Centering Equity and Continuous Improvement in Workforce Evaluations
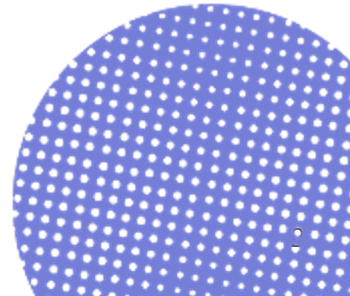
Wednesday, November 16, 2022 | 10:30a ET

CENTER FOR
EVALUATION
INNOVATION

Who we are.

Our mission is to partner with philanthropy to provide changemakers the space and resources needed to advance racial justice and create an equitable future.

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Who we are.

Where we've been: 2009

Founded to support foundations to use learning and evaluation to achieve better and faster results.

Where we are: 2022

Our mission is to partner with philanthropy to provide changemakers the space and resources needed to advance racial justice and create an equitable future.

Where we're going

We imagine a just, multiracial democracy. We hope you join us in this work.

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Who we are.

We brought our own values and mindsets to this analysis (reflexive practice).

Racial equity is a core value.

We seek a just and inclusive multiracial democracy and bring our knowledge, skills, and capabilities into alignment with this aspiration.

Our mission is to support racial equity.

CEI partners with philanthropy on strategy, learning, and evaluation efforts that are intended to advance racial equity and justice.

We study power and power building.

Building community political and representational power (base building, organizing, advocacy that builds power).

How foundations build, share, and wield power.

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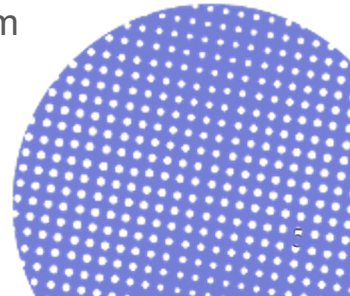INNOVATION
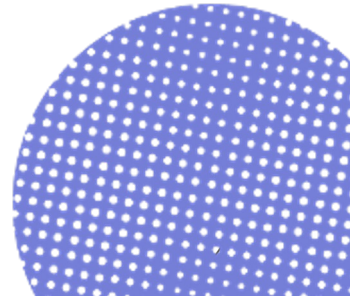
Worker Power strategy review.

Get **honest feedback** from partners and non-grantees on the workstream strategy and progress

Pressure test the assumptions and the possible future strategic directions for this workstream

Explore how ON is **perceived** by the WP ecosystem

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We added a boundary critique analysis.

Boundaries can relate to any decision. They include:

- How we bound a system
- How we frame a problem
- What we choose as a goal
- The range of solutions we consider
- The timeframes we set
- What matters to us when we select grantees
- What we prioritize and pay attention to when we look at evidence or results.

Behind every decision and its related boundaries are values, assumptions, norms, mental models, biases, and power dynamics.

Boundary critique examines our chosen boundaries and what they reveal. It also questions whether other voices affected by those boundaries might draw them differently.

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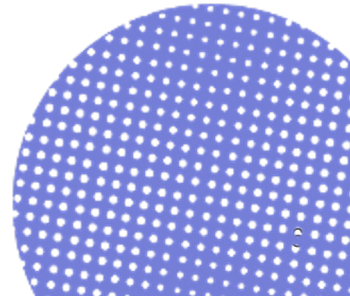
We covered four main questions.

1. What confirming/disconfirming data can we see about **progress** toward our vision?

2. How are our **hypotheses** playing out? What went well/less well?

3. What **developments** are likely to affect this work in the next 2-3 years? What does that mean going forward?

4. What is **ON's role** in the system? How do others understand ON's role?

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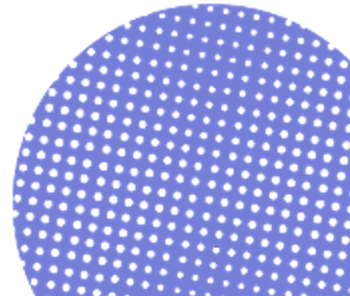
We added boundary critique questions.

1. What confirming/disconfirming data can we see about **progress** toward our vision?

   Is our vision the right vision?
   How do different groups understand the relationships between strategy and aspiration?

2. How are our **hypotheses** playing out? What went well/less well?

   How do groups think about progress differently?
   How do different lenses change perspective on progress?

3. What **developments** are likely to affect this work in the next 2-3 years? What does that mean going forward?

   How do different groups view the opportunity in this moment? What is it an opportunity *for*?

