

Contemplating a New Purpose

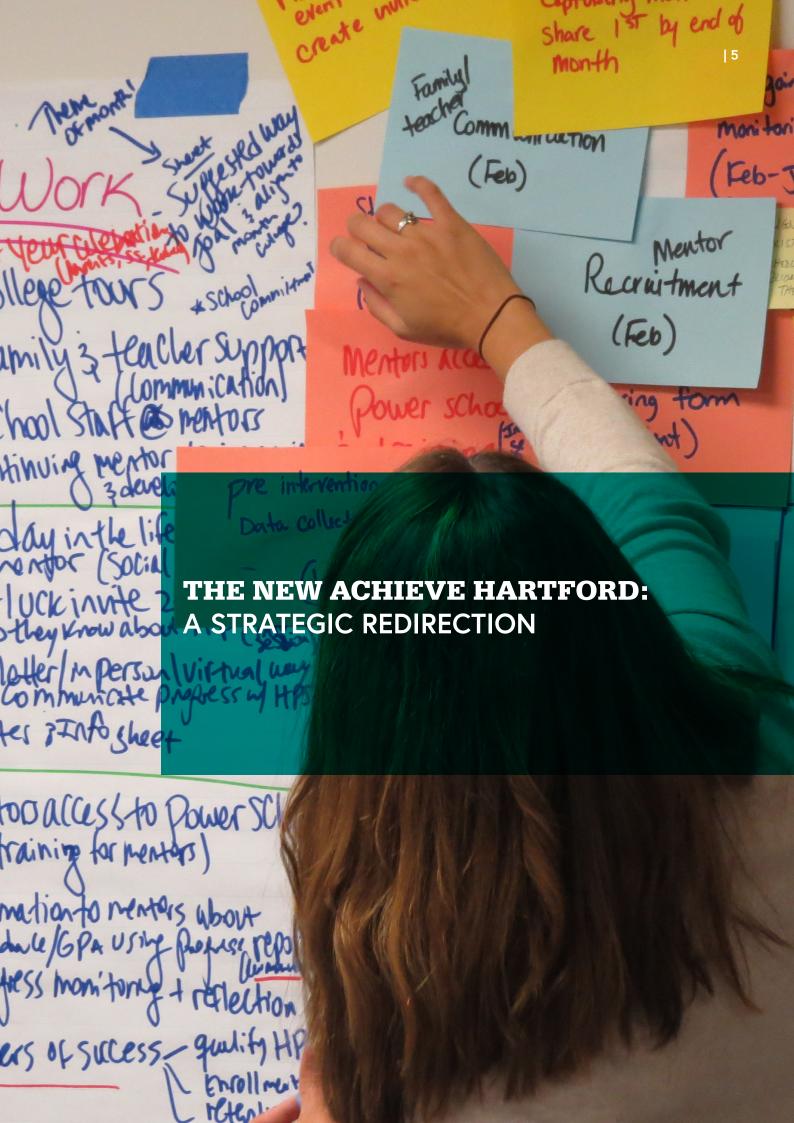
For years, Achieve Hartford! had been the "window into education reform" in Hartford, independently reporting on student achievement annually and on district happenings weekly. We designed community-based programs to support individual school improvement and conducted advocacy efforts to demand the change needed to improve outcomes for kids.

While our eight years of innovative programming had resulted in impressively high numbers of adults engaged in school improvement efforts and a widespread understanding of the lack of and ways to increase progress in Hartford, the impact on student outcomes was incidental compared to the impact of the city's leadership turnover.

No amount of data analysis, presentations, publications, parent trainings, school rebranding efforts, community events, political debates, or incubating of new programs could alter the fundamental lack of capacity at the school district, the lack of support for bold change within the political landscape, and the poor state of resource allocation in Hartford.

With student achievement remaining astoundingly low over the previous five years, it makes sense that major funders feel a certain level of "Hartford fatigue," having witnessed little return for the significant public and private investments made into the schools. And yet, the corporate investment of \$50M for a "Healthy Hartford" earlier in 2018 signals a continued willingness of funders in Hartford to support strong ideas backed by strong leadership.

