



IMPACT THREAD

Data Action Team Report

Prepared for The North
Carolina Early Childhood
Foundation

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INTRODUCTION

The North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation (NCECF) hired Impact Thread to evaluate its process to identify shared, whole-child, birth-to-eight measures of success that put children on a pathway to grade-level reading. The work was the first phase of NCECF's Pathways to Grade-Level Reading (Pathways) initiative. Pathways is creating partnerships among the North Carolina'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.

NCECF launched Pathways by bringing more than 85 representatives from the state's government agencies, nonprofit organizations, the private sector, foundations, research institutions and members of the General Assembly to gauge interest in developing the shared measures of success. The reaction was overwhelmingly positive and this group became the Pathways stakeholders. They informed the creation of smaller group – a Data Action Team (DAT) – that would be charged with recommending the shared measures. The stakeholder group was then kept abreast of the DAT's work, and their feedback was solicited throughout the DAT's process.

The DAT's mission was to identify and recommend a set of whole-child, birth-to-eight, population-level outcome measures that impact third grade reading success. Their work was to engage in a landscape survey of existing national birth-to-eight indicators and those being used by North Carolina state organizations, and to select a limited number of Measures of Success that best suit North Carolina's context based on the state's strengths and needs.

Impact Thread was charged with documenting and measuring the effectiveness of the DAT process, including the effectiveness of engaging the larger stakeholder group in informing the DAT's work.

Impact Thread reviewed information from NCECF about the DAT's mission and goals, observed each DAT meeting and collected data from the DAT members about their perceptions of and involvement with the work.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Highlight's of our evaluation our outlined below.

The Data Action Team Process

- NCECF's reputation played a large role in creating initial buy-in from DAT members and the large stakeholder group. Without the initial buy-in, this project likely would not have been as productive or influential.
- Facilitator responsiveness and participant adaptability contributed to the DAT's success. Throughout the four meetings, the mission of the DAT became clearer and the role of the facilitators became increasingly important and influential.
- Communication between the DAT and the larger stakeholder group helped members better understand the broad purpose and specific goals of the DAT.
- Having a clear and agreed upon goal – third grade reading – was essential to process.
- Enthusiasm dipped early in the process when there was less clarity of purpose and the task felt overwhelming.
- By the last meeting, more than 90% of Data Action Team respondents wanted to be involved in the implementation of the Measures of Success.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Stakeholders felt informed about the Data Action Team's work.
 - 83% said updates met their expectations.
 - 91% said they felt informed about the DAT's progress.
- Stakeholders valued the Data Action Team's work.
 - 96% said that it filled an important role in developing the Measures of Success.
 - 87% said felt positive about the process and outcomes
- Stakeholders believe their input was valued.
 - 78% said that they felt their input and expertise was taken into consideration during the creation of the Measures of Success
 - 91% said they felt that they had the opportunity to inform the DAT's work.
- Stakeholders are invested in the Measures of Success.
 - 96% said that they were excited about the shared Measures of Success,
 - 82% said that they would use the Measures of the Success.
 - 91% said that they felt like they were part of a team that is working towards completing the mission of NC pathways to grade level reading,
 - 96% considered themselves advocates of the Measures of Success

- 100% of stakeholders said that they planned to continue to engage in and support the work of the NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Initiative.

TIMELINE

November 2015: Pathways Stakeholder Meeting 1

January 2016: Data Action Team Meeting 1

February 2016: Data Action Team Meeting 2 and Stakeholder Survey 1

March 2016: Data Action Team Meeting 3

April 2016: Data Action Team Meeting 4

May 2016: Pathways Stakeholder Meeting 2

July 2016: Stakeholder Survey 2

STAKEHOLDER FINDINGS

Impact Thread conducted two surveys of stakeholders. The first survey was disseminated at the beginning of the Data Action Team process in February 2016. The second survey was conducted after the completion of the Data Action Team process and following a stakeholder meeting in July 2016.

Stakeholder Survey 1: February 2016

Below are findings from the initial stakeholder survey of 39 participants from the larger stakeholder group. This survey was given before there were substantial communications from the DAT about their process or outcomes.

When asked about the purpose and outcomes of the DAT, key themes included:

- Develop a set of population measures that will impact third grade reading
- Assess current metrics that impact third grade reading
- Select the best indicators for NC that impact third grade reading
- Aligned measures for NC
- Create measures that NC organizations are committed to using
- Develop a plan of how data is collected and measured that will help achieve third grade reading level
- The DAT will serve as a subset of the larger stakeholder group
- Not clear
- Don't understand

When asked to describe the expectations they have of the DAT, themes included:

- Survey the current landscape of measures that indicate third grade reading level
- Decipher a number of clear, concise, trackable indicators
- Consider a broad range of data, develop indicators, create a plan on how to utilize indicators
- Detailed communication
- Tangible deliverables
- Collaboration
- High level literature review
- To provide information on how NC compares to other states in third grade reading

When asked to describe how you expect to be informed about the progress of the DAT, themes included:

- Emails
- Detailed minute meetings
- In person meetings
- Webinar
- NCECF Website

Presentations

Statistics reported below are the summation of Agree and Strongly Agree respondents.

- When asked if the creation of the DAT was necessary, 88% agreed.
- When asked if participants were excited to learn about the progress of the DAT, 87% agreed.
- When asked if participants felt positive about the outcomes described to them, 80% agreed.
- When asked if participants intended to implement the Measures of Early Childhood Success established by the DAT at their work, 54% agreed.

The themes and results indicated above suggest that, while the larger stakeholder group felt engaged and excited about the DAT overall, many were not yet willing to commit to action. Organizers attribute this dichotomy to the measures not being developed yet and the possibility of not having clear actions to take.

Stakeholder Survey 2: July 2016

Below are findings from the second stakeholder survey of 22 participants from the larger stakeholder group. This survey was given after the DAT had completed its work, the stakeholders had received communications from the DAT about its process and outcomes, and a second stakeholder meeting had been held in May.

When asked about the purpose and outcomes of the DAT, key themes included:

- To create Measures of Success that indicate third grade reading level
- To come to agreement on whole child outcomes that are informed by statewide data
- To help identify measures that we can track that will move the needle
- To identify Measures of Success that can be supported by all stakeholders
- The team would gather information to inform indicators and overall strategy

When asked to describe how you were informed about the progress of the DAT, themes included:

- Regular email communication
- Electronic requests to rank proposed measures/indicators
- Electronic requests to provide input
- Email report from NCECF
- Updates on the DAT
- Not sure
- Lots of emails

Statistics reported below are the summation of Agree and Strongly Agree respondents.

- When asked if the updates on the progress of the DAT and the development of the Measures of Success met the stakeholder expectations, 83% agreed.

