

# Early Literacy Change Action Network

## Bright Spot Proposals

### Overview

Learn4Life's Early Literacy Network and Leadership Council have prioritized factors affecting 3rd grade reading proficiency during COVID-19: teacher preparation and early childhood education, teacher preparation. Our metro Atlanta community submitted these proposals for bright spot consideration. Please review in advance of the Thursday, December 3 – 1:00pm – network meeting to gain familiarity with these strategies. At the meeting representatives will share more, and network members will be able to ask questions in small group discussions. Network members will then evaluate each strategy in the three areas: proven model, scalability, and equity. The top several proposals will then be recommended for the L4L Leadership Council to review and approve on December 10.

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### Proposal: ArtsNow

### Primary Factor Addressed: Teacher Preparation

Criteria	Evidence
<p><b>1. Proven model</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measurable</li> <li>• Positive Return on Investment</li> <li>• Addresses Root Cause</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has this strategy defined and demonstrated success in literacy?</li> <li>• Describe any relevant research that supports this model.</li> <li>• How does this strategy define a positive return on investment?</li> <li>• Describe the interplay of cause and effect with teacher preparation and this strategy.</li> </ul>	<p><b>- ArtsNow Learning was the lead partner with Cobb County Schools for a Governor’s Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) Innovation Grant called KickstART Cobb (2016-2018). The focus was Early Literacy, preK through 3<sup>rd</sup> grades, that yielded highly positive results.</b></p> <p>-As a result of successful completion of a two-and-a-half-year implementation grant, KickstART, led by ArtsNow, was a “spotlight” featured in the 2018 Innovation Fund Annual Report with documentation to support both teacher and student growth. The report states that “as teachers gained confidence and strengthened their instructional practices, students’ reading performance also improved.”</p> <p>-One of these project schools, Powder Springs Elementary, became an ArtsNow Leadership School and was recognized by L4L last year as a “bright spot” specifically because of their performance in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading.</p> <p>-ArtsNow Learning’s external evaluator has documented that these KickstART project schools (Cobb County Elementary Schools) significantly outperformed comparison schools on the 2018 state English/Language Arts Assessment, both overall and in Writing with a 9.4% increase in number of students passing ELA.</p> <p>-96.4% of students involved in an arts integration / literacy grant increased their Lexile, compared to 91% of the comparison group. Students in the control group ended with an average score of 562, while the comparison group ended with an average of 534.</p> <p><b>-ArtsNow Learning was the lead partner for a USDOE arts integration / literacy grant (AEMDD) where the external evaluator documented that:</b></p> <p>-ArtsNow project schools receiving training in arts integration significantly outperformed the comparison schools on the state English/Language Arts assessment. When controlling for students’ prior ELA scale score, there was a significant difference in ELA scale score favoring project students. Results showed the percentage of project students demonstrating proficiency on the state annual English/Language Arts assessment increased significantly over baseline.</p> <p>-Results from a Primary Grades Writing Assessment indicated a 61% improvement in 1<sup>st</sup> grade; 57% improvement in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade; with a 59% total improvement.</p> <p>-In addition, ArtsNow project schools all increased their school climate ratings.</p> <p><b>-ArtsNow is a proven practice for teacher practice and student performance.</b> With a focus on teacher effectiveness, ArtsNow yields positive return on investment with documented longitudinal results showing that teachers collaborate with each other more often, that teacher confidence is enhanced, and that teachers are more engaged in their work. This leads to increased teacher effectiveness, development of teacher leaders, teacher retention, teacher satisfaction, and sustainability of practices that become exponentially beneficial to school-wide practice and student performance.</p> <p>- Students feel more engaged in their work, have a greater sense of community and collaboration, and student self-esteem is enhanced.</p> <p><b>-As for the interplay of cause and effect with teacher preparation and this strategy,</b> research has shown that structured coaching and opportunities for practice are effective ways preparing teachers to use new instructional strategies that lead to improved student performance. ArtsNow’s support for every school we serve involves a combination for professional learning events and job-embedded support which includes demonstration lessons, modeling of strategies, and observations where consultants can observe teachers’ use of strategies and provide constructive feedback.</p>
<p><b>2. Scalable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complementary to Districts</li> <li>• Achievable</li> </ul>	<p>-ArtsNow focuses on customized integrated learning solutions that directly align with local schools’ and school districts’ needs, priorities and plans. Thus, with proven results in teacher practice and student performance, ArtsNow is a complementary professional learning partner rather than a prescribed program or curriculum, allowing implementation that is compatible with, and supportive of, any adopted state or local curricula, models or programs. Understanding the diverse needs and student populations across schools, ArtsNow’s senior</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where has this strategy grown in metro Atlanta?</li> <li>How have school districts been engaged in this effort?</li> <li>How might the L4L network support continued growth?</li> </ul>	<p>leadership team works closely with school / district leadership to design unique professional learning plans for continuous improvement in their local settings and has experienced success in scaling across numerous schools.</p> <p>-Having served 293 schools in more than 30 districts, ArtsNow has facilitated professional learning resulting in more than 29,000 educator contacts with nearly 321,000 student interactions. The metro districts have included Atlanta Public Schools, Clayton County Public Schools, City of Decatur, DeKalb County School District, Fulton County School System, Gwinnett County Public Schools, and Marietta City Schools.</p> <p>-Our growth to date has been a result of word of mouth referrals which has allowed us to deepen and broaden our partnerships beyond metro Atlanta. A direct example of successful scaling has been the award of a new federal grant that replicates the previous Cobb arts integration / literacy grant into Savannah, GA and Charleston, SC.</p> <p>-The L4L network could be of great benefit in the continued growth of ArtsNow. With a newly approved strategic plan, our three-year organizational priorities are: 1) to increase awareness of, and engagement with, ArtsNow; 2) to advance our programs and services to ensure effectiveness and scalability; 3) to expand our footprint and drive organization growth and evolution; and 4) to strengthen financial model and organizational structure to support growth and evolution. The opportunity to work with L4L would directly support all of these priorities and allow us to positively impact teacher practice and student performance across metro Atlanta even more quickly and effectively.</p>
<p><b>3. Equitable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Culturally Aware</li> <li>Community-Based</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What efforts are in place to define and close equity gaps across student populations?</li> <li>How are students and parents involved in strategy and implementation?</li> <li>Are there community collaborations currently in place that support this strategy?</li> </ul>	<p>-Equity gaps across student populations is a key driver for the customization of our professional learning support. Just as best practices include differentiation for student learning, ArtsNow differentiates professional learning plans to best meet the needs of educators serving diverse populations. The large majority of schools we serve are Title 1 schools. An ArtsNow external evaluation reflected that the impact of arts integration on students in the economically disadvantaged subgroup was substantial – economically disadvantaged students scored 36% more than peers in “exceeds” category in reading. Additionally, this same report documented that ESOL students increased their performance on the ACCESS test from 54.1% to 74.0%. Arts integration is a proven strategy that can assist in closing the equity gaps across student populations.</p> <p>-ArtsNow encourages community and parent engagement and works with schools to facilitate Demonstration of Learning Days that invite the school community to see arts integrated practice in action to name one specific way we engage parents and community.</p> <p>-ArtsNow has collaborated with Cobb County project schools to create and develop student arts integrated literacy “kits” that provide an “at home” component for students and parents.</p> <p>-ArtsNow works closely to include SEL components to address individual student needs.</p> <p>-With an awareness of, and concern regarding equity and access, especially during these unprecedented times, ArtsNow has worked to provide content in a variety of delivery models to accommodate virtual learning. In partnership with a key partner, GaTech’s CEISMC, ArtsNow collaborated to create and distribute high quality printed instructional content accompanied by all needed materials to students in the Washington Cluster in APS. These kits were literature based and Lexile appropriate. ArtsNow developed arts integrated tasks for all texts. While this content was accessible for all students, even without technology, ArtsNow also created instructional videos to support student learning. Another component of this project was to then live stream instructional support directly to students who could participate in online sessions.</p>