While conditions in Hartford are not currently right for bold district-led reform, the current conditions present an opportunity for innovation in the way we as a city solve problems – particularly as it relates to the role of the private sector, where goodwill and leadership capacity is in good supply.



2018: HARTFORD'S MOMENT, AND OURS

Hartford right now is benefiting from a shared urgency among local leaders in business, higher education, philanthropy, and government to drive economic development.

- Corporate leaders are laser focused on economic development as demonstrated by investments into stronger entrepreneurial conditions, including the build up of Insurtech, CT Next, Upward Hartford, CT Innovations, ReSet, and more;
- 2. The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving (the nation's 19th largest community foundation, having just topped \$1B under management) is now being led by the former U .S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development under President Obama;
- The local institutions of higher education, around a table as members of the board of the Hartford Consortium for Higher Education, are actively investing in ways to help make Hartford a college town;
- 4. Our local workforce investment board, Capital Workforce Partners, has just completed a strategic plan that refocuses their efforts on work-based learning and apprenticeships for schoolaged youth;
- 5. Our mayor, Luke Bronin, having just stabilized the financial conditions in the city, is conducting a strategic planning process to establish a vision for the city that includes strategies for economic development;
- 6. The MetroHartford Alliance new CEO, David Griggs, is laser-focused on economic development issues in the region and state; and, importantly,
- 7. Our relatively new superintendent, Dr. Leslie Torres-Rodriguez, is very positively disposed to models of shared leadership to improve student outcomes at the high school and post-high school levels.

Taken together, this is quite an opportunity for the private sector to turn their fatigue from the previous five years of education funding into a more "engaged" approach to driving systemic change, where we as a private sector stop looking to the public sector to solve intractable problems, and instead step up to lead the work of designing and implementing solutions. After all, our city is small. 15 high schools in Hartford each graduate on average less than 100 students each year. We should be able to get these students what they need to enter and complete post-secondary education, and then find a career right here in Hartford. What's missing is an organization with deep relationships throughout the entire private sector – corporate, nonprofit, philanthropic, higher ed – to bridge the gaps that still exist between education, workforce and economic development programming. Achieve Hartford is perfectly positioned to be that organization.

A SHIFT AT ACHIEVE HARTFORD

In order to play a new role that captures the opportunity of Hartford's moment, five fundamental shifts have been made at Achieve Hartford.

We have a shift to:



- helping the private sector achieve better results with their investments, from supporting improved practice within the public sector
- **03** social and systemic change, from education reform.
- **04** moving individual leaders, from trying to move institutions
- a goal of building a strong talent pipeline in Hartford for the State and region, from a goal of fixing K-12 education

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The past five years in k-12 education in Hartford have been disappointing: stagnant results and a revolving door of leadership. To this day, Hartford maintains unconscionably low levels of student achievement, and obstacles stand in front of too many students at too many schools in every neighborhood. While there's no shortage of education programs and effort, there's a shortage of a return. We're just not seeing the results and impact we want or hoped for within K-12 education, and farther along the pipeline, abysmal post-secondary degree completion rates leave huge gaps in the region's talent pipeline.

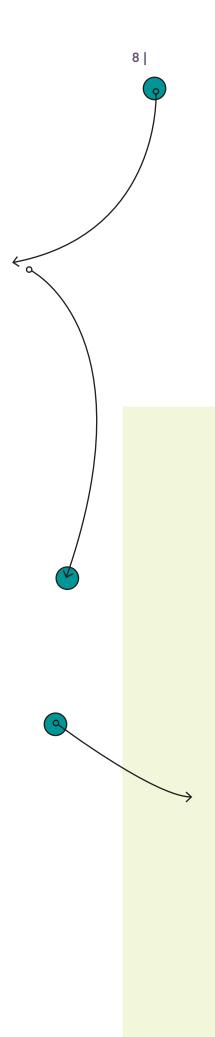
We think this is because, when it comes to education,
Hartford doesn't really have a resource problem as much as
it has a coordination and ownership problem. For such a small
city, Hartford possesses incredible assets within its corporate,
higher education, non-profit, philanthropic, and public sectors.
Hartford leaders across sectors remain unable to ALIGN
RESOURCES & COORDINATE ACTIONS in ways we know can
dramatically improve student outcomes.

OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

While conditions in the city and school district are in need of long term improvement, Hartford's diverse private sector has incredible potential to drive systemic change in both education and workforce development right now.

- The focus for many across the state is economic development, and the talent development is central to this:
- The concentration of private investment in education and workforce development is growing and fast
- Hartford's biggest asset its smart and committed leaders from corporate, nonprofit, higher ed, and philanthropy – is waiting to be tapped.

Unlocking our potential, as a private sector, is the real opportunity.



SETTING NEW CONDITIONS FOR COLLABORATION

As a private sector, we must drastically change the way we collaborate across the sectors, by making these four changes to:

- ... Our Mindset: The "system" must be redefined and understood to be not only the public sector, but all three sectors public, community, and private sharing responsibility, with evidence of private sector leadership having an impact on education outcomes.
- ... Our Capacity: Corporate, nonprofit, philanthropic, and higher ed leaders must be prepared to take on a new level of responsibility to solve education problems, with individual leaders receiving consistent coaching and support to win in this new space.
- ... Our Process: High-functioning, action-oriented, cross-sector collaborations require strong process and design, with conflicting priorities and ideologies addressed openly, resulting in alignment.
- ... Our Understanding of What Works: Achieving a higher return on investment in education requires stronger evaluation for both current interventions as well as a test and learn approach for new interventions, with an eye towards long-term impact and taking solutions to scale.

A NEW ACHIEVE HARTFORD

TAGLINE

Activating private sector leaders to solve education problems

MISSION STATEMENT

To close the opportunity and achievement gap in Hartford and build a viable talent pipeline for our state and region.

CORE OBJECTIVE

To create and maintain spaces for action-oriented, high-functioning, cross-sector collaboration where the private sector can effectively lead in ways that expand opportunity and increase student outcomes.

THEORY OF CHANGE

If we – Achieve Hartford staff, board members, and partners – activate the region's many corporate, nonprofit, philanthropic and higher ed leaders to take shared ownership of solving Hartford's education problems, and if we support high-functioning teams and high-impact interventions, over time we can achieve equity in opportunity and close the achievement gap – in the process building a large base of committed, cross-sector leaders.

A NEW ADVOCACY MODEL

Embracing a model of "distributed leadership", Achieve Hartford can stay small yet enlist and support a large number of private sector leaders to address gaps in the high school to post-secondary degree completion pipeline. To get work done, we must get it done through our leaders.

OUR VISION

We envision Hartford as the state's leading talent hub, with our city's young people well placed in careers and the cycle of poverty ended. We envision a city where:

- leaders from all sectors share ownership of education outcomes and
- all students attain a post-secondary degree and enter the workforce ready.

WHO WE ARE

We are a group of private sector leaders coming from local companies, nonprofits, higher education, and philanthropy working to ensure educational success for Hartford students from high school through post-secondary degreecompletion.

WHAT WE DO

We identify, coach, and inspire private sector leaders to address specific student opportunity gaps via high-functioning, cross-sector teams, and in doing so, change how leaders work together.

WHO WE SERVE

Focusing almost exclusively on the private sector, we recruit and support leaders from corporate, nonprofit, philanthropy and higher ed.

Currently we maintain:

- 50 PRIVATE SECTOR CHAMPIONS
- 14 BOARD MEMBERS
- 4 FULL TIME STAFF MEMBERS
- 9 PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS
- 2 COALITIONS (COLLABORATIONS)
- 10 ACTION TEAMS (INTERVENTIONS)

OUR BELIEFS

We believe...

- 1. In Hartford in our collective ability to address our city's challenges and thrive.
- 2. All kids can succeed and that talent is held equally among us all.
- 3. The opportunity and achievement gap between Hartford kids reflects poorly on all of us.
- 4. The health of Hartford and its suburbs is interdependent.
- 5. All sectors, not just the public sector, have the responsibility to cocreate solutions that ensure all our kids reach their full potential.
- 6. In the power of individual leaders leaning in to catalyze systemic change.

