





**End of third grade
reading predicts
academic achievement
and career success.**

It's Urgent!

67%

of jobs in NC will **require some post-secondary education** by 2020

37%

of NC employers reported **difficulty hiring** in 2016

34%

of NC high school students met **ACT college readiness** benchmarks in reading in 2016

38%

of NC 4th graders in 2015 scored **at or above proficient in reading** as measured by NAEP



Addressing these challenges and **increasing reading proficiency** requires that we begin here.



Why Birth to Eight?

The **most rapid period of development** in human life happens from birth to eight.

Brain development during that time **lays the foundation for everything that comes after.**





Child development
is a **dynamic,
interactive**
process.

It is **NOT**
predetermined.

Brains are **Built, Not Born**

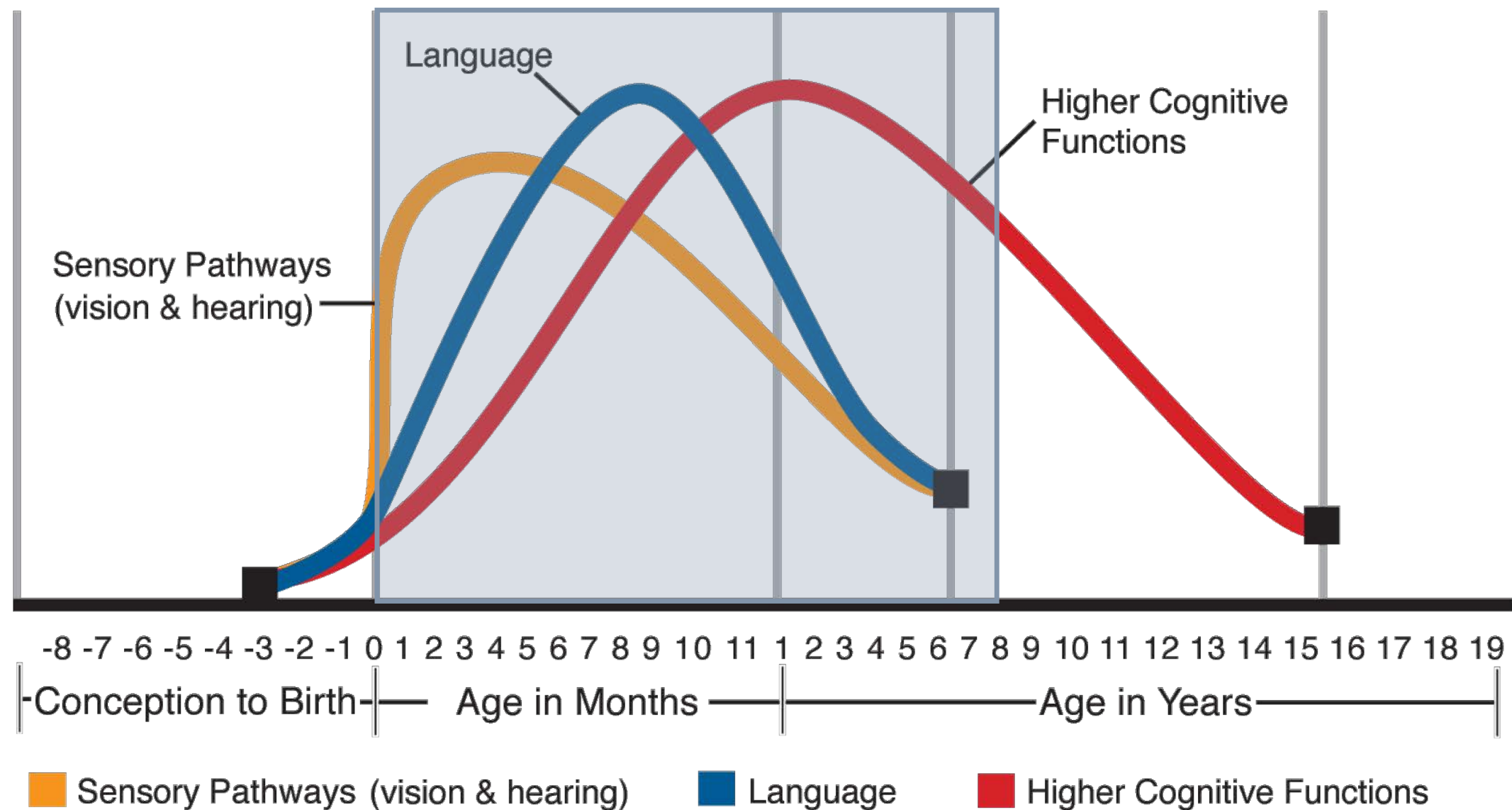
Early experiences are **built into children's bodies**—shaping brain architecture and impacting how biological systems develop.

Every **experience a baby has forms a neural connection** in the brain at a rate of more than a million synapses per second in the early years.

Not all will last. Connections that get used more strengthen, and those used less fade.

