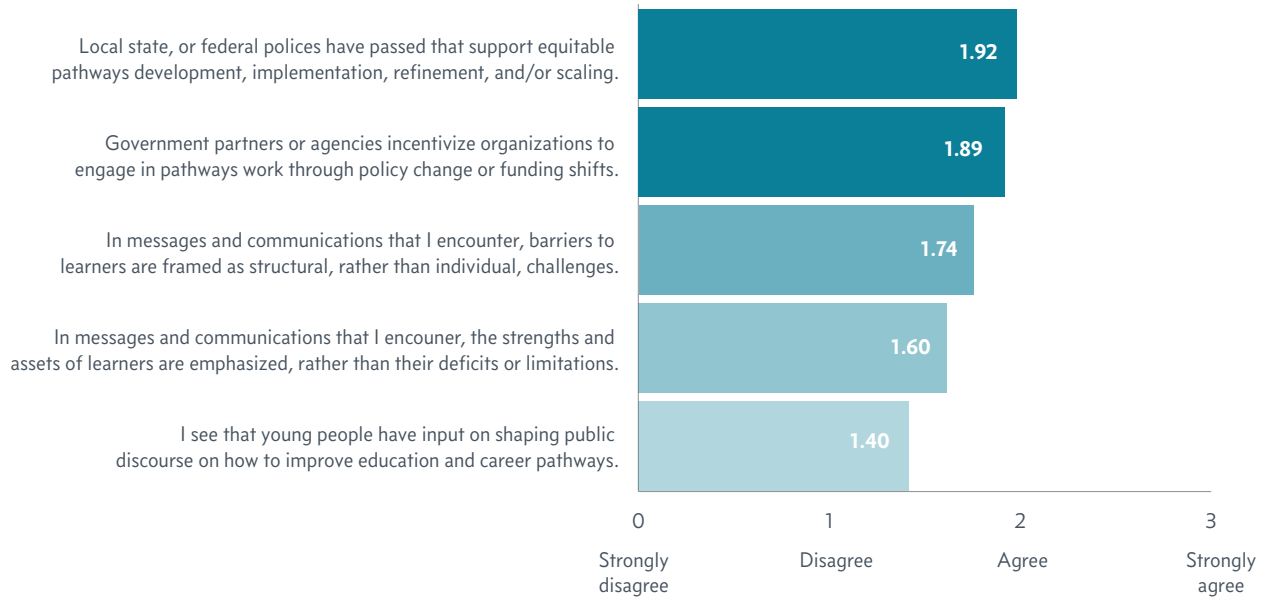
Notably, the indicators related to youth voice and the narrative about learners were rated especially low. Respondents reported that young people are not shaping public discourse on how to improve education and career pathways. They perceive a lack of progress in shifting public perceptions away from white dominant cultural norms that proclaim an individual’s success in life is typically the responsibility of the individual rather than the responsibility of an individual’s community. Respondents also perceive lack of recognition for the strengths and assets that young learners can contribute to society.



While complex systems change takes time to manifest, intermediaries are finding more immediate success in shifting the organizational culture and practices of sector partners.

FIGURE 13

Average ratings for indicators of ecosystem change, intermediary staff and partner responses

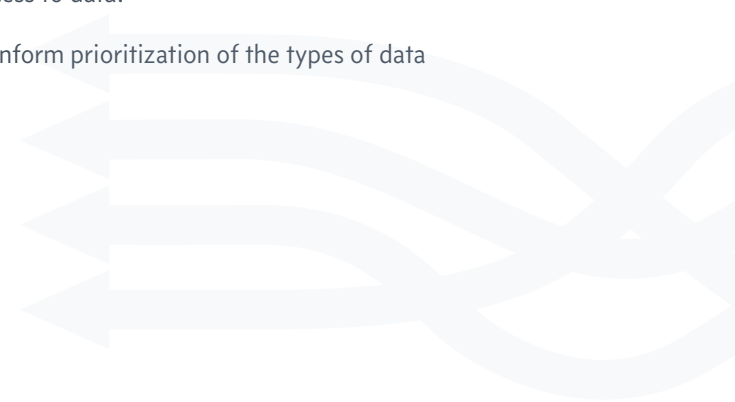


III. IMPROVED AND EQUITABLE LEARNER OUTCOMES

In 2020, Equal Measure conducted a cohort-wide data inventory and led interviews with the data leads of the seven intermediary organizations in the BEP Community of Practice at that time. We set out to understand which short- and long-term outcomes intermediaries and their partners were monitoring. We compiled the intermediaries' data inventories, exploring consistency across sites in the focus areas and in the specific indicators being tracked within each focus area.

Our investigation revealed a great deal of variation in the learner outcomes that intermediaries monitor, related to local context. Primary factors include:

1. Local, state, and federal requirements for which data K-12 and postsecondary institutions collect – and related to this, availability of and access to data.
2. Differences in pathways focus and design, which inform prioritization of the types of data that intermediaries and their partners collect.





Because the intermediaries work in partnership with many different entities, it is common for them to not “own” learner data. Intermediaries need to collaborate with partners to access participation and outcomes data. They may need to establish MOUs, data-sharing agreements, or articulation agreements. Tracking longitudinal data is currently cumbersome, expensive, and incomplete. These factors affect the capacity of intermediaries and their partners to collect, share, and use data that informs partnership efforts focused on building equitable pathways.

Intermediary-led partnerships also continue to explore what data is meaningful and what type and level of metrics really matter in their work. For example, which outcomes are more important: a pathway program’s alumni employment outcomes or outcomes based on a regional analysis of workforce data? Intermediaries are critical for supporting sensemaking about the data and shifts toward more useful analyses that help to strategize for the future, not just respond to the current state.

The COVID-19 pandemic created challenges and opportunities for tracking learner outcomes data, especially related to employment. Unemployment surged, which resulted in heightened national and local attention to labor data, including which industries and populations were most affected. The American Rescue Plan Act infused state, local, and tribal governments with funding to extend unemployment insurance, among other efforts. The pandemic also led to a surge in remote internships and employment, resulting in opportunities to work across state boundaries, and complicating labor and employment data.

Pathways intermediaries are especially interested in learner outcomes signifying progress from education to work that can be disaggregated by race and ethnicity. One example is participation in work-based learning and career and technical education opportunities, which offer exposure and help prepare learners for the world of work. Through these experiences, careers become less opaque to learners as they develop more concrete understandings of specific occupations.

