



Cradle to Career Pathway for Student Success

Jefferson Articulation Area

Prepared by

 **Edgewater Collective**
All kids succeed cradle to career

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Beginnings

The Greater Edgewater Community Connection (GECC) began as a group of stakeholders with an interest in improving the lives of families and children within the greater Edgewater community, specifically with a focus on vulnerable and underserved populations. GECC's formation was established by the Jefferson County Department of Human Services' Jeffco Community Connection, a federally funded collaboration grant designed to create collaboration amongst various systems, particularly TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) and Child Protective Services. GECC emerged from the grant steering committee which consists of local level coordination involving local government, county social service agencies/programs, non-government agencies, faith based organizations, businesses and local citizens.

Then in the spring of 2013, it was determined by the leadership of GECC that the organization would transition to become part of Edgewater based nonprofit, Edgewater Collective. The collective impact model for cradle to career pathways was chosen as the best way to meet the needs of children and families in north Lakewood, Edgewater and south Wheat Ridge.

Our focus is on the schools that flow in to Jefferson High School or what Jeffco Public Schools calls the "Jefferson Articulation Area."

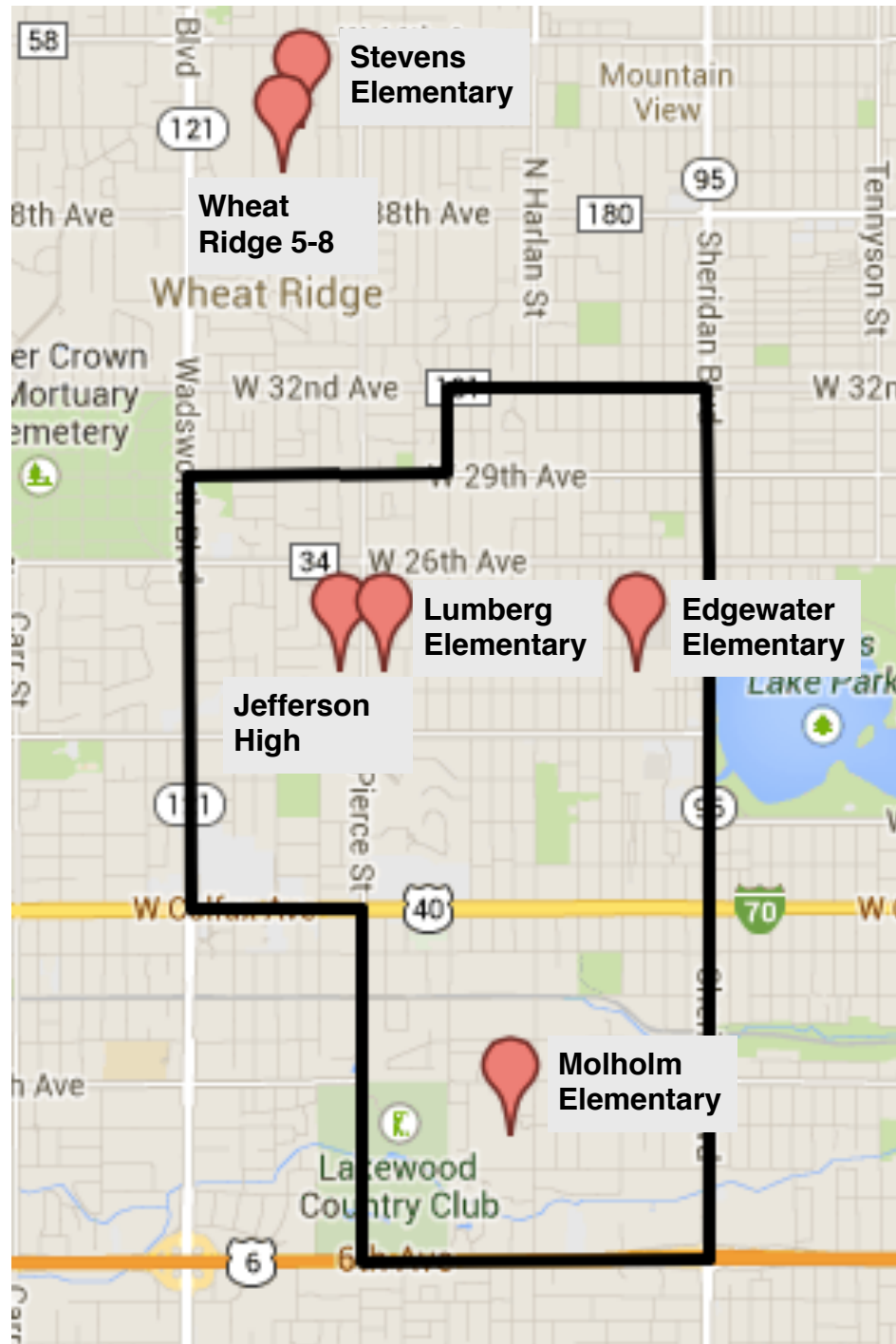
Edgewater Collective is currently part of the Exploring Communities stage of development with national network Strive Together. Our goal is to learn from their best practices around developing a cradle to career pathway. Strive Together Networks are currently in 37 states and are seeing increased student outcomes as a result of their efforts.