- When asked if participants felt like they were kept informed about the progress of the DAT, 91% agreed.
- When asked if participants felt that the DAT filled an important role in the creation of the Measures of Success, 96% agreed.
- When asked if stakeholder input in the Measures of Success was valued, 87% agreed.
- When asked if individuals felt they had the opportunity to inform the DAT's work, 91% agreed.
- When asked if participants felt positive about the process and outcomes regarding the DAT, 87% agreed.
- When asked if participants were excited about the shared Measures of Success, 96% agreed.
- When asked if participants felt invested in using the Measures of Success, 82% agreed.
- When asked if individuals felt their input and expertise was taken into consideration during the creation of the Measures of Success, 78% agreed.
- When asked if participants felt like they were part of a team that is working towards completing the mission of NC pathways to grade level reading, 91% agreed.
- When asked if participants considered themselves advocates of the early childhood Measures of Success created by the DAT, 96% agreed.
- When asked if participants plan to continue to engage in and support the work of the NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Initiative, **100%** agreed.

This data overall reflects that agreement grew throughout the process of stakeholder engagement with the DAT. While we posit that much of the initial support for the DAT may have been due to the reputation and trust that stakeholders had in NCECF, the level of engagement that is demonstrated through survey two suggests that the actions of the DAT impacted the long-term commitment to and excitement about the Measures of Success.

Overall Trends and Themes of The Larger Stakeholder Group

This data set for the stakeholder group is limited due to the number of respondents, and significant statistical correlations cannot be established. However, our expert opinion is that there may have been a marginal increase in stakeholder commitment and enthusiasm between the first and second surveys. Overall, stakeholders feel positive about the outcomes of the DAT. They feel excited about moving forward with the indicators that were established, and invested in using them.

DATA ACTION TEAM FINDINGS

The Data Action Team met four times. Impact Thread observed each meeting, provided feedback to NCECF so that adjustments to the process could be made, and survey DAT members after each meeting.

Significant changes and themes emerged from the four DAT meetings.

At the first DAT meeting, it became clear that much of the measurement data in the early childhood and third grade reading space in North Carolina is either not collected, or is not easily accessible. This realization served as motivation for members to continue the effort of the DAT in subsequent meetings.

Throughout the DAT meetings, team dynamics and bonding were clearly established. The way the members were divided into three subject-matter groups (health, families/communities, birth-to-eight education) was beneficial and encouraged specialization and deep intentional conversation throughout the meetings.

The data reveal that throughout the four meetings, the mission of the DAT became clearer and the role of the facilitators became increasingly important and influential. **The data also reveal that by the last meeting, over 90% of respondents wanted to be involved in the implementation of the Measures of Success moving forward.**

There was an overall dip in enthusiasm and motivation after the second meeting. It is possible that the weight and understanding of the monumental process this team was undertaking was sinking in. Some participants were still unclear about the mission and process of the team as a whole at this point. However, longitudinal, qualitative analysis reveals that this dip was rectified at the third and fourth meetings. One of the main takeaways from the third meeting was that not only did the members really begin to understand the responsibility they were given, but they began to feel like the mission could be accomplished. The facilitators did a commendable job providing bite-sized tasks and goals at each meeting so that members did not feel overwhelmed.

Another major theme was the ability and willingness to compromise and come to consensus as the meetings progressed. Compromise was vital to this work and level of collaboration, and the facilitators did a great job of gently insisting upon it. The third and fourth meeting of the DAT had fewer participants; however, it seemed more was accomplished. We postulate that the final two meetings were limited to the most devoted and passionate team members.

A couple of factors likely contributed to highly productive third and fourth meetings. By the third meeting, the DAT learned that members of the larger stakeholder group were excited to implement these Measures of Success, which seemed to feed the energy of the DAT. As the work progressed, DAT members also increasingly perceived that their specific skill sets contributed positively to the work of the DAT. The reports produced after each Data Action Team are available in full in Appendices C-F.

CONCLUSION

The work of the Data Action Team proved to be productive. Key components of success included the ability of the facilitators to allow the DAT process to change and evolve, and the adaptability of the DAT members. The communication between the DAT and the larger stakeholder group also helped members better understand the broad purpose and specific goals of the DAT.

We believe a main reason that the creation and evolution of the DAT was so successful was due to the clear, established, and agreed upon need for these Measures of Success. DAT members and stakeholders alike indicated that shared Measures of Success were a vital part of establishing pathways to third grade reading proficiency. Pathways also created a process that experts and practitioners in this space can get on board with and work on together.

The reputation of NCECF also played a large role in creating initial buy-in from DAT members and the large stakeholder group. Without the initial buy-in, this project likely would not have been as productive or influential.

Overall, the data we collected from DAT members and the larger stakeholder group demonstrate that these positive outcomes were not coincidence. There were specific actions taken, specific outcomes measured, and specific recommendations made in order for the DAT to accomplish the goal of developing these Measures of Success.

Key factors such as the influence of NCECF, DAT team member selection, communication with the larger stakeholder group, and the willingness to evolve the DAT meeting process were all crucial elements in this process. We feel that these elements aligned to ensure the Measures of Success were created, and that they are indeed effective, generalizable measures.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Larger Stakeholder Group Survey 1

Q1. Hello, we are a team of researchers working with NCECF. We are working to assess the impact and effectiveness of the Data Action Team. As part of the larger stakeholder group interested in the process and outcomes of the Data Action Team, your opinion and perceptions are important to us. Please take a moment and fill out these survey questions.

Q2. Briefly tell us what you were told about the purpose and outcomes of the Data Action Team.

Q3. Briefly describe the expectations you have for the Data Action Team.

Q4. Briefly describe how you expect to be kept informed about the progress of the Data Action Team.

Q5. Briefly describe the type of updates/information you hope to receive about the Data Action Team.

Q6. On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree) please rate the level in which you agree with the following statements.

Q9. Overall I feel that the creation of the Data Action Team was necessary.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q7. Overall I feel positive about the process and outcomes described to me regarding the Data Action Team.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q8. Overall, I am excited to learn more about the progress of the Data Action Team.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q10. I intend to implement the metrics of early childhood success suggested by the Data Action Team at my work.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q11. This survey is complete. Thank you for your time.

Appendix B: Larger Stakeholder Group Survey 2

We are a team of researchers working with the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation to assess the NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading initiative. We are interested in learning about your perceptions of the process to develop the shared measures of success. Your opinion is important to us and will inform the next steps of the work. We would greatly appreciate it if you would complete the survey.

Did you attend the stakeholder meeting held on November 13, 2015 at Red Hat?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know.

Did you attend the stakeholder meeting held on May 20, 2016 at RTI International?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know.

Between the November 2015 and May 2016 meetings, stakeholders received emails requesting input to inform the development of shared measures of success and the Data Action Team's work. Did you respond to requests for input?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know.

Why did you respond to the request for input?

Why didn't you respond to the request for input?

Describe briefly what you were told about the purpose and outcomes of the Data Action Team.

Briefly describe the type of updates and information that you received about the Data Action Team. On a scale of 1 through 5, please rate the level at which you agree with the following statements. (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree)

- The updates on the progress of the Data Action Team and the development of the measures of success met my expectations.
- I felt I was kept informed about the progress of the Data Action Team.
- The Data Action Team filled an important role in the creation of the measures of success.
- I feel that stakeholder input into the measures of success was valued.
- I feel like I had the opportunity to inform the Data Action Team's work and the final measures of success.
- I feel positive about the process and outcomes regarding the Data Action Team.