4. What is **ON's role** in the system? How do others understand ON's role?

   What does ON signal to the WP ecosystem about its WP boundaries?
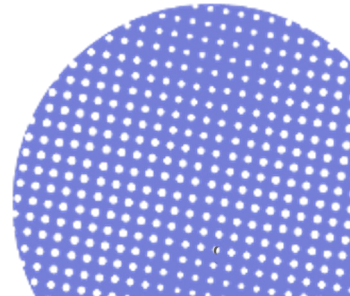   How would different groups draw these boundaries?

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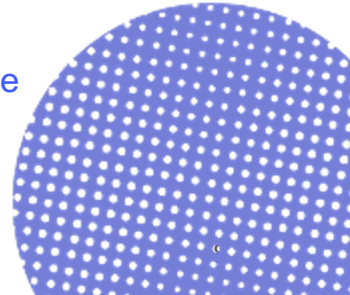
What we found.

There were no major differences between perspectives of groups.

Supporters

Non-grantees

Thinkers

Doers

Grantees

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Worker organizing is the organizing principle across stakeholders for building worker power.

How stakeholders organize this work

Organizing workers to build worker power

State/local policy wins

Federal policy wins

How stakeholders perceive ON's orientation to WP

Organizing workers

State/local policy wins

Federal policy wins

Increasing worker power
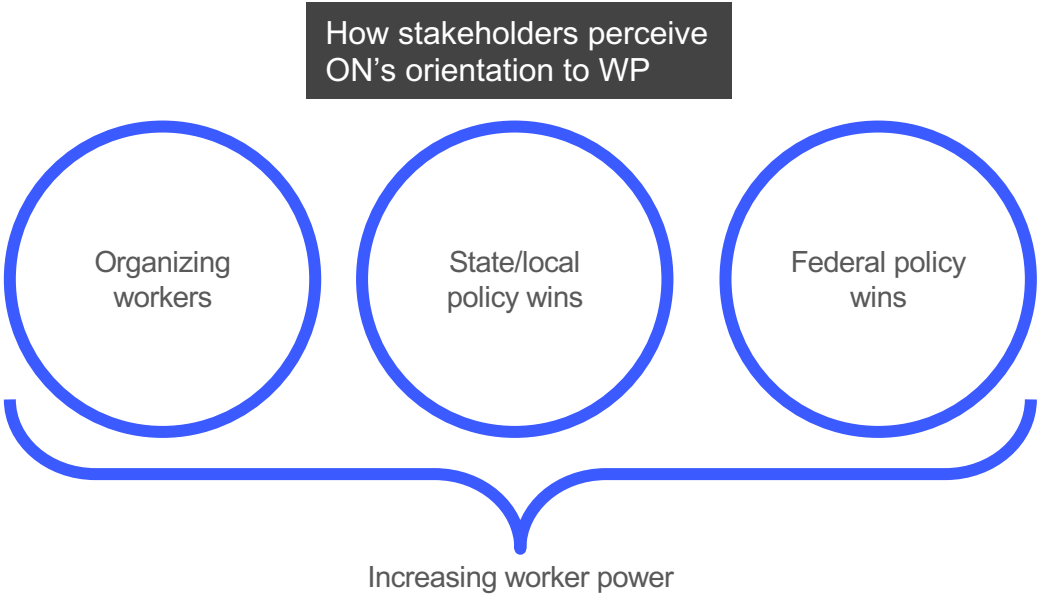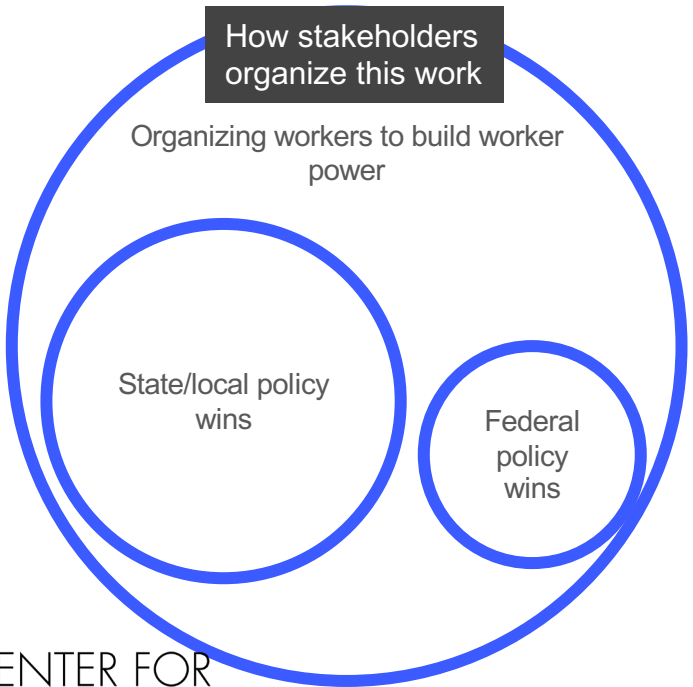
What does this signal mean to stakeholders?

