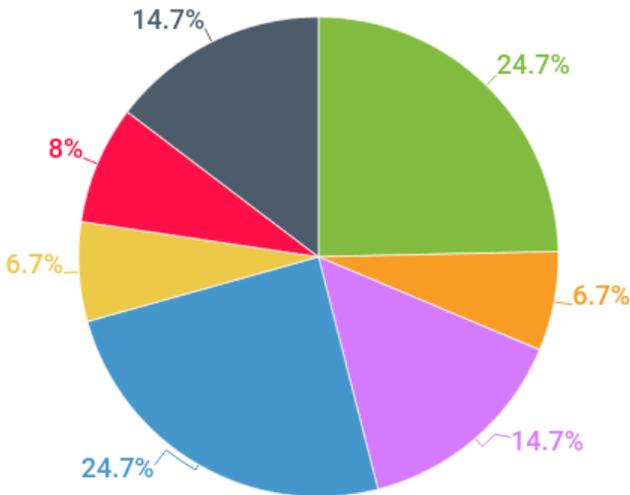


PATHWAYS COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

MEETING ONE EVALUATION SUMMARY

NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading (Pathways) partnered with 14 communities in North Carolina to provide input into how to create the best possible future for young children in North Carolina. These conversations brought together a diverse group of professionals working with children birth through age eight in the following counties: Bertie, Beaufort, Cabarrus, Chowan/Perquimans, Durham, Forsyth, New Hanover, Onslow, Orange, Union, Wake, Watauga, Yadkin and Yancey counties.

298 participants attended the first Community Conversation meetings between August 10 and September 14, 2017. Approximately **70 percent** responded to the evaluation survey electronically or via hard copy.

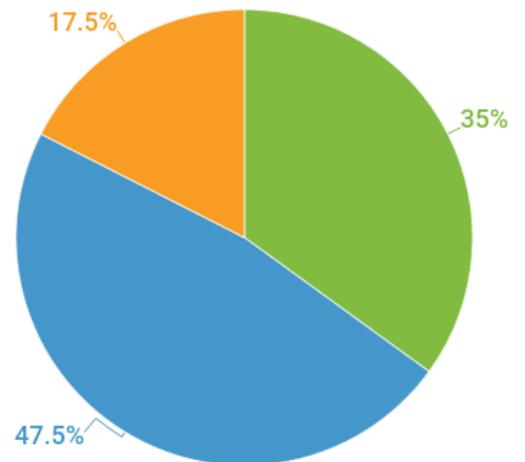


Which of these primary roles describes you?

- Teacher (e.g., Child Care Teacher, K-3 Teacher)
- Administrator (e.g., Child Care Administration/Owner, Principal)
- Child Care Resources & Referral Staff
- Pediatrician/Health Care Provider
- Service Provider (e.g., Home Visiting, Parent Education or Early Intervention Service Provider)
- Agency Representative (not a direct service provider)
- Other

What Pathways Goal do you work in/interact with most often?

- Health and Development on Track, Beginning at Birth
- Supported and Supportive Families and Communities
- High Quality Birth-through-Age-Eight Learning Environments with Regular Attendance



This report outlines the findings from a brief participant evaluation completed after the meeting and includes recommendations based on the findings.

Evaluation

Participants used the following four-point scale to answer questions related to the meeting's outcomes, engagement, and execution: Strongly Agree [4], Agree [3], Disagree [2], Strongly Disagree [1]. The results are presented below:

		Average Score	Percent 3 or 4
Outcomes	Overall	3.6	97.5%
	The objectives and intended outcomes of the meeting were clearly defined	3.6	97.6%
	The conversation at this meeting was valuable and worth my time	3.7	98.1%
	During this meeting we were able to give input and generate ideas for Design Teams to draft policy, practice, and capacity agendas.	3.7	98.1%
	The meeting included opportunities for me to share what supports my work and what gets in the way of helping children make progress on the prioritized measures of success.	3.6	97.1%
	I understand the work of the Pathways initiative so far and the goals moving forward.	3.5	96.6%
Engagement	Overall	3.6	97.5%
	I felt my voice was heard during this meeting.	3.6	98.1%
	I believe I have a valued role in shaping the work.	3.6	98.5%
	I am excited about the state-level Pathways work that is currently underway.	3.6	98.1%
Execution	Overall	3.6	96.9%
	The meeting was well-planned and executed.	3.7	98.1%
	Time was used effectively and efficiently.	3.7	97.1%
	It is clear to me how feedback from the community conversations will inform the state-level Pathways Initiative.	3.6	95.6%

