

The Governor's Commission on Access to Sound, Basic Education



Developing an Action Plan for a Sound, Basic Education for All Students



Early Childhood/ “Whole Child”

- Build the early childhood educator pipeline for birth through 3rd grade
- Scale up Smart Start to provide early childhood system infrastructure and a continuum of services for children and families from birth to age five
- Expand access to early intervention
- Scale up the NC Pre-K Program to serve all eligible at-risk four-year-olds
- Ensure that elementary schools are ready to meet the needs of all children in the early grades
- Improve cross-sector early childhood data quality, collection, analysis, and use for data-based decision making



Build the early childhood educator pipeline for birth through 3rd grade

- Develop a salary and benefits scale and strategies for improving compensation for the birth to age five workforce. Provide salary parity with public school educators with comparable qualifications.
- Enhance early childhood program funding rates to support the workforce
- Increase funding for Child Care WAGE\$ and Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$ wage supplement programs
- Provide professional development that is aligned for the birth through 3rd grade educator workforce



Scale up Smart Start to provide early childhood system infrastructure and a continuum of services for children and families from birth to age five

- Increase state funding for Smart Start that will:
 - Address a greater percentage of community need
 - Expand a range of family support strategies, reaching children as young as possible when impact is greatest
 - Expand developmental screenings
 - Support high-quality early education programs
- Allow community-level flexibility in funding to meet the greatest community needs and build capacity to manage multiple public and private funding sources



Expand access to early intervention

- Expand eligibility for the IDEA Part C Early Intervention Program for infants and toddlers to reach more who are at-risk for developmental delay
- Strengthen early intervention capacity and infrastructure at the state and local levels
- Expand infant/early childhood mental health services

IDEA – Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

Scale up the NC Pre-K Program to serve all eligible at-risk four-year-olds



- Increase state funding to serve all at-risk four-year-olds
 - Implement strategies to ensure equity of access in communities of color and in communities whose first language is not English
- Increase state funding to increase rates to support the true cost of providing NC Pre-K
 - Rates should factor in the cost of teacher salaries/benefits with parity to public school teachers, transportation, quality improvements, and child find
 - Continue to maximize the public-private mixed delivery system
- Ensure access to full day and full year programs to meet family needs and prevent summer learning loss



Ensure that elementary schools are ready to meet the needs of all children in the early grades

- Support effective transitions for young children from birth to age 5 programs into elementary schools that are ready for *ALL* children
- Ensure high-quality elementary principals and teachers, trained in early learning
- Expand instructional assistants in K-3
- Expand student access to school psychologists, nurses, counselors, and social workers
- Ensure capacity for evidence-based teaching of early reading
- Ensure effective support for children with unique needs



Improve cross-sector early childhood data quality, collection, analysis and use across the state and build a culture of continuous quality improvement to support data-based decision making

- Support a NC Early Childhood Data Advisory Council
- Improve data collection for measures prioritized in the NC Early Childhood Action Plan and the NC Pathways to Grade-Level Reading. Use data to focus on equity and target services.
- Connect data systems for birth to age five programs to data systems for public schools for more effective alignment and transitions

Additional Information



Commission's website:

<https://governor.nc.gov/issues/education/commission-access-sound-basic-education>