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Core to this is making decisions about who is a worker— and tying that definition to ON's aspiration.

What does it mean to build power?

- Centering the worker in the work
- Existing worker agency
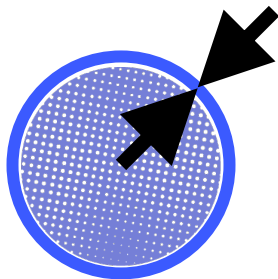
Whose power are you building?

- Using race, gender lenses
- Type of employment – who are the people?

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The way you define "worker," and by extension, whose power you will build, has strategic implications.

FEDERAL

Main avenue of preemption

BLUE, COASTAL STATES

Infrastructure; pro-worker conditions:
Worker power tables
Worker protections
State and national advocates

CITY

Organizing and advocacy to build worker power

Main avenue of preemption

CITY

Organizing and advocacy to build worker power

RED, SOUTHERN STATES

Limited infrastructure; anti-worker conditions:
Limited organizing infrastructure
Limited advocacy capacity
Limited worker protections

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Stakeholders supported ON's focus on state policy work. That has carried through to their new strategy.

Progress in state policy work

- Plenty of state wins
- Shifts within specific states that created inroads for policy change

Progress noted is long-term and not specific to the funding term.

Lack of progress: federal level, new models

- This is a pro-labor administration, which does present opportunity. This may not be the best use of ON's funds, however.
- Newness in organizing models isn't always new, and isn't always important—what is important is building power.

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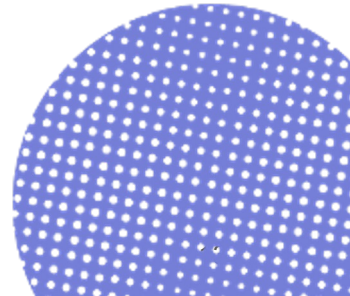
Centering Equity and Continuous Program Improvement in Workforce Evaluations

KELLY FITZSIMMONS

The Next Generation of Evidence

- CENTERS PRACTITIONERS AND THE COMMUNITIES THEY SERVE
- CONNECTS EQUITY WITH DATA AND EVIDENCE
- ELEVATES COMMUNITY VOICE
- EMBRACES A CONTINUOUS R&D-LIKE APPROACH
- REIMAGINES EVIDENCE TO BROADEN ITS DEFINITION AND USE

PROJECT EVIDENT

Actionable Evidence for Equitable Outcomes

PROJECT EVIDENT

Responsive to operational context of practitioners

Reflects the context in which practitioners operate, including organizational settings, relationships and resources, and political and policy environment

Centers on community needs and voices

Addresses the context, perspectives, priorities and assets of students and families, along with the challenges they face

Attends to systemic and structural conditions

Considers systems, policies, practices, cultural norms, and community conditions that drive inequity, including those related to poverty and racism

Prioritizes practitioner learning and decision making

Answers questions that are highly relevant to policy and practice, and that help practitioners prioritize decisions in service of students and families.

Credible and transparent

Uses high-quality data and analysis, aligning methods with practitioner questions, timeline and context

Enables timely improvements

Allows practitioners to make evidence informed decisions in a timely manner

Accessible and user-centered

Clearly communicates research design, analysis, and findings to facilitate practitioner understanding and use

Builds practitioner capacity for R&D

Provides practitioners with data, products, tools and trainings to own and advance their evidence agenda

Baltimore City Public Schools CTE

The Challenge:

Strengthen BCPS' career and technical education (CTE) programs to provide students with a pathway to in-demand, living wage jobs.

The Engagement:

Project Evident supported analyses, planning, and implementation, resulting in immediate improvements to resource optimization and equitable access.

The Impact:

- New CTE Strategic Plan, Capital Improvement Plan, and 4-year financial model.

- Greater community inclusion with an engagement strategy that conducted more than 100 stakeholder meetings.

- Reallocation of $1,000,000 in service of more equitable and impactful programming for students.

"The beauty of working with Project Evident is we not only have the data to support our actions, but we're engaging with the community, so that it's not just being mandated by our office...this is our North star."

