Today's Agenda

1:00   Introduction, Welcome, and Agenda Overview – Stefan Richarz

1:05   Evidence Building – CEEMI

1:25   SLDS Updates and Next Steps – OIT

1:50   Better Data for Better Decisions

1:55   Survey and Closing

Colorado Equitable Economic Mobility Initiative (CEEMI)

Unlocking Public Dollars and Public Data to Scale Effective Workforce & Postsecondary Programs in Colorado

Buzzwords and Phrases

Evidence-based

Data-Driven

Outcomes-based

Innovation

Scaling What Works

Driving Impact

Effective Implementation

Why is building evidence so important?

- We want to improve people's lives.
  (Actually do it, not just talk about it.)

- We have scarce resources (money and time) to accomplish what we want to accomplish.

- The problems we're trying to solve are hard.

- Many things don't move the dial, but some really do. We need to know which are which.

- Research and evaluation can inform how to best deploy our scarce resources to improve outcomes for Coloradans, particularly for those who have historically been underserved.

The bottom line

High-quality data and evaluation can tell us which programs, policies, and strategies are effective at improving Coloradans lives so we can ***understand and grow our impact***

Evidence Building Themes We Commonly Hear

- Evidence and evaluation should not be strictly "box checking" or compliance exercises, but tools to make better decisions and improve outcomes.

- The right funding & policy incentives must be in place to build & use evidence.

- Data and evidence need to be easier to access, integrate, and use in real time.

- We need the right resources (people, money, and time) to effectively build and use evidence.

- Evidence needs to be relevant to – and reflect the input of – the communities it serves.

- Evidence needs to be provided in a form that is actionable, understandable, and trustable by decision makers.
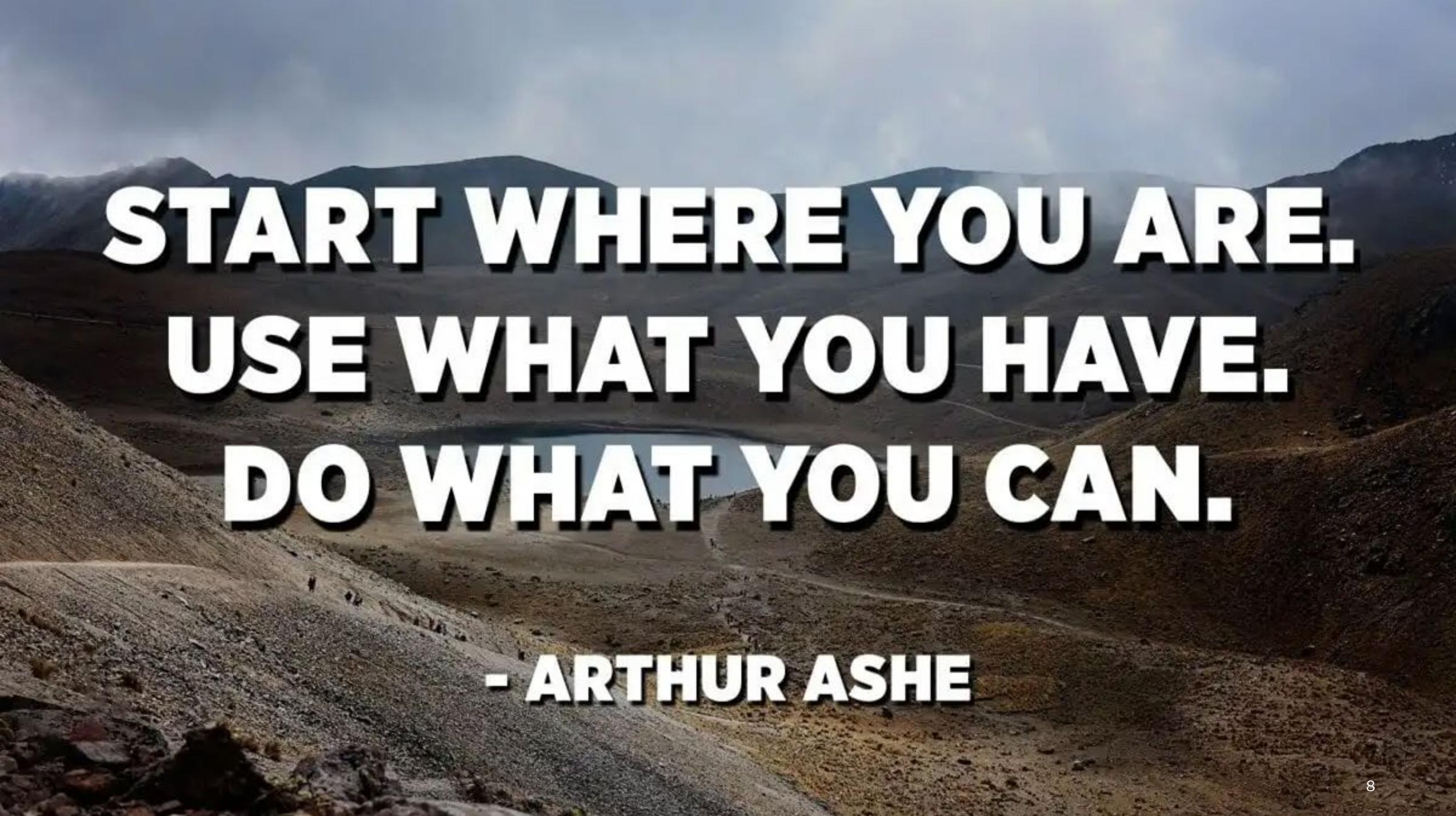
START WHERE YOU ARE.
USE WHAT YOU HAVE.
DO WHAT YOU CAN.