During the summer of 2014, the leadership structure for the cradle to career pathway will be developed and long-term funding for the initiative will be sought.

Join us as we endeavor to see all children and youth in our area succeed!

Focus Geography and Schools

We are focused on the Jefferson Articulation Area as seen by the black boundary lines on the map below. This Articulation Area also includes Stevens Elementary and Wheat Ridge 5-8 which are outside the boundary lines. Our focus schools are shown below with the red pins.



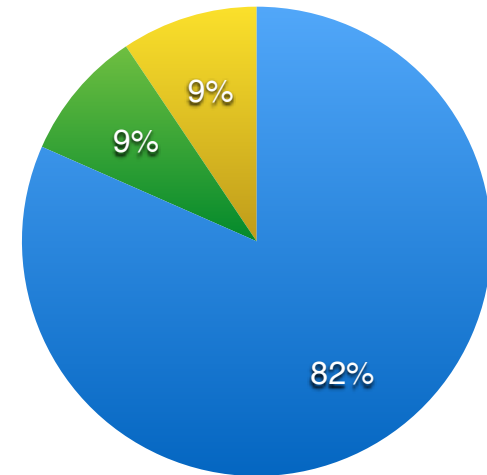
School Demographics

We picked the schools within the Jefferson Articulation Area because they are some of the highest need schools. The demographics are also similar across all six schools so if a best practice works at one school, the chance of that practice working in another area school is likely.

| | Total Students | Free Lunch Program | Free & Reduced Lunch | English Language Learners | Latino Students |
|-----------------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Edgewater Elementary | 404 | 85.6% | 93.3% | 55.9% | 81.4% |
| Lumberg Elementary | 490 | 86.5% | 91.8% | 49.8% | 77.8% |
| Molholm Elementary | 428 | 89% | 96.7% | 47.7% | 79.2% |
| Stevens Elementary | 321 | 71.7% | 86.3% | 23.7% | 53.9% |
| Wheat Ridge 5-8 | 470 | 76.6% | 85.5% | 32.3% | 64.5% |
| Jefferson High | 551 | 80.4% | 89.8% | 46.5% | 80% |
| TOTAL/AVERAGE | 2664 | 81.6% | 90.6% | 42.7% | 72.8% |

Free and Reduced Lunch Rates in Jefferson Area

● Free Lunch ● Reduced Lunch ● Full Price



- Based on 2012-2013 school year data
- Public school children qualify for free lunches if their family's income is less than 130 percent of the federal poverty level. (\$31,005 annually for a family of 4)
- Public school children qualify for reduced price lunches if their family's income is less than 185 percent of the federal poverty level. (\$44,123 for a family of 4)

Collective Impact Model

In the winter of 2011, John Kania and Mark Kramer of the nonprofit consulting group FSG outlined the dynamics of cross-sector coordination or as they termed it “collective impact.” You can read this landmark description of collective impact here: http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/collective_impact

John Kania and Mark Kramer define collective impact as “***the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem.***”

What are the common ingredients for a successful collective impact project? Kania and Kramer outline the five ingredients this way:

1. ***Common Agenda:*** All participants have a shared vision for change including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions
2. ***Shared Measurement:*** Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants ensures efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable
3. ***Mutually Reinforcing Activities:*** Participant activities must be differentiated while still being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action
4. ***Continuous Communication:*** Consistent and open communication is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and appreciate common motivation
5. ***Backbone Organization:*** Creating and managing collective impact requires a separate organization(s) with staff and a specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative and coordinate participating organizations and agencies

One of the successful collective impact projects that Kania and Kramer chronicled in their 2011 article was Strive. Strive is a group of local leaders who sought to improve student achievement in the greater Cincinnati and northern Kentucky area. The Strive model of a cradle to career pathway has spread to more than fifty networks throughout the United States. Strive Partnership is a nationwide group which grew out of Strive Cincinnati to help other networks develop collective impact in education.