Kumasi Vines
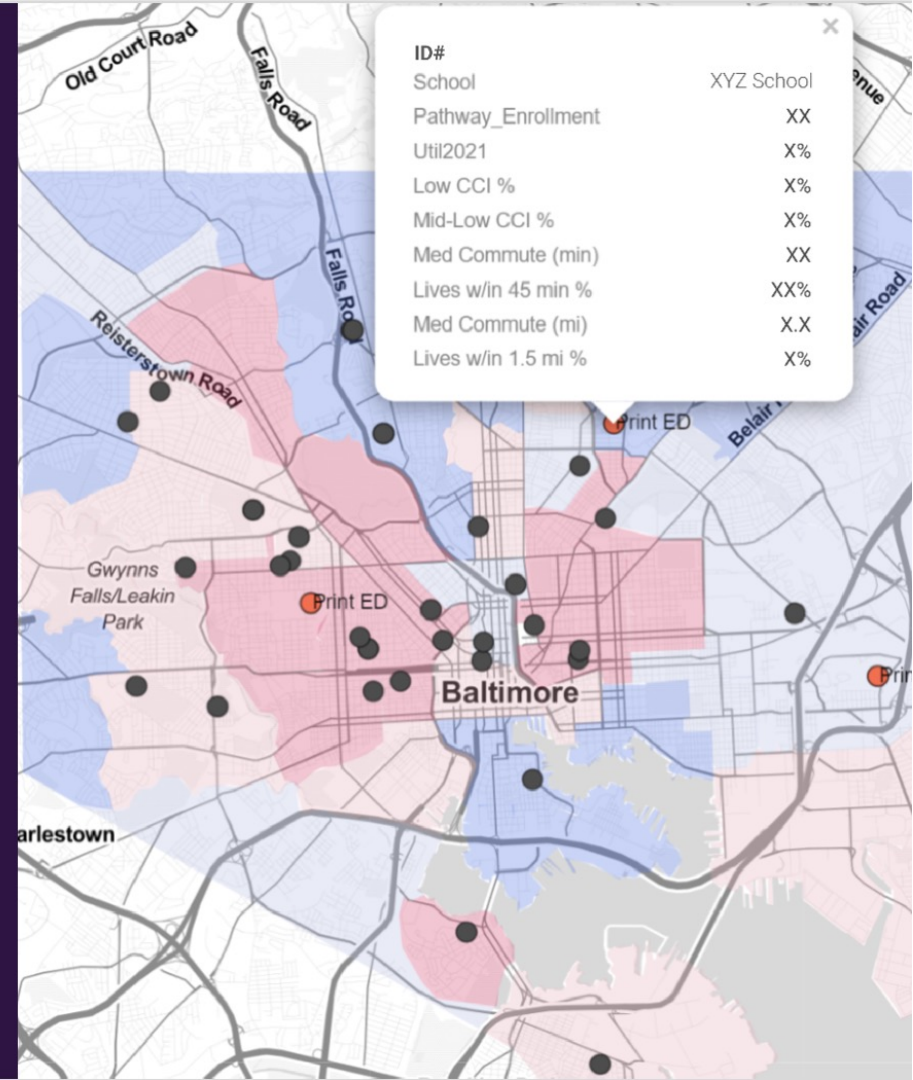Director, Career Readiness, Baltimore Public Schools

To ensure equity of access and opportunity, we analyzed a number of data sets, including:

