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PRESS RELEASE
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Fresno Cradle to Career Partnership Leaps Forward with \$710,000 Grant

Recent funding announced among partners across Fresno County will strengthen efforts to brighten futures for our youth and beyond.

The Fresno Cradle to Career Partnership (C2C Partnership) is supported by a grant from The James Irvine Foundation. This recent funding award will advance the ambitious agenda of the C2C Partnership. Supplemented by financial support from local partners and with Central Valley Community Foundation serving as fiscal agent, the trajectory of Fresno County's youth is looking brighter.

Fresno Cradle to Career Partnership provides the infrastructure for working across sectors to strategically inform, align, and leverage resources throughout Fresno County in order to affect change. More than 37 partners across nine sectors are committed to improving our children's life trajectory through the C2C Partnership. The ultimate goal is to ensure healthy students are prepared to graduate from high school and to enter the world of college or career.

Current Fresno County student statistics:

- Only 34% of students are considered "ready" when they start kindergarten based on 8,297 screenings conducted at the beginning of the school year 2015-16 in 7 districts (Source: Kindergarten Student Entrance Profile)
- Only 31% of all 3rd graders in Fresno County met the state standards for English Language Arts. (Source: Fresno County Office of Education. Based on data from 2014 – 2015.)
- Only 81% of Fresno County students graduate from high school. (Average graduation rate for 2014-15 schoolyear.) (Source: Fresno County Office of Education)

Three immediate goals of the C2C Partnership are 1) increasing kindergarten readiness by 10 percentage points per year, 2) increasing third grade reading proficiency by 10 percentage points per year and 3) achieving 100% high school graduation rate county-wide by 2020.

Fresno C2C Partnership is the evolution of work that began in Fresno in 2011. Fresno Area Strive was coordinated by the Fresno COMPACT, a business and education coalition, and focused on developing a network of local partners committed to the success of our youth. The Fresno COMPACT introduced the national collective impact framework of Strive Together to the local business and education community.

In 2012, Fresno Area Strive outcomes and indicators were selected and a baseline report was presented to the community on kindergarten readiness, 3rd grade reading proficiency levels, 8th grade math

proficiency, high school graduation rates, college entrance and college completion. From 2013 – 2014 workgroups formed around each outcome and annual reports of participating school district data provided results through 2014.

In 2015, building on Fresno Area Strive, the Cradle to Career Partnership was forwarded. The past twelve months included the strengthening of a high level collaborative partnership across nine sectors with more than 38 leaders. Working on the full continuum from cradle through career, C2C will ultimately create healthy graduates from high school that enter the world of college and/or career. Workgroups and leaders use data to focus efforts to determine and advance practices to impact the core indicators and outcomes. A new baseline report is in progress. More information on how C2C is developing through the use of the nationally proven StriveTogether framework can be found on the website at www.fresnoc2c.org.

Members include a wide array of community leaders who have the ability to bring into alignment multiple programs and disciplines:

- A single focus across sectors
- Commitment to collaborative leadership actions
- Commitment to measuring data and using it to inform continuous improvement
- Collective investments leading to systems change
- Identify practices that work and replicating them

The Partnership agreed to move forward with a series of initial indicators to help measure our progress as a community. These indicators include tracking the following outcomes:

- Preconception – age 3 are thriving
- Kindergarten readiness
- Third grade reading and math proficiency
- Middle School (5th and 8th) reading and math proficiency
- High school graduation, ready for success
- Post-secondary enrollment and completion
- Health, which is involved in all of the above areas

Learn, support and follow online at C2C's newly launched website www.fresnoc2c.org. See the latest progress of how C2C is strengthening educational and community support systems through collaboration and build the capacity for all children and families to achieve success.