

## **High Quality Birth to Eight Care and Education Design Team**

### **Work Group: High Quality Teachers and Leaders**

Highly effective teachers, from birth through third grade, are one of the most-cited elements of children's social-emotional and academic success. High quality leadership – center directors and elementary school principals – are critical to creating an effective teaching and learning environment.

#### **Outcomes:**

- Birth-to-eight early childhood teachers, administrators and principals have post-secondary education
- Birth-to-age-eight teachers, administrators and principals have early childhood and child development knowledge and competencies
- Teachers receive professional development on children's mental health, including trauma
- Teachers working with special populations, including English-language learners and children with disabilities, receive specific training and coaching for these populations

North Carolina has a lot of assets in place! There has been a lot of excellent work already done in North Carolina around these issues. Pathways would like to lift up and leverage these assets. We have talked with some of you and surveyed the larger Pathways Partners (stakeholders) group to learn about some of the great initiatives that are helping us move towards these outcomes. Here is what we have learned.

#### Integrated Birth to Eight System for High Quality Care and Education

- NC is drafting its ESSA plan, which will help define what quality education means for our state and offers opportunities to improve policies.
- The General Assembly has called for an integrated birth to eight system.
- The NC Office of Early Learning within DPI brings together some of the pieces of the B-8 system in NC.
- The recently-released House and Senate versions of the NC state budget call for formative assessments in the K-3 years.
- The NC Division of Child Development and Early Education currently houses many parts of the B-8 system in NC, including licensing and assuring the health and safety of early care and education programs who serve children from birth through age eight, providing financial assistance for children in licensed early care and education programs serving children from birth through age eight, administering the state's NC Pre-K program, coordinating teacher licensure support for teachers working outside the public school system, administering the state's Child Care Development Fund plan and the Quality Dollars allotted to improve the early care and education system, funding and monitoring the state's child care resource and referral system to help families of all children from birth to age eight find the appropriate early care and education that meets their needs, managing the contract for Smart Start with the NC Partnership for Children, and more.

### Educator and Administrator Education and Training

- More online modules for teacher training and professional development are being developed by NC DPI and made accessible through CANVAS, the state's learning management system.
- There are proposals to increase education standards and compensation for 0-5 teachers, based on national recommendations (NC Early Education Coalition and the NC Institute for Child Development Professionals)
- NC is writing a professional development plan for early educators as part of the state's Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) state plan.
- Focus groups have been held around the state to inform the state's professional development plan for the early care workforce (0-5).
- There is some cultural competence training available for the early care workforce.
- NC has a Birth to Kindergarten (BK) certificate that includes training on both regular and special education.
- NC Infant and Young Child Mental Health Association Workforce Development Project's *Developing a System of Core Competencies to Support North Carolina's Early Childhood Workforce* reports on progress developing mental health core competencies for the early childhood workforce.
- NCAEYC speaks on behalf of early childhood professionals working with or on behalf of young children birth through age eight.
- Early educators are coming into the field with stronger technology backgrounds, which is bringing innovation into the classroom.
- There is pilot work to build trauma-sensitive whole school learning environments through specific professional development for educators and building students' resilience, in six school districts over a 3-year period. (Public School Forum's NC Resilience and Learning Project)
- The NC House of Representatives passed a bill this session to mandate a statewide articulation agreement between two- and four-year state institutions of higher education.
- UNC-G and UNC-W each have an online Masters' Degree focused on Early Childhood Leadership and Administration, to help develop a pipeline for program and system leaders across North Carolina.