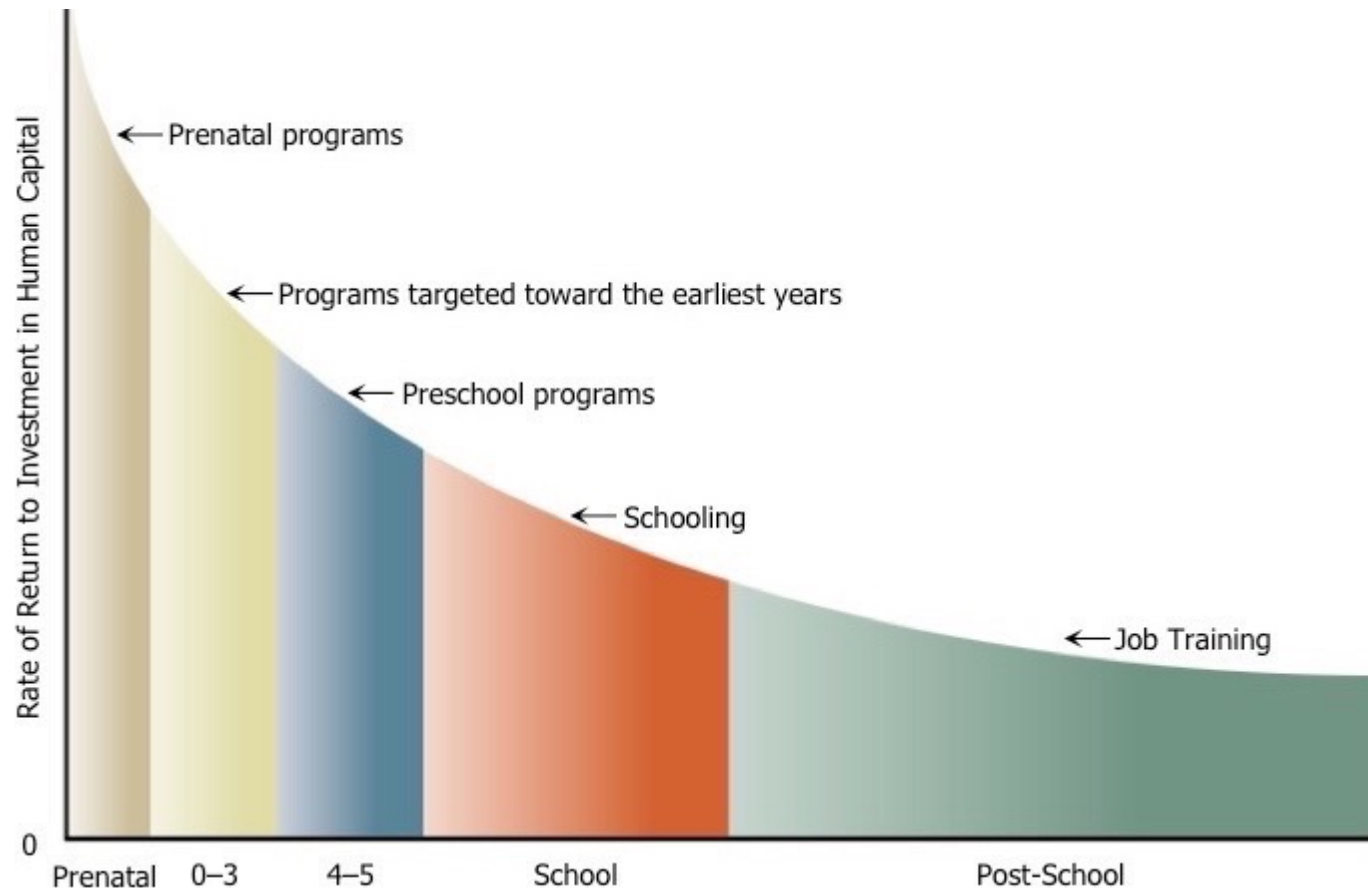
Positive early experiences build **a strong foundation** for learning and future health.

Birth-through-age-8 **Development**



Human Capital Creates Economic Capital

“The foundation for school, career and life success is largely determined through the development of cognitive and character skills beginning in children’s earliest years.”



Nobel Laureate
Professor James J. Heckman



Good News: **It's Achievable**

Each child can have 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, Starting at Birth
- Supported and Supportive Families and Communities
- High Quality Birth-through-Age-Eight Learning Environments with Regular Attendance