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### Proposal: Out Teach

### Primary Factor Addressed: Teacher Preparation

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<p><b>1. Proven model</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measurable</li> <li>• Positive Return on Investment</li> <li>• Addresses Root Cause</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has this strategy defined and demonstrated success in literacy?</li> <li>• Describe any relevant research that supports this model.</li> <li>• How does this strategy define a positive return on investment?</li> <li>• Describe the interplay of cause and effect with teacher preparation and this strategy.</li> </ul>	<p>Out Teach defines success in literacy by effectively preparing teachers to integrate English Language Arts into science instruction using hands-on, outdoor learning as a teaching tool.</p> <p>Through targeted one-on-one instructional coaching, Out Teach helps teachers use outdoor learning to provide real-world contexts for students to acquire and advance their knowledge and skills in oral and written language as they pursue questions that engage them in understanding important scientific concepts.</p> <p>Research shows that teachers grow in a variety of ways when working with instructional coaches, including changes in teaching practices and attitudes as well as trying new approaches, strategies, and programs. As a result of coaching, teachers report gains in confidence, increases in student expectations, and deeper teaching characterized by reflective thinking about why they do things the way they do (Hamblin Morgan, 2010. <i>The Impact of Job-Embedded Coaching on Teacher Practice</i>. Electronic Theses and Dissertations, East Tennessee State University). These types of job-embedded professional development have been shown to improve student achievement in elementary literacy and mathematics (Althausser, K. 2015. <i>Job-embedded professional development: Its impact on teacher self-efficacy and student performance</i>. <i>Teacher Development</i>, 19:2, 210-225)</p> <p>For Out Teach, return on investment for its instructional coaching programs is observable improvement in teaching practice, including the effective integration of literacy standards anchored in outdoor phenomenon. Teacher Improvement is measured throughout the course of a school year using a teacher observation rubric with embedded measures for literacy instruction, which guides regular review of formative data and outcomes about improvements.</p> <p>In evaluations of science and English Language Arts training during the 2019-20 school year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 91% of teachers report that they strongly agree or agree that they have a better understanding of how to integrate ELA concepts into science instruction.</li> <li>• 93% of teachers report that they strongly agree or agree that they will be able to immediately integrate ELA concepts into science instruction.</li> <li>• 90% of teachers report having new ideas for connecting literature to outdoor phenomena.</li> </ul> <p>Additional measurements of success reported during the 2019-20 school year include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 88% of teachers reported improvements in their practice across all subjects, not just in the outdoor environment.</li> <li>• 86% collaborated and shared their professional learning with other teachers at their schools.</li> <li>• 96% would recommend Out Teach coaching to their peers.</li> <li>• 94% of teachers report that they strongly agree or agree that Out Teach has contributed to an overall improvement in their job satisfaction.</li> <li>• 100% of teachers report that they strongly agree or agree that Out Teach has a significant, positive impact on their students' engagement and performance.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>2. Scalable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complementary to Districts</li> <li>• Achievable</li> <li>• Sustainable</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where has this strategy grown in metro Atlanta?</li> <li>• How have school districts been engaged in this effort?</li> <li>• How might the L4L network support continued growth?</li> </ul>	<p>Since launching in metro Atlanta in 2017, Out Teach has successfully grown to serve schools in APS, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb and Henry County School Districts. This includes contracts with the science departments in Clayton and DeKalb County Schools to provide district-wide teacher training.</p> <p>Support from the L4L network can help Out Teach scale and improve our work by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Promoting awareness of our program within the educational and philanthropic communities to develop deeper district-level partnerships and funding opportunities that increase school participation.</li> <li>•Increasing school participation in metro Atlanta to provide additional local data that contributes to the field of evidence at the intersection of professional development, science experiential learning, and literacy.</li> <li>•Connecting with more corporate and philanthropic partners to establish scholarship program fees for local schools and teachers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Equitable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culturally Aware</li> <li>• Community-Based</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What efforts are in place to define and close equity gaps across student populations?</li> <li>• How are students and parents involved in strategy and implementation?</li> <li>• Are there community collaborations currently in place that support this strategy?</li> </ul>	<p>Out Teach grounds its efforts to address equity across culturally diverse populations by centering instruction on student experience, choice and voice. Out Teach engages with primarily Title I elementary schools in high-need districts, and trains teachers in experiential pedagogy that elevates student choice and voice and taps into their personal interests and backgrounds. These techniques guide students to connect with outdoor phenomena based upon their unique lived experiences and make decisions about exploring particular habitats based on personal interest.</p> <p>At schools where new Out Teach Outdoor Learning Labs are being installed, parents and the entire school community participate in Out Teach-facilitated design and engagement activities to ensure that spaces are designed with a school’s culture and specific learning objectives in mind.</p>