Another useful example is the transition from high school to postsecondary by monitoring “momentum metrics,” which help predict postsecondary preparation, retention, and success.¹⁹ Intermediaries are emphasizing these metrics to high school and postsecondary educators and administrators who can target supports for individual students to ensure that students successfully transition from high school to postsecondary.

Figure 14 presents 20 outcomes across the areas of *Education*, *Transitions from Education to Work*, and *Employment*. The outcomes stem from performing an inventory of learner outcomes across BEP organizations and a variety of research-based sources.

Improved and equitable learner outcomes diminish race and class as predictors of educational attainment and career success.

Many of these outcomes are “traditional” (e.g., high school graduation rate) for which data may be readily available because of longstanding requirements to track them. Others, particularly those under the *Transitions from Education to Work* area, are less traditional and especially relevant for intermediary-led pathways seeking equity markers.

Intermediaries can leverage disaggregated data to determine whether and the extent to which achievement gaps are closing. Intermediaries and their partners may track outcomes at the individual and/or community/local population levels. Given the systems change focus of the Equitable Pathways Intermediary Framework, Equal Measure presents learner outcomes at the *community* level.



FIGURE 14
Inventory of community-level learner outcomes by education, transitions from education to work, and employment

S=short-term (achieved in ~ six months); L=long-term (achieved in six+ months)

AREA	LEARNER OUTCOMES—RATES IN THE COMMUNITY
 EDUCATION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High school enrollment ^S 2. High school attendance ^S 3. Promotion and retention in high school ^{S,L} 4. Graduation from high school or high school equivalency ^{S,L} 5. Completion of college and FAFSA applications ^S 6. Enrollment in postsecondary education, particularly “college match” schools ^{20, S} 7. Promotion and retention in postsecondary education, including completion of gateway courses ^{S,L} 8. Completion of postsecondary education ^L
 TRANSITIONS FROM EDUCATION TO WORK	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Successful career transition after high school ^{21, S} 10. Awareness of work-based learning (WBL), career technical education (CTE), and other career and training opportunities ^S 11. Enrollment in WBL and CTE programs, including paid and unpaid internships, apprenticeships, and job shadows ^S 12. Enrollment in advanced and early college courses, including advanced placement and dual enrollment ^S 13. Enrollment in technical training programs, including certificate programs aligned with labor market demand ^{S,L} 14. Completion of WBL and CTE programs, including paid and unpaid internships, apprenticeships, job shadows, and production of digital portfolios of work ^{22, S, L} 15. Industry-specific technical competency development ^{23, F, S, L} 16. Certifications or industry-recognized credential attainment ^L 17. Soft skills development ^{24 S, L}
 EMPLOYMENT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. Employment in lifetime or springboard jobs ^{25 F L} 19. Wages post-graduation ^L 20. Professional and social network development that supports career advancement toward lifetime or springboard jobs ^L

Monitoring learner outcomes, especially focused on the transition from education to work, is a critical contribution of intermediaries and helps hold partners accountable to building equitable pathways.



CRITICAL JUNCTURES: ROADBLOCKS AND OPENINGS

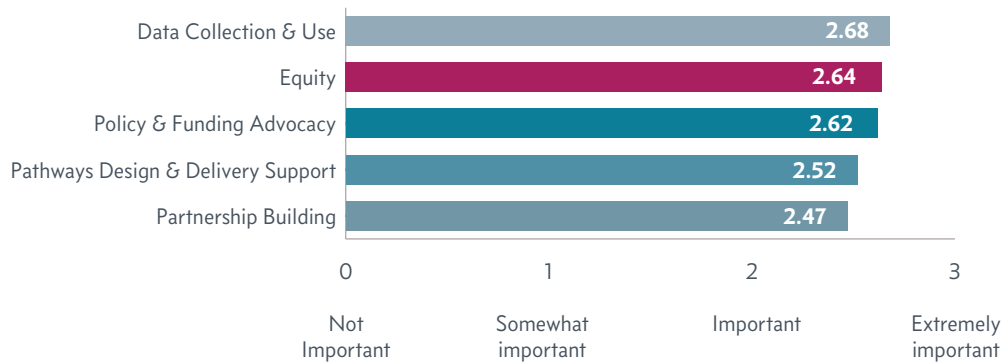
In this section, we describe salient challenges and opportunities for intermediaries and their pathways partnerships, drawing from survey results and reflections from field partners, including JFF, CREC, Evan James Consulting, and Education First.

DATA COLLECTION AND USE

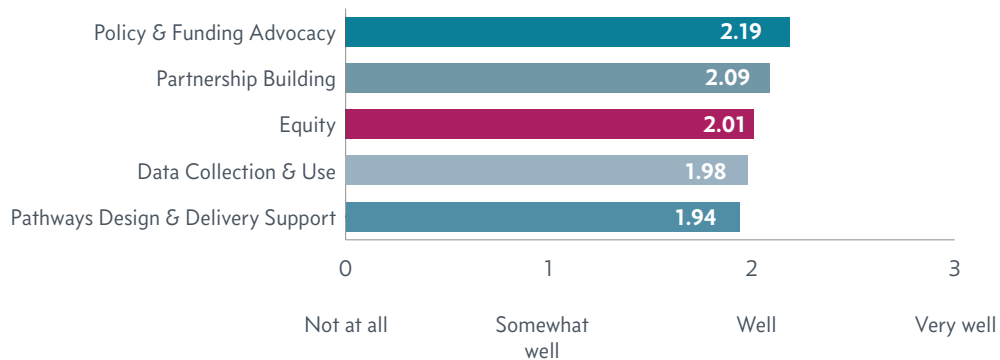
Intermediaries and their partners commonly experience challenges with data collection and use, including issues with data sharing and tracking longitudinal data. As shown in Figure 15, intermediary staff and partners rated *Data Collection and Use* as the most important domain of activities for the intermediaries to conduct; however, it ranked fourth out of five activity domains in intermediary effectiveness.