OUR VALUES

We value...

- 1. Action
- 2. Results
- 3. Systemic change
- 4. Using data to understand what really works and drive decisions
- 5. Bold leaders who force hard conversations
- 6. Putting kids first when reconciling different interests
- 7. Leaders who collaborate to the point of interdependence
- 8. Community voice
- 9. "Test and learn" approaches
- 10. Leveraging best practices from anywhere

A NEW BUSINESS CASE

Unlike other nonprofits running programs that serve youth directly, Achieve Hartford is positioned to work alongside business and philanthropy to support and align the work of direct-service organizations in education, higher education and workforce development for greater results. By embracing a distributed leadership model whereby the marginal cost to support an additional private sector leader (and action team) is small, Achieve Hartford can stay lean and maintain a budget of \$600-800K annually over the next three years, while still impacting 600 students across its two initiatives in Year 1 and 500 additional students each year thereafter.

More importantly, the interventions executed by each action team or work group should unlock synergies between city-wide efforts that allow for still more students to be served among and between existing nonprofits, without the need for additional corporate or philanthropic investments, represented graphically here:

THE PRIVATE SECTOR **Foundation** Nonprofit **Higher Ed** Corporate Individual Individual Individual Individual Leaders Leaders Leaders Leaders & & & & Community Community Resource Resource **Investing Investing** Allocation Allocation Achieve Hartford Facilitated Alignment Systems Change & Improved Student Outcomes

A SUMMARY OF MEASURABLE BENEFITS TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR

- Increased efficiency in the deployment and redeployment of resources
- Increased collaboration and alignment among funders
- Increased sharing of resources among nonprofits
- Increased results as measured by student outcomes
- Increased ability to leverage investment from new players
- Increased fulfillment of private sector leaders in their work
- Increased perception of Hartford as a highfunctioning city

To execute against our new theory of change, we must be perfectly designed to get the results we desire. This means (1) re-defining three full-time positions to work under the Executive Director, (2) a greater reliance on the Board of Directors, as strong private sector leaders, (3) efficient use of part-time staff and/or consultants where outside expertise is necessary, and (4) an increased reliance on our partners as private sector leaders carrying out a bulk of the work.

The needed roles and responsibilities within the new organization, along with a correlating human capital strategy, are listed in the table below.

		Part-	Board		
Role and Responsibility	4 FTE	time	Member	Consultant	Partner
Business Development	Executive Director		Х		
Program Oversight	Executive Director				
Administration / Operations	Executive Director				
School Design expertise	Executive Director		Х	Х	
College / Career Readiness expertise	Executive Director				Χ
Bookeeping		Χ			
Grantwriting		Х			
Strategic Communications Support			Х	Х	
Program Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis	Project Management & Evaluation Lead Project Management & Evaluation Lead		Х	X	
Project Management				^	
Organizing Strategy	Lead Coalition Organizer Lead Coalition				Х
Leader Recruitment, Coaching	Organizer				
Org-level Communications	Lead Storyteller				
Program-level Communications	Lead Storyteller				
Event Management	All staff				

In addition, the composition of our Board of Directors must also shift, to specifically add expertise in key areas needed to execute our current initiatives to the best of our ability. And, the roles that our current Board members play must also change, to ensure we are fully utilizing the support of our private sector champions. The table below presents a shift:

Current Board Members Corporate	New Roles Partnership building within the Chamber of Commerce Strategic Communications support Leader Recruitment
Corporate / Higher Ed	Participation on an Action Team or Work Group
Higher Education	Partnership Building within Higher Ed Program Evaluation
Small Business	Business case and pitch development
New Board Members	New Roles
Venture Philanthropist	Help staff identify high-net-worth individuals insterested in education / workforce development
Digital Communications Expert	Help staff design more compelling methods to "sell" each coalition's impact
School Design Expert	Help staff evaluate current school design implementation and evaluation
Leadership Development Expert	Help staff better design leader supports to deepen private sector leader engagement
Economic Development Expert	Help staff better steer the work of coalitions towards talent development priorities.
Diversity & Inclusion Expert	Help staff recruit diverse action team leaders for current and future initiatives

SUSTAINABILITY

While we will always seek to attract regional and national funders such as the Nellie Mae and Lumina education foundations, three core strategies will drive sustainability of the new Achieve Hartford over the next three years:

Earning Core Operating Support

Achieve Hartford has had the good fortune of maintaining many of its founding corporate funders, and this strategy specifically involves deepening these relationships to ensure strategic partnerships can be formed at the coalition and action team / work group levels.

