



NC Early Childhood Data Advisory Council Description and Scope of Work

NC Early Childhood Data Advisory Council (DAC) Purpose

The overarching purpose of the NC Early Childhood Data Advisory Council is to provide strategic direction and use its influence and decision-making authority to improve the quality and scope of early childhood data collection, and to thereby support widespread analysis and use of early childhood data by policymakers and other decision-makers.

Rationale for NC Early Childhood Data Advisory Council

North Carolina has begun important work to improve the quality, collection, analysis and use of cross-sector early childhood data:

- The Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Measures of Success were developed by NC data experts in 2016 and have become a foundation for other state-level early childhood initiatives such as the B-3 Interagency Council, the Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council, the Essentials For Childhood federal grant, and the NC Early Childhood Action Plan (ECAP).
- The NC Early Childhood Action Plan is rooted in early childhood data measures that will be tracked over time to measure whether NC is meeting targets set out by the Plan.
- NC's Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) includes longitudinal early childhood data and has the potential to become a comprehensive early childhood data system for the state.
- Data workgroups are kicking off in 2019 to identify population-level measures for children's social-emotional health and children's outcomes at kindergarten entry.

This data work requires a high-level Early Childhood Data Advisory Council to guide and expand it.

Data Advisory Council Objectives

- Improve the quality and scope of early childhood data available by identifying definitions and data collection approaches for shared measures for which data are not currently collected (Data Development Agenda items).
- Advocate for state and local agencies and organizations to align their work around the Pathways and ECAP measures
- Advocate for and facilitate better public early childhood data sharing.
- Provide guidance, feedback, and support so that the state's early childhood work, throughout the ECAP and Pathways, remains grounded in data and research.
- Build partnerships with other existing data groups so as not to duplicate efforts.
- Serve as ambassadors for the ECAP, ECIDs, and the Pathways initiative by staying up to date about current priorities and status of initiatives.



Data Advisory Council 2019-2020 Scope of Work:

- (1) Create a strategic plan for improving North Carolina's early childhood data, based on the Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Measures of Success and the Early Childhood Action Plan Measures. The strategic plan will:
 - a. Prioritize where to start to fill current gaps in early childhood data collection on the shared measures, including a focus on under-represented populations.
 - b. Outline an approach for reporting on and visualizing the state's early childhood population-level data for public access, including consideration of data ethics in determining how data is shared publicly.
- (2) Evaluate regularly the definition and data source for Pathways and ECAP measures to ensure they are high quality and best meet the need.
- (3) Develop guiding policies and processes for regularly updating the measures data.

The DAC will be professionally facilitated to achieve these aims by the NC Early Childhood Foundation.

Data Advisory Council Workgroups:

Workgroups of the Data Advisory Council will also be facilitated in 2019, including:

- (1) Children's outcomes at kindergarten entry: This workgroup will meet between May and September of 2019 to recommend a strategy for measuring NC children's outcomes at kindergarten entry on the population level, likely a portfolio of measures.
- (2) Children's social-emotional health: This workgroup will meet in late 2019 to recommend a strategy for measuring NC children's social-emotional health on a population level, likely a portfolio of measures.

The workgroups will include subject-matter experts from outside the Data Advisory Council membership. Data Advisory Council members will also be invited to join the workgroups as appropriate.

Data Advisory Council Timeline:

In 2019, the Data Advisory Council will meet in May and September.

Data Advisory Council Resources:

The Data Advisory Council will have resources available, such as:

- DHHS' vision for NC's early childhood data
- A Data Development Agenda, co-created by key NC data stakeholders in 2018 based on the Pathways to Grade-Level Reading shared Measures of Success. The Agenda includes information like:
 - What data for the shared measures NC collects and what we do not, and why.
 - What data needs to be improved and how.
 - What it would take to collect the needed data or improve the current data.
- Racial equity consultants to train Council members and support their using a racial equity lens in their data work.



Data Advisory Council Member Characteristics:

The Data Advisory Council will include approximately 20 members from the highest levels of state agencies and statewide organizations, including from:

- The Governance Council of ECIDS
- Department of Health and Human Services, and its Divisions
- Department of Public Instruction
- Research institutions that analyze and use early childhood data
- State level organizations and funders involved in early childhood data collection and analysis

Overarching characteristics for Data Advisory Council members include:

- A commitment to acknowledging and eliminating systemic inequities and racial, ethnic and socioeconomic disparities in early childhood experiences, opportunities and outcomes.
- Deep knowledge of NC's current early childhood data
- A commitment to being data- and research-driven.
- An eagerness to think outside the box of what the state currently does and imagine the possibilities.
- A commitment to action, and to finding a good – even if imperfect – starting place for the work.

Expectations:

Data Advisory Council members will be asked to commit to:

- Attend at least two Data Advisory Council meetings in the Triangle in May and September 2019;
- Ongoing work in 2020 (and beyond);
- Conduct work before and between Data Advisory Council meetings, including gathering information about data in their spheres as needed by the Council; and
- Participate on Data Advisory Council workgroups if/as needed and desired.