FIGURE 15
Importance and effectiveness ratings of intermediary activities by domain, intermediary staff and partner responses

Importance for intermediaries to conduct each type of activity



Effectiveness of intermediaries in conducting each type of activity





The following data collection strategies emerged from our analysis as opportunities for growth for communities represented in the Community of Practice:

- **Cross-sector data sharing focused on learners.** Sharing data across sectors deepens collaboration across partners and allows for better understanding of learner progress and needs. Data that links learner progress within and across systems including K-12, postsecondary, and the private sector, is often limited. Cross-system data sharing is a complex process that requires strong collaboration, comprehensive data sharing agreements that allow individual learner data to be connected across systems, and the infrastructure to make this connection happen, such as through unique learner identification numbers that bridge systems.
- **Tracking longitudinal data about learners.** Tracking longitudinal data allows for greater understanding about learner progress through pathways, including where weak transitions lie across K-12, higher education, and employment. Long-term outcomes, including outcomes informed by employment and wage data, are elusive because these data are typically held at an administrative level by a state governmental agency, such as a department of labor or bureau of labor statistics. As CREC has noted, an intermediary's ability to develop relationships with state agencies to access data takes significant time, resources, effort, and trust building, especially when faced with legislative, political, and/or resource constraints to state agencies' ability to produce or share data. CREC names "the capabilities and capacity of state agencies to produce and share or otherwise activate the data" as a major roadblock for the tracking of longitudinal data.

Intermediaries can be effective advocates for pursuing longitudinal data in their ecosystems. They can also be critical partners in bridging data across systems. Intermediaries need support to advance these activities since data availability and access require collaboration across multiple organizations at the local, regional, and state levels. Funders and other influential partners can broker relationships between intermediaries and entities that hold important data points, and they can advocate for data availability and access alongside intermediaries in their states or regions.



LEARNER ENGAGEMENT

While intermediary staff and their partners view learner engagement in pathways development as very important, they want to connect with learners more meaningfully and effectively. By centering learner experience and perspective, programming can be more responsive to participants' needs and preferences, and partnerships can ground data and policy work in the learners' lived experiences. Our survey findings show staff and partners deem multiple learner engagement activities as important but not conducted as effectively as other activities. Some of these important but less-effectively conducted activities include:

- *Designing career pathways programming with input from learners of color and learners experiencing poverty, and with their identities and experiences in mind*
- *Including and elevating the voices of learners of color and learners experiencing poverty in policy advocacy efforts*
- *Collecting and sharing feedback from learners of color and learners experiencing poverty about their experiences with career pathways programming*

Opportunity abounds for intermediaries to empower learners by engaging them in the refinement of pathways programming in which they are participating, interpreting and sharing data, and being involved in advocacy and policy work.

CREC and JFF have gleaned similar insights. For example, JFF convened Community of Practice members around the problem of practice of “changing approaches to engagement to ensure that the partners engaged and the nature of the partnership themselves are oriented toward prioritizing youth voice and experience.” Washington STEM is one example of a cohort member using qualitative data grounded in student perspectives to improve programming.²⁶ [The Opportunity Youth Forum \(OYF\)](#), convened by the Aspen Institute Forum for Community Solutions, centers youth voice and considers youth input in its decision making and strategies, both at the network level and within individual partnerships across the country. OYF is one example that pathways intermediaries can draw from in considering how to deepen equity-oriented learner engagement – deep connection that creates power sharing.



EMPLOYER AND POSTSECONDARY PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

Intermediary-led pathways often struggle to engage postsecondary institutions and employers.

Deeper commitment by and collaboration with postsecondary and employer partners is needed to continue advancing equitable pathways. As described above, K-12 partners typically reported working closely or very closely with the intermediary and reported higher ratings for indicators of organizational change than postsecondary and employer partners.

Postsecondary and employer partners rated themselves much lower than K-12 partners on the following indicators of organizational change: *changing or creating policies to increase access for learners, undergoing organizational cultural change to become a more inclusive environment for learners, articulating the responsibility that their organizations have in preparing learners, and incorporating learner voice into pathways-related decisions.*

In their landscape scan of pathways intermediary organizations across the U.S., Education First found employer partner engagement was a critical condition guiding the success of pathways work: “While engagement from partners in all sectors are needed, buy-in and equity-oriented partnership from employers are emerging as critical conditions.”²⁷ JFF engaged cohort members around a problem of practice called “Enacting and leveraging accountability for and with partners with a particular focus on employee relationships.”

Lessons on Effective Employer Engagement from “Community Partnerships for Attainment”

Through Equal Measure’s evaluation and learning partnership with the Lumina Foundation’s Community Partnerships for Attainment, a pathways initiative that included 75 communities across the nation, we highlighted promising practices by which partnerships connect and engage with employer partners:

1. Engage employers around “pain points.”
2. Locate the right players from the business sector.
3. Set up employers for success.
4. Articulate roles that encourage employer engagement.

Typically, engagement between partnerships and employers deepens over time. In some cases, although there is mutual desire to have deeper engagement, the employer partner lacks capacity to do so; for example, when they are a smaller business with a few employees.



SUSTAINABILITY

Regardless of business model, pathways intermediaries are vulnerable to financial strain, affecting their capacity to lead. Our survey findings suggest that intermediaries in the BEP cohort are effective in advocating for increased funding to support career pathways programs and influencing the allocation of public and private funding toward equitable pathways. In addition, partners indicated their organizations dedicate staff time toward supporting learner participation in pathways, and they secure funding to support career pathways programming. While these results provide promising evidence toward the continuity of intermediaries' work, multiple intermediaries and field partners have identified sustainability as a persistent area of concern.

Through a report presenting results of their technical assistance efforts and analysis of cohort members' financial sustainability, Evan James Consulting found that regardless of intermediary type, intermediaries demonstrate strengths and opportunities regarding financial sustainability.²⁸ Intermediaries vary in the diversity of their revenue streams, organizational capacity, and their organizational visibility to funders and the broader public. Evan James Consulting found that partner spending accounts for more than three-quarters of the total cost of pathways work – concluding that the sustainability of intermediary-led pathways is dependent on partners contributing resources. Nonprofit pathways intermediaries rely heavily on philanthropic funding for sustainability. If philanthropic and sector partner interests change, many intermediaries' viability will be at stake.

Intermediaries face common, persistent challenges in collecting and using learner data, engaging learners and partners in meaningful ways, and diversifying revenue. Breaking through these roadblocks can expand opportunities for intermediaries to deepen their impact.