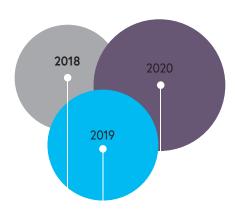
Selling New Projects to Institutional Investors

Foregoing most traditional grant applications to private foundations who tend to
focus on direct-service nonprofits, we will identify corporate institutions with an
interest in workforce development and look for \$5-10K investments in specific action
teams or work groups in which they can also participate.

Pursuing Venture Philanthropy

 We will engage in the active recruitment of high-net-worth individuals from the Greater Hartford region to build a base of systems change-minded and "engaged" philanthropists, willing to involve themselves in the design and implementation of education and workforce development solutions in Hartford.

In all three of these strategies, the goal is to engage private sector leaders directly in the work or action teams and work groups, with asks for funding being a secondary goal of partnership.



Seeking to stay lean as a staff and focused on no more than two major initiatives at once, the three-year financial model for the organization looks like the following:

Core Operating Supporters	Amount	Project-Specific Funders	Amount	Individual Investors	Amount
Corporate Core 1	\$150,000	All In! Corporate 1	\$20,000	Board Members	\$20,000
Corporate Core 2	\$150,000	All In! Corporate 2	\$10,000 Project Investors		\$10,000
Corporate Core 3	\$100,000	All In! Corporate 3	\$10,000	,	
Corporate Core 4	\$40,000	Weaver Corporate 1	\$10,000		
Private Foundation 1	\$25,000	Weaver Corporate 2	\$5,000		
	\$465,000	All In! Event Sponsorship	\$25,000		
		Corporate Core 1	\$50,000		
			\$130,000	Total	\$625,000
Year 2 FY20					
Core Operating Supporters	Amount	Project-Specific Funders	Amount	Individual Investors	Amount
Corporate Core 1	\$150,000	Maintained All In! Funders Year 1	\$55,000	Board Members	\$20,000
Corporate Core 2	\$150,000	All In! Event Sponsorship	\$25,000	Project Investors	\$30,000
Corporate Core 3	\$100,000	New All In! Funder(s) Year 2	\$20,000		\$50,000
Corporate Core 4	\$40,000	Initiative 3 Funders	\$60,000		
Private Foundation 1	\$25,000	Weaver 3rd Party Evaluator Contrac	\$20,000		
	\$465,000		\$180,000	Total	\$695,000
Year 3 FY21					
Core Operating Supporters	Amount	Project-Specific Funders	Amount	Individual Investors	Amount
Corporate Core 1	\$150,000	Maintained All In! Funders Year 1	\$55,000	Board Members	\$20,000
Corporate Core 2	\$150,000	All In! Event Sponsorship (or SVP)	\$25,000	Project Investors	\$50,000
Corporate Core 3	\$100,000	Maintained All In! Funders Year 2	\$20,000		\$70,000
Corporate Core 4	\$40,000	Maintained Initiative 3 Funders	\$60,000		
Private Foundation 1	\$25,000	New All In! Funders Year 3	\$20,000		
	\$465,000	New City Expansion	\$90,000		
			\$270,000	Total	\$805,000

NEW PROGRAMMATIC SCOPE

For the duration of this strategic plan, Achieve Hartford is committing to programming that impacts the talent pipeline between high school and post-secondary degree completion. Nothing prevents this scope from changing during the next strategic planning process.