Edgewater Collective has partnered with Strive Partnership to learn from their best practices and connect with their partnership tools. We are currently in their Exploring Communities gateway of development.

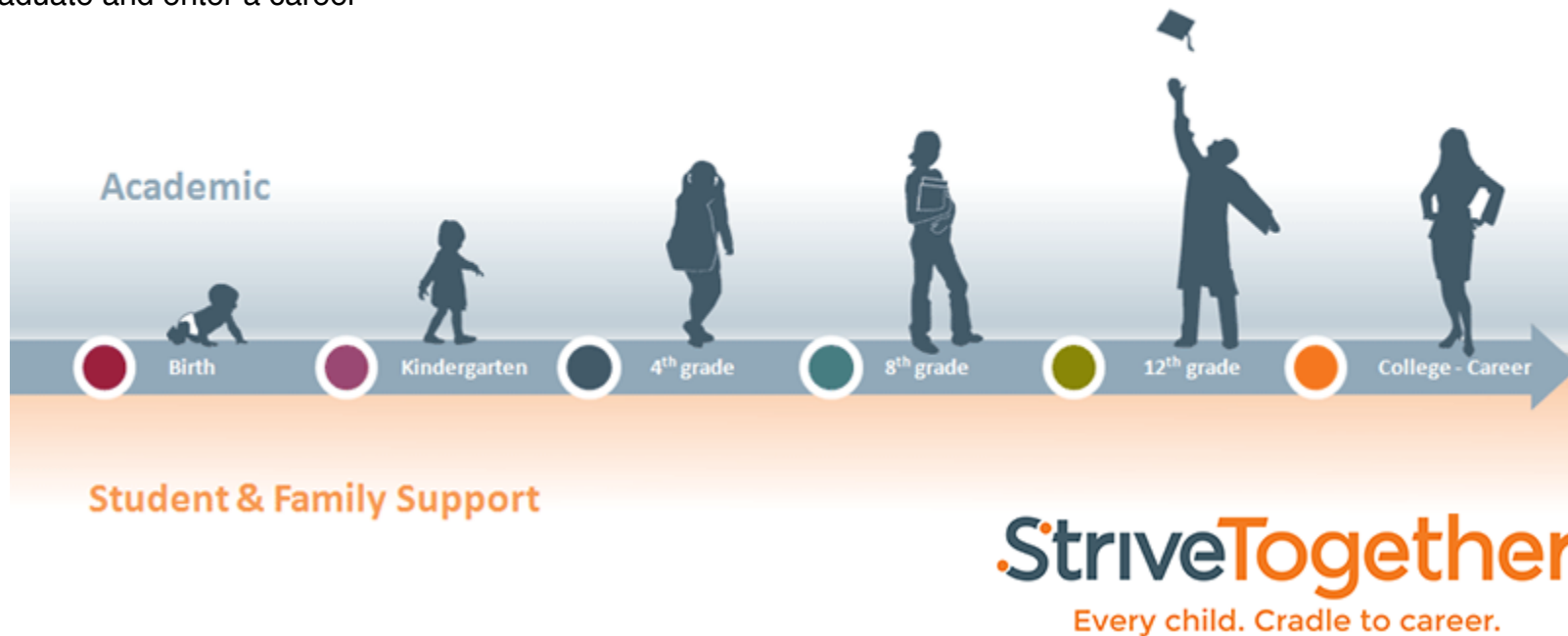
Cradle to Career Pathway

Strive Together's collective impact work is focused on rallying community stakeholders around developing a cradle to career pathway for student success. To see students college and career ready, we need to start even before children are born and follow them through their early childhood and secondary education.

Community leaders come to a consensus on important milestones along a child's development and then define key indicators along that pathway.