ON THE HORIZON: A VISION FOR STRONGER INTERMEDIARY-LED PATHWAYS

In this section, we imagine a future state in which pathways intermediaries are more fully supported by funders, technical assistance providers, and evaluators and researchers to build and strengthen equitable pathways. We present four components of this vision, which correspond to examples of how these allies can support intermediaries and their partnerships.

Education First, in concluding their Action Guide for Pathways Ecosystem Stakeholders, provide a comprehensive list of implications for funders, policymakers, and partners of various systems connected to pathways. Here, we synthesize those implications with our own learning and the insights from JFF, CREC, and Evan James Consulting. For further considerations about how pathways partners can broaden and deepen their engagement, please refer to the Education First guide.²⁹ For considerations on how state agencies can support equitable pathways, please refer to the State Policy Framework that JFF developed in collaboration with the 14 Building Equitable Pathways intermediaries.³⁰



CONNECTED DATA SYSTEMS




VISION STATEMENT #1:

DATA INFRASTRUCTURE IS ROBUST, SHOWING THE PROGRESSION OF LEARNERS ACROSS SYSTEMS AND THE LONGER-TERM OUTCOMES OF MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER PROGRESSION IN HIGH-DEMAND FIELDS.

To promote continuous improvement and reinforce sustained funding in equitable pathways, progress must be made establishing: 1) longitudinal data that can track learner progress across systems, 2) disaggregated data to judge whether pathways systems are increasing equity by reducing disparities in education and workforce outcomes, and 3) connection to systematic wage and employment data.

To communicate the importance and impact intermediary organizations have on pathways ecosystems, intermediaries and field partners can clarify the connection between intermediary activities, systems changes, and equitable outcomes. Equal Measure’s analysis of this shows promising potential and early results, but further research could build a stronger evidence base.

FIGURE 16
Support Strategies for Connected Data Systems

<p>FUNDERS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivizing the interaction of data across organizations and systems involving the co-creation of shared measures • Encouraging sector partners to report data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and income, and promoting capacity building where gaps exist to produce these data • Hosting or investing in an initiative to accelerate access to widespread employment and wage data
<p>TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocating for broader policy change to make employment and wage data more accessible and shareable with pathways partners and the broader public (CREC) • Connecting intermediary organizations to state agencies or organizations with access to employment and wage data • Collaborating with education partners around how to disaggregate their data in ways that can bridge across systems
<p>EVALUATORS AND RESEARCHERS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building a story of pathways system effectiveness that connects data from multiple sources and sectors • Adopting culturally responsive and equitable evaluation principles, such as responsive ways to collect, analyze, and present disaggregated data and publishing findings with the intent to influence policy and practice changes • Applying causal analysis methodologies (e.g., theory-based, participatory, case-based, and systems-based approaches) to explore the relationships between intermediary activities and outcomes³¹






MEANINGFUL LEARNER ENGAGEMENT IN PATHWAYS DEVELOPMENT

VISION STATEMENT #2:

THE VOICES OF LEARNERS AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE ELEVATED IN PARTNERSHIPS' DECISION MAKING, POLICY ADVOCACY, AND IN THE CREATION AND REFINEMENT OF PATHWAYS.

According to JFF, "Everyone wants to engage youth, but how that engagement occurs needs to be more thoughtful and deliberate."³² Through the Community of Practice, intermediaries are piloting methods of deeper learner engagement to enhance the learner experience. Intermediary staff and partners simultaneously view learner engagement as very important yet among the least effectively led activities.

FIGURE 17
Support Strategies for Meaningful Learner Engagement in Pathways Development

<p style="text-align: center;">FUNDERS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking direction and input from learners and families, starting from the pathways and initiative design (offering compensation for their time) • Developing a learner advisory group that can inform philanthropic strategy regarding pathways and advise on pathways-related initiatives • Investing in development, implementation, and refinement of student-engaged leadership across intermediary organizations
<p style="text-align: center;">TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring with intermediaries how they can more meaningfully engage learners and families, particularly in ways that would influence decision-making or pathways refinement (JFF) • Bringing learners and families into spaces where intermediary organizations are receiving technical assistance or learning from peer organizations
<p style="text-align: center;">EVALUATORS AND RESEARCHERS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involving learners and families in studies as co-creators, modeling how learners can influence decisions in pathways partnerships through engagement in research (offering compensation for their time) • Training learners and families in evaluation or research methods so that they can carry out this type of work in their communities, for their communities • Including mechanisms for feedback from learners about sector partner and intermediary effectiveness, and comparing the feedback to organizations' self-perceptions






DEEP ENGAGEMENT OF ALL SECTOR PARTNERS

VISION STATEMENT #3:

ALL SECTOR PARTNERS, INCLUDING POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS AND EMPLOYERS, ENGAGE MEANINGFULLY WITH AND INVEST RESOURCES TOWARD THE INTERMEDIARY AND THE PARTNERSHIP TO CREATE BETTER PATHWAYS FOR LEARNERS.

As learners progress through pathways programming, they interact with K-12, postsecondary, and employers. The deeper the collaboration across sector partners and the more intention on centering the learner experience, the more seamless the transitions between these partners can be for learners. It is critical that sector partners are engaged in and contributing to the partnership through people, time, and financial resources (Education First, Evan James Consulting).

FIGURE 18
Support Strategies for Deep Engagement of All Sector Partners

<p>FUNDERS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritizing cross-sector collaboration and an explicit focus on partnership building through investments and initiatives • Incentivizing deep collaboration between higher education and the private sector, such as through co-creation of industry-aligned pathways • Shifting mindsets within philanthropy and beyond about the time and effort required to achieve equitable systems change; investing and setting expectations accordingly
<p>TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenting high-interest topics in technical assistance offerings that engage representatives from K-12, postsecondary, and the private sector • Identifying barriers or reservations that prevent cross-sector collaboration and data sharing and troubleshooting these with intermediaries and partners • Centering the learner experience and transitions across systems in communicating the importance of sector partners collaborating and contributing to the partnership
<p>EVALUATORS AND RESEARCHERS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building on an evidence base for the importance of cross-sector partnership and the role that intermediary organizations play in bringing sector partners together, enhanced by the collection of systems change and learner outcomes data






FINANCIALLY STABLE INTERMEDIARIES

VISION STATEMENT #4:

PATHWAYS INTERMEDIARIES HAVE THE FINANCIAL STABILITY TO EFFECTIVELY PERFORM CORE ACTIVITIES IN THEIR LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND STATE ECOSYSTEMS.