Proposal: SEE-KS

Primary Factor Addressed: Teacher Preparation

Criteria	Evidence
<p><b>1. Proven model</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measurable</li> <li>• Positive Return on Investment</li> <li>• Addresses Root Cause</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has this strategy defined and demonstrated success in literacy?</li> <li>• Describe any relevant research that supports this model.</li> <li>• How does this strategy define a positive return on investment?</li> <li>• Describe the interplay of cause and effect with teacher preparation and this strategy.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The SEE-KS professional learning approach embraces the Four Pillars consistent with the Get GA Reading Campaign (<a href="https://getgeorgiareading.org/framework-overview/">https://getgeorgiareading.org/framework-overview/</a>) and defines successful implementation based upon progress in all four of these pillars. Proficient reading at the end of third grade relies on creating these conditions for learning and literacy.</b></p> <p><b>Pillar 1: Language Nutrition:</b> Refers to the fact that all children must receive “abundant, language-rich, adult-child interactions, as these are as critical for brain development as healthy food is for physical growth.” This serve and volley of communicative exchanges is what is referred to as “Language Nutrition.”</p> <p><b>Outcome Measure – Learner Engagement;</b> In the SEE-KS approach, educators use a freely accessible tool, the <b>Social Engagement Ladder</b> to assess whether their learners are actively engaged and, thus, receiving a high dose of Language Nutrition. Using a Likert scale from “4” – “fully engaged” to “0” – “not yet engaged” educators gauge their success by whether learners are at least a 2.5 or above on this rubric.</p> <p><b>Pillar 2: Access:</b> Refers to the recognition that all children, families, and educators need to have year-round access to, and supportive services for, healthy physical and social-emotional development and success in home, community and educational settings.</p> <p><b>Outcome Measure – Sustainability;</b> In the SEE-KS approach, the <b>SEE-KS Sustainability Scales – Coaching Teams</b> measures how each team of educators are building internal capacity to “sustain and replicate” instructional practices at the regional, district, and school level.</p> <p><b>Pillar 3: Positive Learning Climate:</b> Refers to ensuring the social emotional engagement is embraced as part of the culture and ethos of the learning setting.</p> <p><b>Outcome Measure – Educator Self-Efficacy;</b> In the SEE-KS approach, a freely accessible <b>SEE-KS Self Reflection Tool</b> is used to gauge an educators’ knowledge, skills and beliefs related to creating a learning environment that fosters social emotional competencies in everyday lessons. Educators typically move from “starting out” to “proficient,” findings which we have correlated with increased teacher self-efficacy and reduced teacher burnout.</p> <p><b>Pillar 4: Teacher Preparation and Effectiveness:</b> Refers to the understanding that all who interact with the child are “educators” and, as such, should be equipped with evidence-informed skills, knowledge, and resources that effectively meet the literacy needs of each child in a developmentally appropriate manner.</p> <p><b>Outcome Measure – Fidelity of Evidence-Based Instructional Strategies.</b> In the SEE-KS approach, the <b>SEE-KS Sustainability Scales – Instructional Strategies</b> provides a measure of whether educators are “starting out” or moving toward “sustaining” strategies that are developmentally appropriate and evidence-based for learning and literacy.</p> <p><b>SEE-KS has “promising” evidence and is in the process of obtaining funding for a randomized controlled trial (RCT) study to earn “strong” evidence. Note that this makes SEE-KS eligible for federal funds per 1003 and all Title programs.</b> SEE-KS is grounded in several distinct, yet related bodies of empirical research: 1) Active Engagement / Social Emotional Learning (SEL) as a key focus of educational practices, 3) Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and 4) adult learning models using appreciative inquiry-based mentorship for sustainability. Under the direction of Dr. Lindee Morgan, Co-Director of the Education Sciences Research Core of the Marcus Autism Center several evaluations are currently in progress. Pilot data obtained throughout the state of Georgia, has enabled this research team to secure grant funding. One of the grants that is</p>

