

Feedback to Proposed NC Pathways to Grade Level Reading Project Goals and Outcomes from Stakeholder Group

All NC citizens understand the importance of early childhood development and education. Public awareness and engagement in the broad issue would serve as a great benchmark for political will, and I would think there are polling sources that have been tracking interest in the issue. This indicator doesn't have the actionable nature of some of the ones you have listed, which may be why it wasn't included, but we thought it was a good outcome to measure how people in NC viewed early childhood development, regardless of whether they were part of a family directly impacted by many of the other indicators.

This is a correlated but strongly predictive factor - "All babies mothers will have completed a high school education or its equivalent." During the 70s, Stedman and Scurletis completed a study of predictors of First Grade performance. Mother's education level was one of the most powerful predictors. Ira Gordon found similar predictive power in his studies of parenting.

In my group, there was quite a bit of discussion about language being included that noted the importance of pre-natal care and its impact on prevention of premature births.

My group discussed the importance of early care providing extended learning opportunities, which is noted in Effective Teaching and Learning Classrooms, but not in High Quality Early Care early care facilities. Could the following sentence also be an outcome for High Quality Early Care and Education? "All children have access to extended learning opportunities to meet their individualized needs."

'Literacy' could be included in each developmental area. While it is so wonderfully captured in High Quality Early Care and Education, literacy rich environments can and should be created in every step along the way. So, for example, in the first section, "All families' members have access to literacy rich environments" could be included. The second section could have something like, "All families are book secure," and "All Early Care and Education centers are book rich environments". And, in the fourth area, Effective Teaching, we could add insights about book access for both the kids and the educators. We know without a doubt, schools and educators do not have anywhere near the appropriate number of books (and many have NO books). Some have gone as far as calling their own schools book deserts.

The indicators I'm thinking about appear to be more proximate to reading proficiency. For example, research shows mastery of phonemic awareness by the end of Kindergarten is linked to third grade reading proficiency. This is a "down in the weeds" type of indicator that hopefully will be a harbinger of improved third grade reading outcomes. I know from the meeting notes that the NC Pathways is focused more on the whole child. However, I don't see any of the outcomes that are explicitly related to reading skills (e.g., print concepts, reading behaviors, fluency, vocabulary, phonemic awareness, etc.). I know the outcomes are intentionally broad, but am curious about whether explicit reading skill indicators will be included?

One thing re: framing - "All children have the opportunity for..." or "All children have the chance..."

RE: socio-emotional — I would argue that expanding on that to add additional goals in keeping with the compassionate schools model makes sense.

The only addition I'd make is under Health and Development, goal of all babies are born healthy — I'd add, under Detailed Outcomes — All women receive adequate prenatal and postnatal care.

Under goal #1 on Health: I would spell out parents' access to "mental" health services just for clarity.

On the last goal regarding systems: I would suggest expanding "Public Systems" to "Public/Private" to be more inclusive and to pull in pediatric practices private preschools/schools and non-profits who do so much of this work.

<p>If we are making all babies are born healthy as a goal of our work does that mean we are moving from birth to conception as a starting point?</p>
<p>Next to the last detail – should we add “mental” so that we are addressing mental as well as physical health?</p>
<p>Last detail – add “Knowledge” so we are addressing the need to educate families about healthy diets</p>
<p>High Quality Early Care and Education –Is this birth through pre K? In general, it seems like these were written with pre-K programs in mind. This is fine but I think we need to also address equipping the parents to be” teachers” in the home , or is the Supported & Supportive Families addressing that part and this goal is just for the out of the home programs? The language sounds more like school that pre-school</p>
<p>The only thing I might add under the early care and education area would be that teachers should be well educated and also that they use appropriate early learning strategies with the children.</p>
<p>I wonder if "on track" developmentally could be defined more clearly (particularly for the detailed outcomes). For example, does this mean "achieves developmental milestones within the expected range of time?" We certainly know that there will always be children with significant delays and that there will be many more of these for those children who have adverse childhood experiences. Most of the other detailed outcomes sound more like things that could be done rather than goals like this does.</p>
<p>For the social-emotional health domain, could we say something like identifying and reducing ACES?</p>
<p>I would suggest adding specific reference to parents having needed health and mental health services because we know that untreated maternal depression is a huge risk factor for child disruptive behavior disorders.</p>
<p>One thing that our early childhood groups talked about in a recent meeting is that our wording of outcomes/indicators be reflective of our thinking about children with varying abilities and that they are not all “on track” for typical development. They reworded one of their indicators around “children who demonstrate developmental progress” since all children grow and make gains as they develop with differing timelines.</p>
<p>I’d love to hear your thoughts on whether everyone should be using DPI’s KEA domains.</p>
<p>I wonder if we can take advantage of our knowledge of how to optimize language, pre-literacy, and literacy without compromising an earnest focus on the whole child. Maybe it would be appropriate to have one language/literacy-specific “strand” for each goal area?</p>
<p>Goal # 1.- Health and Development. To have a stated goal of "All children of child-bearing age to have access to contraceptives" is a little over the top for me. Personally I would leave this one out.</p>
<p>Goal# 2. - Support and Supportive. "Paid sick leave." This should be stated so that it specifically relates to "Working Families". No job, no sick leave. This does not apply to the self employed. So to say all families is a stretch.</p>
<p>"Access to home visiting." It is certain that all families do not need in-home services. I cringe at the high cost if every family, without regard to income, or financial capacity, were expected to receive in home services. This is just another place where the use of the leading word "All" is not appropriate without an additional adverb clause to clarify the intent.</p>