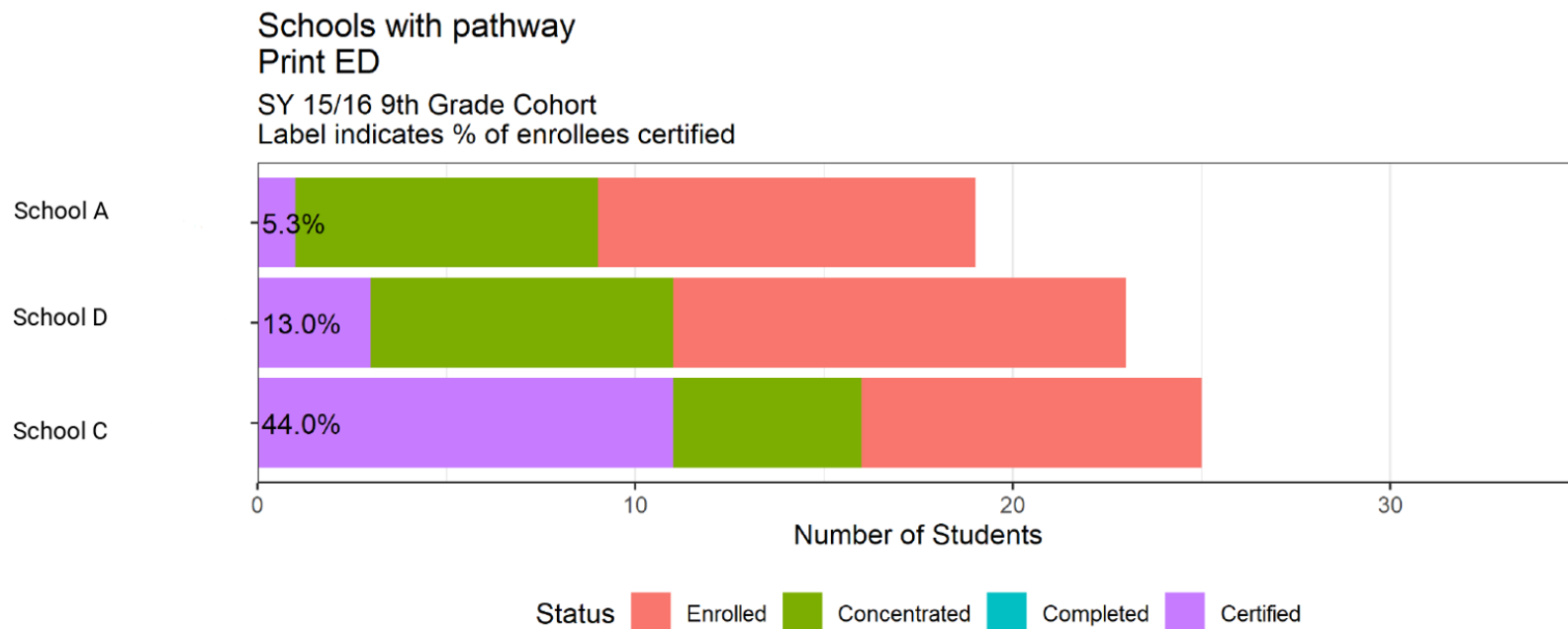Student enrollment data to help us understand demand for each pathway.

Transportation data (how long it would take a student to travel to a pathway using public transportation) to ensure equitable access.

Pathway location data to determine how pathways were distributed across the city, and whether certain pathways were clustered in higher or lower resourced neighborhoods.

Facilities utilization data to inform program planning (i.e. where a new program might be accommodated).

ID#	
School	XYZ School
Pathway_Enrollment	XX
Util2021	X%
Low CCI %	X%
Mid-Low CCI %	X%
Med Commute (min)	XX
Lives w/in 45 min %	XX%
Med Commute (mi)	X.X
Lives w/in 1.5 mi %	X%

PROJECT
EVIDENT

Student success in a pathway was assessed to inform whether a pathway needed to be redesigned or if it was a school-specific challenge.

Schools with pathway
Print ED

SY 15/16 9th Grade Cohort
Label indicates % of enrollees certified

We assessed **labor market demand** by looking at labor market projections by pathway and occupation and the education requirement and entry wage for each occupation.

Pathway	Occupation	Baltimore City		Baltimore County		Maryland		Education	Entry wage (000s) in the city, 2018
		2026 (#)	Growth	2026 (#)	Growth	2026 (#)	Growth		
Across Arts	Art and Design Workers			2,098	0.1%	13,253	5.3%		$35
	Merchandise Displayers/Window Trimmers			232	0.0%	2,062	6.0%	HSD/HSE	$32
Multimedia Production	Desktop Publishers					539	8.7%	Associate's	$38
	Web Developers	544	7.7%	499	11.6%	5,616	7.7%	Associate's	$53
Print ED	Printing Workers			476	-9.7%	4,445	5.5%		$22
	Printing Press Operators	223	0.9%	199	-2.9%	2,615	4.7%	HSD/HSE	$22
	Print Binding and Finishing Workers			101	-10.6%	1,020	7.5%	HSD/HSE	$20
	Prepress Technicians and Workers			176	-15.8%	810	5.9%	PostSec Cred	$28
	Desktop Publishers					539	8.7%	Associate's	$38

To advance equity through workforce philanthropy, we must:

Center worker and community voice.

- Integrated principal, teacher, student, parent, and local workforce data to **include** and balance **perspectives**

- Invested in community and school **learning** sessions

- Allowed for shared decision making and genuine incorporation of community feedback into **recommendations**

To advance equity through workforce philanthropy, we must:

Not prioritize programs over systems.

- Align context and capacity together

- Focus not just on CTE program specifics / district / community

- Encode in budget / resource allocation and strategy

To advance equity through workforce philanthropy, we must:

Not jump to impact evaluation too quickly.

- Establish baseline with shared and accepted data and evidence

- Engage in internal testing and validation with participants, front line practitioners, and leadership

- Strategic evidence planning including continuous improvements / small tests of change to inform timely, relevant, and actionable third-party evaluation that centers community voice