To achieve meaningful results with a staff of four, Achieve Hartford is also committing to executing no more than two initiatives at any given time. For Year 1 of the strategic plan, those two initiatives include:





In our model of distributed leadership, we provide the following support to private sector leaders within our two coalitions.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT (ORGANIZING):

- New stakeholder recruitment and stewardship
- One-on-one stakeholder coaching to increase engagement
- External communications to drive awareness and amplify impact of leaders who are stepping up
- Funder and City Leader engagement and sustainability planning

PROJECT MANAGEMENT:

- Logistics: Co-planning meetings, agendas, co-creating materials, taking minutes)
- Internal communications to drive members' full engagement
- Oversight: General accountability to ensure deadlines hit
- Research and sharing of national best practices re: systemic coordination
- Data collection and analysis / reporting for evaluation
- Support for Future Action Team design
- Procuring technical assistance (national network)

ALL IN! COALITION

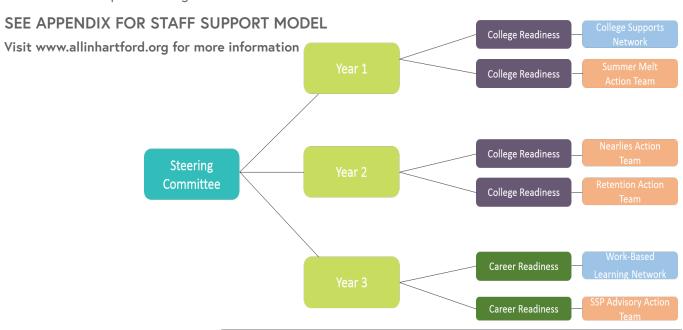


ALL IN! Steering Committee Members include:

- Martin Estey Hartford Consortium for Higher Education
- Richard Sugarman Hartford Promise
- Julie Daly-Meehan MetroHartford Alliance
- Jim Boucher Capital Workforce Partners
- Sonia Dinnall Hartford Public Schools
- Kim Oliver City of Hartford Office of Children, Families, Youth and Recreation
- Erin Haberman Travelers Foundation

Additional Coalition partners include:

- Marlene Ferreira Lincoln Financial
- David Johnston Council Higher Education Retention Excellence
- Other nonprofit and higher ed leaders



WEAVER HIGH SCHOOL REDESIGN PROJECT

The Hartford Board of Education decided formally to re-design and reopen Weaver High School as a building that would co-locate at least two mediocre schools.

In partnership with the Blue Hills Civic Association, Achieve Hartford secured a commitment from HPS to put nothing less than a high-functioning and fully- resourced neighborhood high school inside the new building.



The launch of a new Weaver is about much more than the end goal of constructing a new building; Weaver stands as a symbol of hope, opportunity, equity, and success for Hartford. There is one overarching goal, defined in more detail in the appendix, which is to achieve 900 high-quality seats upon opening Weaver High in 2019.

THE WEAVER STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS INCLUDE:

- Vicki Clark Blue Hills Civic Association
- Lee Hunt Blue Hills Civic Association
- Tara Spain Travelers Foundation
- Alan Hadad University of Hartford
- Sal Salafia ARCADIS/O&G
- Evette Avila Hartford Public Schools
- Janice Castle City of Hartford
- Donna Sodipo Connecticut Public Broadcast Network (CPBN)
- Hartford Board of Education
- Susan Winkler Metro Hartford Alliance (Insurance and Finance Cluster
- Abigail Korhonen North End Organizing Task Force

Additional partners include:

- Ethan Reid Morgan Stanley
- Karraine Moody Habitat for Humanity
- Michelle Szynkowicz Teach for America
- Sheldon Neal Hartford Public Schools
- Ken O'Brien Hartford Public Schools
- Jason Fargharson Weaver High School Alumni

School Climate & Culture

Family & Community Engagement

Weaver Steering

Committee

Student Learning Experience

Industry & Higher Ed Partnerships

Visit www.weaver2019.org for more information

NEW MILESTONES

As a new organization, our number one focus is the impact we have directly on students. In addition, we must measure the impact we have on the private sector leaders and their level of engagement. Lastly, in our first year as a "re-started" organization, we must measure our ability to establish ourselves in the marketplace. The table on the next page presents the milestones we are using to gauge our success in Year 1.

