

NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Initiative
Families & Communities Learning Team
Meeting Three Summary Report

The NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Families & Communities Learning Team met for the third time on November 16th from 1-4 pm at Parker Poe in Raleigh.

The summary reports and presentations from the Learning Team meetings are online at <http://buildthefoundation.org/learning-teams/>.

Background on the NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Initiative is online at www.buildthefoundation.org/pathways.

Meeting Three Summary

Co-Chairs Amy Hawn Nelson and Tamika Williams welcomed 15 Learning Team members.

The co-chairs set the context for the meeting by reminding the team members of the top-line goal, the shared Measures of Success Framework, and the goals of the Learning Teams process. They walked through what to expect at each of the four Learning Team meetings and outlined today's activities:

- Prioritize four indicators based on the need and inequity data from Meetings 1 and 2.
- Prioritize indicators based on the connections among the indicators and their impact.
- Recommend four final prioritized indicators and outline the rationale for the decision.

Co-chairs highlighted the [Guiding Principles](#) of the Pathways work.

Mandy Ableidinger (NCECF) introduced an evolution of the Measures of Success Framework, based on feedback from all three Learning Teams and other stakeholders. This work is iterative, and we are intentionally open to change as we learn more. The version of the evolved framework shared with the Learning Team is included as Appendix A in this report.

- A few indicators outlined an emergent and early literacy developmental trajectory. Those indicators were pulled out of the goals and organized as grade-level reading milestones guiding the framework.
- Key social/economic living conditions – like families living with low income – were pulled out of the goals and placed along the bottom of the framework, to demonstrate that they impact every indicator and should be considered in every design strategy. Pathways Design Teams will be asked to design strategies to reduce the *impact* of these conditions on children and families, and they will consider closely aligned strategies to *reduce* the conditions themselves. Included in the children's living conditions sections were trauma and inequity.
- The remaining indicators were simplified into 4 goals:
 - Health on Track, Beginning at Birth
 - Supported and Supportive Families & Communities
 - High Quality Birth to Eight Learning Environments
 - Regular Attendance in Early Learning Programs and Schools: Regular attendance became its own goal because there is strong research showing that it is both influenced by many of the indicators we are considering, and it is in turn very influential on the top-level result of grade-level reading.

The Learning Team engaged in a conversation around the evolved framework. Full notes on the conversation are included as Appendix B in this report and will be considered, along with feedback from the other Learning Teams. Main points included:

- Like it, easier to understand
- After moving the children’s living condition indicators out of the goal, we are now missing the “community” part of Families and Communities.
 - Problem is with the visualization, not the logic or the indicators. Move to a circular model to change perception that families are being held responsible for achieving these outcomes for children on their own.
- Add "Environmental Health" in orange children’s living conditions section, as measured by blood lead levels
- Homelessness – use Housing Instability instead, because broader definition than homelessness

The Framework was revised again based in some of the changes proposed by the Learning Team members. The most recent version can be found in Appendix A as well.

Prioritizing based on Need/Equity Exercise:

Facilitators provided tools that scored and averaged the Need and Equity ratings team members had assigned the indicators at meetings 1 and 2. Team members worked at their tables to choose their top four indicators, based on the Need and Equity data. The following chart shows which indicators the three tables chose:

	Inequity and Need
Reading with Children	XXX
Skilled and Knowledgeable Parents	XX
Social Supports	XXX
Family Meals	
Parent-Child Interactions	XX
Safe at Home (Child Abuse/Neglect)	XX

The full group noted that Reading with Children and Social Supports rose to the top, and that Family Meals did not receive any votes. They discussed the reasons why these were the top choices. Main themes included:

- Reading with children has high inequity, high need, and it is directly related to literacy, our top-line goal.
- Social Supports has high inequity, high need, and allows parents to succeed in other areas.
- Skilled and knowledgeable parents influences the others and might be easier to develop policies around than some of the others, but goal of increasing knowledge is to change behavior, so let’s measure the behavior change instead (Parent-Child interactions and Reading with Children)
- Safe at home: We aren’t going to have good parent-child interactions or skilled and knowledgeable parents if kids aren’t safe at home.
- Family meals: Don’t see the worst outcomes for the poorest children and families, and there are many opportunities for good interactions not based on mealtime.

Full comments are included in Appendix C of this report.

Prioritizing based on Connections/Impact Exercise:

Facilitators then provided tools that allowed team members to see the connections among the indicators, as a measure of impact. All of the indicators in the Framework influence, in some way, our top-line result of reading proficiency by third grade. Some indicators are positioned to have potentially more impact, however, because of the connections they have to other indicators. By shifting one very connected indicator, we can influence others, and by shifting this larger group of indicators, we are more likely to have an impact on our top-line result.