Data Action Team Report

- I am excited about the shared measures of success.
- I feel invested in using the measures of success.
- I feel like my opinions and expertise were taken into consideration during the measures of success development process.
- I consider myself an advocate of the early childhood measures of success.
- I plan to continue to engage in and support the work of the NC Pathways to Grade- Level Reading initiative.
- I feel like I am part of a team that is working towards completing this mission.

The power of shared measures is increasing alignment around a common set of outcomes. A first step to building support and public demand is demonstrating support. May the Pathways to Grade-Level Reading initiative list you as a supporter of the measures of success framework?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know.

First Name

Last Name

Organization

What would need to change for you to support the measures of success framework?

Appendix C: Data Action Team Report 1

Summary

The first meeting of the Data Action Team (DAT) was held on January 28th at the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation. The demographic makeup of members was diverse in regard to race, gender, specialty, experience, and current place of employment. DAT members were well informed of the outcomes of the meeting and excited to begin the process of identifying impactful metrics for early childhood development. This report details specific actions and processes that worked effectively at the meeting as well as those that can be improved upon, culminating in overall recommendations for moving forward both for the next DAT meeting, and the eventual “How To Guide.”

This report is organized as follows:

- Overall observations about flow and content of meeting
- Overall observations about members and communication tone of meeting
- Key aspects that worked well
- Key aspects to be improved upon
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Notes: The surveys that were sent and images from the meeting are included as appendices. “We” hereafter refers to English and Emery of Impact Thread.

Flow and Content

Members were given a packet of materials as they entered and self-selected their seats. The content provided allowed members to gain background information on the DAT, goals for the day, and the project/process overall. The introductions that followed proved fruitful—team members enjoyed introducing themselves and shared what excited them most about the DAT process.

Memorable quotes from this section included:

- Taking a deep dive into this work
- Being on the frontline
- Part of work that is systems oriented
- Seeing data used to improve people’s lives
- To see what this work will do for families

One of the most important parts of the program we identified was Tracy Zimmerman’s explanation of why NCECF was motivated to do this work. This provided common ground for members and direction for moving forward.

The spirit of the meeting was clear, but we observed a lot of confusion about the process leading up to the January meeting, how the larger stakeholder group was involved, what role they played, as well as how the Guiding Principles were created. We recognize some members of the DAT joined later than others, but a timeline of previous actions on the website of documents would be helpful.

The overall set up of the meeting was productive. There was plenty of foundational information provided that was intended to set the stage for the next meetings. It was important to get everyone on the same page to better understand what they were ultimately responsible for creating and why. Many indicated that much of the materials provided were helpful to follow along with. Making these materials available prior to the day of the meeting (if possible) would encourage more participation and better preparation by the DAT.

NCECF made it clear that their role was to facilitate the DAT process and accelerate the outcomes of the DAT. We think this step is imperative and appreciated the clear communication by NCECF.

There was emphasis on the fact that this had to be a collaborative process between the DAT and larger stakeholder group in order to achieve “buy-in” and implementation state-wide.

The introduction of the guiding principles produced some confusion; some questioned their overall helpfulness to the process.

The presentation given by Laila Bell was well-received and timely. It provided context and process suggestions to DAT members. A key communication was data as an applied tool, or “data for what?” **This presentation should be provided in the “How To Guide” as a reference. This is something that would be relevant for any Data Action Team.**

The data walk provided a good opportunity for the DAT members to stretch their legs and communicate with each other. There was a slow start to the data walk, and while it seemed to provide perspective to some members, it lent more frustration to others.

Overall, it seemed to spark good discussion, but we suggest a better introduction. For example, “Here are *some* data points that are currently available, but not *all*.”

A great take away from the data walk:

👉 “There is a whole story missing because of lack of measurement.”

It is imperative that DAT members identify gaps on their own, allowing them to take ownership of the metrics meant to fill those gaps.

Beginning the brainstorming sessions in the first meeting was a good idea because it allowed members to get a feel for the conversations they will be having moving forward. This allowed the DAT members a chance to practice letting their guard down about work they are passionate about, and open a dialogue in the spirit of “meeting in the middle.” On past projects, we have found this doesn’t come naturally, and commend NCECF’s facilitation.

Time ran short, and some people had to leave before the day was scheduled to end. Important to note: if there is important information that needs to be provided in the wrap up session, provide it at 1:30 and let the brainstorming session commence at 2pm.

Members and Communication

Overall, the DAT make-up was diverse and the majority of members were vocal. The education level and skill set was elite. Many people identified as “data geeks” and indicated their excitement about diving further into the process.

The level of data expertise in the room allows for high level conversations and efficient sharing of information. It will be important to monitor whether this level of expertise will also make it difficult to communicate and relate the data and results to the general population.

It was apparent that there was a substantial amount of leg work that went into the preparation for assembling and identifying the need for this team. This was communicated in a humble yet clear way, which allowed the DAT members to feel like they were not wasting their time or energy. This is something NCECF is serious about accomplishing—with their participation.

There was clear communication during the wrap-up that the environment created and the tone of the meeting was extremely thoughtful and accommodating.

Member Reflections included:

- There was a collective sense of safety and comfort in sharing experience and opinions.
- The meeting was efficient and effective.
- Many DAT members considered this one of the best convenings of this nature.

What Worked Well

- The flow of the meeting worked well. The agenda was adhered to and members were able to stay engaged and did not appear worn down at any point. There was an overwhelming sense of energy in the room that indicated this has been a hot topic on many members’ minds, and they were excited to begin addressing it.
- One of the best processes about this meeting was the time and detail spent on the rationale for why the DAT is here and why NCECF is pushing forward with this.**
- The materials handed out at the beginning of the meeting were well received, especially the goals and objectives handout.

- It was great to include a brainstorming session in this meeting to get the DAT members feet wet in regard to the hurdles they are facing and the processes they will need to go through to make strides on this project.
- It was great to have a recorder for each table during the brainstorming sessions and for them to write notes in a way that members can clearly see and follow along with.
- The facilitators played a large role in the brainstorming sessions. This was good for the first session and important to remember when doing a first meeting. Consider minimizing the role of the facilitator in the brainstorming groups as the sessions progress and nominating a DAT member as a note taker.
- The smallest group (Health and Development on Track, Beginning at Birth) during the brainstorming session seemed to be most productive. The NCECF facilitator struck a balance between facilitating, commenting, and tracking the conversations. The group was successful at coming up with metrics that were relevant, without much nay-saying. This group timed themselves on each prompt which proved to be effective and helped them get thorough the agenda. Everyone in this group spoke numerous times and seemed to feel very comfortable speaking. Bottom line success indicators: Facilitator commented and tracked conversation effectively, group was small enough to promote participation from all members, objectives were met (metrics created), and timing kept everyone on track.
- There was a lot of clarification going on in each group with high-level questions such as:
 - What is access?
 - What is the long-term use of this metric?These questions are thoughtful and should be encouraged throughout the process.
- The Supported and Supportive Families and Communities group began utilizing a tool called “Power Round” where they went around the table and each person contributed one comment or metric to the topic quickly. This proved to be a great tool that encouraged everyone to participate and communicate efficiently.