- ARTHUR ASHE

Steps to Building Evidence
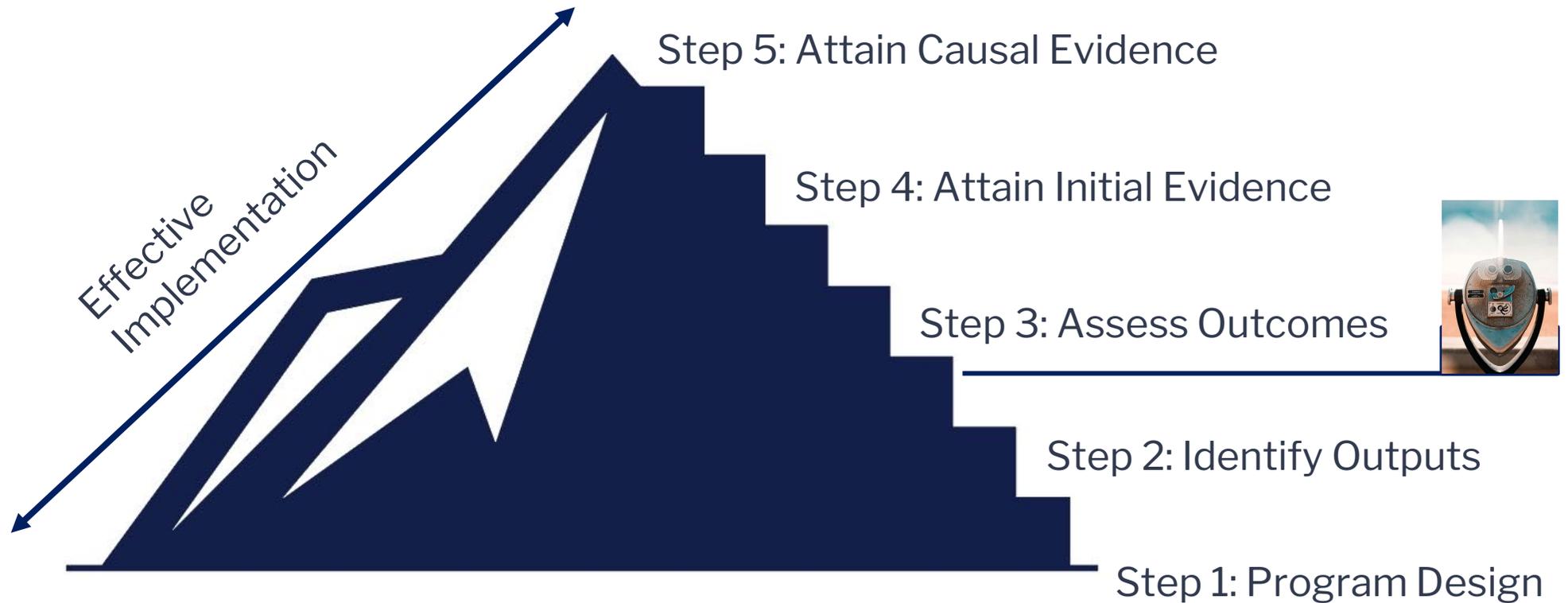
Outputs vs. Outcomes