FEEDBACK HIGHLIGHTS

Participants offered several comments in the open response portion of the evaluation. *High level themes that emerged are in italics, all other text is direct quotes from the evaluations.*

WHAT WAS THE MOST VALUABLE PART OF THIS MEETING?

Stakeholder perspectives and diversity

- The chance to hear other professionals viewpoints: what is needed and how we might address that need.
- Interactions between many different voices in our community.
- Hearing the diverse perspectives of the participants; we will accomplish so much more when we can pull down our silos and see how the other agencies work, how the parents feel, how the providers struggle, etc.
- The diversity of professional perspectives.
- Having people from varying disciplines who work with children all in the same room was quite valuable.
- The diversity of partners brought together and the assigned seating that "forced" cross-sector discussion.
- Hearing from parents about what would demonstrate to them the value proposition of childhood development programs.
- Having a variety of stakeholders at the table was a great experience.
- Hearing the viewpoint and need in all industries. It allowed me to look at the "whole child."
- I appreciated that a parent participated and provided a voice to real concerns individuals face.

Collaborative approach

- Collaboration among stakeholders.
- A diverse group of stakeholders was able to collaborate and in turn educate one another. Time well spent.
- Breaking down of groups allowed easier conversation.
- Small group discussion.
- Participant engagement and room for open, honest discussion.
- Brainstorming and sharing perspectives and ideas.
- Connecting with community members who directly impact families and children
- The collaboration and working in areas that I, at first, thought that I had little input.

Enthusiasm and passion to make change

- Blending passionate stakeholders who want the same outcome, collective impact.
- Hearing about the passion of this group for improving the lives of young children and their families.

A focus on solutions

- Sharing ideas that can be used to make decisions.
- Discussing ways to make our programs even better and supporting each other.
- Coming together as a community to identify problem areas and solutions.
- The exercise on generating possibilities on priorities. Allowed me to see areas of overlap and opportunities for change and improvement.
- I like that "shifts" are being considered—this brings hope for impact change.
- The potential action oriented outcomes.

Opportunities to learn

- Understanding the breadth and complexity of the issues.
- Learning about the resources in our district of which I was previously unaware.
- Talking together in our groups to have a better understanding of how other agencies face some of the same challenges that affect all of us.
- Learning the goals of Pathways.
- Opportunity to understand the initiative as well as have a chance to contribute to it.
- Learning what we are doing at the local level.

Well-run meeting

- Open discussion and focused objectives
- Digging into the data to then discuss with people from the table.
- Great meeting and very productive.
- Everything.
- The participants and facilitators were very open and receptive to feedback and comments. The environment was comfortable and definitely accommodated our community conversation.

WHAT DID WE DO WELL THAT WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO DO IN FUTURE MEETINGS?

Use of data

- Use of county data.
- Providing data to reflect on.
- Provide data/talking points/structure.

Strong facilitation

- Drive for clear statements of the change being requested—not easy to get a bunch of professionals from different agencies and backgrounds to agree though.
- Very well organized method for getting feedback.
- Keep us on topic.

- I like seeing our thoughts/answers on the chart paper—good visual.
- Excellent facilitator and note-takers who are engaging and great at keeping us on task.
- Great Facilitators!
- Good facilitators.

Meeting execution and planning

- Good planning, meeting flow went well.
- Flowed well.
- Well planned, thoughtful agenda.
- Everything was well executed.
- Getting to know a member there and introducing them instead of yourself.
- Well planned and executed meeting; nice meeting space.
- Very well organized (use of time); interactive.
- Well organized, expectations were clearly communicated.
- Meetings were well organized and moved smoothly.
- Providing snacks, lunch, materials, and concise agenda.
- Food—Excellent!
- Well-organized!
- Everything worked well.