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	<p>underway is an NIH Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant Award (R21) to evaluate the impact of SEE-KS at an early childhood level. The ESRC also collaborated with Emory School of Nursing to investigate SEE-KS professional learning in universal settings. Results showed that teachers gained a sense of self-efficacy. This is a particularly important, as teacher retention rates and burn out levels key concerns of our school systems. A grant application is in submission with the Institute of Educational Sciences (IES) for a larger scale RCT design study.</p> <p><b>Cost benefit research shows a high return on investment in professional learning designed to increase social emotional competence in learners.</b> A recent study highlighted for every \$1 spent on professional learning in social emotional well-being there is an \$11 return on investment due to increased attendance, decreased behavioral referrals, reduced costs of higher tiers of support, and increased teacher retention.</p>
<p><b>2. Scalable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complementary to Districts</li> <li>• Achievable</li> <li>• Sustainable</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where has this strategy grown in metro Atlanta?</li> <li>• How have school districts been engaged in this effort?</li> <li>• How might the L4L network support continued growth?</li> </ul>	<p>SEE-KS has been implemented in 29 districts throughout Georgia and in 81 schools (from preschool through high school settings). In Metro Atlanta, SEE-KS has been implemented in Clayton County, DeKalb County, Cobb County, and the City Schools of Decatur. The scalable nature of SEE-KS has been appealing to not only districts but Regional Educational Service Agencies (RESAs) and the GA Learning Resources System (GLRS), as program specialists have been empowered to sustain and replicate this approach in their support of the districts they serve. To learn how SEE-KS is complementary with district priorities, please read these <a href="#">LETTERS OF SUPPORT</a> from the Director of Metro RESA, GA DOE leadership, district leads, and the Get GA Reading Campaign Director. The state of Iowa HAS begun a 6 -year contract to empower their Area Educational Agencies with the freely accessible tools of SEE-KS; their focus is on engagement to create the conditions of learning. If the L4L network embraced SEE-KS here in Georgia, this would foster continued growth toward sustainability in Metro ATL and across the state.</p>
<p><b>3. Equitable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culturally Aware</li> <li>• Community-Based</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What efforts are in place to define and close equity gaps across student populations?</li> <li>• How are students and parents involved in strategy and implementation?</li> <li>• Are there community collaborations currently in place that support this strategy?</li> </ul>	<p>The materials of SEE-KS were designed to be accommodating to <i>every</i> child and are student-centered, regardless of that child’s developmental level of language acquisition, learning style, and whether English may be the child and family’s second language. The SEE-KS materials are organized by developmental stage and have an instructional fidelity rubric and exemplars outlined for children who are before words, at emerging language stages, or at conversational stages. Therefore, there are materials and tools accessible for every child. Language delays, in fact, can be a significant barrier to literacy instruction if unmitigated. A learner’s success is gauged by how actively engaged they are in classroom lessons and educators are empowered with strategies to enhance every child’s engagement. As the SEE-KS approach can be implemented by educators, districts and regional agencies at minimal cost, using freely accessible tools, we have seen partnerships develop in pre-service institutions to prepare new educators (University of West GA &amp; GA College), with DECAL quality rated childcare and head start programs, and with agencies supporting families to implement Plan of Safe Care (social workers have been trained to mentor families within the child welfare system).</p>

