



Public Schools of North Carolina

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Summarized and Themed District Team Commitments from January 2018 Regional Meetings Using District ESSA Plans to Support Early Learning

During the week of January 22, 2018, 82 district teams attended regional meetings across the state to understand how and begin planning to leverage the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to strengthen the local birth-through-eight continuum. Teams were required to include representatives from the Superintendent's office, Title I, Smart Start local partnerships, Head Start. Each team developed commitments to build upon for their district ESSA plan. This document shares those commitments by the following themes:

- Collaboration/Coordination
- Convene Working Group/Create a Plan
- Data Collection, Analysis and Sharing
- District/Leadership Focus on Early Childhood/Language and Policy
- Funding
- Locate and Serve Under
- Needs Assessments
- Parent, Family and Community Engagement
- Professional Development
- School Improvement
- Transition Planning and Vertical Collaboration
- Transportation
- Other

Collaboration/Coordination

- Coordinate with other district and community leaders
- Alignment of collaborative efforts across all agencies to better reach families
- Enhance a collaborative partnership with stakeholders between birth to 8-year-olds
- Continue to collaborate with current partners and seek and add other stakeholders for future work
- Participate in collaborative and inclusive dialogue, planning and activities with all stakeholders (common goals, common language, common plan of action for children 0-8 years)
- Instructional services will meet regularly to plan and support collaboration and engage in team problem solving
- Connect the dots and common language for all (vertical alignment)

- Alignment of curriculum and standards
- Employ a part-time educator to coordinate all agencies/partnerships
- Build childcare/DSS/school connections
- Build partnership between early childhood and schools: childcare/day cares, pre-school, CDSA, Smart Start, CCHC/CC4C, DSS, Head Start, Juvenile Justice, community providers, faith communities, community/students
- Strengthen the partnership among LEA, Smart Start, Head Start, and private and faith-based childcare centers
- Collaboration: county-wide meetings, home visits, day cares, social services
- Utilize the collaborative group to problem solve and design better opportunities for birth-eight
- Better networking/connections, better communication and sharing ideas and strategies for student and parent success
- Determine commonalities in resources and practices
- Share resources, align outcomes
- Review/revise MOU with stakeholders every 3-5 years and consider combining where appropriate
- We will expand and develop MOAs with other early childhood community partners (to include other at-risk populations)

Convene Working Group/Create a Plan

- Convening a work group to establish work-in-progress/current focus of stakeholders (what we're doing now)
- Convene a working group including LEA, Head Start, Smart Start, NC PreK, CC4C, CDSA, Child care center reps, parents, DSS, other community partners
- Revitalize/enhance kindergarten readiness committee (all stakeholders)
- Create a small group to determine next steps
- Convene meeting of the core group
- Possibly huge collaboration of local agencies meeting
- We will develop an early childhood task force with all stakeholders represented, like head start, Smart Start partnership to develop a plan for sharing resources (commitment, regular meetings, attendance of stakeholders)
- Convene 0-8 education collaborative network
- Develop an early learning committee with specific objectives and outcomes, based on the community assessment and utilizing MTSS framework
- Community meeting
- Reconvene team in attendance today to debrief and create action timeline
- Commit to creating a planning team with DPI support
- Stakeholder alignment: Convene district wide meeting across admin/schools/parents/community to align priorities and have buy-in to include pre-k
- Hold meeting with community ESSA team
- Align district plan with ESSA requirements
- Complete early learning components of ESSA plan

- In writing our ESSA plan, we will look for more opportunities to build capacity with early learning community agencies who support education
- Create a plan for improving services and participation in early interventions
- Create school readiness plan for the community (curriculum, principal, title I, EC, kindergarten teacher, coach, pre-k)
- With stakeholders, develop a plan to expand programming to children who have not yet entered school, especially ESL and migrant children.
- Process: data dive, policy dive, create plan, implement plan; monitor and adjust; review data, revisit plan, policy, new opportunities
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning for 100% of pre-k classrooms by assessing and evaluating current practices and then making necessary changes

