



NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading

Family Input on Birth to Age Five Strategic Plan

Updated: May 2019

The [NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Initiative](#) (“Pathways”) requests proposals from local family service organizations or informal parent or family-led groups to gather input from families on North Carolina’s Birth to Age Five (B-5) Strategic plan, as part of the Preschool Development Grant.

Grantees will collect family input in September or October 2019. Selected grantees will be reimbursed for costs associated with the project (food, participant stipends, etc.) up to \$500. Additional funds may be available upon request. **Proposals are due May 24th.**

Background on the Pathways Initiative

The Pathways vision is that *all North Carolina children, regardless of race, ethnicity or socioeconomic status, are reading on grade-level by the end of third grade, so that they have the greatest opportunity for life success.*

Pathways recognizes that literacy is rooted in birth-through-age-eight child development, and includes health, family support and high quality early learning. Pathways brings diverse state and local stakeholders and leaders together, across health, family support, and early learning and education disciplines. These stakeholders have co-created a **common vision, shared measures of success** and **coordinated strategies** that support children’s optimal development beginning at birth.

- The [Pathways Measures of Success Framework](#) outlines 50-60 birth-through-age-eight measures that research shows influence early literacy and young child and family well-being.
- The [NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Action Framework](#) lays out a series of expectations for the state’s child and family serving systems and actions to support children’s social-emotional health, ensure high quality birth-through-age-eight early learning environments, and create the conditions for every child to be in school every day. The Pathways expectation is that systems are family-driven and equitable with identified action steps such as supporting families in advocating for their children, linking strategies across programs to engage and learn from families and including families in the planning and designing of services.

The Pathways process, frameworks and associated metrics have been foundational in setting the strategic direction for a comprehensive early childhood system in North Carolina. In February 2019, the NC Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) and NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) released the [NC Early Childhood Action Plan](#) (ECAP) which was based on the Pathways Measures of Success and incorporates many of the actions from the Pathways Action Framework.

Pathways and the Preschool Development Grant

The Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) was awarded funding through the federal Preschool Development Grant Birth-Five (PDG) for activities to strengthen its early childhood system. The PDG requires states to develop a B-5 strategic plan to improve the quality and access of services for children and families across programs through coordination and collaboration among state and local agencies, early childhood partners, and stakeholders. The PDG provides an opportunity for NC to develop its B-5 strategic plan to ensure the state's early childhood system best meets the needs of young children, particularly the most vulnerable, and their families.

NC's Early Childhood Action Plan will inform the development of the state's B-5 strategic plan. The B-5 strategic plan is being developed by staff from DHHS, using data, analysis and community engagement work from Pathways and other state-level partners, including the North Carolina Partnership for Children/Smart Start.

With this proposal, Pathways seeks to **partner with local organizations serving families with young children or informal family groups to collect input from families to inform the final B-5 strategic plan and implementation of the Pathways Action Framework.**

Proposal Requirements and Instructions

The following three sections contain project requirements and instructions, to inform and assist in the completion of applications:

1. Participate in project planning and webinar;
2. Collect family input through a group meeting with families, interviews and/or survey.
3. Project deliverables including brief family input report.

Participate in project planning and webinar

Pathways will work with grantees to determine the best fit for data collection strategy – family group meeting (focus group), family interviews or written or electronic survey. Other approaches proposed by communities will be considered. Pathways will support grantees in conducting meetings, interviews or survey and collecting the input by providing facilitation and meeting materials, survey and interview tools and technical assistance. Family materials/tools will be available in Spanish and translated into other languages as needed.

Staffing: Grantees will identify staff or family group leaders to implement this project. If hosting a family meeting to collect input, a facilitator and a note-taker will need to be identified. If using survey or interview format, a coordinator will need to be identified.

Project webinar: **A project webinar will be held on August 20th.** The webinar will familiarize project leaders with the facilitation guide, including tools and templates they will use to coordinate and elicit and record participant input.

Note: Grantees are required to ensure at least two people participate in the webinar.

Collect Family Input

Grantees will collect input from the families they regularly meet with on the opportunities and barriers families face and how they can be supported in their role as their children's most important teacher. Informal parent and family-led groups who would like to convene a group of family representatives for this project will also be considered and are encouraged to apply. Family input will be critical in informing the final B-5 Strategic Plan and begin moving NC towards implementation of the strategic plan, the Early Childhood Action Plan and the Pathways Action Framework.

Targeted Participants

Grantees will collect family input on the strategic plan, with a focus on diverse representation among invited participants including family members (parents, grandparents, aunts/uncles, foster parents) with young children, representation from diverse racial, socioeconomic, and language groups, families of differently abled children and families experiencing the most barriers to success (e.g., lack of transportation, housing instability, language barriers).

A competitive application will outline how the organization would capture feedback from 8-15 parents or family representatives. The number of families engaged will vary based on data collection method used and that is okay – the priority is quality engagements with families resulting in rich data.

Note: A separate RFP is being released as part of this project to collect input from early childhood professionals.

Grantees are responsible for:

- Project logistics (including, but not limited to, food, staff time, participant stipends in the form of Visa gift cards, etc.),
- Submitting receipts or invoices for reimbursement of costs,
- Collecting family input, using Pathways-provided tools,
- Completing a Family Input Report template, and
- Submitting the report to Pathways by October 31st.

Project Deliverables, due on the timeline below:

- Family Input Report, including copy of completed notes template.

Timeline

- Pathways circulates RFP – April 18, 2019
- **Proposals due – May 24, 2019**
- Proposals selected – June 1, 2019
- Webinar – August 20, 2019
- Collect Family Input – September-October 2019
- **Deliverables Due – October 31, 2019 – Family Input Report**

Submission Details:

When completed, please return your signed application to Anna Yonk at anna.yonk@compasseval.com.

Questions:

Please direct questions to Kate Irish at kirish77@gmail.com.

**Pathways to Grade-Level Reading
Family Input Application**

Please email this form by May 24th to anna.yonk@compasseval.com

Organization or Name of Group _____

Executive Director or Group Leader _____

Address _____

City _____ **Zip Code** _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Project Leader(s) (if different from above) _____

Phone Number: _____ **Email Address:** _____

Coordinator/Facilitator Name: _____

Coordinator/Facilitator Email: _____

Please answer the following questions (1-2 pages):

1. Please provide a brief overview of your organization or family-led group. Please describe the demographics of the families you engage. If you have a regularly meeting parent group, please describe that. If you plan to bring together parents and family representatives specifically for this purpose, please describe your process for recruiting and convening participants.
2. Please describe what method(s) you propose using to gather input from families— focus group(s), interviews, surveys and/or other means. Please discuss your organization or group’s capacity to participate in a webinar and collect the input from families, including facilitating input meeting(s), taking detailed notes, and submitting a clear (brief) report that summarizes the feedback gathered.
3. Approximately how many family representatives do you propose to collect input from using the described methods above?

Deliverables

Please sign this agreement to indicate that you understand and will comply with the requested deliverables.

I understand that, on the timeline described in the attached RFP, I will provide the following deliverables:

- Signed Application by Executive Director or Group Leader
- Family Input Report, including a copy of completed note templates
- Invoice for reimbursement

Name _____

Date _____

Signature _____