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## Bright Spot Proposals

### Proposal: Boost Childcare Scholarships

### Primary Factor Addressed: Early Childhood Education

Criteria	Evidence
<p><b>1. Proven model</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measurable</li> <li>• Positive Return on Investment</li> <li>• Addresses Root Cause</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has this strategy defined and demonstrated success in literacy?</li> <li>• Describe any relevant research that supports this model.</li> <li>• How does this strategy define a positive return on investment?</li> <li>• Describe the interplay of cause and effect with teacher preparation and this strategy.</li> </ul>	<p>Ninety percent of a child’s brain is “hardwired” by age 5, laying the groundwork for all future learning and success. Access to high-quality (Quality Rated) child care remains one of the best interventions to prepare children for success in school and beyond. Yet child care and early education costs are often the most significant expenses in a family budget, with the average cost of infant care in metro Atlanta exceeding \$10,000 a year. In Atlanta, as in many other cities throughout the US, children’s access to the high-quality early care and learning they need depends primarily upon the family’s ability to pay. Educational inequities that begin in the early years, follow children into school and can haunt them for the rest of their lives.</p> <p>While some programs and interventions can be complex, this one is very straightforward. Georgia has invested significant resources into improving the quality of child care through its Quality Rated system. Thanks to this investment we know which programs support learning and development, including the development of early literacy skills. However, if we don’t intervene to ensure children from low-income families have access to Quality Rated child care, we may just be deepening the already existing inequities. How do we ensure equitable access to Quality Rated child care so that the children who can benefit most are able to attend? QCC’s Boost scholarship program addresses this challenge by paying for Quality Rated child care for families who cannot afford it. Success is measured by access to quality and number of weeks/months/years of Quality Rated child care provided. Parents choose any Quality Rated provider, with help from QCC’s child care referral service. QCC executes a Memorandum of Understanding with the parents and the providers, and pays the provider directly for the child care.</p> <p>QCC has operated scholarship programs since the mid 1980’s. Boost began in 2016 to provide child care scholarships to college student parents. Evaluation results were strong and contributed to revision in state child care subsidy policy so that college student parents were eligible for the subsidy. In 2019 QCC created Boost: Parent Child Success to provide child care scholarships to low-income families in the Washington and Douglass school clusters. Evaluation of that program is underway. QCC also manages a scholarship program for APS targeting APS parents. During the pandemic, QCC has managed more than \$800,000 in emergency (3 month) child care scholarships for families in Fulton, DeKalb and Gwinnett counties. QCC collaborates with other non-profits and community organizations, the Department of Early care and Learning, APS, and area colleges for referrals of families needing assistance. We collaborate with Quality Rated community-based child care programs for the provision of child care.</p> <p><b>Proven</b> (Measurable, Positive Return on Investment, Addresses Root Cause)  The Boost program has proven its ability to ensure access to high-quality child care for children who otherwise would not have access. Economists estimate the return on investment in high-quality child care to be as high as \$7 to \$12 for every dollar spent. Lack of access is primarily an issue of affordability. Boost makes quality child care affordable for low-income families.</p>

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<p><b>2. Scalable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complementary to Districts</li> <li>• Achievable</li> <li>• Sustainable</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where has this strategy grown in metro Atlanta?</li> <li>• How have school districts been engaged in this effort?</li> <li>• How might the L4L network support continued growth?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scalable (Complementary to Districts, Achievable, Sustainable)</b></p> <p>QCC has created a program model that is very scalable with minimal administrative costs. It is also easily customized, for example, in terms of scholarship amount provided, length of scholarship, etc. It can easily be adapted to target certain populations, i.e., parents and children in a particular neighborhood or school catchment area, low-wage employees for a particular company, essential workers, teen mothers, etc. The pandemic has shed light on the importance of child care for working parents and the enormous financial burden on young families. We know that employers are considering ways to support their employees in their child care expenses. This model, with much lower costs and liability than an on-site child care programs, is an option for both small and large employers wanting to support their employees. It is also a strategy that can bolster other educational and workforce development efforts. L4L could help lift this model up as an option.</p>
<p><b>3. Equitable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culturally Aware</li> <li>• Community-Based</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What efforts are in place to define and close equity gaps across student populations?</li> <li>• How are students and parents involved in strategy and implementation?</li> <li>• Are there community collaborations currently in place that support this strategy?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Equitable (Culturally Aware, Community-Based)</b></p> <p>This model is designed to address inequities in access to quality child care. Further, it preserves parent choice allowing them to choose the Quality Rated child care providers who is right for them and their family. Finally, it utilizes existing community-based child care programs that are Quality Rated.</p>

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### Proposal: Jumpstart

### Primary Factor Addressed: Early Childhood Education

Criteria	Evidence
<p><b>1. Proven model</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measurable</li> <li>• Positive Return on Investment</li> <li>• Addresses Root Cause</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has this strategy defined and demonstrated success in literacy?</li> <li>• Describe any relevant research that supports this model.</li> <li>• How does this strategy define a positive return on investment?</li> <li>• Describe the interplay of cause and effect with teacher preparation and this strategy.</li> </ul>	<p>Over the past 26 years, Jumpstart has provided high-quality learning experiences to young children by training college student volunteers (known as Jumpstart Corps Members) to build caring relationships and deliver a proven curriculum. Corps Members are trained to engage preschool children in activities that build the language, literacy, and social-emotional skills shown to correlate strongly with early school success. Delivery of Jumpstart’s curriculum is grounded in the following principles: (1) culturally competent, developmentally appropriate practices; (2) playful learning experiences; (3) a balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning; (4) high expectations for all; and (5) an environment in which children feel safe, valued, respected, seen, and heard.</p> <p>Jumpstart sessions support an overarching sequence of skill development, which enhances school readiness. Sessions blend large and small group learning and independent play, and revolve around a developmentally appropriate storybook. Members facilitate a small group shared reading experience to help children develop their vocabulary and content knowledge and explore connections between characters’ mental states and their behavior. Children are encouraged to make choices, experiment, practice new or previously learned skills, and play, and Corps Members engage children in conversations and activities that support oral language and social-emotional development.</p> <p>Jumpstart is a data-driven organization, and we aim to use data to frame and guide our work so we can grow to be even more impactful and effective. We know that Jumpstart works; a 2013-2014 multi-state external evaluation found that Jumpstart children make 1.5x greater gains in important literacy skills, as compared to those who do not receive the Jumpstart program (Miller &amp; Abrams, 2015). In Atlanta, this has translated into 89% of children make literacy and language gains within the course of one program year. Yet, we are eager to learn more about how and why Jumpstart is working, how we can lean into our strengths and improve upon any areas for growth, and assure the highest quality possible for children, Corps Members, staff, and communities.</p>
<p><b>2. Scalable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complementary to Districts</li> <li>• Achievable</li> <li>• Sustainable</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where has this strategy grown in metro Atlanta?</li> <li>• How have school districts been engaged in this effort?</li> <li>• How might the L4L network support continued growth?</li> </ul>	<p>The city of Atlanta has long been a potential area of growth for Jumpstart. In Atlanta, 31% of children are growing up in poverty (Kids Count Data Center, 2018). Jumpstart began serving children in Atlanta in 2003 and has developed longstanding relationships with top local universities: Clark Atlanta University, Morehouse College, Spelman College, Georgia State University, and the Georgia Institute of Technology. We currently deliver our proven language, literacy, and social-emotional skill-building program to children in underserved neighborhoods in and around south and west Atlanta. Previously, we have partnered with Atlanta Public Schools to provide summer programming and, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, were in conversations to bring Jumpstart into a few of their pre-kindergarten classrooms. Despite this reach, we are aware there are many other neighborhoods and communities in metropolitan Atlanta area where Jumpstart could be a positive, impactful program for children and the community. Especially as the city becomes more expensive, demographics begin to change and the population we seek to serve moves. With help from the Learn4Life network, we hope to expand our programming in Atlanta and increase the number of children in underserved communities who have access to our high-quality early learning opportunities. Specifically, we feel there is unique opportunity to scale our program within community-based programs and/or among families in our target communities.</p>