Although survey results show traction around advocating for public funding and dollars secured by partner organizations to support equitable pathways, sustainability will be a persistent pain point for many intermediaries.

FIGURE 19
Support Strategies to Build Financially Stable Intermediaries

<p>FUNDERS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investing in the systems-change functions of intermediary organizations like partnership building, coordination, and convening efforts • Gaining better understanding, in collaboration with intermediaries, about the length and amount of investment needed to support the long-term efforts that intermediaries are leading • Connecting intermediary organizations to funding sources new to them and supporting them in endeavors to secure resources, particularly from funders outside philanthropy (Education First) • Incentivizing sector partner organizations to contribute people, time, and dollars to the pathways partnership and efforts (Evan James Consulting)
<p>TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting intermediaries to new sector partners and helping to strengthen relationships with existing partners • Messaging the importance of sector partners contributing resources to pathways partnerships and systems change work
<p>EVALUATORS AND RESEARCHERS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting studies on the importance and impact of investing financially in intermediary organizations

Funders, technical assistance providers, evaluators and researchers can help intermediaries overcome challenges in their pursuit of leading equitable pathways.



CONCLUSION

Intermediaries across the U.S. are leading cross-sector partnerships to forge shared visions of pathways that result in more learners who are Black, Latine, and/or experiencing poverty gaining education credentials and family-sustaining employment. These organizations come in various shapes and sizes, and there is no one organization type or business model that determines an intermediary's effectiveness. Intermediaries pay attention to the local, regional, and state contexts in which they operate as they prioritize their connections and activities with partners.

Through three years of investigation and learning exchanges with multiple partners supporting the Building Equitable Pathways Community of Practice, Equal Measure developed the Equitable Pathways Intermediary Framework and survey to further codify the work of intermediaries leading pathways. The framework articulates four activity domains (*Data Collection and Use*, *Partnership Building*, *Pathways Design and Delivery Support*, and *Policy and Funding Advocacy*) as well as a fifth, cross-cutting domain (*Equity*). To build a more equitable pathways system, equity must be the driving force guiding partners' individual and collective efforts. We expect that more intensive equity-minded practice within communities will prompt organizational and ecosystem changes that benefit learners.

Accessing and using meaningful data will continue to be both a primary function for intermediaries as well as a pain point until data systems and sharing practices improve. The ability to deeply engage postsecondary and employer partners – as well as learners, by centering their first-hand experiences in seeking education and career opportunities – emerged as salient challenges and opportunities. Funders, technical assistance partners, evaluators and researchers, among other allies, can address these in partnership with intermediaries. In the end, it is everyone's responsibility to increase the ability of our most vulnerable learners to dream big and ensure their education and career aspirations are within their reach.



NOTES

- ¹ Education Strategy Group and Level Up (2020). From Tails to Heads: Building Momentum for Postsecondary Success. <https://edstrategy.wpengine.com/resource/from-tails-to-heads/>.
- ² Equal Measure has chosen to use the term “Latine,” which adopts the letter “e” from the Spanish language as a representation of gender neutrality. It is the latest effort by Spanish-speaking populations to describe all people using their own lexicon. Source: <https://www.bestcolleges.com/blog/hispanic-latino-latinx-latine>. We acknowledge other terms, including Hispanic, Latino, and Latinx, are currently used more often in philanthropy and broader U.S. society.
- ³ Education First (2022): How Do Intermediary Organizations Support Stronger Pathway Systems? A National Landscape Scan.
- ⁴ Lewis, K. (2022). A Disrupted Year: How the Arrival of Covid-19 Affected Youth Disconnection. Measure of America, Social Science Research Council. <https://measureofamerica.org/youth-disconnection-2022/>.
- ⁵ See Appendix A for data sources, methodology, and references. Appendix B provides additional information about the Framework and survey
- ⁶ Education First (2022)
- ⁷ JFF (2020). Intermediary Functions and Features in Pathways Systems. <https://www.jff.org/resources/intermediary-functions-features-pathways-systems/>
- ⁸ Harder+Co. & Equal Measure (2017). Cultivating Systems Leadership in Cross-sector Partnerships: Lessons from the Linked Learning Regional Hubs of Excellence. Cultivating Systems Leadership in Cross-sector Partnerships: Lessons from the Linked Learning Regional Hubs of Excellence – Equal Measure
- ⁹ See for example: JFF’s Core Intermediary Functions, Education First’s Core Capacities of Pathways Intermediaries, and Evan James’ Intermediary Archetypes and Intermediary Spectrum.
- ¹⁰ The first survey administration was in 2021 with a set of six intermediary organizations and their partners and included only items based on the activity domains. The second survey administration was in 2022 and included items based on five systems change domains in addition to the activity domains. Five sites participated in the survey in both 2021 and 2022. In total, nine unique intermediaries participated in the survey.
- ¹¹ We split each “double-barreled” activity item into two or more survey items to enhance clarity and specificity for survey respondents.
- ¹² See Appendices A and B for more information about survey administration.
- ¹³ CREC (2022). June Report on the Building Equitable Pathways Community of Practice Data Strand.
- ¹⁴ Bennett, S., & Minty, D. (2022). Mind the Gap: Investing in Data Capacity. Blog post. <https://www.jff.org/what-we-do/impact-stories/building-equitable-pathways/blog-series/Mind-the-Gap-Investing-in-Data-Capacity/>
- ¹⁵ CJFF (2022a). Building Equitable Pathways Community of Practice | Phase II Synthesis.
- ¹⁶ After administering the 2022 survey, Equal Measure updated this item in both the framework and survey instrument to read: “Intermediary incorporates input and feedback from learners and families to inform decisions about the development of curricula, program design, and learner experiences.”