Opportunities/time to collaborate and share

- Time to collaborate with colleagues.
- Small group participation worked well.
- Loved the individual small groups.
- Collaborative discussions.
- Varied small group/large group discussion.
- Guided conversations across various stakeholder groups on these issues.
- Time to collaborate and share.
- Listening to and considering all comments and ideas.
- Allow time to network with each other.

Inviting diverse attendees

- Have a diverse set of perspectives and voices in the room—more so next time!
- Engaged all participants and considered all backgrounds.
- Invite parents from various socioeconomic backgrounds to contribute feedback.
- Inclusive of wide variety of voices and stakeholder groups.
- I felt like a valued member of the group.
- Seating with people from a variety of agencies.
- Put people together from different backgrounds but with a common goal.
- Let the community speak.
- Participants rich with diversity, provided a safe atmosphere to share feedback and opinions.
- Continue to invite and attract the representatives that need to be in the room to discuss these important issues.
- Variety of community partners included.

Presenting/sharing good information

- Share valuable information about the process.
- Very informative.
- Very clear introduction to the work of Pathways and what it is all about.
- Clear worksheets for capturing information.
- Provide explanations of the what and why.

WHAT SUGGESTIONS DO YOU HAVE FOR WHAT WE CAN CHANGE OR HOW WE CAN IMPROVE?

NOTE: Most respondents said no changes were necessary, and provided high praise for meeting. Below are what adjustments were suggested.

Enhance data:

- I think it is very important to have as much viable and relative data on hand as possible to demonstrate a clear picture of where we are so that we can see clearer where we're going.
- Have someone available for data follow up questions about what terms mean or how things were measured.
- Additional county specific data.
- Review the data as a group.

Allow for more time

- Allow a little more time to work through small group discussions.
- Perhaps allow for more open discussion time.
- Too much agenda packed into a four hour meeting. Needs to be an all day meeting.
- More time to hear from small groups and large groups. I love hearing ideas.
- Longer amount of time needed or follow up sessions
- Everything was pushed through too fast, needed more time!
- More time for small group conversations.
- More time for whole group discussions.
- More time may be needed. Some parts felt a little rushed.
- Longer in length.
- More time to allow for discussion that would allow us to finish our responses.
- The meeting did not provide enough time to delve into topics with a room full of experts.
- More time to discuss and collaborate with tablemates would have been more supportive.
- More whole group discussion.

Shorten the time

- Try to conserve time better.
- Less time in the beginning with icebreakers/doing introductions for others.
- Less whole group talk.
- We only needed three hours to meet.

- I think we could have tightened it up a bit in the middle, started at 8:30, and adjourned by 11:00, and still received the same benefits.

More breaks

Review structure of activities

- Lunch during the meeting instead of grab and go aka working lunch.
- Perhaps chances to speak with people outside of the assigned groups.
- Same format, but use a microphone
- We could have used more space to have organic conversation as a large group; it was too structured.
- I do think the last part of the meeting was more complicated than it needed to be. If there is a way to simplify, that would be good.

Provide additional support and guidance for facilitators/scribes

- More intentional effort to facilitate discussions. We got off track sometimes.
- Our table scribe seemed a little unclear on the directions/steps that guided our table's conversation.
- Sometimes the instructions were not clear.

Consider larger small group sizes

- I would have liked to see a larger "small group." We needed more opinions.
- As stated earlier—perhaps slightly larger groups (maybe 5-6 or so per group).
- I enjoyed the small groups, but due to some participants being absent, some of the groups may have been too small—perhaps ever-so-slightly larger groups in the future?

Expand attendees to include as diverse a group as possible (e.g., parents, policy makers, community members, educators in and beyond K-12):

Provide earlier and additional materials/resources

- More resources to take.
- Need a "cheat sheet" for all those abbreviations!
- It would be helpful to have definitions for the many abbreviations for programs offered by the different providers, and also a breakdown of each provider group and the services they provide as well as demographics related to each.
- Survey out earlier and prep materials shared in advance.
- Childcare for parents.
- Feedback template for me as a note-taker was confusing.
- If I understood the state-level work better I'd be even more excited!

- Until the meeting, I wasn't sure why I was asked to be present because I was unsure what my role in this system might be. After the discussions, I felt as though I had a clearer picture of my role and thoroughly enjoyed discussing this social issue with others.

