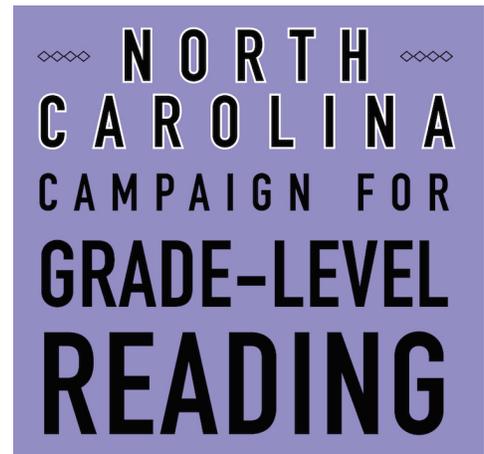




NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading and the NC Campaign for Grade-Level Reading Frequently Asked Questions

Let's face it, it's confusing. The names sound similar, they are led by the same organization, and many people just don't get the distinctions between the two. We hope to eliminate that confusion with this FAQ! If you have other questions, please send them our way after reading through what we have here.



What is the NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading (Pathways)? *(An in-depth description can be found [here](#). For the purposes of this fact sheet, we are highlighting key features.)*

Pathways is a **state-driven effort** to ensure that each child has the opportunity to be on track by third grade with aligned state and local policies and practices rooted in child development, including health and development on track beginning at birth, supported and supportive families and communities, and high-quality birth-through-eight learning environments with regular attendance. Pathways works to:

- Adopt shared, whole child, birth-through-age-eight measures that put children on a pathway to grade-level. Its first goal was to identify a [common set of measures](#) to guide the work of anyone working to improve outcomes for children from birth through age eight. By agreeing on where we want to go across agencies, disciplines, and organizations, we will be much more likely to get there.
- Align policies and practices that are rooted in how children develop to make progress on the shared measures. Pathways is now working on identifying what policies and practices need to be adopted, changed, and/or eliminated at the state-level, including legislative, agency and organizational policies. It also is looking at what capacities need to be strengthened to support the policies and practices that are put into place and ultimately to improve outcomes on the shared measures.

But aren't communities involved in NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading?

Yes. While Pathways focuses on state policies, practices and capacities, communities are engaged in several ways, including:

- Informing the development of state practice, policy and capacity agendas. To ensure that agendas are grounded in the local realities across North Carolina, Pathways is partnering with 14 communities to host local conversations with birth-through-eight providers. The information gathered will inform the creation of the agendas. Proposed solutions will be vetted with communities before a final plan is created.
- Using the Pathways measures for local strategic planning. Communities are convening stakeholders to assess where they are on the Pathways measures. They may be considering all of the measures or subsets depending on the convener and their area of focus. These convenings often lead to community strategic planning.

That said, there are no "Pathways Communities." Pathways measures provide a framework that can be used by an individual organization, a collaborative of partners, and/or several collaboratives in a community. Down the road, Pathways will develop toolkits to assist communities in hosting conversations that look systemically at local policies and practices.

So What is the NC Campaign for Grade-Level Reading?

The Campaign is a collaborative effort by more than 300 communities across the country, including 2,300 local organizations and 250+ state and local funders working to ensure that more children from low-income families succeed in school and graduate prepared for college, a career and active citizenship. In North Carolina, there are 14 Campaign communities. Campaign communities mobilize schools, parents, non-profits, businesses, congregations, foundations and other members of a community to remove barriers, expand opportunities, collaborate and align efforts under one local collaborative.

The campaign is based on three core strategies – improving school readiness, eliminating summer learning loss and improving school attendance.

Can Campaign Communities use Pathways Measures to guide their work?

Yes! We encourage it. While Campaign Communities typically focus on the three core strategies described above, it is up to each community to determine what data they will use and how they will measure progress. While not required, we encourage Campaigns to use Pathways measures to both guide the actions they will take to advance each of the three core strategies and to measure progress.

You said above that you plan to develop toolkits to support a systemic look at local policies and practices. Doesn't that mean that eventually there could be Pathways communities?

It means that eventually communities could engage in a Pathways process to look at local policies and practices. The toolkit will support communities in using the Pathways measures to assess where they are and the Pathways policy, practice and capacity agendas to determine where greater alignment is needed. Campaign Communities could convene these community conversations or to be participants in them.

What are some examples of communities currently using the Pathways Framework?

- Prevent Child Abuse North Carolina is supporting communities in developing Child Abuse Prevention Plans in 2017. These plans are bringing communities together across sectors with parents at the table to develop plans that support the Protective Factors proven to prevent child abuse and neglect. They will be evaluating results using the Pathways to Grade Level Reading indicators so that communities are using consistent language and measures of success.
- Smart Start partnerships in several counties are using the Measures of Success Framework to organize their work and prioritize areas of focus. For example, Wake County SmartStart has aligned its strategic plan with the Pathways Measures.
- A collaborative community group in Charlotte is working on a county-level analysis of the Pathways measures.

Why are the names so similar?

The truth is there is no brilliant reason for this, and it's a fair critique to say that it adds to the confusion. Pathways was not the intended name for our state-level work; however, it stuck! Yet there is benefit to their similarities. These efforts are intertwined and both are stronger because of the other. By prioritizing birth-through-age-eight measures of success and facilitating state-level policy change, Pathways is creating opportunities for Campaign communities to be most successful.