Outputs are . . .

- Measures of to what extent – and how well – your program's core elements are being implemented.
- For example, did we teach all intended training units and/or provide all coaching sessions.

Outcomes are . . .

- Measures of what your program is trying to improve for your target population.
- For example, how much did the average participant earn after training? Did most learners get higher quality jobs?

Outcomes vs. Impacts

Outcomes are . . .

- Measures of what your program is trying to improve for your target population.
- For example, how much did the average participant earn after training?

Impacts are . . .

- Estimates of how much of a change in outcomes was caused by your program.
- For example, on average, how much more did program participants earn than an equivalent comparison group?

A Vision for Evidence Building in Colorado . . .

- Data should be viewed as a public good. We must fund (and defend) data access & infrastructure.

- Treat evidence-aligned spending as an enabler of mission.

- "Focus on outcomes and impact." Reward results (not just activities): paying for what works is the best way to get more of it.

- Make outcomes transparency & performance part of public contracting.

- Set a medium-term goal to get 80% of state-funded programs to a place where we at least have solid, verifiable data on their outcomes (step 3 evidence).

Credit: Julie Stone, Gary Community Ventures

Colorado SLDS

Dr. Heather MacGillivary | SLDS Program Manager
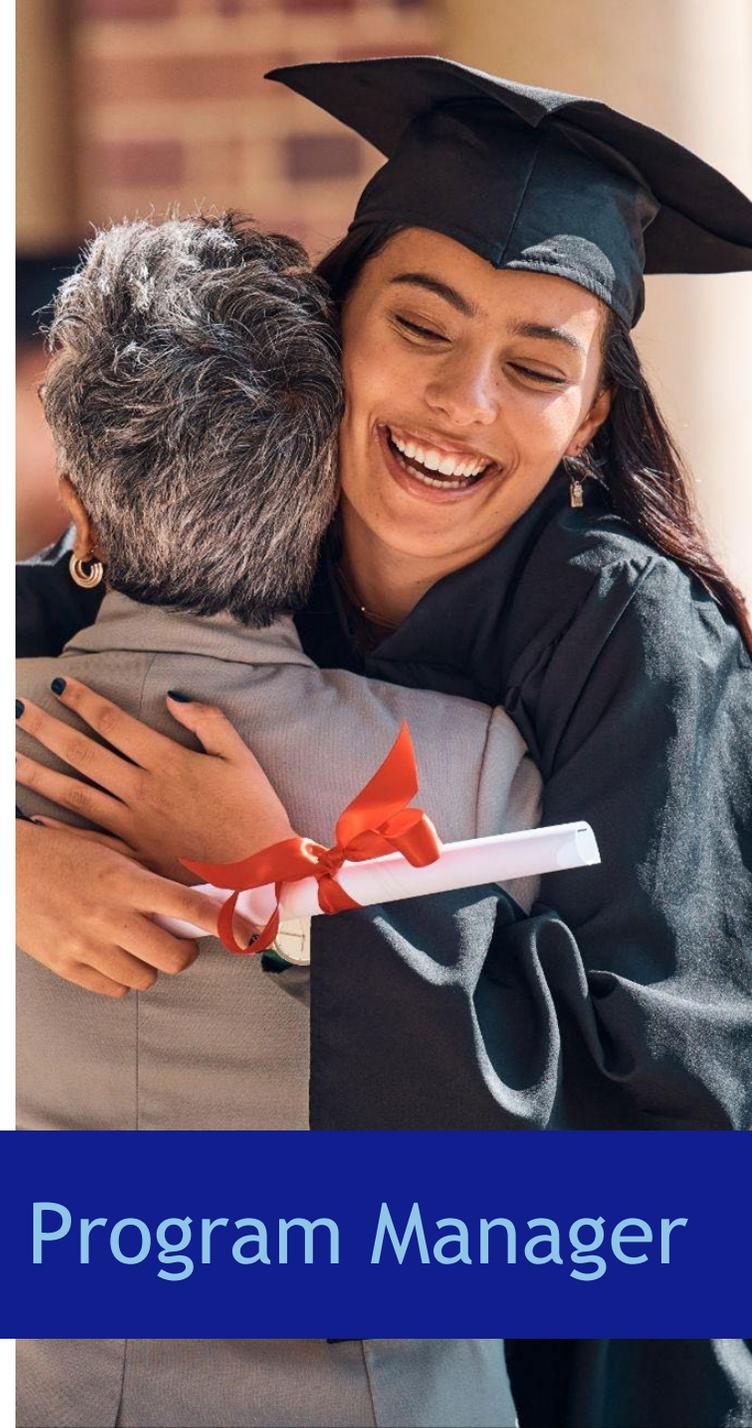
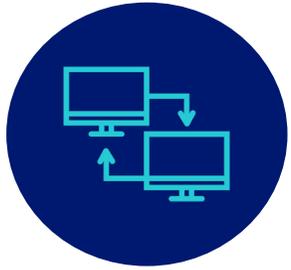# What is a Statewide Longitudinal Data System?

Powerful data infrastructure to connect and report data across state agencies

Designed to provide a more complete picture of how education and workforce initiatives are impacting individuals and communities

Robust safeguards for privacy & security

Three Functions of a Modern Data System

Public Reports & Dashboards

Provides transparent, consistent information that displays and clarifies outcomes

01

02

03

Supporting Individuals

Provides personalized services to individuals so they can access education and public services

Research & Analytics

Makes data available to authorized parties to develop nuanced analyses of the factors impacting outcomes

Taken from DISC.WestEd.org

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Creating A Unified Vision for Colorado's Data System

- **Governed by Experts**: OIT tapped national experts from the Education Commission for the States (ECS) led discussions to create the system's mission, vision and values.

- **Shared Leadership:** The SLDS Governance Board, composed of multiple state agencies, developed and approved these principles and continues to ensure the system aligns with HB24-1364.

- **Driving Adoption**: OIT and the Governance Board are collaborating to raise awareness and educate users to drive adoption of the new data system.

- **Data for Decisions**: The goal is to provide Coloradans with high-quality, trustworthy data that improves education and workforce outcomes.

The goal is to raise awareness, educate users and drive adoption of the new data system.

Who are the people of COdata?