Clarify objectives and outcomes

- Maybe have the description of what the meeting is about more clearly stated.
- More time, understanding of objectives
- Still unclear of the real long-term goals and outcomes.
- More understanding of how our work will change policies to benefit our students.
- I understand the initiative, but am concerned with the actions steps. I have worked with other state initiatives, but follow through has at times been an issue. We collect a lot of data but don't continue the work that makes a change.
- It is clear that feedback will be given but not what will be done with it. What are the realistic expectations?

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Great meeting!

- This meeting was terrific.
- Excellent discussion/ goals.
- I'll keep coming back!
- It was wonderful to have folks all in the same room to discuss these important topics and love that the focus is Birth through age 8 years old.
- Excellent opportunity, thank you!
- Each participant shared information and worked toward solutions.
- Thank you! This was great!
- Good opportunity for not only its purpose, but also to meet others who work with and support young children.
- Excellent meeting and excellent use of time!
- Have more of these.

Meeting was inspiring!

- This meeting has opened my eyes to what is going on in the community and how important it is for all bodies to come together to do this work!
- This session produced great discussions and was overall inspirational.

Praise for structure and activities

- The dynamic and process was productive-- breaking it down into small groups for discussion was effective.
- We were able to give ideas for concrete action steps at varying levels.
- The meeting created a forum to discuss how each one of these areas are influenced by so many factors and gave us opportunities to hear various points of view.

- Purpose was clearly outlined, support was rendered and mission was accomplished.
- The meeting included a nice mixture of small and large group discussion time.
- Valuable meeting—good balance between structured and organic.
- The meeting location was great and the food provided for lunch was beyond expectations.

Things to consider

- With movement toward becoming a Specialty Plan it is hard for the LME-MCOs to focus on proactive services.
- Most attendees agreed that strengthening families and supporting children's educational needs should happen before children reach age five. Many people in our discussion group agreed that ECE teachers should be required to have degrees in ECE and coursework in child development.
- Our feedback ranged from ideal to realistic, not sure which side to fall on.
- Requires trust in the process and that the state level work will bring along state policy.
- The group included representation from many different community partners and we all have the same goals. Funds for positions (social workers, program administrators, family liaisons) are needed to adequately educate and support families.
- We know money is a continued barrier so we need to be creative to not let that stand in our way.
- I appreciate the focus and guided discussion to address social determinants of health, which is critical to understanding the various needs of the communities we serve.

Desire for action as a result

- Many of us have been in these conversations multiple times. I hope that this is able to actually develop a plan and see change.
- Can't wait to be a part and see the outcome.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Based on the results of this evaluation and participant feedback, consider the following next steps for the Community Conversation work:

1. Stress with host organizations the importance of having diverse attendance at meeting 2, and encourage communities to use these conversations as a springboard for discussions with a greater variety of stakeholders.
2. Clarify how Pathways is gathering and incorporating the voices of other stakeholders throughout the process.
3. Consider revising schedule to include more breaks and additional time for small group discussion and sharing.
4. Support communities to have multiple grouping plans based on the number of participants in attendance, to ensure that small groups are not too big or too small.
5. Be clear about next steps, outputs, how the discussions will lead to action.
6. Continue to train and prepare facilitators and scribes for best practice in guiding conversations toward tangible recommendations.

North Carolina Pathways to Grade Level Reading Initiative

North Carolina Pathways to Grade Level Reading is creating partnerships among the state's early learning and education, public agency, policy, philanthropic and business leaders to define a common vision, shared measures of success and coordinated strategies that support children's optimal development beginning at birth. North Carolina state leaders—working with a Data Action Team composed of 30 experts from North Carolina's leading universities, research institutes, government agencies, and think tanks—identified shared birth-through-age-eight, whole-child measures of success to put children on a pathway to grade-level reading.

Learning Teams then determined how North Carolina was doing on those measures and recommended where to move to action first. Design Teams are working during 2017-18 to create policy, practice, and capacity-building agendas to move North Carolina forward on the prioritized areas of focus. Design Teams will present their recommendations to the Pathways Partners in Spring 2018.