NC Voters Get It

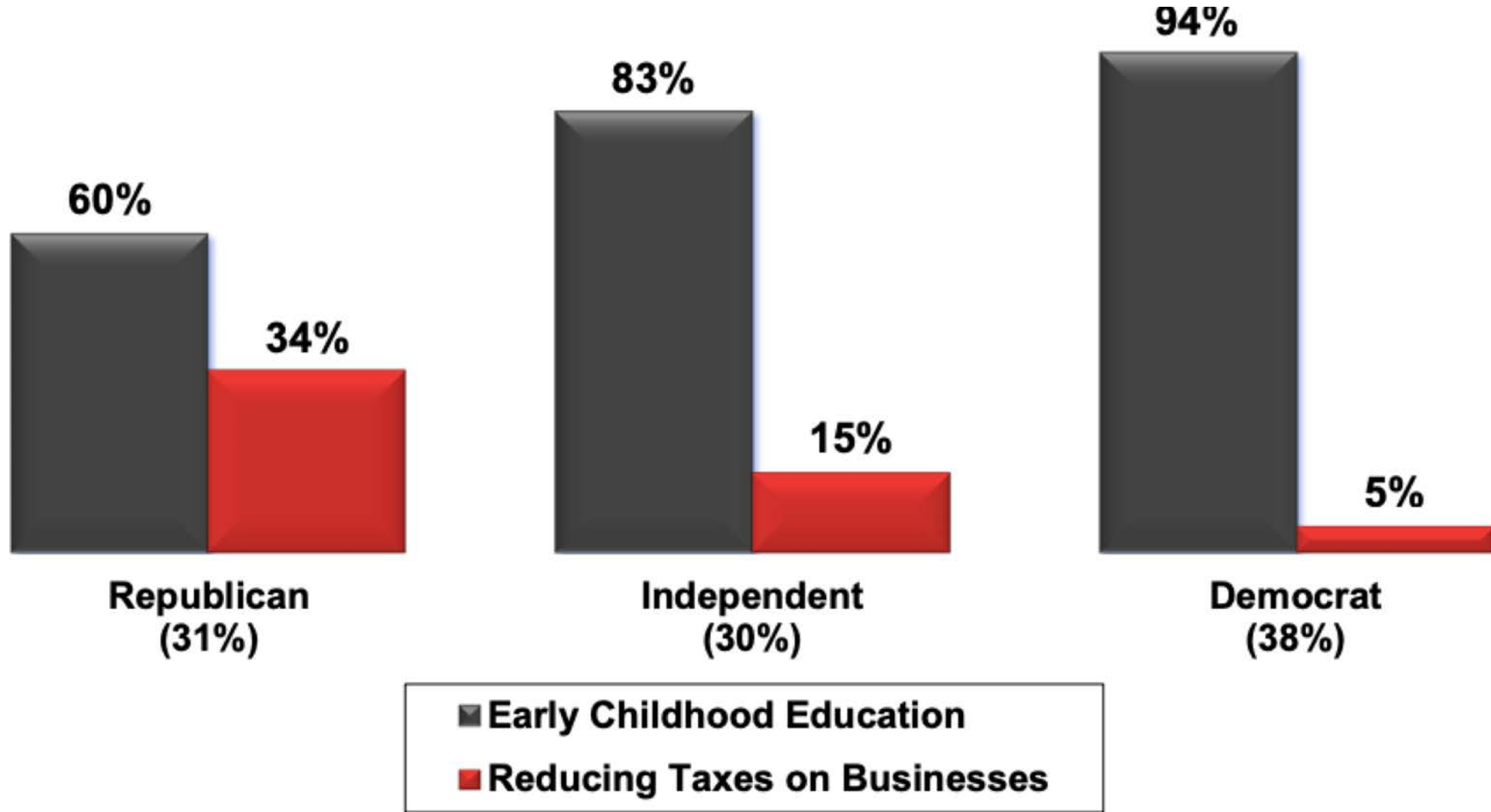
#ThinkBabiesNC

80% of voters say early education should be a higher priority than reducing business taxes in the state.

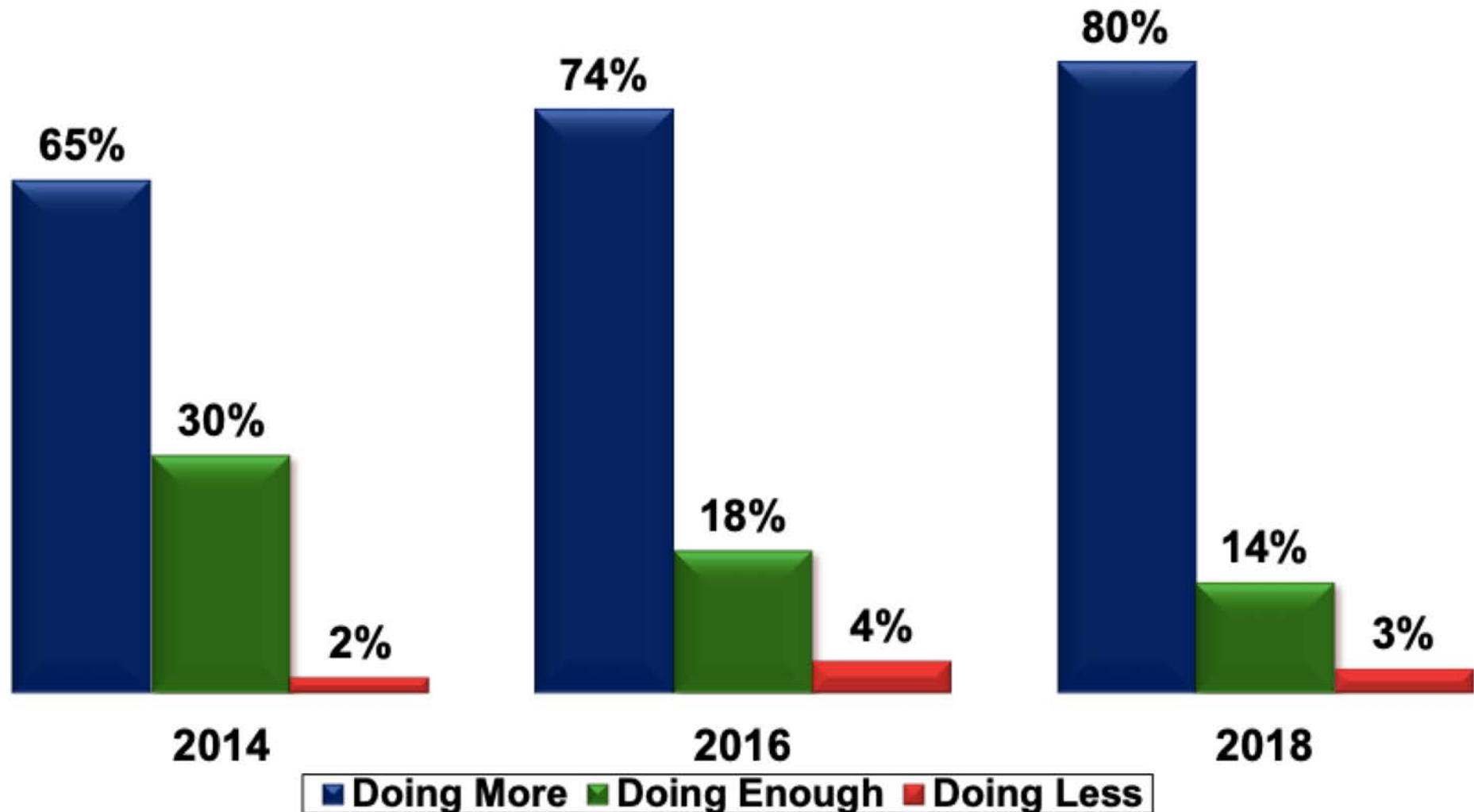
Invest in early childhood education and build a stronger North Carolina.

Learn more: buildthefoundation.org/2018-voter-poll-tookit

Voters from all parties side with investing in early childhood education over reducing business taxes.



The percentage of voters saying we should do more for young children's education has increased by 15 points since 2014.



What Would **be Possible** if....