Governing Board

Setting Mission & Vision

Creating the SLDS Charter

Co-constructing the Legal Framework

(incl. Memorandum of Understanding & Data Sharing Agreements)
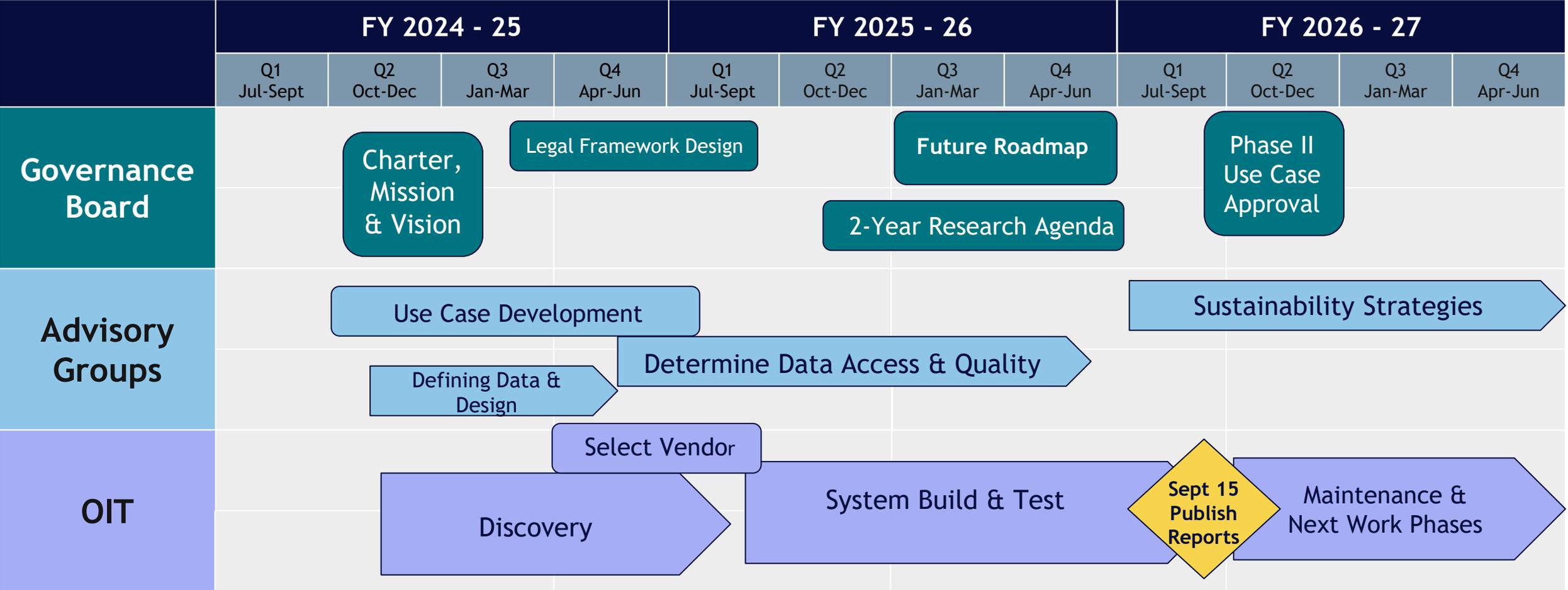
Sustainability Advisory Group

Reviewing and approving Use Cases

Review data requests

Build & Implementation Advisory Group

Advise on technical development of the system

Approve additional data elements beyond initial build

Phase I Timeline

	FY 2024 - 25				FY 2025 - 26				FY 2026 - 27			
	Q1 Jul-Sept	Q2 Oct-Dec	Q3 Jan-Mar	Q4 Apr-Jun	Q1 Jul-Sept	Q2 Oct-Dec	Q3 Jan-Mar	Q4 Apr-Jun	Q1 Jul-Sept	Q2 Oct-Dec	Q3 Jan-Mar	Q4 Apr-Jun
Governance Board		Charter, Mission & Vision	Legal Framework Design				Future Roadmap / 2-Year Research Agenda		Phase II Use Case Approval			
Advisory Groups		Use Case Development / Defining Data & Design		Determine Data Access & Quality					Sustainability Strategies			
OIT		Discovery		Select Vendor	System Build & Test				Sept 15 Publish Reports / Maintenance & Next Work Phases			

COdata Milestones Since August

01 Staffing
- Onboarded vendor
- Hired Research Analyst & Data Engineer

02 Governance
- Created multiple Data Addenda to specify data elements
- Onboarded new data contributor - CTE of Colorado
- Research Framework Draft - feedback processes started

03 System Build
- Received, ingested and linked 15 of 17 program data, as well as wage data
- Created MVP dashboard and started UX feedback sessions
- Data Quality processes and scorecards created

