

### STRATEGIC PLAN EXECUTION

The Eastside Pathways Partnership relies on continuous improvement to help positively impact existing systems affecting youth and communities across the cradle to career continuum in East King County.

In early 2019, the Partnership crafted a new Strategic Plan signaling the Partnership's readiness to continue collective work in three phases: Organizing for Implementation, Conducting the Work, and Reporting Outcomes. The Eastside Pathways Strategic Plan also laid out the Partnership's commitment to Racial Equity and achieving whole population goals while introducing new onboarding pathways for stakeholders to become Community Partners, Organizational Partners, or Philanthropic Partners.

Over the past decade, the Eastside Pathways Partnership received feedback that community members were not regularly present in collaborative spaces and had not been routinely included in formal decision making. The Partnership responded by transitioning from a traditional hierarchical model of top-down decision making to a co-centric model placing decision making in the center and empowering community partners and individuals to make decisions on the strategies that impact them.

### PANDEMIC RESPONSE

A core value of Eastside Pathways Partnership continues to be creating connections between community groups, municipalities, funders, and larger community-based organizations. Diverse community representation and engagement have always been crucial and the needs arising from the pandemic made these perspectives even more invaluable. As the effect of COVID-19 and the shelter-in-place orders spread through East King County and Washington State, the Partnership began meeting virtually and quickly created a Collaborative Action Network focused on pandemic response.



“...we have to keep those traits, those learned skills of being flexible and being nimble, and keeping the doors wide open...”

Helena Stephens  
City of Bellevue

In March of 2020, the Eastside Pathways Backbone began convening numerous Organizational, Community, and Philanthropic Partners to plan strategies responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the course of 2020, 71 unique organizations across seven sectors (Business, Civic/Government, PK-12 Education, Higher Education, Philanthropic, Faith-Based Organizations, Community-Based Organizations) came together weekly within focus areas to address the pressing problems they identified as facing the East King County community. Since March 2021, this group has continued to meet every other month providing the necessary support to various communities navigating the pandemic recovery.

## COLLABORATIVE ACTION NETWORKS & CAPACITY

Beyond the COVID-19 Response Collaborative Action Network, Eastside Pathways Partners organized into Collaborative Action Networks (CANs) to collectively build strategies supporting different age groups (0-8, 9-12, 13-18, 19-26, 0-26) the Partnership represents.

Over the past 20 months, Partners have been working within CANs dedicated to Early Learning for the Hispanic/Latinx community, East King County's COVID-19 Response, and Social Emotional Wellbeing and Career Pathways for students in the Bellevue and Lake Washington School Districts who are transitioning into their post-secondary lives.

One of the Partnership's strategic priorities has been building the skills and abilities of Partners to improve their own practices towards equity and successful community outcomes. Relying on survey data from its CANs, Councils, and Taskforces, the Eastside Pathways Backbone also supports Partners in understanding fundamental areas of its work through ongoing coaching and training.

The goal of Racial Equity spans the Cradle to Career continuum (0-26) and is supported by the efforts of each CAN and fully embedded into the Partnership's work.

The May 2020 murder of George Floyd brought renewed demands for racial and social justice, and many people of color in the East King County community and beyond reported increased fatigue due to their own racial trauma. The Eastside Pathways Racial Equity Taskforce collected these experiences of individuals of color throughout East King County as the foundation of the [Eastside Pathways Equity Pledge](#) (EPEP), a document partners can sign indicating their willingness to begin addressing racial equity within their organizational culture.

The Eastside Pathways Equity Pledge signaled the transition from Racial Equity being a spoken value to becoming a tangible goal with a strategic pathway.

## WHATS NEXT

In the fall of 2021, the Eastside Pathways Board, began to re-imagine what Board leadership looks like for the Eastside Pathways Partnership. This process was borne from the Board's reflection on community input about how the Partnership currently holds decision-making authority. This work will continue into 2022 and lead to the formation of a more responsive, representative, and equitable leadership table within the Eastside Pathways Partnership.

The Eastside Pathways Backbone continues to address existing power dynamics in the Partnership and envision

“ Through this work [CAN], BSD is informing one of the populations that are marginalized from our communication outlets. This work also shows us one way to inform the Latinx community efficiently and effectively.

Benjamin Roldan  
Bellevue School District

The Eastside Pathways Backbone holds semi-annual Eastside Pathways Institutes to coach, guide, and support the Partnership toward mastery of skills and competencies related to four core areas of partnership work: Adaptive Community Leadership, Collective Impact, Equitable Results, and Racial Equity. Understanding these pillars is critical to execute and sustain the cradle-to-career work necessary for improving outputs and outcomes in the East King County community.

“ We're all committed to similar goals...meeting together and staring at the same problem together or trying to come at something together, provides the mechanism to learn about each other's services and to learn about what resources are available in the community...

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spaces that invite a broader audience better representing the diverse community impacted by this work.

In order to track the upstream effect of Eastside Pathways Partner's collective body of work, the Partnership will explore a number of adjacent factors impacting the six outcome goals the Partnership is working towards. These systems indicators will provide a framework to understand and report on the connection between organizational practices and policies and the Partnership's outcome goals. Affecting cradle to career outcomes is long-term work and the Partnership looks forward to documenting the steady collaborative steps taken to continue this progress.