## Early Literacy Change Action Network Bright Spot Proposals

Criteria	Evidence
<p><b>3. Equitable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culturally Aware</li> <li>• Community-Based</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What efforts are in place to define and close equity gaps across student populations?</li> <li>• How are students and parents involved in strategy and implementation?</li> <li>• Are there community collaborations currently in place that support this strategy?</li> </ul>	<p>Jumpstart’s work rests on the belief that high-quality ECE programs can disrupt cycles of poverty. Today, our work is specifically driven by the realization that the impact of COVID-19, racial injustice, and economic uncertainty has resulted in significant learning loss, trauma, and a decimated early learning workforce.</p> <p>In the 2018-2019 program year, Jumpstart served more than 300 children across Atlanta, but we know the need in communities across the country is far greater since less than 50% of children born into low-income families are ready for kindergarten at age five. Of the children we served, nearly all children (98.5%) identified as Black/African American, and 99% of families enrolled, on average, were identified as low-income, as measured by the federal guidelines for free and reduced-price meals. In the same program year, 76% of Corps Members identified as Black/African American, 14% identified as multi-racial, 95% were female, and 38% were first generation college students.</p> <p>Given the population we serve, we must address systemic injustices, especially racial, ethnic and socio-economic, that contribute to substantial opportunity gaps for children of color and children from underserved communities in order to accomplish our mission in Atlanta. As such, we will enhance our collective experience and increase our ability to deliver on our mission by embracing and mirroring from within our organization the vibrant diversity in the communities we serve. This philosophy is not only infused in our organization culture, but it’s reflected throughout our child-facing curriculum and all Corp Member training opportunities.</p>

# Early Literacy Change Action Network

## Bright Spot Proposals

### Proposal: Learning Spaces

### Primary Factor Addressed: Early Childhood Education

Criteria	Evidence
<p><b>1. Proven model</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measurable</li> <li>• Positive Return on Investment</li> <li>• Addresses Root Cause</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has this strategy defined and demonstrated success in literacy?</li> <li>• Describe any relevant research that supports this model.</li> <li>• How does this strategy define a positive return on investment?</li> <li>• Describe the interplay of cause and effect with teacher preparation and this strategy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building on work that began in 2013-2014, Learning Spaces is a school readiness initiative.</li> <li>• Research indicates that 90% of brain development occurs by age 3.</li> <li>• United Way is the sponsor and has 5+ local partners</li> <li>• Provides quality early learning experiences to children who are not enrolled in formal care.</li> <li>• Bridges the gap between home and school using a two generation approach.</li> <li>• Address factors that impact children entering school ready to learn such as toxic stress, recognition of developmental delays, etc.</li> <li>• Improves CWB by increasing the # of children who enter school developmentally on track, # of children making language and literacy gains, etc.</li> </ul> <p>How Well: Over 8,000 experiences for children &amp; families since October 2016</p> <p>Better Off (2018 - 2019): Increase in number of children who are developmentally on track (127 on track; 137 assessed - ASQ, LAP-D, developmental checklist); Increase of number of children making language &amp; literacy gains (275 made gains/259 assessed - Get Ready to Read Screener)</p>
<p><b>2. Scalable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complementary to Districts</li> <li>• Achievable</li> <li>• Sustainable</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where has this strategy grown in metro Atlanta?</li> <li>• How have school districts been engaged in this effort?</li> <li>• How might the L4L network support continued growth?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 stationary sites and 1 mobile site that serves Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb and Fulton.</li> <li>• New sites will launch in Douglas, Butts and Rockdale in 2021.</li> <li>• Sites are based on Child Well Being Index - where the greatest need is in each county and identified locations where families already gather (to eat, pray and/or play)</li> <li>• School district Engagement - School districts have expressed interested in Learning Spaces, but strategy is to support an open enrollment for each site which makes school site locations difficult (cannot be limited to children of siblings in schools). Districts have been encouraged, through partnership, to provide facilitators in the community and marketing to families of older children.</li> <li>• Partners with community organizations, Pre-K coordinators in various districts on special events such as resource fairs, social services fairs, roundups, etc. (Atlanta Public Schools, Rockdale Public Schools, etc.)</li> <li>• Builds community partnerships &amp; capacity</li> <li>• L4L Network can support scale by identifying new locations and facilitation agencies within communities and identifying new resources/partners needed for families/caregivers given barriers to literacy</li> </ul>