- ¹⁷ JFF (2020)
- ¹⁸ JFF (2022b). State Policy Framework for Building Equitable Pathways. <https://info.jff.org/building-equitable-pathways-state-policy-framework>
- ¹⁹ Education Strategy Group and Level Up (2020). From Tails to Heads: Building Momentum for Postsecondary Success. <https://edstrategy.wpengine.com/resource/from-tails-to-heads/>. Research shows that students who attend postsecondary institutions that match their academic preparation levels are more likely to persist in their college coursework.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ Gonzalez, N., Albery, E., & Brockman, S. (2022). Education-to-Workforce Indicator Framework: Using Data to Promote Equity and Economic Security for All. Mathematica. <https://www.mathematica.org/publications/education-to-workforce-indicator-framework-using-data-to-promote-equity-and-economic-security>
- ²² Digital portfolios of work completed is an example provided by HERE to HERE, Key Distinguishers: Key Features of Data and Accountability. <https://www.heretohere.org/about/about-key-distinguishers/key-distinguisher-data-accountability/>
- ²³ JFF (2019). Recommended Technical and Essential Employability Competences for College and Career Pathway Endorsements. https://jfforg-prod-new.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/PWR_Report_4-16-19.pdf
- ²⁴ Examples include adaptability, conflict management, and teamwork/collaboration. See for example: Smith, E., Tsin, D., Rogers, E. (2019). Who Will Succeed in Tomorrow's Job Market? Bridging the Soft Skills Gap for a More Equitable Talent Pipeline. Urban Alliance. https://theurbanalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/UA_WP2019_Who_Will_Succeed_in_Tomorrows_Job_Market.pdf; JFF (2022c). The Power of Data: Advancing Equity-Centered Narratives. Podcast episode. Building Equitable Pathways podcast series. <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-power-of-data-advancing-equity-centered-narratives/id1613815107>
- ²⁵ Lamback, S., Gerwin, C., & Restuccia, D. (2018). When Is a Job Just a Job—and When Can It Launch a Career? The Real Economic Opportunities of Middle-Skill Work. Lifetime and Springboard Jobs. <https://jfforg-prod-new.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/ResumeDataBook6.pdf>
- ²⁶ See for example: Washington STEM (2022). Listening to Student Voice: Improving Dual Credit Programs. <https://washingtonstem.org/student-voice-improving-dual-credit-programs/>
- ²⁷ Kovacic Duran, K., Redmond Takhar, C., Bartlebaugh, H., & Falol, A. (2022). Action Guide for Pathways Ecosystem Stakeholders. https://www.education-first.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Action-Guide-for-Stakeholders-to-Support-Pathways-Intermediaries_Education-First_June-2022.pdf
- ²⁸ Square Button (2022). Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Financial Sustainability Technical Assistance, Equitable Futures Cohort.
- ²⁹ Kovacic Duran et al. (2022)
- ³⁰ JFF (2022b)
- ³¹ Lynn, J., Stachowiak, S., & Coffman, J. (2021). Lost Causal: Debunking Myths About Causal Analysis in Philanthropy. *The Foundation Review*, 13(3). <https://doi.org/10.9707/1944-5660.1576>
- ³² JFF (2022a)



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Equal Measure thanks the following organizations and individuals for their thought partnership over the last three years: JFF (Kyle Hartung, Sarah Bennett, Nyema Mitchell- and formerly Derek Niño), the Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness (Allison Forbes), Evan James Consulting (Charles E. West II, Gabrielle Gunn, and Harry Schnur, and Hamilton Simons-Jones through ResourceFull Consulting), Center for Innovation in Education (Gretchen Morgan), and Education First (Kelly Kovacic Duran – and formerly Claire Redmond Takhar). Our many conversations and your written work have enriched this report. Our partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, particularly with our program officer, Isa Ellis, enabled our team to take a developmental approach to the learning and evaluation project that enabled this report, and your ongoing insights supported refinement of the framework and sharpening of our findings along the way.

Finally, we thank the intermediary staff and partners whom we engaged through interviews, survey administration, and webinars to learn from your work and to elevate it through this report. Your perspectives and experiences provided the foundation for the Equitable Pathways Intermediary Framework and survey, and your suggestions and input throughout led to the refinement and strengthening of these materials. We gained deep appreciation for all that you do to create equitable pathways.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: DATA SOURCES, METHODOLOGY, AND REFERENCES

Equal Measure led a mixed-methods learning and evaluation project between fall 2019 and September 2022. Below we describe each data source informing framework development and report findings and considerations.

Equal Measure-led Building Equitable Pathways data collection, analysis, and products:

- **Interviews with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and JFF (2019).** We conducted interviews with BEP project leads during the planning phase of the evaluation to understand the vision and design of the BEP initiative and the Equitable Futures portfolio. In total, we conducted five interviews with foundation representatives and one interview with representatives from JFF.
- **Intermediary staff and partner interviews to develop activity domains of the framework (fall 2019-summer 2020).** Interviews during the first phase of framework development captured perspectives about current and aspirational activities led by pathways intermediaries. Across the Community of Practice (CoP) Phase 1 cohort, we conducted 14 interviews with intermediary leads and 20 partner interviews with four to five representatives from each category across K-12 education, postsecondary education, the private sector, community-based organizations, and government.
- **Interviews with data leads from the intermediary organizations and learner outcomes inventories (winter 2020).** Equal Measure interviewed 10 data leads connected to CoP Phase 1 who were directly engaged with data collection and analysis and requested data via a learner outcomes and indicators inventory. The inventory requested information on the variety of indicators that they tracked on learners, how they measured those indicators, and successes and challenges with using them. Equal Measure generated cross-cutting findings about the cohort of intermediaries.
- **Intermediary staff interviews to develop systems change domains of the framework (winter 2022).** Interviews during the second phase of framework development focused on changes observed and anticipated in partner organizations and in the broader ecosystem in which the intermediaries and their partners operate. We conducted 13 interviews with intermediary leads representing CoP Phase 2 organizations.
- **Document review (2019-2022).** We complemented interview data with a review of intermediary documents, including logic models, annual reports, and other contextual documents. We reviewed a total of 80+ documents.
- **Framework development, feedback, and iteration (2020-2022).** We conducted thematic analyses of documents and coded interview data to create the framework. Equal Measure presented drafts of the Equitable Pathways Intermediary Framework to intermediary leads, JFF, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation through virtual meetings and webinars and email, which we incorporated into subsequent drafts.
- **Equitable Pathways Intermediary Framework survey (2021-2022).** We operationalized the framework into a survey instrument, with framework items mapping closely to survey items. The survey was administered once in 2021 and once in 2022, each time with a set of intermediaries associated with the BEP CoP. Each participating intermediary received an individual survey report. In 2021, only the activity domains were available. By 2022, Equal Measure had added the systems change domains. For more information about the Framework and survey, see Appendix B.



COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE PHASE	SITES PARTICIPATING IN INTERVIEWS
1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Boys and Girls Club of Memphis (Memphis, Tennessee) 2. Brooklyn STEAM (New York City) 3. Career Connect Washington (Washington state) 4. CareerWise Colorado (Colorado) 5. CityWorks DC (Washington DC) 6. HERE to HERE (New York City) 7. REACH - Rush Education and Career Hub (Chicago, Illinois) 8. Urban Alliance (Washington DC) 9. YouthForce NOLA (New Orleans, Louisiana)
2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Career Connect Washington (Washington state) 2. CareerWise Colorado (Colorado) 3. CityWorks DC (Washington DC) 4. Connecticut State Colleges and Universities: CSCU Success (Connecticut) 5. Delaware Department of Education (Delaware) 6. Educate Texas (Texas) 7. Education Systems Center (Illinois) 8. Employ Indy (Indianapolis, Indiana) 9. HERE to HERE (New York City) 10. REACH - Rush Education and Career Hub (Chicago, Illinois) 11. Say Yes Buffalo (Buffalo, New York) 12. Urban Alliance (Washington DC) 13. YouthForce NOLA (New Orleans, Louisiana)



REFERENCES

Bennett, S., & Minty, D. (2022). Mind the Gap: Investing in Data Capacity. Blog post. <https://www.jff.org/what-we-do/impact-stories/building-equitable-pathways/blog-series/Mind-the-Gap-Investing-in-Data-Capacity/>

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (2022). Pathways Strategy. PowerPoint deck.

Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness (2022). June Report on the Building Equitable Pathways Community of Practice Data Strand.

DVP-Praxis and Equal Measure (2017). Engaging Employers in a Cross-sector Postsecondary Attainment Agenda: Lessons from Lumina Foundation's Community Partnership for Attainment Initiative. <https://www.equalmeasure.org/engaging-employers-cross-sector-postsecondary-attainment-agenda-lessons-lumina-foundations-community-partnership-attainment-initiative/>.

Education First (2022). How Do Intermediary Organizations Support Stronger Pathways Systems? A National Landscape Scan. https://www.education-first.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Full-Report_Pathways-Intermediaries-Landscape-Scan_Education-First_June-2022.pdf

Education Strategy Group and Level Up (2020). From Tails to Heads: Building Momentum for Postsecondary Success. <https://edstrategy.wpengine.com/resource/from-tails-to-heads/>.

Gonzalez, N., Alberty, E., & Brockman, S. (2022). Education-to-Workforce Indicator Framework: Using Data to Promote Equity and Economic Security for All. Mathematica. <https://www.mathematica.org/publications/education-to-workforce-indicator-framework-using-data-to-promote-equity-and-economic-security>

Harder+Co. and Equal Measure (2017). Cultivating Systems Leadership in Cross-sector Partnerships: Lessons from the Linked Learning Regional Hubs of Excellence. <https://www.equalmeasure.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Systems-Leadership-Issue-Brief-081017-FINAL.pdf>

HERE to HERE (2022). Key Distinguishers: Key Features of Data and Accountability. <https://www.herehere.org/about/about-key-distinguishers/key-distinguisher-data-accountability/>

JFF (2019). Recommended Technical and Essential Employability Competences for College and Career Pathway Endorsements. https://jfforg-prod-new.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/PWR_Report_4-16-19.pdf

JFF (2020). Intermediary Functions and Features in Pathways Systems. <https://www.jff.org/resources/intermediary-functions-features-pathways-systems/>

JFF (2022a). Building Equitable Pathways Community of Practice | Phase II Synthesis.

JFF (2022b). State Policy Framework for Building Equitable Pathways. <https://info.jff.org/building-equitable-pathways-state-policy-framework>

JFF (2022c). The Power of Data: Advancing Equity-Centered Narratives. Podcast episode. Building Equitable Pathways podcast series. <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-power-of-data-advancing-equity-centered-narratives/id1613815107>



Kovacic Duran, K., Redmond Takhar, C., Bartlebaugh, H., & Falol, A. (2022). Action Guide for Pathways Ecosystem Stakeholders. https://www.education-first.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Action-Guide-for-Stakeholders-to-Support-Pathways-Intermediaries_Education-First_June-2022.pdf

Lamback, S., Gerwin, C., & Restuccia, D. (2018). When Is a Job Just a Job—and When Can It Launch a Career? The Real Economic Opportunities of Middle-Skill Work. Lifetime and Springboard Jobs. <https://jfforg-prod-new.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/ResumeDataBook6.pdf>

Lewis, K. (2022). A Disrupted Year: How the Arrival of Covid-19 Affected Youth Disconnection. Measure of America, Social Science Research Council. <https://measureofamerica.org/youth-disconnection-2022/>.

Lynn, J., Stachowiak, S., & Coffman, J. (2021). Lost Causal: Debunking Myths About Causal Analysis in Philanthropy. The Foundation Review, 13(3). <https://doi.org/10.9707/1944-5660.1576>

Smith, E., Tsin, D., Rogers, E. (2019). Who Will Succeed in Tomorrow's Job Market? Bridging the Soft Skills Gap for a More Equitable Talent Pipeline. Urban Alliance. https://theurbanalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/UA_WP2019_Who_Will_Succeed_in_Tomorrows_Job_Market.pdf

Square Button Consulting (2022). Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Financial Sustainability Technical Assistance, Equitable Futures Cohort.

Washington STEM (2022). Listening to Student Voice: Improving Dual Credit Programs. <https://washingtonstem.org/student-voice-improving-dual-credit-programs/>



APPENDIX B: EQUITABLE PATHWAYS INTERMEDIARY FRAMEWORK AND SURVEY

As part of the Building Equitable Pathways (BEP) initiative of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Equal Measure developed the Equitable Pathways Intermediary Framework to capture and distill essential activities of pathways intermediary organizations, systems change – including changes in partner organizations and changes in the broader pathways ecosystem – and learner outcomes. To better understand these activities and systems changes – including their relevance to partners and intermediaries’ effectiveness in carrying them out, Equal Measure administered a survey to the staff and partners of BEP intermediary organizations. The survey captures key activities associated with pathways intermediaries across four domains: 1) Data Collection and Use, 2) Partnership Building, 3) Pathways Design and Delivery Support, and 4) Policy and Funding Advocacy. Activities reflecting equitable practice are embedded within each domain. The survey also captures organizational changes within partner organizations, categorized across three domains: 1) Organizational Culture, Practice, and Policy Changes; 2) Increases in Cross-Organizational Collaboration; and 3) Changes in Resource Allocation and Funding. Lastly, the survey captures changes in the broader ecosystem through five distinct survey items.