Data Collection, Analysis and Sharing

- Data
 - Identify data needs (topics and disaggregated)
 - Plan for sharing
 - Determine how data will be used in planning
- We will gather and analyze data in areas of
 - number of children 0-5 by age
 - number children in licensed daycares
 - number of children with no pre-k experience
 - number of children in early intervention
 - results of TS Gold from NC Pre-k and Head Start
- System for gathering data
- Review incoming student data
- Create a tracking system that shows connection between 0-5 and third grade performance
- Incorporate a data tracking system in PowerSchool
- Review policy/consents for data sharing, developed over time
- Explore informal data sharing opportunities with consent across programs
- Create a plan to effectively share common data points with schools, Smart Start, Head Start and other stakeholders as appropriate
- School system will be more intentional about collaboration with Head Start for data sharing
- Develop platform for data sharing
- Build a database of leadership participation in community groups
- Discuss data – strengthen needs assessment by investigating data relevant to work, what do we have? What do we need?
- Utilize and implement data shared to drive instruction done through professional development/PLC
- PLC collaboration to review and analyze data from pre-k assessments through kindergarten (track, monitor students)
- EC community (pre-k, HS, private) will utilize trended KEA data. Use several years of KEA data...what are trends? How can we support and raise low trends?

- We will examine data through the use of our ready school's sub-committee during the next six months by working with the health department on their new survey
- Utilize data to realign priorities, help justify need
- Create a plan for data analysis and expand data analysis
- Review available disaggregated data and target "at risk" families
- Develop ESSA report card

District/Leadership Focus on Early Childhood/Language and Policy

- District re-prioritization to focus on early childhood as a means to have improved outcomes as children age
- Be inclusive of early childhood needs in our language and action in our Title I plan and routine communications
- Policies, language that include birth to eight population
- Commitment of agency to learn early childhood efforts and build upon existing ECI
- Help stakeholders make a connection between 0-5 data and third grade performance

Funding

- Expand and examine funding
- Explore funding streams
- Title I funding – improve the processes without more funding
- Awareness of all the funds available in the community – public and private
- Determine exactly what resources each agency/organization has available and what alignments exist between agencies/organizations
- increase funding/supportive and sustained
- We will look for ways to expand resources by examining all funding sources including public and private entities. We will also disseminate this information to pediatricians as well
- Collaborate to improve use of blended funding and resources
- Coordination of county resources
- We will investigate flexibility of funding
- Public and private donors for additional funding

Locate and Serve Under/Unserved Children

- Locate unserved children ages 0-5 through a partnership between the school system and Smart Start
- Reach unserved children (in-home care, family care)
- Commit to develop strategies to better identify 0-5
- Increase our capacity to serve more children prior to kindergarten entry
 - NC Pre-k slot capacity
 - Infant/Toddler care – home and in center
- Develop mechanisms to serve students before pre-k – how can we do more in 0-8?
- Increase services for children birth to age three
- Pre-school for all: collaborate with funding sources

- Explore expanding our current pre-k program (by one classroom)
- Expand access to birth to pre-k programs, including migrant ESL populations
- Explore public school capacity

Needs Assessments

- Conduct a comprehensive Community Needs Assessment for children 0-8 years
 - Engage an external consultant to assist in assembling a local team of stakeholders
 - Develop a strategic plan to accomplish objectives
- Conduct a needs assessment focused on early learners' needs district-wide with high poverty index levels that include early childhood instructional resources, teacher incentives, transportation costs, and family involvement
- Explore parent and community educational needs in the area(s) of child development and early education
- Needs assessments to prioritize professional development needs
- Conduct an initiative inventory so that alignments Pre-k-3 can be discovered, communicated and presented
- Identify resources available to birth-third grade children
- Determine gaps in resources needed
- Identify goals, visions and needs
- Develop budget based upon needs