What Needs Improvement

- More context needs to be provided about the larger stakeholder group and guiding principles.
- More context is needed on the history of metrics in NC.
- The brainstorming groups need to be smaller.
- The brainstorming sparked a fair amount of tension and nay-saying. Especially in the Early Education group. It would be helpful to pinpoint where this came from and attempt to facilitate against it in future brainstorming sessions.
- The prompts for brainstorming may be too general to create the specific results desired.

- ✦ The arrangement of members in the brainstorming groups should be switched up. There were a lot of vocal, opinionated people in one group, and nearly none in another.
- ✦ The use of acronyms caused tension and confusion.
- ✦ The larger brainstorming groups were having side conversations that would have been helpful for the whole group to hear.
- ✦ The role of the facilitator needs to be more consistent between groups.
- ✦ There was a sense of feeling overwhelmed. A lot of information was shared, and it was a lot to take in. Make more information available before the meetings to encourage self-paced learning.

Recommendations

Below are recommendations for the next DAT meetings as well as any future convenings of a DAT.

- ✦ Put the data presentation before the guiding principles conversation to emphasize the commitment to common language and common metrics moving forward.
- ✦ Provide more context about the larger stakeholder group (e.g., Who are they? Why do they care about the DAT and its metrics? How was the group created? etc.) and guiding principles (e.g., Where did they come from? Why are they important? How will they be used moving forward? Where are they used currently? etc.)
- ✦ Make paper materials available online before the meeting so people can take notes on the PowerPoints if desired—cater to different learning styles to encourage engagement and broad participation.
- ✦ Video record all presentations for any members who cannot attend. Consider using this material to make a fun video that introduces the final metrics to the larger stakeholder group.
- ✦ Consider trimming the length of the introductory “how we got here” presentation. Improve visibility of the presentation by changing text size and color.
- ✦ Encourage members to bring packet materials to each meeting or show them where to go online to access them.
- ✦ Outline the role of facilitator for brainstorming groups. Consider not having a facilitator for some sessions and instead allow groups to self-nominate a note-taker, then compare participation and idea generation to facilitator-led sessions.
- ✦ Consider having a “Devil’s Advocate”. This session will provide a specific time for nay-sayers and any negative information to be communicated and not let this negativity hinder productivity.
- ✦ Ensure groups are mixed up from meeting to meeting. For brainstorming sessions, either keep the same groups and change the topics around, or mix up participants.
- ✦ Consider developing key check-in questions for the group to ask in wrap up. For example:
 - Are we prioritizing effectively or at all?

- Are we translating and communicating our ideas to the general public?
- Where did we start? How far are we getting? What is getting us there?
- These questions will act as a checkpoint for each participant.
- The brainstorming topics may be too broad. Many people called for separation of topics. Consider asking them to separate and prioritize them themselves.
- It may help in brainstorming groups to ask guiding questions, such as:
 - What data is currently available?
 - Who are the partners that we need to identify to help us achieve this?
 - Is there a research gap here? What is it?
 - What are the pros and cons of this metric?
- Consider asking for anonymous feedback (in addition to the survey we are conducting that will ask more specific questions about DAT team dynamics).

NCECF Data Action Team Survey 1

Q1. Hello, we are researchers collecting information about the Data Action Team for evaluative purposes. Please take a moment and fill out the questionnaire below from your perspective as a Data Action Team member. We appreciate your participation.

Q2. On a scale of 1-5, (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree) please rate the level to which you agree with the following statements.

Q3. I am clear on the mission of the Data Action Team.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q4. I feel I am personally attached to the mission of the Data Action Team.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q5. I have previous experience collaborating with a team like the Data Action Team.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q6. I have had previous exposure to assessing and analyzing data.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q7. I feel I have a clear understanding of what the outcomes of the Data Action Team should be.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q8. I feel like my skill set and experience will lend well to this project.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q9. I understand why I was chosen to be a member of this team.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q10. I understand the type of indicators I am tasked with helping create.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q11. I feel like the mission of the Data Action Team is clear.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q12. I feel like the last Data Action Team meeting was productive.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q13. I feel like the facilitators have done a good job at making me feel prepared to contribute to this project.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q14. I feel like the other Data Action Team members are making positive contributions.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q15. I feel like the overall tone of the Data Action Team is positive.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q16. I feel that there are large hurdles that will be hard to overcome with this project.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q17. I feel paralyzed by the magnitude of this project.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q18. I feel excited at the thought of diving into this project.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q19. Please fill in the blank in the text box below. "I plan on committing _X_ number of hours per month on this project."

Q20. Please list any personal goals you have that relate to being part of the Data Action Team:

Q21. This survey is complete. Thank you for your time.

Stakeholder Group Pulse Survey

Q1. Hello, we are a team of researchers working with NCECF. We are working to assess the impact and effectiveness of the Data Action Team. As part of the larger stakeholder group interested in the process and outcomes of the Data Action Team, your opinion and perceptions are important to us. Please take a moment and fill out these survey questions.

Q2. Briefly tell us what you were told about the purpose and outcomes of the Data Action Team.

Q3. Briefly describe the expectations you have for the Data Action Team.

Q4. Briefly describe how you expect to be kept informed about the progress of the Data Action Team.

Q5. Briefly describe the type of updates/information you hope to receive about the Data Action Team.

Q6. On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree) please rate the level in which you agree with the following statements.

Q9. Overall I feel that the creation of the Data Action Team was necessary.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q7. Overall I feel positive about the process and outcomes described to me regarding the Data Action Team.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q8. Overall, I am excited to learn more about the progress of the Data Action Team.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q10. I intend to implement the metrics of early childhood success suggested by the Data Action Team at my work.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q11. This survey is complete. Thank you for your time.

Appendix D: Data Action Team Report 2

Summary

The second meeting of the Data Action Team (DAT) was held on February 25th at RTI International in the Cox Building. It is important to note that a significant portion of the education experts (DAT team members) were missing from a major portion of this meeting due to a conflict. DAT members were excited and interested to engage in this meeting after being introduced to the project and each other in meeting 1. This report details specific actions and processes that worked effectively at the meeting as well as those that can be improved upon, culminating in overall recommendations for moving forward both for the next DAT meeting, and the eventual “How To” Guide.

This report is organized as follows:

- Overall observations about flow and content of meeting
- Overall observations about members and communication tone of meeting
- Key aspects that worked well
- Key aspects to be improved upon
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Notes: The survey(s) that were sent and images from the meeting are included as appendices. “We” hereafter refers to English and Emery of Impact Thread.

Flow and Content

This meeting incorporated many of the recommendations from the previous report. Notably, great explanations of “why we are here” and “how to make the biggest impact.” A recap from November was shared with the DAT members which allowed them to gain a better understanding of who the larger stakeholder group is and the role it will play in the overall process. It was stated that the goal of the DAT was to “look at what data is there/available” and “what metrics are there.” The DAT will create a list of measures to present to the larger stakeholder group in May.

Memorable quotes from this meeting included:

- Are there legislative strategies in place?
- How can the larger stakeholder group help?
- Data sharing is difficult and is something we need to consider.
- It is key to consider what level of data we need for a specific metric.
- We need to understand the data from a North Carolina perspective.

One of the most important takeaways from this meeting is how helpful the paper materials were. Table discussions revealed that the Data Action Team Mental Map was very useful.