Milestones for Year One of the 2018-21 Strategic Plan

(How will we know the new approach is working AND the new AH can succeed in the market?)

Top Line Goals from the Strategic Plan:

Positioning: Achieve Hartford establishes itself as Hartford's new resource for solving HS-PS pipeline problems

(as demonstrated by all financial milestones hit and key partnership milestones hit, listed in table on next page)

Impact (A): 600 students put ON TRACK for Post-Secondary Readiness and/or Career Readiness

(Breakdown: 80 Summer Melt & Retention, 80 Retention new, 40 CSN, 100 SSP/CC, 300 Weaver non-seniors)

Impact (B): 71 Private Sector Leaders fully participating on work groups and action teams and networks

(Breakdown: Nonprofit (28), Corporate (26), higher ed (15), philanthropy (3)) (25 reach level two, 40 reach level three, 6 reach level four)

	Student Impact Milestones A	Adult Impact Milestones B	Positioning Milestones
AH Org Level			
Q1			New core funder secured
			50+ learn more cards received from rebrand mailing
Q2			(2) Core/Project funders secured
Q3			Core funder secured
ALL IN!			
7122 1111			
Q1	New Work-Based Learning Network launched	(7) Nonprofit and (5) corporate leaders	Corporate Investor 1 secured (\$50K)
	Action Team on Career Readiness launched (100)	(2) Nonprofit and (1) corporate leaders	Corporate Investor 2 secured as institutional funder (\$20K)
	College Supports Network relaunches (40)	(5) Nonprofit and (4) higher ed leaders	ALL IN! given at least 10 min at State of the Schools
Q2	Summer Melt Action Team results (80)	(1) Nonprofit and (1) higher ed leaders	Corporate Investor 3 secured (\$10K)
	Retention Action Team – Fall relaunch	(2) Nonprofit and (6) higher ed leaders	Corporate Investor 4 secured (\$10K)
			Core Funder becomes project investor
			Major ALL IN! Event raises \$25K
Q3	New Retention Action Team launches (80)		Foundation investor secured (\$25K)
			New Action team project investor secured (\$10K)
			ID'd as part of MHA plan
			ID'd as part of Mayor's plan
Q4	Ī		At least 4 individuals investors secured
			(\$10K) Two new action teams proposed by
			coalition members One initiative proposed in partnership
			with regional philanthropic investor Guided pathways initiative proposed for
Weaver			next year
Q1		Industry Advisory WG launch (12) corporate (1) higher ed	Plan approved by board with huge support
		Health WG launch (4) corporate, (1) nonprofit, (2) higher ed	
		nonpront, (2) nigher ed	
Q2			
Q3			
Q4	Weaver Plan Implemented (300)		New initiative ID'd based on success of Weaver
			Requested to stay on as paid evaluation partner
			At least \$225K raised for Weaver

Appendix A

AH Staff Support for ALL IN! Coalition

	College Supports Network	Summer Melt Action Team	Retention Action Team	Longitudinal Data Project Action Team	Work-Based Learning Network	New "SSP / Career Competency" Action Team	Steering Committee
Stakeholder Engagement (Organizing):							
New stakeholder recruitment and stewardship			Х	Х	Х	Х	Х
One-on-one stakeholder coaching to increase engagement	Х		Х		Х	Х	х
External communications to drive awareness and amplify impact of leaders who are stepping up	Х	Х	х	Х	Х	Х	х
Funder and City Leader engagement and sustainability planning							Х
Project Management:							
Logistics: Co-planning meetings, agendas, co-creating materials, taking minutes)	Х		Х	X	X	Х	Х
Internal communications to drive members' full engagement	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х
Oversight: General accountability to ensure deadlines hit	Х		Х	Х	Х	Х	Х
Research and sharing of national best practices re: systemic coordination	Х				Х		Х
Data collection and analysis / reporting for evaluation	Х	Х	х	Х	Х	Х	Х
Support for Future Action Team design							Х
Procuring technical assistance (national network)							Х