04 Communications
- Branding materials finalized including:
  - Name
  - Logo
  - Color palette

COdata Research Framework

Overview of Purpose and Approach

- Two - three year Research Framework revisiting in Fall of 2027
- Initial focus is education-to-workforce (PK20W)
- Research Framework guides data access, analytics and subsequent data ingestion
- All efforts to execute on the framework is governed by COdata policies and procedures including reviewing uses cases and developing corresponding data addendum

Feedback: [Research Framework](#)

Timeline:

- **February 2026 - April 2026 |** Collect feedback

- **May 2026 |** Summarize feedback & make recommendations to Governing Board

- **June 2026 |** Governing Board Vote on Final Research Framework (and future roadmap?)

Process

1. Identify key groups to reach out.
   a. COdata will reach out to each Governing Board member to identify stakeholder group(s).
   b. COdata team will provide branded slidedeck about the Research Framework to present to key groups.
   c. Governing Board member or Advisory Group member in partnership with COData Team can present to identified group(s)
   d. A feedback form will be provided to collected feedback
2. COdata team will summarize feedback and recommended changes at May meeting.
3. Governing Board vote on final version of Research Framework at the June Meeting.

Process for Developing the Research Framework

- Anchored in the [Education to Workforce Framework's Essential Questions](#)

- Began with card sorting and dot voting on 20 Essential Questions

- Reduced to 5 key questions, 14, 15, 16, 19 & 20

- Also included questions about early childhood

- In-person mtg:

  - Provided feedback on an initial draft

  - Generated sub-questions for each Essential questions

- Program staff found themes across sub-questions to revise framework

Overview of Research Framework

A. Data Driven Definitions
B. Understand Patterns and Trends in Education to Workforce (PK20W) Pathways
C. Exploration of a Variety of Outcomes
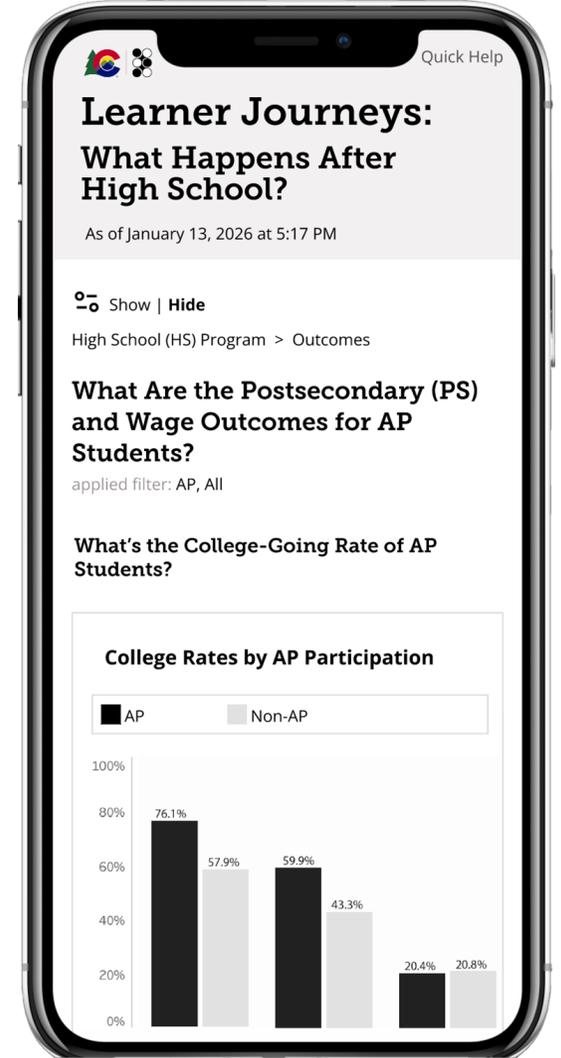D. Analysis of Opportunity for all Coloradans