The spirit of this meeting was much more proactive. Members seemed excited and ready to jump into the work. Overall, this meeting sparked a lot of good questions and things that left members and facilitators thinking about the long-term vision and realistic action items.

The overall set-up of the meeting was productive. The materials were useful and were given notation and consideration at each table. The incorporation of recommendations from the previous meeting's evaluation report, especially the attention paid to recapping the previous meetings and steps leading to this point, united the team and quickly put everyone on the same page. It was especially important that the videographer was there capturing this meeting for those who could not be there.

An important suggestion was made to continue thinking about what the DAT wants from the larger stakeholder group moving forward that will inform what the DAT is doing. This is important to continue to ask at each meeting and keep fresh in members' minds. Facilitators played a large role in this meeting ensuring that explanations and details were covered and everyone was on the same page. Meeting two is a perfect time for the facilitators to ensure that everyone is on the same page after digesting the wealth of information provided in the first meeting.

DAT members noted that data sharing is difficult. Not all data they will need comes in a user-friendly form, and not all data is collected similarly or generalizable. After hearing from the DAT members about the actionability of the data, NCECF should consider bringing someone on-board (either during this process, or after) to translate and clean data. It will be difficult to hold the DAT member organizations or individuals accountable for this task. This is an idea that should be posed to the DAT, and they would decide on the type of person and/or position this would be. The hope is that this person would be used by all organizations.

A key piece of information that proved useful was the slide of the time frame. **This slide should be provided in the "How To" Guide as a reference. This is something that would be relevant for any Data Action Team.**

There was a lot of time spent by members voicing "things to keep in mind." It is helpful to pose these questions; however, it will be important for the facilitators moving forward to limit those conversations for the sake of time.

One note about set-up. People seem much more inclined to write on the large notepads than the dry erase boards. If we want to encourage the members to write it will be useful to have the large notepads for each group.

There was a suggestion of creating a "continuous data advisory team." This is a great idea, and based on limited survey data, DAT members are amenable to this option. Another important note is that the materials are presented extremely well on the website. **This is important to mention and demonstrate in the "How To" Guide.**

Members and Communication

The DAT was somewhat smaller due to the missing Education team members. Members seemed much more inclined to speak and question the facilitators and the process, which is positive. This demonstrates their commitment to the DAT mission. Many valid questions were posed about the best way to move forward and what can be expected from each other, the facilitators and the larger stakeholder group.

The guided tabletop discussions proved to be fruitful and helped people stay on target.

When instructed to work at their tables to define what would be considered “good data,” there was some confusion, and not every table understood the exercise. The question that was posed was “How do we set a standard of good data quality?” This activity, while fruitful, would have most likely been more productive as a whole-group activity. It would also be helpful to provide examples, e.g. validity, reliability, large enough N, etc.

When wrapping up the exercise, a great practice was to ask each table for their two best ideas. This helped each group narrow and prioritize.

A great suggestion that was made was for the DAT to have an “assumption list” and a “criteria list.” This is good idea to follow up on at the next meeting.

What Worked Well

- The flow of the meeting worked well. The recap and deep dive into how the DAT got to where they are was very helpful and immediately improved understanding and participation.
- **One of the best aspects of this meeting was the materials provide for the DAT to reference and the explanation of the materials by the facilitators.**
- Another great process was the assigning roles to DAT members during the brainstorming sessions (Time Keeper, Data Liaison, Driver, Facilitator). This helped encourage participation, as well as keep the group on track.
- Facilitators did a great job of explaining the process of getting through the big packet of data in the groups.
- It was important that facilitators checked in with the group as a whole occasionally, and this is a practice that should continue throughout the meetings.
- Based on limited data, people feel more clear about the mission of the DAT after meeting 2.
- There were a few members that ended up “floating” during the brainstorming sessions. This proved to be useful to pick up on group trends. One of the members ended up making a large contribution about the group trends, stating that **“if an indicator or outcomes requires a hefty amount of discussion to figure out if it’s useful, it probably is not.”**
- The group sizes for the brainstorming groups were great.
- The Education group managed time very well, clearly laying out how much time they would spend on the indicator discussion and how much time they would spend on task assignment.

- That table's facilitator also did a great job of facilitating and parroting back to the group, using phrases such as "So let me repeat what I heard" and "What I think you all are saying is..." This is a good thing for facilitators to note and use at future meetings.
- A notable quote from a DAT member: "If we can just make this list shorter, that is a huge accomplishment."**

What Needs Improvement

- If the "data quality criteria" exercise was to be done again, we would recommend it be done as a large group activity, with examples provided or with a facilitator at each group posing questions to keep the groups on track. Some groups were observed to be more productive and on-track with answering the question posed than others.
- The voting on the core criteria seemed unnecessary and confused people. This should be posed as a discussion but not a vote.
- Based on limited data, people still feel unclear about the larger stakeholder group's role in the DAT process. This may become more clear as meetings progress; however, it will be important to continue to monitor that.
- Overall, members feel less confident that DAT meeting two was productive. This feeling is contrary to our observation. This may be because people feel like there are more concrete goals to accomplish and are feeling overwhelmed at the thought of accomplishing them.
- Not everyone is getting the opportunity to speak, as some people are dominating the conversation.

Recommendations

Below are recommendations for the next DAT meetings as well as any future convenings of a DAT.

- Overall, DAT members seem to have mixed opinions about their fellow DAT members. Some are unsure that others' contributions are productive. This will be important to monitor moving forward. It will be important for facilitators to monitor opinions or long-windedness in the brainstorming groups.
- Increase male participation. Some males were not as vocal during the brainstorming sessions. Consider giving males a role of "Driver" more often.
- The parent representative is doing a good job voicing her concerns and bringing up important issues. Consider having two specific parent representatives.
- We asked DAT members if there were organizations that did data collection and data sharing very well. Here are some of the organizations they shared: National Center for Education Statistics and NCDPI.** It might be a good exercise to ask this question to the DAT members at a meeting, as well as open this question up to the larger stakeholder group.
- Some members indicated in the survey that it would be a good idea for the smaller groups to meet outside of the larger DAT. Facilitators should mention that this is an option and provide a space if members are inclined to meet.

- **Continue to have a “floater” during brainstorming sessions.**
- Keep re-iterating that this is long- term, messy work. This will help people feel less overwhelmed. It would also be helpful to make time at the end of each meeting for a few members to share what they feel was accomplished at the meeting.
- Implementing a round-robin during brainstorming will help make sure everyone is heard.
- Using phone alarms for time keepers proved productive for certain groups and is recommended going forward.
- **Thinking outside the box on data sources: Universities and other non-profits might be willing to share data they have collected.**
- It would be helpful if there were a member or facilitator assigned to follow up with each group on their progress on their tasks outside of the meeting.
- Wrap-up announcements should be done at 1:40. Many people are packed up and out the door by 2pm.
- NCECF facilitators implemented a great wrap-up exercise by asking each group to give a two-sentence summary on where they are. This should be repeated.
- Making a “wish-list” of data (data we wish we had) is a great exercise to continue.

A notable member quote: “We need to continue to focus the conversation.” This is a great observation and important to keep in mind moving forward.