# Early Literacy Change Action Network

## Bright Spot Proposals

Criteria	Evidence
<p><b>3. Equitable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culturally Aware</li> <li>• Community-Based</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What efforts are in place to define and close equity gaps across student populations?</li> <li>• How are students and parents involved in strategy and implementation?</li> <li>• Are there community collaborations currently in place that support this strategy?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County Libraries have been critical partners in launching Learning Spaces and serve as key stationary and now pop-up resource locations.</li> <li>• Sites bring on Learning Spaces Ambassadors from within the community, moving to co-facilitators, providing local feedback and an entry point to the career pathway program within communities.</li> <li>• Prior to COVID, UWGA partners hosted community cafes with families as part of design within communities.</li> <li>• In response to COVID: Virtual Platform – expanding our virtual presence through the use of social media through YouTube, Facebook and Instagram</li> <li>• Collaboration with the Alliance Theatre to integrate the arts into our virtual platform</li> <li>• Partnership with InspirEDU to close the digital divide by providing tablets and hot spots to children who attend Learning Spaces</li> <li>• Ferst Readers – sending books to children at home monthly (building home libraries)</li> <li>• Literacy Pop-Ups – providing additional resources, activities and books to families that align with monthly studies from Creative Curriculum</li> <li>• Monthly calls made to families who have attended LS during COVID-19</li> <li>• Parents and caregivers increase their knowledge of child development and better understand their role of being the child’s first teacher.</li> <li>• Newest addition of Bright by Text- partnership with GA Public Broadcasting (virtual research based resource)</li> </ul>

# Early Literacy Change Action Network

## Bright Spot Proposals

### Proposal: Los Niños Primero

### Primary Factor Addressed: Early Childhood Education

Criteria	Evidence
<p><b>1. Proven model</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measurable</li> <li>• Positive Return on Investment</li> <li>• Addresses Root Cause</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has this strategy defined and demonstrated success in literacy?</li> <li>• Describe any relevant research that supports this model.</li> <li>• How does this strategy define a positive return on investment?</li> <li>• Describe the interplay of cause and effect with teacher preparation and this strategy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The strategy was defined and shaped by 20 years of <i>listening to and observing</i> immigrant families. We offer two programs to improve early literacy. Both programs are led exclusively by Georgia-certified educators and serve children 3 to 7-years old. The first program is our five-week, <b>Summer Academic Program</b> which is offered in 5 Atlanta locations, hosted by Fulton County public and private schools. The curriculum is based on Bright From the Start and Georgia Standards of Excellence. The second, a <b>Multigenerational Literacy Program</b> is offered twice weekly and is currently <i>virtual</i>. A primary component of this program is that parent participation is required for each session. The focus is to deepen the parents' understanding of the critical importance of building a cognitive-linguistic foundation while fostering emotional well-being and social competence. To assess the efficacy of both programs, children complete a pre-test and post-test measuring the child's competence in four domains: social skills, language skills, reading skills and writing skills. Dr. Sara Botto, a Cognitive Development researcher analyzed quantitative and qualitative data for the multigenerational program. She stated that progress was "significant" and demonstrated benefits for the parents as well. Their end of course surveys revealed a greater confidence in communicating with their children, providing guidance for their learning and an increase in reading at home.</li> <li>• Relevant research across a variety of sources demonstrates that <b>early parent engagement</b> is critical to the success of a child's academic growth. Los Niños Primero's documented results support this fundamental truth and encourage our families to engage early. Los Niños Primero supports bilingualism. By including our Spanish-speaking parents in the early literacy program, we are advancing toward this goal of bilingualism. Our state certified, bilingual, and bi-cultural teachers are key to the success our children and families have demonstrated. They connect with the families and are remarkable role models in their demonstration that bilingualism is a powerful asset., The Department of Education noted the findings from an American Community Survey (2016). "Approximately one-third of children under age 8 in the United States have at least one parent who speaks a language other than English at home... Current research documents the cognitive, social, and linguistic benefits of early bilingualism."</li> <li>• Inviting the parents into the classroom, guiding them to invest early in their child's education and remaining connected to the families has proven to be a fruitful ROI. Pre and Post tests given for our programs demonstrate growth in all metrics, language, reading readiness, math, and social skills. As immigrant parents gain confidence in their own abilities to encourage and foster their child's academic development, they deepen their connection to our programs.</li> </ul>