Strive Together has focused their efforts on five goals for this cradle to career pathway. Their goal is that every student will:

1. Be prepared for school
2. Be supported inside and outside of school
3. Succeed academically
4. Enroll in postsecondary education or training
5. Graduate and enter a career

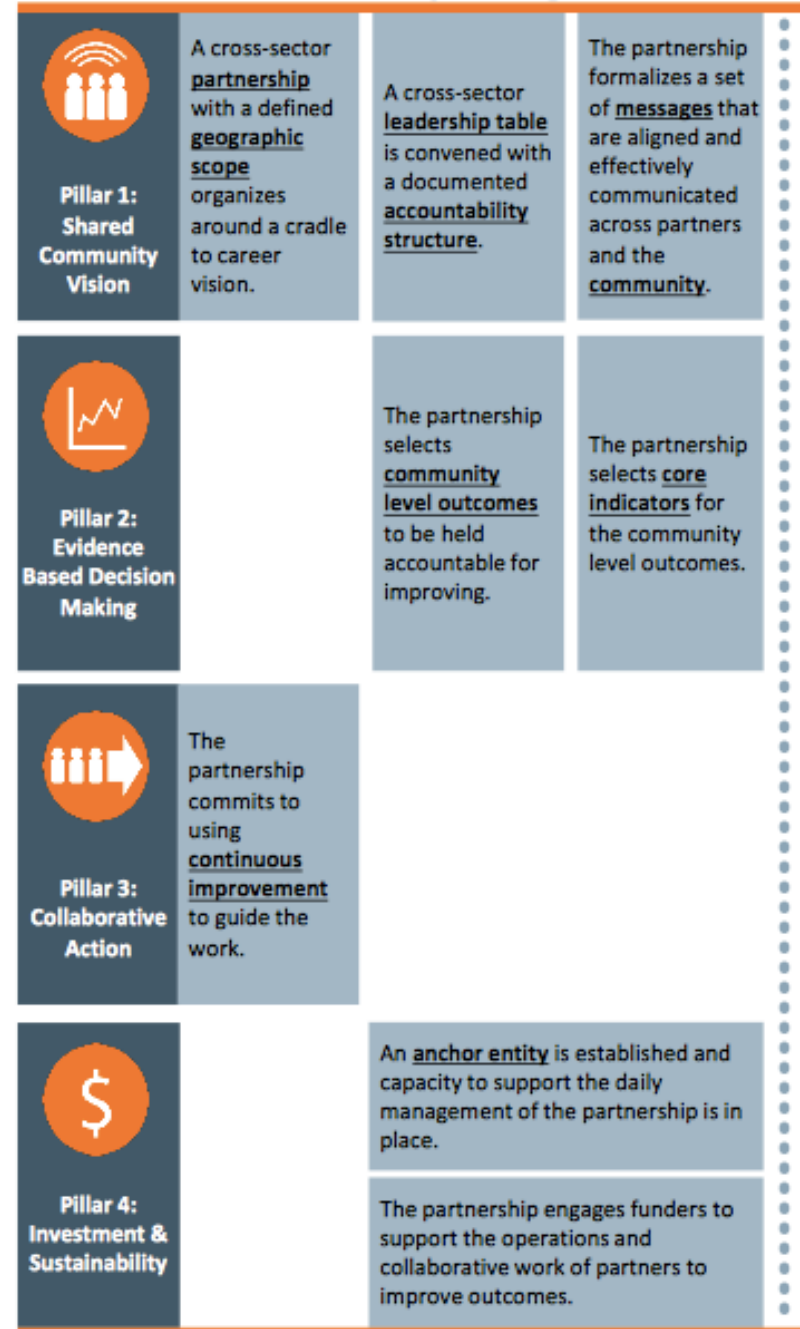


Next Steps

We are currently in the Exploring Communities gateway of development in our cradle to career pathway. Strive Together has outlined some key steps in this stage of development as seen below.

Here are some of our important next steps during the fall and spring of 2014-2015:

- A cross-sector leadership table is convened with a documented accountability structure
- The partnership selects community level outcomes to be held accountable for improving
- The partnership selects core indicators for the community level outcomes
- The partnership engages funders to support the operations and collaborative work of partners to improve outcomes



Leadership

Leadership Council

Meets twice a year

Embrace, endorse and advocate for the vision, mission, and strategy of the cradle to career pathway. Leadership Council members represent top level decision makers in their organizations and bring their leadership and influence to the shared effort to improve common outcomes.

Leadership Council members represent area universities, county agencies, school districts, business networks and large nonprofits.

Community Partners

Meets monthly

Develop and implement action plans that are aligned to outcome indicators of the cradle to career pathway. Community Partners are leaders in their respective agencies or organizations and show significant buy-in to the cradle to career pathway.