We adopted shared, whole child, birth-through-age-eight measures that put children on a pathway to grade-level reading?

We aligned policies and practices that were rooted in how children develop?

We coordinated strategies to support children's optimal development beginning at birth?

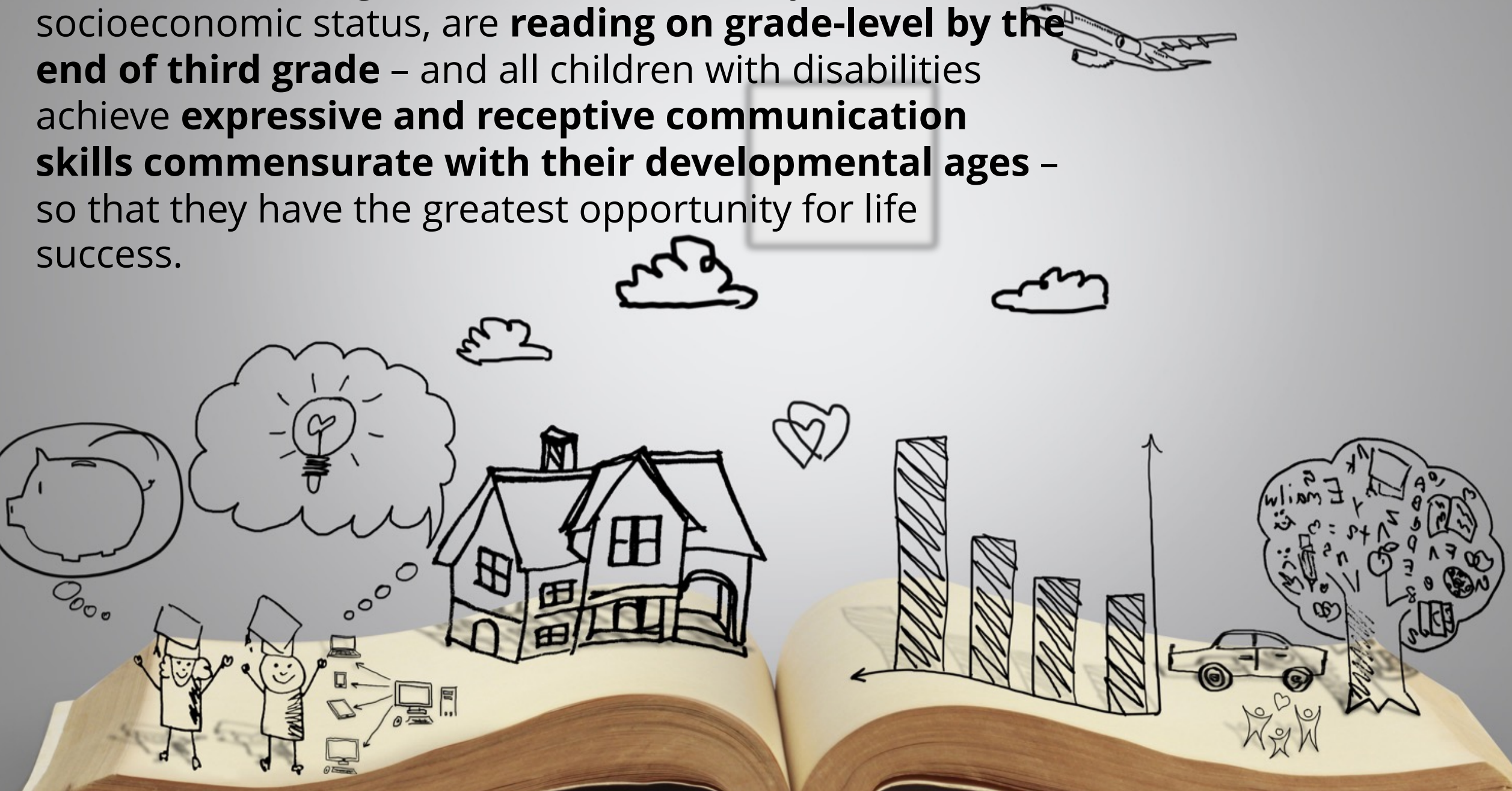


PATHWAYS

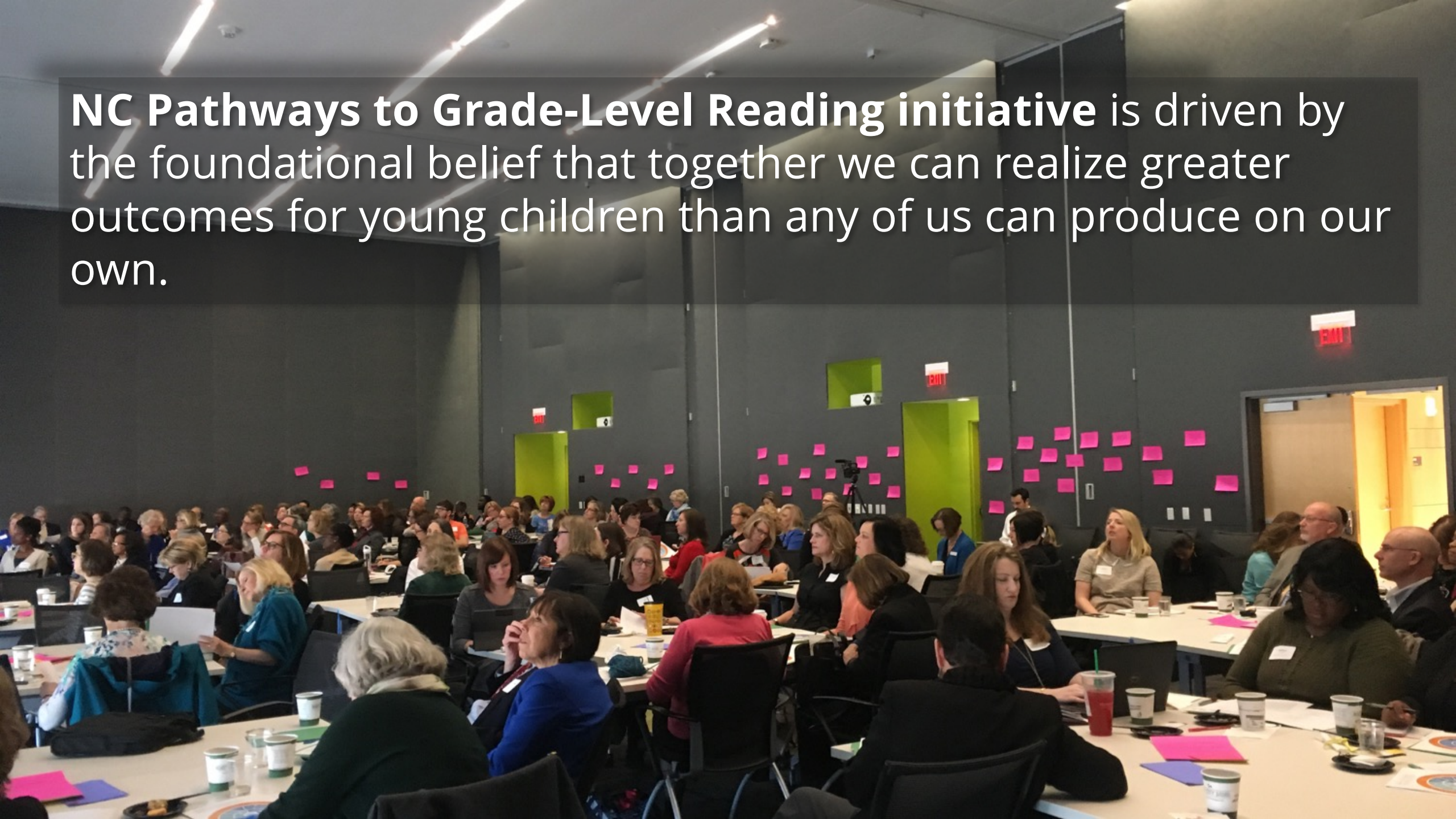


to grade-level reading

All NC children, regardless of race, ethnicity or socioeconomic status, are **reading on grade-level by the end of third grade** – and all children with disabilities achieve **expressive and receptive communication skills commensurate with their developmental ages** – so that they have the greatest opportunity for life success.



NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading initiative is driven by the foundational belief that together we can realize greater outcomes for young children than any of us can produce on our own.



Hundreds of **Pathways Partners, Including:**

State agencies:

- DPI—Office of Early Learning, Head Start State Collaboration Office, K-3 Literacy
- DHHS—Early Intervention, Public Health, Social Services, Medicaid, Child Development and Early Education

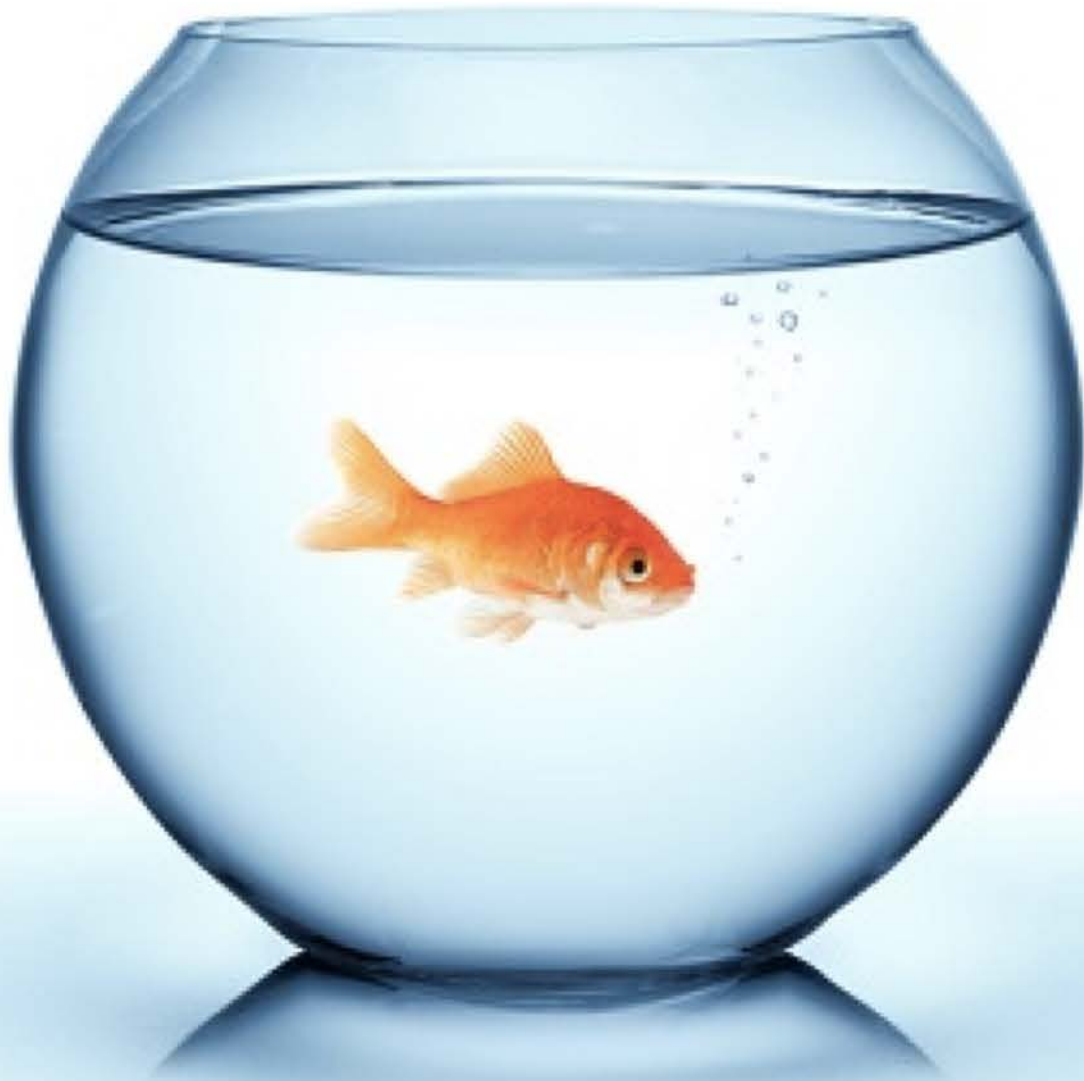
Nonprofits and Advocates—NC Child, John Locke Foundation, NC Justice Center, Institute of Medicine, BEST NC, Partnership for Children/Smart Start