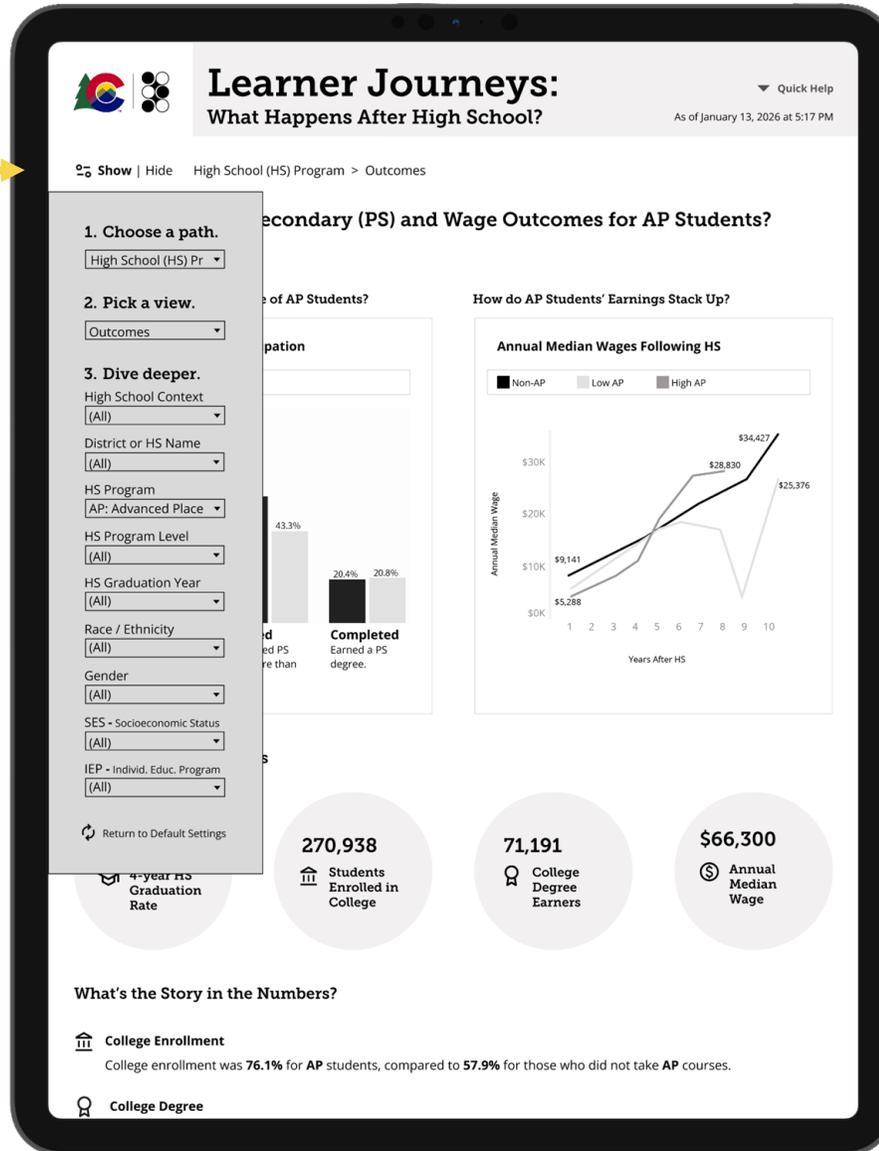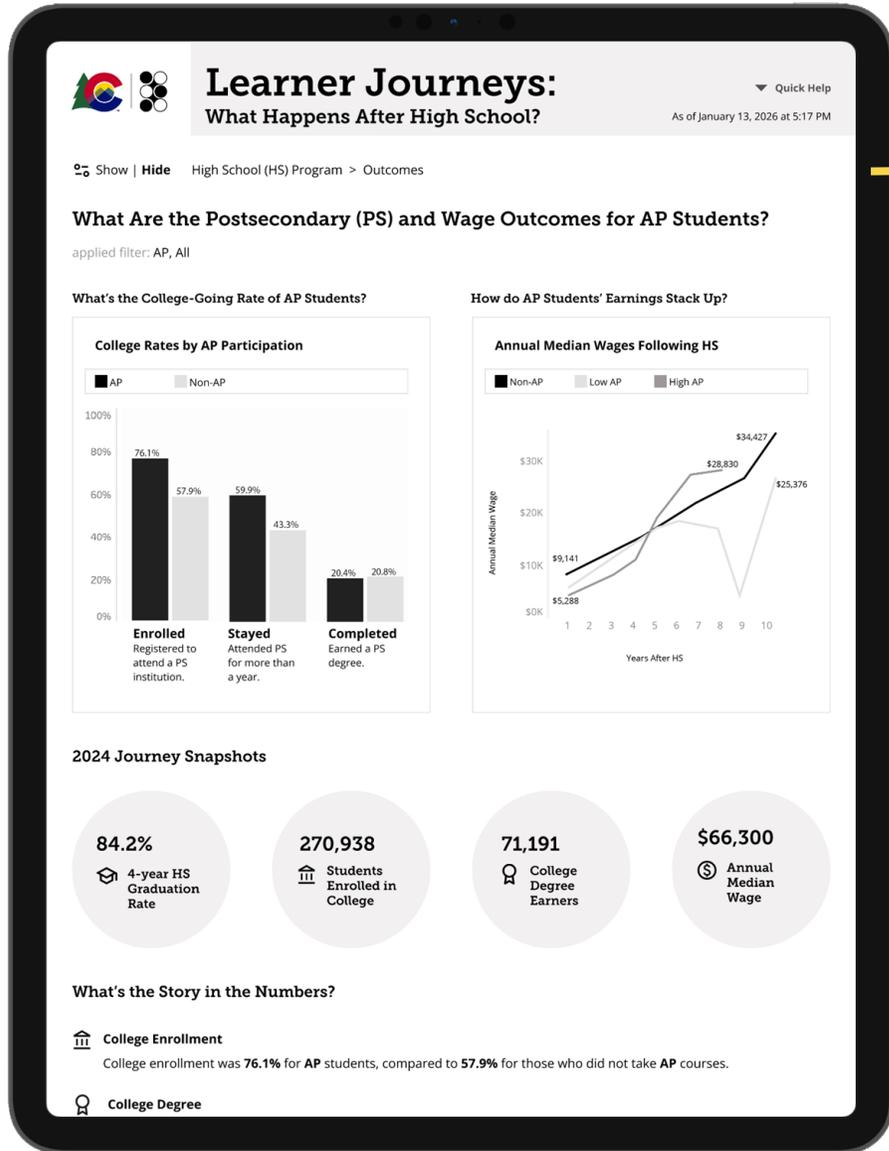Research Framework

- Research Framework Feedback Survey

COdata Reporting

Dashboard Mockup

Feedback: MVP

Timeline:

- **February** | State Agency UX feedback Focus Groups

- **March - May** | Practitioner, Student, Parent UX Focus Groups or one-on-on

- **June** | Finalize End Product

- **July - August** | Technical Testing and Optimization

- **September** | Release Dashboard

Process

February:

State Agency Phase

This process begins with a 1-hour, moderated, virtual focus group for current COdata-providing agencies

Participant will have an opportunity to access the dashboard outside of the session, and then return for a second moderated focus group

March - May:

External Stakeholder Phase

Identify key stakeholder groups and provide one-on-one UX testing or focus group settings provided by key partners

Stakeholders: students, parent, practitioners and policy makers

Opportunities to Engage

- Seeking families and student groups to test the dashboard prototype (March - May)

- Contact: Stefan Richarz (Stefan@attainmentnetwork.org)

- Questions: Heather MacGillivary heather.macgillivary@state.co.us

BETTER
DATA FOR
BETTER
DECISIONS
COALITION

Data **strengthens communities**, **fuels opportunity**, and **helps every learner** make more informed choices.

Complete the Survey

The State of The Data Feb 25th, 2026 - Feedback and Questions

Thank you!