



TEAM CHARTER

EARLY LITERACY DESIGN TEAM

CONTEXT

Today, more than 1 in 3 children in Guilford County enter kindergarten not literacy-ready. One in 5 will need significant remediation in order to get on track with their peers — that's 1,000 children each year. And children who start behind have a difficult time catching up.

Data on four-year-olds who participate in the NC Pre-K program (a free preschool program offered to approximately 2,100 eligible children each year) shows that the majority enter the program not developmentally on track when it comes to physical development, language and communication, social-emotional development, and cognitive development. In fact, 84.9% of children were below widely held expectations for literacy objectives at the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year.

This startling data isn't about four-year-olds — it's a story about the developmental trajectory for our newborns to four-year-olds. It's a story about how families are (or are not) getting connected to services that would help prepare children for school and for life.

DESIGN TEAM PURPOSE

The purpose of the Early Literacy Design is to:

- Develop shared vision for early literacy in Guilford County
- Finalize prioritized early literacy outcomes for infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children and their families
- Develop a comprehensive understanding of local assets, opportunities, needs, and gaps in the existing early childhood literacy system
- Create an early literacy strategic plan composed of powerful systems change strategies to tackle both programmatic and systems changes
- Prioritize a shared agenda for building an effective early literacy system

GOALS/OUTCOMES

The goal is for each child in Guilford County to enter kindergarten with the early literacy skills they need to succeed in school, and to read on grade level at third and fifth grades.

MEMBERSHIP

Members will work together to design strategies to change the current system. Members:

- Have content knowledge or experience in early literacy, family literacy, the local early literacy system, system building and systems thinking, and/or strategy design
- Have the ability to influence the early literacy system, through organizational or program policy, practices, budget, or professional development.
- Are from organizations and roles that are a part of the early literacy system, or that partner closely with the early literacy system.

- Are willing to engage in disruptive thinking, and have a desire to change the status quo and drive improved outcomes for young children and their families
- Will meet each month for one full day starting in October, 2016 through March, 2017
- Will volunteer to take on pieces of the work between meetings
- Participate in ABLe Change Training in February and March

ROLES

- Jenny Gore, Executive Director, Reading Connections, and Dr. Whitney Oakley, Executive Director of PK-5 Curriculum and Instruction, Guilford County Schools, will serve as team co-chairs. The co-chairs lead the team's progress toward its goals and objectives, chair its meetings, and perform follow-up with the team after meetings.
- Joan Blough and Denise Nelson will serve as facilitators, and guide the team's process toward desired outcomes. Facilitators work to ensure that every participant has a positive and productive meeting experience and that the team as a whole achieves the objectives for each meeting.
- Rachael Burrello will serve as Ready/Ready staff liaison for team support. The staff liaison ensures that the team has everything they need—logistically, administratively, technically, and informationally—to achieve their work objectives.

ACTIVITIES

The team's activities drive toward the stated outcomes, and include:

- Leveraging the work of the early literacy 100-Day Challenge Team shared in May 2016
- Reviewing/improving current data and agreeing to priority outcomes for literacy for infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children and their families
- Defining a shared vision for early literacy in Guilford County
- Understanding local assets, needs, and gaps relative to priority outcomes and vision
- Identifying, learning about, and understanding the nature of potential "bright spots" relative to the prioritized outcomes and vision (i.e. places where success is occurring despite the odds)
- Prioritizing Change Targets/Goals based on what was learned through the completion of previous steps, and the expertise/content knowledge of the Design Team
- Participating in training on disruptive thinking and powerful strategy design
- Identifying local programs to improve; local best practices to scale; other evidence-based practices to adopt
- Designing strategies powerful enough to disrupt the status quo and lead to systemic change
- Participating in ABLe Change Action Learning training

The team may also engage in additional activities as the work progresses and evolves.

MEETINGS

The team will meet four times from October 2016 to March 2017. Team meetings will be full-day meetings (anticipated 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.). Meeting schedule is as follows (some exact dates/times TBD):

- October 26, 2016, 8:30 - 3:00 p.m. (Action Greensboro)
- December (TBD) 2016
- February (TBD) 2017
- March (TBD) 2017

In addition, members will attend two training sessions:

- February (TBD) 2017 – 1.5 days
- March (TBD) 2017 – 1 day

COMMUNICATIONS

Group members can expect communications via email and Basecamp (an online platform for project management and team collaboration) between meetings. Basecamp may be used to post:

- Group messages
- Documents and files
- Assigned tasks and to-dos
- Dates and reminders for meetings and trainings

Email may be used to:

- Distribute meeting preparation materials
- Distribute meeting minutes
- Follow up with group members about assigned tasks
- Communicate with group members between meetings

HOW WE WORK

- The approaches and processes we follow are informed by the ABLLe Change Simple Rules
- We are accountable for, and hold each other accountable for: following the group's working agreements; completing the tasks we volunteer for; communicating in a timely fashion if we cannot complete a task; and having some fun along the way!
- We recognize that each member brings passion, talents, and expertise to the group to support and contribute to powerful strategy design in Guilford County's early literacy system.
- We treat one another with respect, learn together, and work together to achieve the goals of the Early Literacy Design Team.