Team members worked at their tables to choose their top four indicators, based on the Connections data. The following chart shows which indicators the three tables chose:

	Inequity and Need	Connections/Impact
Reading with Children	XXX	X
Skilled and Knowledgeable Parents	XX	XXX
Social Supports	XXX	XXX
Family Meals		
Parent-Child Interactions	XX	XX
Safe at Home (Child Abuse/Neglect)	XX	XXX

The full group noted that Skilled and Knowledgeable Parents, Social Supports and Safe at Home rose to the top, and that Family Meals again received no votes. They discussed the reasons why these were the top choices. Themes included:

- Skilled and Knowledgeable Parents was the most connected.
- Family meals is too specific. Parent-child interactions and/or Skilled and Knowledgeable Parents are better indicators.
- Reading with children is easily measured and good supports for this can bring about other positive outcomes.
- Parent-child interactions are hard to measure.

Full comments are included in Appendix C of this report.

The group had a final discussion to prioritize their top four indicators, and chose:

- Social Supports
- Safe at Home
- Parent/Child Interactions
- Reading with Children

With several indicators scoring very close to each other, there was a good discussion about the prioritization of four. The group debated between Skilled and Knowledgeable Parents and Parent/Child Interactions and Reading with Children. Ultimately, they decided that it would be impossible to design strategies around increasing parent/child interactions and/or reading with children without discussing the importance of improving parents' skills, knowledge and education. They chose the behaviors the

research shows are important, knowing that skilled and knowledgeable parents is an important path to changing those behaviors. The group reached consensus fairly quickly.

They then answered as a group the following questions. Main themes noted here.

- *Why else is it important to prioritize this set of indicators?*
 - We chose two upstream and two downstream, which is a good balance. We want to prevent, and we know there will always be a need for intervention and remediation.
 - In summary:
 - you don't have the bad at home (child abuse/neglect)
 - you have the good at home (parent/child interactions)
 - you have support to make sure both of those things happen (social supports)
 - and, you prioritize reading! (reading with children)

- *If the state were to address these indicators, would the state start to make significant progress towards the aim of getting all children proficient by the end of 3rd grade?*

Yes!

- *Any concerns about this set of indicators?*

No concerns were raised.

- *Would you support a focus on these indicators in the next 3 to 5 years? And would you want to be involved in making change in these areas?*

Yes!

Full comments are included in Appendix C of this report.

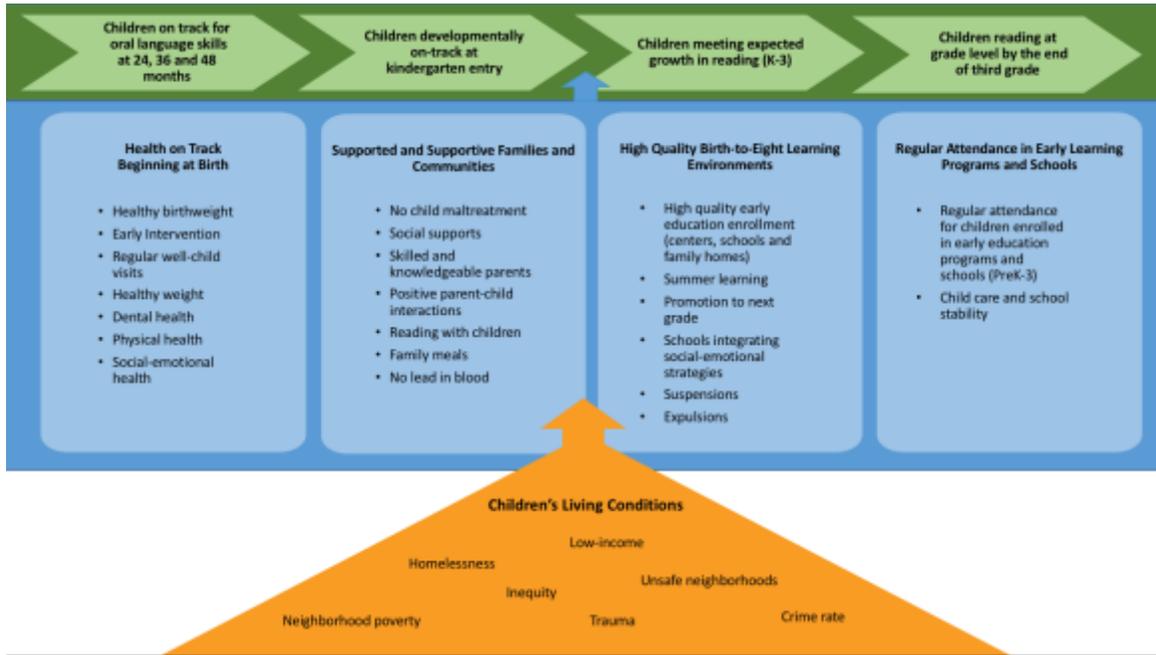
Wrap-Up and Next Steps

The meeting concluded with a reminder of next steps. The priority indicator decisions will be recorded, and the group discussions will be organized into a rationale for why those indicators were chosen. At the last meeting on December 8th, Families & Communities Learning Team members will present their prioritized indicators to the Health and Education Learning Team members. The full group will develop an integrated list of recommended indicators and discuss the root causes identified at Meeting 2.