In 2022, the survey was distributed to a sample of eight CoP Phase 2 cohort members who work at intermediary organizations in the cohort (“staff”) and those who partner with intermediaries in the cohort (“partner”), including representatives from K-12 and postsecondary education, the private sector, and other partners. Respondents were asked to rate each activity on two four-point scales: 1) importance—their perceptions about the importance of the intermediary carrying out the activity (0=not important, 3=very important), and 2) effectiveness—how well they believe the intermediary carries out the activity (0=not at all, 3=very well). Respondents were also asked questions about changes in partner organizations or in their own organization, and in the broader ecosystem.



Survey Item Scales

INTERMEDIARY ACTIVITY RESPONSE SCALES		
	IMPORTANCE	EFFECTIVENESS
0	Not important	Not at all
1	Somewhat important	Somewhat well
2	Important	Well
3	Extremely important	Very well

INDICATORS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE RESPONSE SCALES	
0	Does not describe us; Does not describe them
1	Somewhat describes us Somewhat describes them
2	Describes us well; Describes them well
3	Describes us very well; Describes them very well

INDICATORS OF ECOSYSTEM CHANGE RESPONSE SCALES	
0	Strongly disagree
1	Disagree
2	Agree
3	Strongly agree

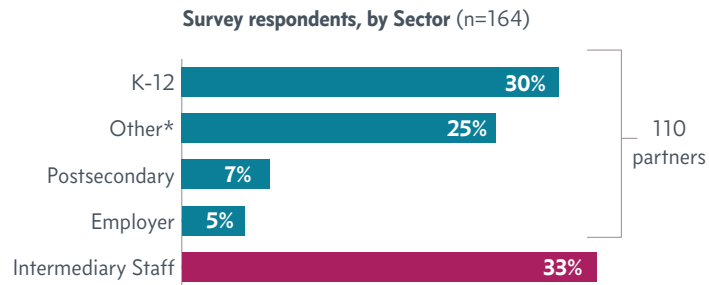
2021 Survey Details

	NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING THE SURVEY	NUMBER OF RESPONSES*	RESPONSE RATE
Intermediary Staff	56	54	96%
Partners	227	110	48%
TOTAL	283	164	58%

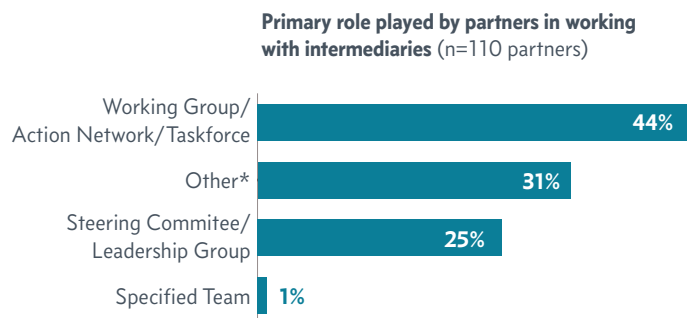
*Includes partially completed surveys, with the Data Collection & Use section completed at minimum.



2021 Survey Details



*Other includes staff of government, community-based organizations, and funder/philanthropy.



*Other includes coordinator/navigator, counselor, school principal, and funder/donor.

How closely have you worked with the intermediary organization in the past year? (n=110 partners)

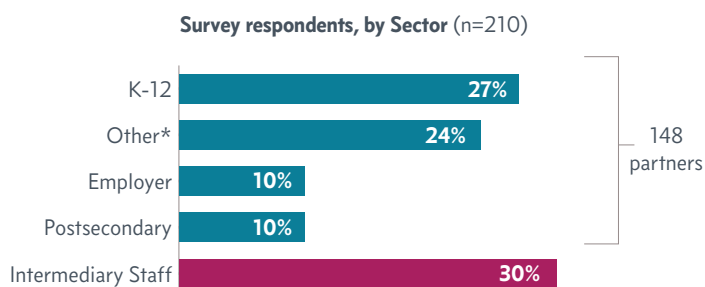




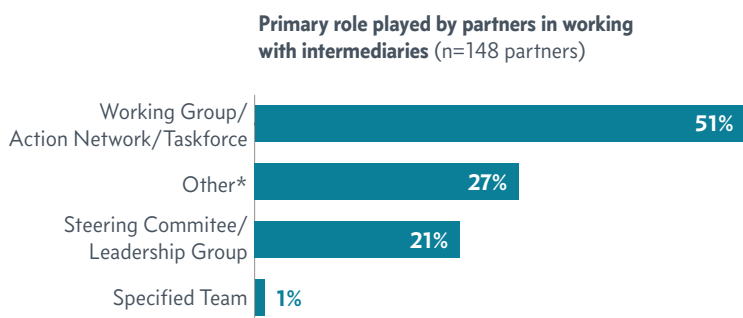
2022 Survey Details

	NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS THE SURVEY WAS SENT TO	NUMBER OF RESPONSES*	RESPONSE RATE
Intermediary Staff	107	62	58%
Partners	483	148	31%
TOTAL	590	210	36%

*Includes partially completed surveys, with the Data Collection & Use section completed at minimum.

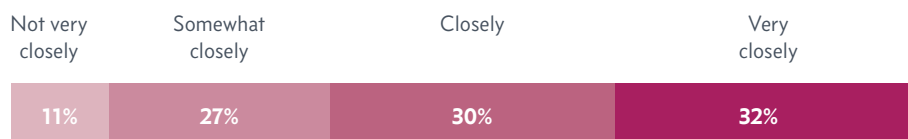


*Other includes staff of government, community-based organizations, and funder/philanthropy.



*Other includes coordinator/navigator, counselor, school principal, funder/donor, recruitment and apprenticeship roles.

How closely have you worked with the intermediary organization in the past year? (n=148 partners)





EQUAL
MEASURE

FINDING
PROMISE
FUELING
CHANGE