Parent, Family and Community Engagement

- Develop a family engagement plan with community ESSA team to identify and engage families of children 0-8 who are "at risk"
- Connect with all families through authentic family engagement opportunities and support activities with intention
- Investigate the possibility of a discussion at the next business partnership meeting (parent involvement with employees)
- Get what we already do out there to families and each other, pediatricians
- Build a model for early childhood family connections
- Parent and community involvement
 - Align community resources and stakeholders
 - Parent resource center
 - Family/school connection
- Kick off kindergarten, kindergarten boot camp
- Raise awareness of the needs of the 0-5/0-8 population. How effective the early learning will be in the children's lives later on.
- Parent training on brain activity, literacy acquisition
- Increase literacy with families in the home
- Utilize instructional coaches to facilitate professional development for parents
- Provide instructional materials to families upon kindergarten registration to encourage early learning opportunities

- Communication with community stakeholders (mass screenings, churches, private businesses)
- Raise awareness of program and services offered (Smart Start, NC Pre-K, Head Start, Title I, early intervention)
- Raise awareness through parent meetings, flyers, radio, TV, paper, fair, museum, library, websites
- increase family engagement with transition from pre-k
- Talk with administrators to open up discussions for kindergarten tour for pre-k parents
- Plan community pre-k event
- Showcase pre-k success stories to increase awareness of the value of early childhood education
- Partnering to support and provide parent education
- Engage and train parents in traditional and non-traditional ways, meeting them where they are and giving them what they need.
- Conversations with parents
- Dedicate resources to parents
- Bring resources and information to the community – flip our approach

Professional Development

- Collaborate with key stakeholders to assess professional development needs
- Systematic professional development plan for teachers and administrators that addresses early childhood topics including child development and early learning standards
- We will look at creating a leadership academy for administrators, teachers and child care providers
- Provide pre-k LCS administrator academy. Topics may include: curriculum and instructional practices, assessment, teacher evaluation, developmentally appropriate stages of pre-k students
- District administration will facilitate professional development for all elementary principals in early childhood development (NC Foundations/SEFEL) to better equip them to address the unique needs of pre-k children/families and better evaluate pre-k staff
- Professional development involving Head Start program operations manager, CCR&R director, ACS teaching and learning, teachers pre-k, k-3, Early Head Start education coordinator (home and center based, community college ECE department chair
- Title I literacy coach provides literacy professional development for pre-k teachers
- Provide professional development for teachers to meet student/family needs
- Professional development for Pre-k/kindergarten to understand expectations for each new level (transition support)
- Explore shared professional development options for multi-agency collaboration
- Share resources across entities – invite everyone to trainings
- Professional development across county (private, Head Start, in-home providers, schools)
- Provide joint early childhood and pK-12 professional development for stages of learning and appropriate classroom management.
- Professional development for pre-k, k to understand expectations for each level

- Open school district professional development to agencies working with children from birth to eight, and make professional development provided for other stakeholders open to school staff
- Assess opportunities for collaborative professional development (obesity, challenging behaviors, crisis intervention, teacher wellness)
- Kindergarten curriculum training
- Develop a year-long professional development calendar that includes the professional development offerings of all agencies
- Expand options for professional development across agencies for birth to eight and identify options
- Professional development – mental health, first aid training, appropriate strategies to respond to mental illness and substance abuse, trauma-informed instruction, crucial conversations
- Pre-k and ICPVC/Head Start would collaborate to provide professional development/support to elementary principals and site directors on curriculum, behavior
- Professional development
 - Common workday(s) with local providers
 - Focused on community need (behavior, autism, early literacy support)
 - Flex title II funds
 - Develop PLC with preschool providers
- Provide PD for all pre-k teachers and child care providers. Topics may include: instructional plans based on data, curriculum alignment, developmentally appropriate practices
- Collaborate with community partners to provide professional development for a better understanding for the development of children
- Provide ongoing professional development in literacy
- Provide more evidence-based professional development
- K-2 coach to go in community to network with Head Starts and pre-schools

School Improvement

- Committed to improving Child Find and resources for three-year olds in feeder schools that are in school improvement status
- Targeted support for improvement school
- Identify elementary school with improvement plans to target
- Expand/explore services to include specific elementary schools. Head Start will reach out to these principals to discuss further, seeking information re: local contacts (churches, etc)