Professional Associations—NC Pediatric Society, Association for the Education of Young Children, School Boards Association

Local organizations--Smart Start partnerships, local United Ways

AND many, many more...

Pathways uses
an **Equity Lens**



Three Phases of **Pathways**

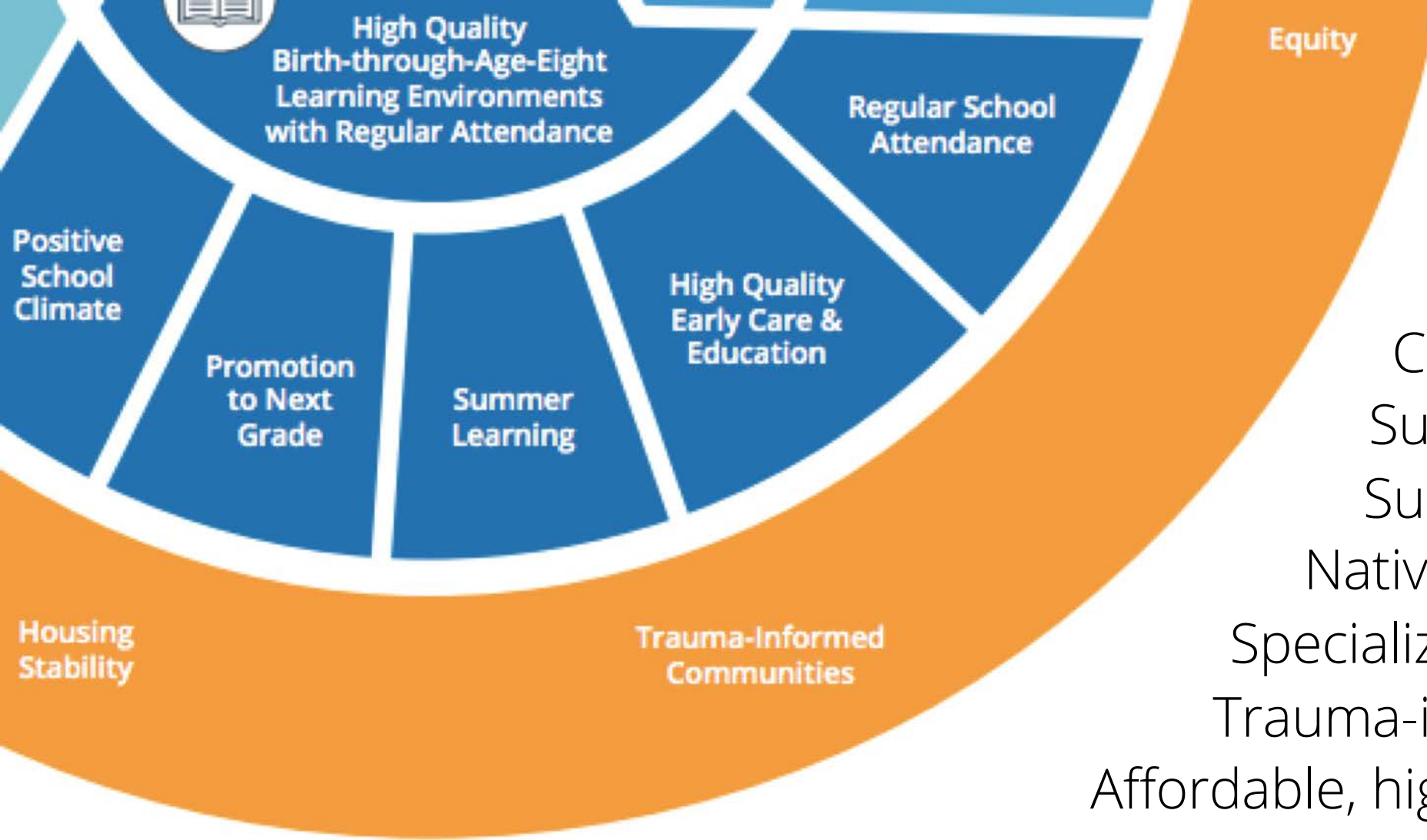
PHASE 1: Data Action Team—What do we need to measure to know children are on a Pathway to Grade-Level Reading?

PHASE 2: Learning Teams—How is NC doing on those measures? Where should we focus as a state?

PHASE 3: Design Team—What should we do about it? What expectations should we hold for child and family systems and what actions should NC take to improve outcomes for children birth-through-age-eight and their families?