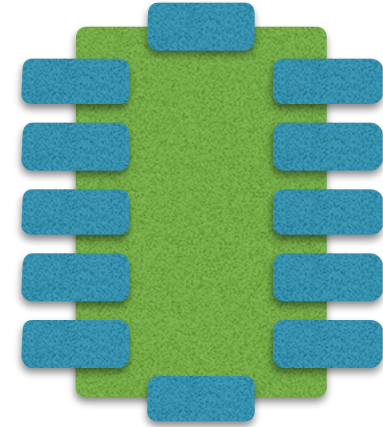
Community Partner members represent area universities, county agencies, school districts, business networks and nonprofits are are tasked by their organization to work on an aspect of the cradle to career pathway.

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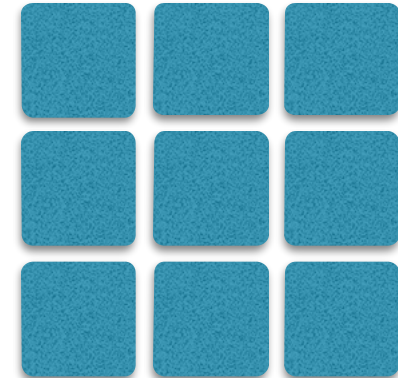
Backbone Organization

As this cradle to career pathway develops, Edgewater Collective will transition to be the backbone organization for these collective impact efforts. Our focus will be on building this cradle to career pathway and connecting various organizations and groups behind this effort.

Leadership Team



Community Partners



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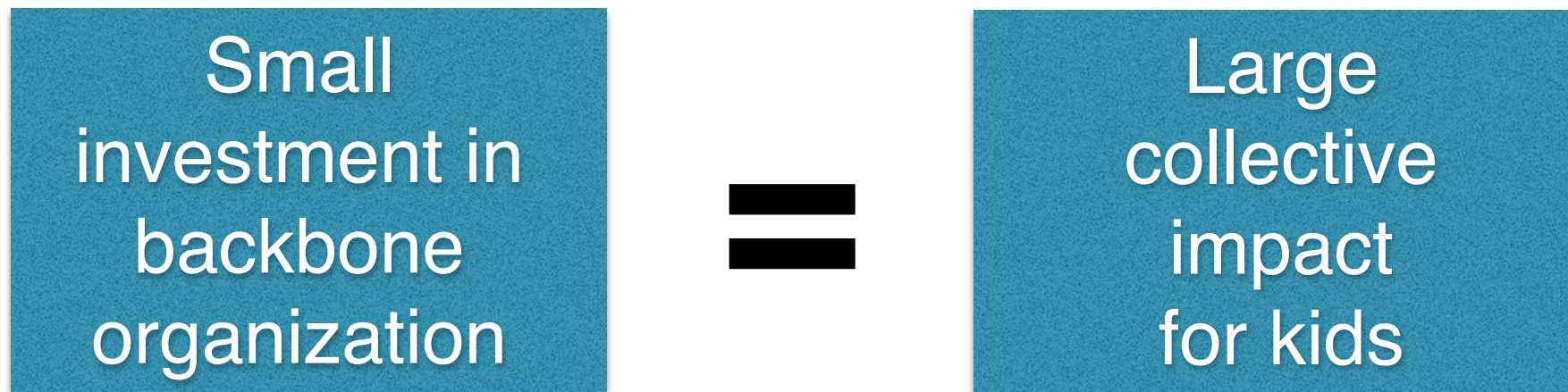
Funding Edgewater Collective

As we continue this work, our biggest hurdle for collective impact success is funding. This is not unique to our work. Others across the country who are engaged in collective impact work have a hard time funding the behind the scenes organization that coordinates and connects cross-sector work.

Strive Together stresses the following benefits of funding backbone organizations like Edgewater Collective:

- *The reality that investing in programs alone has not led to the desired population-level impact. Investment in infrastructure is also needed.*
- *The investment in the basic core staffing and related costs is remarkably small compared to the amount of existing resources that can be influenced. (Example: In one community the backbone operating costs are \$520,000, but the backbone directly influences over \$4.5 billion when considering the resources represented at the partnership table).*
- *The efficiencies that will be realized by being more disciplined in using data across similar partners far outweigh the investment in the backbone function.*

We will be working with our Leadership Team and partner organizations to think creatively about how to fund the salary of Edgewater Collective's Executive Director Joel Newton and the small budget of the organization. Our goal is to raise \$100,000 for the yearly budget of Edgewater Collective to act as the backbone organization for the cradle to career pathway.



Learn more

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