Overall, limited data suggests that members would be amenable to a fifth DAT meeting, if needed.

NCECF Data Action Team Survey 2

Q1. Hello, we are researchers collecting information about the Data Action Team for evaluative purposes. Please take a moment and fill out the questionnaire below from your perspective as a Data Action Team member. We appreciate your participation.

Q2. On a scale of 1-5, (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree) please rate the level to which you agree with the following statements.

Q3. If previously unclear, the mission of the Data Action Team was made more clear at meeting two.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- Not Applicable (6)

Q7. If previously unclear, the intended outcomes of the Data Action Team were made more clear at meeting two.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- Not Applicable (6)

Q24. I am clear about who is included in the "larger stakeholder group."

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q8. I feel like my skill set and experience are lending well to this project.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q9. The skills and expertise of the other Data Action Team members are clear.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q12. I feel like the last Data Action Team meeting was productive.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q26. I feel that the materials provided at the previous meetings were useful and timely.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q13. I felt like the facilitators did a good job at making me feel prepared to contribute to meeting two.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q14. I feel like the other Data Action Team members are making positive contributions.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q15. I feel like the overall tone of the Data Action Team is positive.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q16. I feel confident about the progress being made by the Data Action Team.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q18. I feel excited about the future of this project.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q27. Are there organizations or agencies that you know of that do data collection and sharing well? Could you provide a few examples?

Q28. Do you feel it would be helpful for the smaller brainstorming groups to meet together outside of the larger Data Action Team meetings?

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q22. Would you be willing to have a fifth meeting with the Data Action Team?

- Yes (1)
- Maybe (2)
- No (3)

Q23. If other projects arose based on the work of the Data Action Team, I would consider continuing to work in this space.

- Yes (1)
- Maybe (2)
- No (3)

Q25. How many hours of work did you do for the Data Action Team between meeting one and meeting two? Note: there is no correct answer; honesty is most helpful.

Q21. This survey is complete. Thank you for your time.

Larger Stakeholder Group DAT Pulse Survey

Q1. Hello, we are a team of researchers working with NCECF. We are working to assess the impact and effectiveness of the Data Action Team. As part of the larger stakeholder group interested in the process and outcomes of the Data Action Team, your opinion and perceptions are important to us. Please take a moment and fill out these survey questions.

Q2. Briefly tell us what you were told about the purpose and outcomes of the Data Action Team.

Q3. Briefly describe the expectations you have for the Data Action Team.

Q4. Briefly describe how you expect to be kept informed about the progress of the Data Action Team.

Q5. Briefly describe the type of updates/information you hope to receive about the Data Action Team.

Q6. On a scale of 1-5 (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree) please rate the level in which you agree with the following statements.

Q9. Overall I feel that the creation of the Data Action Team was necessary.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q7. Overall I feel positive about the process and outcomes described to me regarding the Data Action Team.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q8. Overall, I am excited to learn more about the progress of the Data Action Team.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q10. I intend to implement the metrics of early childhood success suggested by the Data Action Team at my work.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q11. This survey is complete. Thank you for your time.

Appendix E: Data Action Team Report 3

Summary

The third meeting of the Data Action Team was held on March 17th at RTI International in Building O9. This meeting is the third meeting of four. DAT members came together at this meeting and were immediately prepared to dive into work. This report details specific actions and processes that worked effectively at the meeting as well as those that can be improved upon, and culminates in overall recommendations for moving forward both for the next DAT meeting, and the eventual “How To” Guide.

This report is organized as follows:

- Overall observations about flow and content of meeting
- Overall observations about members and communication tone of meeting
- Key aspects that worked well
- Key aspects to be improved upon
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Notes: The survey(s) that were sent and images from the meeting are included as appendices. “We” hereafter refers to English and Emery of Impact Thread.

Flow and Content

This meeting incorporated many of the recommendations from the previous report, like concise recaps of previous meetings and what was asked of participants leading up to this meeting. The participants were immediately seated in their groups. There was a review of the last two meetings which was important and engaging for participants. It is important to note for the How-To Guide that the facilitators opted to delay jumping into the data to tweak the process to ensure that the members were sufficiently prepared and understood their prerogative.

Memorable quotes from this meeting included:

- Easily accessed data goes a long way with communicating data.
- What we measure is what gets done.
- We need to balance with the reality of what can be measured.
- We need to be aware of unintended consequences.
- Ultimately, we need to figure out where we are going from here.

One of the most important takeaways from this meeting is that the team is really starting to understand their responsibility with this data, which is clear from the quotes above. It is clear the members are ready for the data process.

The first activity was a round robin for each group, using one word to describe what they found when they looked over the data and information emailed to them after the last meeting. A few people felt as though they did not receive the information that was sent.

The overall set-up of the meeting was productive. The materials were useful and were given notation and consideration at each table. Recommendations from the previous DAT evaluation reports were followed, especially the attention paid to recapping the previous meetings and going over that day's agenda. The PowerPoint was especially useful and concise. The criteria for the data selection flow chart was cited as extremely helpful.

Important high-level insights include:

- We need to consider items that might help prioritize indicators.
- Change can be good, but not for children in high-stress environments.

The activity to prioritize 4-5 indicators by discussing first in pairs and then coming back to the groups was very effective and sparked great ideas and communication. It was a linear process that is easy for members to participate in and see immediate gains. This process was used for each item, to narrow the list from five to three indicators.

Members and Communication

Both the DAT members and the NCECF facilitators seem more invested and excited. The level of confidence in the room has multiplied, and there is an energy that has been building from the previous two meetings. The facilitators are more comfortable balancing leading and facilitating and are able to take a passenger's seat on the DAT's journey.

The groups of two or three for the process of narrowing down the indicators was very effective. Everyone participated, and there was more open communication and expression.

One of the most valuable activities was the gallery walk, where members from the other groups were able to comment on areas outside of their discipline.

Throughout the third meeting, the members seemed comfortable and excited to address the task at hand.

Overall, the observations of the first three meetings are as follows:

- First DAT meeting: There was confusion among members.
- Second DAT meeting: There was a sense of burden and being overwhelmed among members.
- Third DAT meeting: Members are excited and energized to dive in.

People are clearly compromising and putting the greater good ahead of personal agendas.

Moving forward, it will be important for facilitators to emphasize team cohesion. Please note recommendations on how to monitor and encourage this.

Half of respondents would like to have a fifth DAT meeting. The other half would consider it.

Half of respondents would like to be a part of projects based off of this work. The other half would consider it.

On average, DAT members put in one hour of work on the assignments and activities outside of the DAT meetings.