Transition Planning, including vertical collaboration

- Improve the transition process from pre-k – 3rd grade including Head Start and private providers, procedures and expectations for each level by examining all current practices being offered throughout the county and identify gaps and needs for transition.
- Share a universal state transition plan, 0-8, which fosters communication and expectations for the next level of learning

- Management of transitions for birth through secondary at home to PreK, Pre-K to kindergarten, 2nd to 3rd grade, elementary to middle, middle to high, and high school to college or the workforce
 - Campus tours, play date, introductory parent conferences, open houses, home visits, family literacy nights, introducing PK/K to buses (cafeteria/gyms, etc.)
- Child care providers and head start teachers visit public pre-k/k classrooms
- Kindergarten teachers visit pre-school teachers
- Hold collaborative transition meeting between pre-k and k-3 staff in spring to review incoming student data and interventions at target schools
- Engage families more in transitions
- Aligning curriculum instruction and assessments, aligning and developing a common language for pre-k transitions
- Vertical planning (quarterly) pre-k and kindergarten
 - curriculum
 - assessment data
- Develop a reciprocal release of information between pre-schools and LEAs
- The district will set-up a system of information sharing between the LEA and non-LEA pre-k providers for smooth, successful transitions. Certified birth certificates and health assessment will be provided by the non-LEA programs. The LEA will provide kindergarten day information to non-LEA programs. Open communication will occur between LEA and non-LEA programs.
- Memorandum of understanding between agencies to allow sharing of student information. Parent sign permission form at beginning of pre-k to give permission to transition pre-k info to K
- Make a form for K registration to denote where child is currently receiving care
- Convene collaborative group of Pre-K and K educators to begin curriculum communication and data sharing between public and private settings
 - Transition planning
 - Coordinate services & screening
 - Data tracking/analysis to determine needs
 - Share curriculum and teaching strategies
- Team building meetings with the pre-k teachers and the kindergarten teachers
- Incorporate transition efforts within MTSS practices
- Do we need a transition point person?
- Smart Start will coordinate with LEA on a Pre-k -> kindergarten transition activity at eight elementary schools
- PK will collaborate with elementary schools to create a transition meeting time to share data for incoming students
- Plan a transition activity in the community; kindergarten transition meeting/expo
 - Local providers, sources to reach unserved
 - Increase participation (at-risk)
- Transitions from private agencies
- Transition Plan/Process
 - Universal screener process

- Data collection/sharing
- Professional development
- Family engagement – home visits, school visits
- Accountability
- Enhance transitions with evidence-based activities and monitor to assure compliance

Transportation

- Transportation – equipped for pre-k, funding, licensing barriers, routes, equity
- Investigate Head Start/Pre-k transportation

Other

- Working together to reduce the percentage of absenteeism (late arrival too)
 - Professional staff, parents, leaders
 - Training, PD, home resources in multiple languages
 - Parent accountability
 - Bring stakeholders to the table to determine common language and resources/professional development to update policies, and procedures
 - Build on current resources and coordinate what is already available
 - Review data to determine effect and changes, if needed
- Have a conversation with higher education about how to meet community need related to qualified staff
- Hire a literacy coordinator
- Build capacity in or schools to support early learning needs of community
- Utilize community resources to supplement opportunities for students
- Kindergarten screening
- Comprehensive assessments for pre-school
- Summer programs
- Equity: informing and providing services and resources to ensure all students have access
- Culturally relevant instruction and practices to identify strengths and support all students
- Develop strategies around recruitment, communication, and messaging that are equitable and effective
- Provide a standard curriculum for Title I and locally-funded interventions
- Ready Rosie shared with Pre-k staff and families
- A more unified and clear expectation of child success
- Medical community
- Placemats, pinwheels – development milestones
- Improve Quality: alignment of curriculum crosswalk, incorporate pieces of magnet programs to pre-k
- Committed to, supporting teachers and administrators for pre-k to 3rd