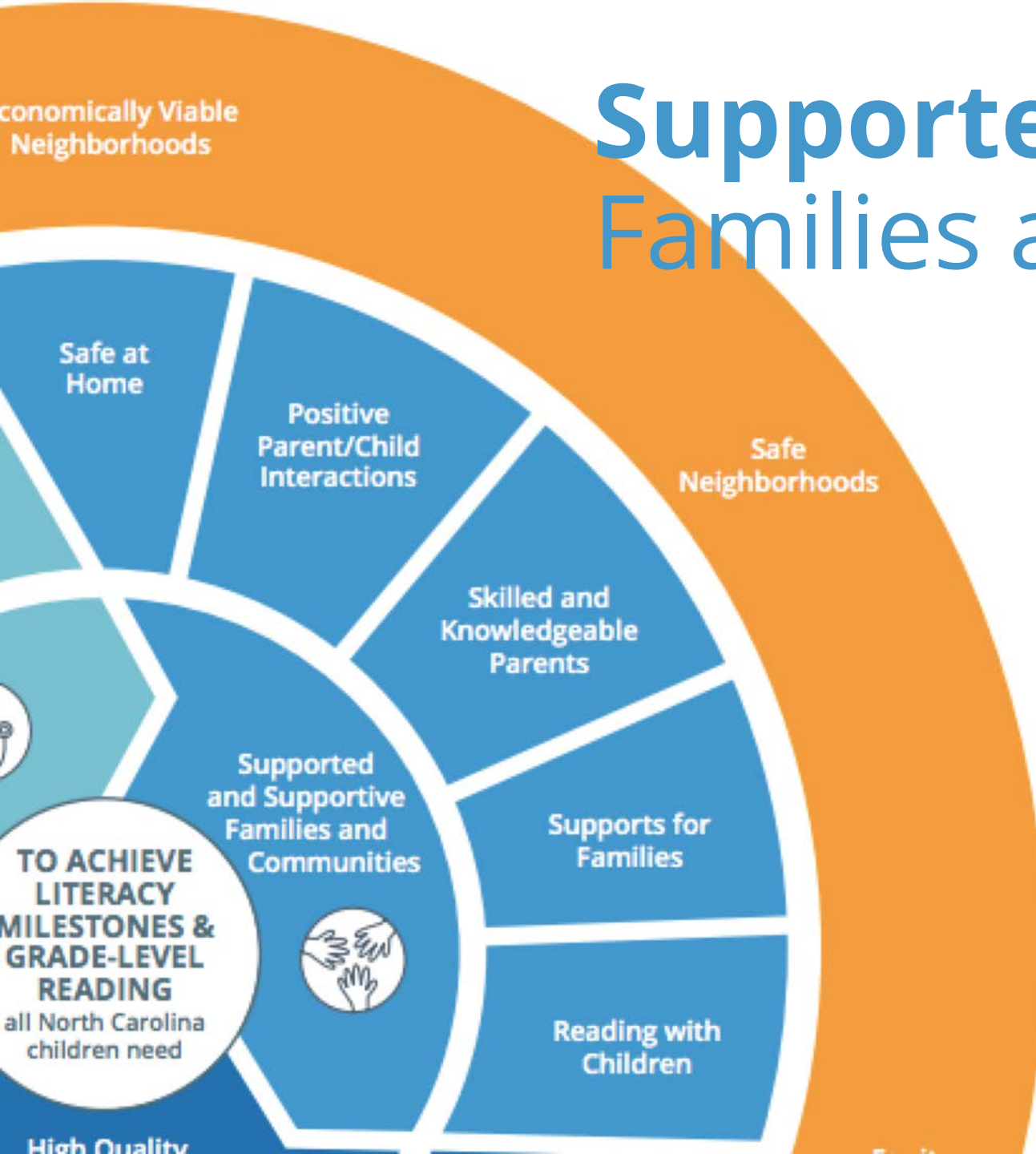
PHASE 1: How do we know children are on a **pathway to grade-level reading?**



School stability
Diverse schools
Special education
High quality Pre-K
Cultural competence
Supported transitions
Suspension/expulsion
Native language support
Specialized teacher training
Trauma-informed education
Affordable, high quality child care
Quality summer learning programs
Teacher/administrator education and knowledge of child development