What Worked Well

- The flow of the meeting worked well. The first activity was confusing but allowed members to ease in.
- It was a great reminder from facilitators that the top line result is increasing third grade reading proficiency. This should be a constant reminder going forward.
- It was a good exercise to define “consequences” moving forward
- It was helpful to go over the agenda for the day.
- The recommendation to work in pairs and prioritize the top three measures was positive. Working in pairs seemed to be very effective.
- There were more males at this meeting, which was positive for the group.
- One group is able to be light-hearted and make jokes, which strengthens cohesiveness. Note that this is the smallest group, so size could play a role here. This group also does a good job of checking in with one another.
- People are doing a great job of admitting what they do not know and what needs to be checked. This shows increased comfort among the members.
- Facilitators did a great job of reconnecting their groups to the data criteria, which helps connect the team back to previous decisions.
- Facilitators did a great job of keeping the pace and not letting people get hung up on small details like exact wording.
- Facilitators do a good job of asking the group “is this more important than this?”
- There seem to be emerging leaders for different activities, which is positive and shows that there are different avenues for people to play to their strengths.
- The Gallery walk comments seemed to be well received, and people made good points.
- Based on survey analysis, the majority of respondents feel that they are clear about the mission of the DAT – more so than previous surveys. Seventy percent of respondents feel that the mission was made more clear during meeting three.
- Based on survey analysis, the majority of respondents feel more confident that they understand who the larger stakeholder group is.
- Ninety percent of respondents feel that their skills and experiences are lending well to this project. This is 40% more than the previous survey.
- Ninety percent of respondents feel that their fellow DAT members’ skills and abilities are clear. This is 30% more than the previous survey.
- All respondents feel that the third DAT meeting was productive, compared to 66% of respondents in survey two.

- All respondents feel that materials were useful and timely.
- All respondents feel that the facilitators did a great job of making them feel prepared to contribute, compared to 70% in survey two.
- Ninety percent of participants feel that their fellow DAT members are making positive contributions.
- All respondents feel that the DAT is making progress.

What Needs Improvement

- The first activity came off as confusing and seemed to be less beneficial to members. It worked as an “ease in” activity. Some members said they did not receive the information, which made the activity difficult, and there was a general lack of understanding from the group.
- In some groups, differing opinions are driving wedges and causing combativeness.
- Screen size is less optimal.
- Some groups need to focus less on small details, like perfecting wording.
- There seemed to be some confusion about certain terms that were brought up.
- The gallery walk comments, while well received, seem to reveal that there are certain terms and ideas that are specialized, and it would be helpful moving forward for groups to make sure they are able to generalize.
- Only 20% of respondents feel that it would be helpful for the smaller groups to meet outside of the larger DAT meetings.

Recommendations

- Below are recommendations for the next DAT meetings, as well as any future convenings of a DAT:
- To improve upon the first group task, ask members to share their one word on a google doc prior to the meeting so they have more time to think about it and can have their words in mind.
- Facilitators should continuously check in with groups on whether or not they have the resources they need for this work.
- To help facilitate team cohesiveness, it may be worthwhile to do an easy team-building exercise. A suggestion for this exercise:
 - Have each group come together and come up with a logo or mission statement for the Data Action Team. This activity could last from 30-45 mins.
- Facilitators should continuously ask for feedback about the brainstorming or paring down sessions at the end of the meeting.
- Facilitators should remind members to celebrate small successes. This will boost morale and keep the excitement and energy going.
- It may also help to build team cohesion for the facilitators to ask members at the end of the meeting to say one thing about another team member that they appreciated.

- Facilitators need to keep reminding the team that some indicators that people care about will be cut by necessity.
- Comparing the indicators when needing to trim them down is a good strategy.
- Defining any confusion or controversial terms will be helpful moving forward.
- Consider having each group present or talk generally about the five indicators they come up with and why. Ensure that they ask the rest of the team how the information can be made more accessible.

NCECF Data Action Team Survey 3

Q1. Hello, we are researchers collecting information about the Data Action Team for evaluative purposes. Please take a moment and fill out the questionnaire below from your perspective as a Data Action Team member. We appreciate your participation.

Q2. On a scale of 1-5, (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree) please rate the level to which you agree with the following statements.

Q3. If previously unclear, the mission of the Data Action Team was made more clear at meeting three.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- Not Applicable (6)

Q7. If previously unclear, the intended outcomes of the Data Action Team were made more clear at meeting three.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- Not Applicable (6)

Q24 I am clear about who is included in the "larger stakeholder group."

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q8 I feel like my skill set and experience are lending well to this project.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q9. The skills and expertise of the other Data Action Team members are clear.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q12. I feel like the last Data Action Team meeting was productive.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q26. I feel that the materials provided at the previous meetings were useful and timely.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q13. I felt like the facilitators did a good job at making me feel prepared to contribute to meeting three.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q14. I feel like the other Data Action Team members are making positive contributions.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q15. I feel like the overall tone of the Data Action Team is positive.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q16. I feel confident about the progress being made by the Data Action Team.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q18. I feel excited about the future of this project.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q27. Are there organizations or agencies that you know of that do data collection and sharing well? Could you provide a few examples?

Q28. Do you feel it would be helpful for the smaller brainstorming groups to meet together outside of the larger Data Action Team meetings?

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q22. Would you be willing to have a fifth meeting with the Data Action Team?

- Yes (1)
- Maybe (2)
- No (3)

Q23. If other projects arose based on the work of the Data Action Team, I would consider continuing to work in this space.

- Yes (1)
- Maybe (2)
- No (3)

Q25. How many hours of work did you do for the Data Action Team between meeting two and meeting three? Note: there is no correct answer; honesty is most helpful.

Q21. This survey is complete. Thank you for your time.

Appendix F: Data Action Team Report 4

Summary

The fourth (and last) meeting of the Data Action Team was held on April 4th at RTI International in the Haynes Building, Room 360. The next step in the Pathways process will be a larger stakeholder group meeting on May 20th to learn from the DAT's work. At this last meeting, DAT members were immediately prepared to dive into work and were prepared with data and data sources to finish their work. This report details specific actions and processes that worked effectively at the meeting as well as those that can be improved upon, culminating in overall recommendations for moving forward for the large meeting and eventual How-To Guide.

This report is organized as follows:

- Overall observations about flow and content of meeting
- Overall observations about members and communication tone of meeting
- Key aspects that worked well
- Key aspects to be improved upon
- Recommendations
- Appendix

Notes: The survey(s) that were sent and images from the meeting are included as appendices. "We" hereafter refers to English and Emery of Impact Thread. Recommendations made in this report are based on a survey with data from only six participants.

Flow and Content

This meeting incorporated many of the recommendations from the previous report, like concise recaps of previous meetings and what was asked of participants leading up to this meeting. The recap at the beginning and the explanation of what was expected at the upcoming larger stakeholder meeting were useful. The participants were immediately seated in their groups. There was a great reminder of why this team was formed initially. It is important to note for the How-To Guide that the number of participants decreased slightly, which has happened steadily throughout the four meetings. More will be said about retention and team effectiveness in the large report, and overall recommendations will be made.

Memorable quotes from this meeting included:

- We are here to think about what children need for third grade reading.
- Two organizations have already reached out about wanting to use the measures.
- Keep in mind the end goal: There are holes in our work because our job was not to encompass every indicator.

- There is no perfect indicator.
- Slow change will be observed, and that is okay.

One of the most important takeaways from this meeting is that the team appeared confident and prepared for the upcoming larger stakeholder meeting.

The first activity was a partner activity where team members discussed what they observed about a specific framework and how they could communicate the framework to a larger, general audience. This was an efficient activity to get them in the mindset to communicate to the larger stakeholder group.