The final Learning Team meeting will include all three teams, and is scheduled for December 8th from 1-4 pm at Fidelity Investments in Durham.

The PowerPoint presentation for the meeting is available online at <http://buildthefoundation.org/learning-teams/>.

Appendix A – Framework before Families & Communities Meeting 3:



Framework after Families & Communities Meeting 3:



Appendix B: Reactions to Evolved Measures of Success Framework

- Some are more easily measured/understandable than others (need full indicator and explanation of what they measure on a separate page)
- Like it, easier to understand
- Family Meals stands out as on a different level from the others – very specific.
- Does high quality birth-to-8 learning environments include schools?
- In Education goal, use “family child care homes” instead of just “family homes”
- After moving the children’s living condition indicators out of the goal, we are now missing the “community” part of Families and Communities
 - Moving those out logically makes sense though
 - Need new title for the section?
 - Supportive Families and Family-Friendly Communities
 - Supportive Families and Supportive Communities
 - Need to find a community supports indicator? Maybe add a formal social supports indicator to go with the current informal social supports indicator. Possibilities:
 - Maternal leave- access to FMLA
 - Sick leave- access to FMLA
 - Parental access to MH/SA/DV services
 - Parenting classes
 - Decision: Problem is with the visualization, not the logic or the indicators. Move to a circular model to change perception that families are being held responsible for achieving these outcomes for children on their own.
 - Framework should include explanation that community/society is responsible for achieving these outcomes, not just families
- Should Blood lead levels indicator be moved to Health goal?
 - Decision: Add "Environmental Health" in orange children’s living conditions section, as measured by blood lead levels
- School environment not reflected in orange as a living condition. Think it should be.
- Homelessness – Decision: use Housing Instability instead, measured by mobility rate, % cost burdened. Broader definition for housing unstable than for homelessness (HUD definition narrow)

Appendix C – Notes from Full Group Discussions on Prioritization Exercises

Inequity/Need Prioritization Exercise

Reading with children: all groups prioritized

- high inequity, high impact, directly related to literacy

Social Supports: all groups prioritized

- high inequity, high impact, allows parents to succeed in other areas

Skilled and knowledgeable parents:

Pros:

- Influences others
- Felt like this is an easier thing to develop policies and actions around than parent-child interaction
- This is where we start

Cons:

- Already had a parent/child interaction indicator, so this one felt duplicative
- Idea of increasing knowledge is to change behavior, so let's measure the behavior change
- This indicator would feed into parent-child interactions
- There isn't a good measure for it
- This is where we end up

Safe at home:

- We aren't going to have good parent-child interactions or skilled and knowledgeable parents if kids aren't safe at home. Fundamental
- System of reporting is deeply flawed and deeply inequitable
- Abuse and neglect often indicative of substance abuse, domestic violence, mental health, etc.

Family meals:

- Indicator based on economic situation of families (u-shaped data), so don't see worst outcomes for poorest children and families
- There are many opportunities for good interaction not based on dinner

Connections/Impact Prioritization Exercise

Skilled and knowledgeable parents:

- Picked the indicators with the most connections

Family meals:

- Can be considered under parent-child interactions and skilled and knowledgeable parents

Reading with children:

- Not as connected
- Can be considered under parent-child interactions and skilled and knowledgeable parents
- Easily measured
- Doesn't encompass all interactions
- Good supports for reading to children can bring about other positive outcomes

Parent-child interactions:

- Hard to measure
- Can be related to reading with children

Final Prioritization Discussion

Why is it important to prioritize this set of indicators?

- Like the focus on interactions because it is more culturally responsive, takes into effect cultural differences in how parents raise children, rather than relying on knowledge banks that parents rely on
 - o For example, reading to children tends to be a white middle class norm, while storytelling tends to be an activity that can be just as nurturing/important
- Chose two more upstream and two more downstream, which is a good balance. We want to prevent, and we know there will always be a need for intervention and remediation.

In summary:

- You don't have the bad at home
- You have the good at home
- You have support to make sure both of those things happen
- and, you prioritize reading

What are your concerns about the indicators?

No concerns were raised

If we address these indicators, would we achieve our aim?

(head nods)

Would you support a focus on these in the next 3-5 years?

(head nods)