High Quality B-8 Care and Education

Supported and Supportive Families and Communities



Maternal education

Paid leave

Parental mental health

Parental ACEs

Parent education supports

Substance use

Treatment access

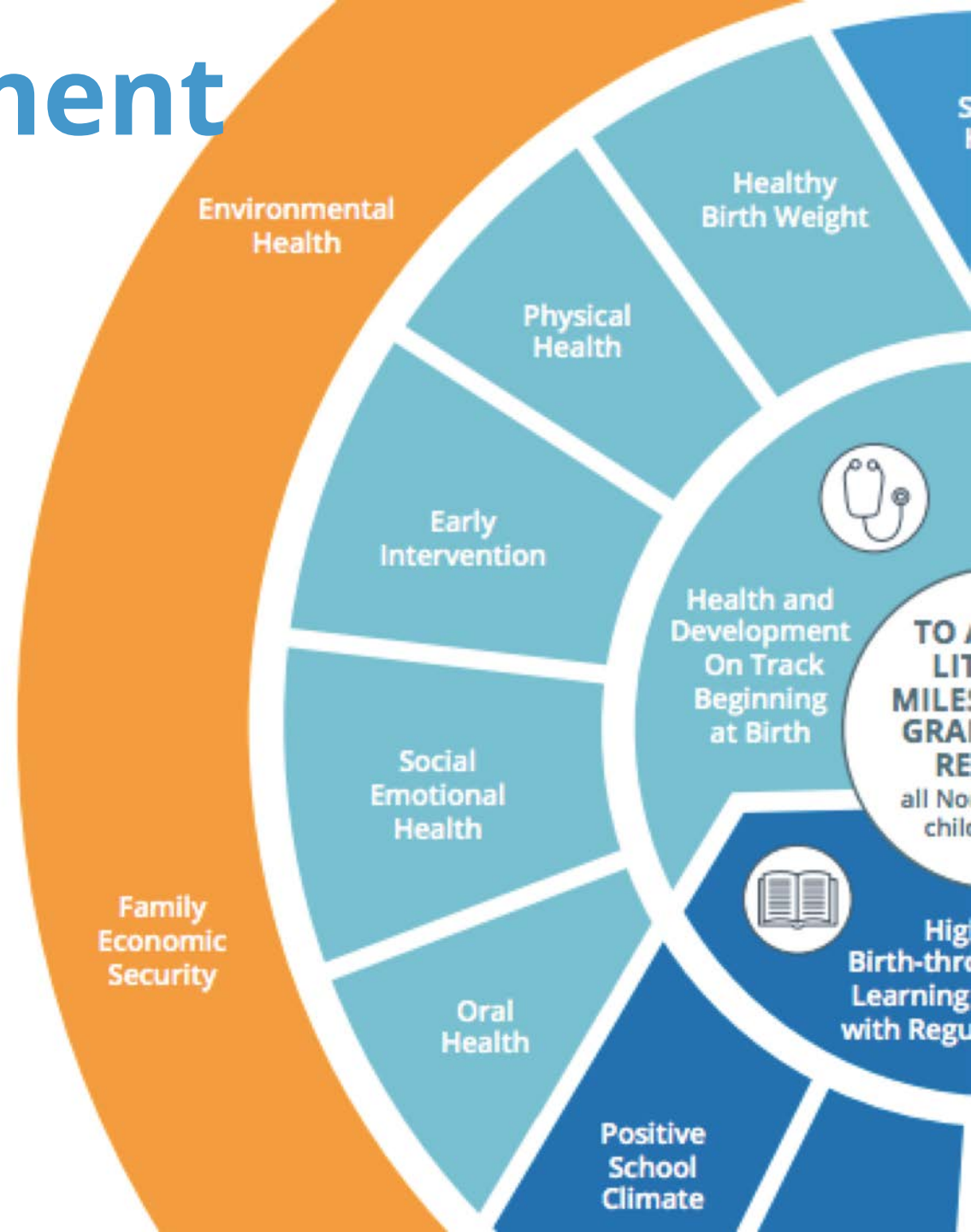
Poverty screening

Family meals

Books in home

Health and Development on Track

Health insurance	Dental care
Well-child visits and medical home	Immunizations
Access to doctors and dentists	Developmental and social-emotional screenings, referrals and services
Food security	Prenatal care
Breastfeeding	Smoking and substance abuse
Healthy weight	Teen pregnancy
Physical activity	
Healthy eating	



PHASE 2:

How are we **doing**?

Where should we **begin**?

High Quality Birth-through-Age-Eight Early Care and Education

Regular School Attendance

Social-Emotional Health



PHASE 3: What should we **do**?

Pathways Design Teams:

- Worked for a full year to understand NC's assets and opportunities for action and gathered broad input
- Determined what expectations we should hold of child and family systems
- Proposed actions NC should take to realize those expectations



Recommended **actions**:

Address racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and ability inequities

Are data- and research-driven and informed by developmental science

Address the whole child and family

Are actionable and accountable

Address critical gaps in our system



Pathways is North Carolina's **Early Learning Operating Model**

The **Pathways Model and Action Framework** have been forged through the thinking of hundreds of stakeholders across sector, geography, and political aisle, community voices from two rounds of 14 community conversations, a meta-analysis of parent voice from across North Carolina, and national research focused on what works for children of color.



Pathways in **Action**

Pathways is serving as a **foundation of current early childhood state-level initiatives.**

Leandro Commission for a Sound, Basic Education
Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC)
Early Childhood Action Plan
B-3rd Interagency Council
Essentials For Childhood
myFutureNC
Think Babies™ NC



Whole School, Whole Community Whole Child



Ensure a **Great Teacher for Every Child** and a **Great Leader for Every School**

- Support incentives to ensure high-quality educators and school leaders in high-need schools and early education programs
- Recruit and retain educators and school leaders of color
- Provide research-informed teacher education and professional development on:
 - Social-emotional health and learning
 - Early childhood development
 - Trauma and resilience
 - Cultural competency and working with diverse families
 - Implicit bias
- Create collaborative birth-through-third grade PD

Prepare Schools to **Teach Every Child**

- Hire sufficient support staff—counselors, psychologists, nurses, social workers, literacy coaches, family advocates
- Ensure accountability systems, assessments and standards and curricula are culturally- and linguistically-relevant so that every child and family feels they belong
- Develop linked and intentional strategies across schools and districts to engage and learn from families
- Set intentional strategic goals for racial equity
- Eliminate or minimize suspension and expulsion in early education and in the early grades

Prepare Children for **Success in Kindergarten**

- Expand child care subsidies for birth-through-five children, raise subsidy rates and provide higher rates in underserved communities
- Screen babies and toddlers and connect them to appropriate two-generation services like home visiting
- Increase access to high-quality infant and toddler child care
- Increase standards and compensation for birth-through-five educators
- Invest in full-day, full-year preschool for the most at-risk children, including wrap-around services

Eliminate Barriers to **Expanding NC Pre-K**

From recent NIEER report, Barriers to Expansion of NC Pre-K:

- Target expansion based on need, not "waiting lists"
- Incentivize high quality early education centers to participate
- Raise base reimbursement rate to support high quality
- Offer start-up grants
- Use county-specific supplements to address specific barriers
- Support private classrooms to achieve educator pay parity with public school classrooms
- Increase percentage allowed for administrative costs
- Blend Pre-K and subsidy dollars to better serve children
- Allocate Pre-K dollars through the public school allocation formula to better blend federal, state and local funding and leverage non-state dollars



Promote Understanding

Promote public understanding of and support for policies that promote children's birth-to-eight years for academic and lifelong success.



Spearhead Collaboration

Convene and spearhead collaboration to bridge North Carolina's birth-to-five and kindergarten-to-third grade systems.



Advance Policies

Advance policies that create a stronger NC today and tomorrow by supporting each child's birth-to-eight development.



www.buildthefoundation.org



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