

The California Collaborative on District Reform

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March 13, 2012

Dear Collaborative Members and Guests,

I look forward to seeing you on March 26–27 for the 18th convening of the California Collaborative on District Reform at the Hewlett Foundation in Menlo Park. The topic for this meeting—*Looking Forward: Preparing Our Students for a New Workforce*—builds on our exploration of Linked Learning in Long Beach last November and responds directly to our superintendents' requests to follow up on that discussion. At their request, we are stepping back temporarily from our usual practice of nesting our dialogue in the specific context of one of our member districts. Instead, we will take on a broader exploration of national, state, and regional workforce trends, the skills these future careers will demand, and avenues for preparing our students to meet this demand. We will pay particular attention to the role and direction of California's community colleges as key players in career preparation, through both their career technical education programs and their transfer functions. We will also consider a recent proposal for California to participate with several other states in the *Pathways to Prosperity* initiative being spearheaded by Harvard's Graduate School of Education and Jobs for the Future.

As noted on the agenda (see the first tab in this binder), we will begin on Monday morning with presentations from two labor economists—John Dorrer of Jobs for the Future and Hans Johnson of Public Policy Institute of California—who will share workforce projections at the national and state levels. **Suggested readings, including priority readings for this morning session, are located behind the Workforce Projections tab.** As always, we have included an annotated reading list behind each tab, including both priority readings for the meeting (indicated with a double asterisk **) and additional articles for your reference.

We will then turn to a discussion of what skills are necessary to meet the needs of the workforce, delving specifically into ConnectEd's framework on college and career readiness (the first reading in the *College and Career Readiness* tab). **Please review this framework prior to the meeting.** (Note: This is a revised version of the framework included in the briefing binder for our last meeting.)

Monday afternoon, we will turn our attention to the community college system to better understand the ways in which the system currently prepares students for the workforce, and suggested directions for the future. We will ground this discussion in recent research conducted by Nancy Shulock from the Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Policy. We will also have the opportunity to hear from a distinguished panel of community college leaders and experts. Readings for this discussion are in the *Community College* tab, which is separated into readings on 1) ensuring student success, 2) career technical education, and 3) equity and access issues. There are several priority readings in this section that would be helpful to

The California Collaborative on District Reform (www.cacollaborative.org) joins researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and funders in ongoing, evidence-based dialogue and collaborative activity to improve instruction and student learning for all students in California's urban school systems.

review, **including the recently released California Community Colleges Student Success Task Force Report and the research reports on community colleges.**

After returning to the hotel Monday afternoon, we will drive to the Left Bank Brasserie, where participants will have opportunities for networking and collective relaxation over cocktails and dinner.

After an update on new Collaborative projects on Tuesday morning, we will turn our attention to a new multi-state initiative being spearheaded by Bob Schwartz (Harvard Graduate School of Education) and Nancy Hoffman (Jobs for the Future). The initiative draws on the *Pathways to Prosperity* report in the front sleeve of the binder. As part of this conversation, we will look specifically at one region—the Bay Area—to explore the health care labor market and the collective efforts needed from the K–12 system, community colleges, and the business community to fulfill the needs of this market and of the region’s students. **In preparation for this discussion, please review the Pathways to Prosperity Initiative documents in the *Pathways to Career* tab prior to the meeting, as we will spend time discussing both in detail during the meeting.**

For your convenience, we have enclosed a CD in the front sleeve that contains all of the briefing binder’s materials. As always, we have also posted a full list of the literature and resources in the binder on our website: www.cacollaborative.org.

If you have any questions regarding the meeting logistics, please don’t hesitate to contact Suzanne Claussen at 650.843.8192 or sclaussen@air.org. I look forward to seeing you all later this month!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jennifer O'Day".

Jennifer O’Day, Chair
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