The overall set-up of the meeting was productive. The materials were useful and were given notation and consideration at each table. Recommendations from the previous reports, especially the attention paid to recapping the previous meetings and going over that day's agenda, were incorporated. The PowerPoint was concise and well-received. The use of the large notepads and sticky notes was excellent—they gave every participant a tool with which to be engaged and productive and led to productive conversations about where/how everything fits together.

Important high-level insights include:

- Larger stakeholder group is excited and interested in this work, the overall feedback from the larger group is important (113 responses from this group).
- Priorities for May meeting: Prioritization of indicators; adopt strategy.

Members and Communication

DAT members are now more familiar with each other, comfortable within the group, and confident expressing their opinions about the indicators and stating issues they had with data sets or measures.

Partner exercises were productive and allowed members to make their arguments and thought processes more concise in a smaller setting.

The DAT saw a mild drop-off in attendance over the course of the four meetings. That is not surprising – members who are less engaged for whatever reason (personal workload, looser connection to the issue being discussed, organizational demands, etc.) may attend less, while those who are more engaged tend to stay the course. The DAT also noted that when the group became smaller and leaner, everyone present was fully engaged and the work was productive.

Overall, the observations of the first three meetings are as follows:

- First DAT meeting: There was confusion among members.
- Second DAT meeting: There was a sense of burden and being overwhelmed among members.
- Third DAT meeting: Members were excited and energized to dive in.

- Fourth DAT meeting: DAT narrowed to the most passionate and hardworking members, who are ready to see this project to the end

Members are excited about the overall interactions with the larger stakeholder group and feel confident about the proposed outcomes of the May 20th meeting.

What Worked Well

- The flow of the meeting worked well. The partner activity was productive and impactful.
- It was a great reminder from a facilitator that the top line result is increasing third grade reading proficiency. It has been a good reminder at each meeting to focus the group.
- It was helpful for the facilitators to discuss the organizations interested in these measures, as well as the interest of the larger stakeholder group. This clearly boosted motivation and excitement within the group.
- It was energizing for participants to hear facilitators emphasize: “by the end of the day, we will have draft Pathways to Grade Level Reading measures.”
- It was important to get feedback from the larger stakeholder group to help the DAT members get a sense of their expectations.
- A key theme of this meeting was considering how this team was going to communicate these indicators to the general public, which made for impactful conversations.
- The use of the notepads and post-it notes encouraged people to really explore each indicator.
- There were one or two members in each group that were helping the whole group rethink and reframe conversations when there was confusion. This appeared very productive.
- Facilitators did a great job reminding the group why one indicator was chosen last time over another, and that there will be holes and that is okay. This is exactly the role the moderator should play.
- Great job within groups bringing up measurement nuances.
- DAT members overwhelmingly (80% of respondents) feel confident that their skill sets lend well to this project.
- Seventy-five percent of respondents feel that the facilitators did a good job of making members feel prepared to contribute.
- Seventy-five percent of respondents feel that the overall tone of the last DAT meeting was positive.
- Overwhelmingly, respondents reported that they want to be involved in projects based on the outcomes of the DAT moving forward.
- On average, respondents put in about 1.5 hours of work on this project outside of the meeting.

What Needs Improvement

Note: These recommendations are based on surveys returned by six members.

- There has been a small decline in attendance. This is not necessarily negative since the skill sets needed remained present, but something to consider for future processes of this type.
- Due to this being the last meeting, there was a sense of urgency among the group and anxiety about the May 20th stakeholder meeting.
- Some groups were still grappling with the fact that there is no one perfect indicator.
- Based on preliminary analysis, most participants are clear about who the larger stakeholder group is.
- There are scattered results about the productivity of the last DAT meeting.
- About half of respondents feel confident about the progress being made by the DAT. This could be due to anxiety building about the May 20th meeting.
- Half of respondents feel excited about the future of this project. It will be important to see how/if this grows after the May 20th larger stakeholder meeting.
- Half of respondents feel confident going into the May 20th meeting.
- We are hesitant however to imply that the conclusions are reflective of the entire group due to the lack of data.
- Continued engagement by team members is a proxy measurement of both the DAT's success in relationship-building among stakeholders and the importance of these measures. The fact that DAT members volunteered to co-chair the next phase of the work – Learning Teams – is a clear indicator of the excitement and motivation that was generated by the DAT process and product.

Recommendations

Below are recommendations for the next DAT meetings as well as any future convenings of a DAT:

- Emphasizing the concrete responsibilities of the DAT and how the work will feed into the larger vision throughout the process may help with retention.
- Facilitators should continue to play a passive yet informative role within their groups. Keep participants and groups as diverse as possible. Possible ways to prepare the DAT for the May 20th meeting:
 - Facilitators send out an email asking each member to be prepared to speak about at least one indicator that was decided upon.
 - Tell DAT to be prepared to discuss indicators that did not make the cut.
 - DAT members should be prepared to state what work they feel prepared to commit to moving forward.
 - Have DAT members and facilitators be prepared to speak to why the formation of the DAT was necessary and the overall process of the DAT.

NCECF Data Action Team Survey 4

Q1. Hello, We are researchers collecting information about the Data Action Team for evaluative purposes. Please take a moment and fill out the questionnaire below from your perspective as a Data Action Team member. We appreciate your participation.

Q2. On a scale of 1-5, (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree) please rate the level to which you agree with the following statements.

- If previously unclear, the mission of the Data Action Team was made more clear at meeting three.
- If previously unclear, the intended outcomes of the Data Action Team were made more clear at meeting three.
- I am clear about who is included in the "larger stakeholder group."
- I feel like my skill set and experience are lending well to this project.
- The skills and expertise of the other Data Action Team members are clear.
- I feel like the last Data Action Team meeting was productive.
- I feel that the materials provided at the previous meetings were useful and timely.
- I felt like the facilitators did a good job at making me feel prepared to contribute to meeting four.
- I feel like the other Data Action Team members are making positive contributions.
- I feel like the overall tone of the Data Action Team is positive.
- I feel confident about the progress being made by the Data Action Team.
- I feel excited about the future of this project.

Q27. Are there organizations or agencies that you know of that do data collection and sharing well? Could you provide a few examples?

Q28. I feel confident of the work of the Data Action team going into the May 20th meeting.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q23. If other projects arose based on the work of the Data Action Team, I would consider continuing to work in this space.

- Yes (1)
- Maybe (2)
- No (3)

Q25. How many hours of work did you do for the Data Action Team between meeting three and meeting four? Note: there is no correct answer; honesty is most helpful.

Q21. This survey is complete. Thank you for your time.

Q28. Do you feel it would be helpful for the smaller brainstorming groups to meet together outside of the larger Data Action Team meetings?

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- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)

Q22. Would you be willing to have a fifth meeting with the Data Action Team?

- Yes (1)
- Maybe (2)
- No (3)

Q23. If other projects arose based on the work of the Data Action Team, I would consider continuing to work in this space.

- Yes (1)
- Maybe (2)
- No (3)

Q25. How many hours of work did you do for the Data Action Team between meeting two and meeting three? Note: there is no correct answer; honesty is most helpful.

Q21. This survey is complete. Thank you for your time.

(Questions showing up out of numerical order is due to a shift partway through the evaluation process.)