## Early Literacy Change Action Network Bright Spot Proposals

Criteria	Evidence
<p><b>2. Scalable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complementary to Districts</li> <li>• Achievable</li> <li>• Sustainable</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where has this strategy grown in metro Atlanta?</li> <li>• How have school districts been engaged in this effort?</li> <li>• How might the L4L network support continued growth?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The strategy has been to grow slowly to ensure the delivery of an exceptional program. Over the last 4 years, we have expanded from one location in Sandy Springs to a total of 5 locations - two in Roswell, two in Sandy Springs and one in Hapeville, GA. Los Niños Primero tailors the early literacy and summer learning to each individual school. Principals identify which grade levels (3-year-old to 1st grade) require the most support. In Roswell, at Mimosa Elementary School, we first introduced the <b>Summer Academic Program</b> and expanded the following year with the <b>Multigenerational Literacy Program</b>. As a bonus for the community, Los Niños Primero also tailored a conversational English class for mothers whose children were enrolled at the elementary school.</li> <li>• Six Fulton County elementary schools have active input. In 2021, we will expand to Dekalb County. This month (Nov 2020) we have introduced the programs to one school in APS - E Rivers Elementary School. In the next month, we will explore the viability of offering the summer program.</li> <li>• L4L could support our efforts by assisting in the tracking of our students up through third grade, at a minimum.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Equitable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culturally Aware</li> <li>• Community-Based</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What efforts are in place to define and close equity gaps across student populations?</li> <li>• How are students and parents involved in strategy and implementation?</li> <li>• Are there community collaborations currently in place that support this strategy?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Los Niños Primero is an anchor in the Latinx community. A trusted resource that has longevity and has earned the confidence of the population we serve. Services are provided fee-free. Los Niños Primero staff is bicultural and largely bilingual. Many youth and adults in the community have earned part-time roles in our organization upon completing leadership training.</li> <li>• Los Niños Primero is an open, transparent nonprofit. We solicit feedback and make the appropriate changes from our constituents' input. We are completing our third Strategic Plan and there are many voices from the community participating in its shaping.</li> <li>• Yes, we collaborate with several organizations that share our vision - The Goizueta Foundation, Sandy Springs Mission, Sandy Springs Education Force and The Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta.</li> </ul>

# Early Literacy Change Action Network

## Bright Spot Proposals

### Proposal: The READY School

### Primary Factor Addressed: Early Childhood Education

Criteria	Evidence
<p><b>1. Proven model</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measurable</li> <li>• Positive Return on Investment</li> <li>• Addresses Root Cause</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has this strategy defined and demonstrated success in literacy?</li> <li>• Describe any relevant research that supports this model.</li> <li>• How does this strategy define a positive return on investment?</li> <li>• Describe the interplay of cause and effect with teacher preparation and this strategy.</li> </ul>	<p><b>How has the strategy described, defined and demonstrated success in literacy?</b> The READY School, an asset-based community development initiative, is a program of CDF Action, Inc. in partnership with early learning centers and families. CDF focuses on community building and early learning and is the fiscal agent. CDF oversees and provides technical assistance to three READY Schools, in Norcross and Central DeKalb, which are funded by United Way of Greater Atlanta and others. The READY School is a free, part-day multi-lingual early learning and family engagement program in a literacy-rich environment for 3 and 4- year old dual-language learners. Objectives include: (1) Children are prepared for Georgia-Pre-K; (2) Children are enrolled in Georgia Pre-K when age-eligible; (3) Families are engaged in their child’s early learning journey and in the early learning and education programs and institutions that serve them.</p> <p>The first objective is measured primarily by Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3), a normed screening tool in Spanish and English, that provides families and staff with information to inform the curriculum and is used to identify potential developmental delays. The second objective is measured by the percentage of age-eligible children who enroll in Georgia Pre-K. The READY Schools use Creative Curriculum, which has tools to measure student progress. Family involvement and engagement is measured by parent surveys and testimonials. A READY School typically serves 25 to 30 children per year.</p> <p><b>Describe any relevant research that supports this model.</b> Research is clear that children at an early age learn concepts best in their home language and that children do better when their teachers share the same language and culture as they do. Children are more successful if a developmental delay is identified early. Family involvement in a child’s education is linked to school success. Georgia DECAL data indicates that attendance in a quality Georgia Pre-K program results in children doing better in kindergarten and beyond.</p> <p><b>How does this strategy define a positive return on investment?</b> Data that helps illustrate the positive return on investment include: As a result of the READY School, approximately 90 % of the children are developmentally on track at Pre-K entry. Nearly 95 % enroll in Pre-K, providing a smooth transition from the READY School to their next early learning Journey. A recent ASQ analysis (2019) conducted in Spanish found that there were increases in overall scores for each of the five domains (Communications, Gross Motor Skills, Fine Motor Skills, Problem Solving and Personal-Social). The preliminary findings indicate that was a statistically significant increase in Fine Motor Skills and in the Personal-Social domain.</p> <p><b>Describe interplay of cause and effect with early childhood education and this strategy.</b> If children with limited English have access to a bi-lingual and language rich early learning program, and their families are engaged in their early learning, these children will be more successful than children who enter Pre-K with limited early learning experiences. Children acquire social-emotional skills and the foundations of early learning in the READY School environment as well as become exposed to routines and structure. The families and children develop relationships with early learning staff and with each other.</p>
<p><b>2. Scalable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complementary to Districts</li> <li>• Achievable</li> <li>• Sustainable</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p>	<p><b>Where has this strategy grown in metro Atlanta?</b> La Escuelita, The Little School, was developed by Latinx families in Norcross, in 2015. The families who were participating in a W. K. Kellogg initiative, wanted a program in their apartment complex, with trained, bi-lingual teachers, that would provide them with the foundation of early learning and assistance in enrolling in Pre-K. The program, funded by United Way, was operated by the American Learning Academy, assisted by Clara Herrera and Roberta Malavenda. Clara continues as a consultant to La Escuelita and Roberta is the current CDF Executive Director.</p>

# Early Literacy Change Action Network

## Bright Spot Proposals

Criteria	Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where has this strategy grown in metro Atlanta?</li> <li>How have school districts been engaged in this effort?</li> <li>How might the L4L network support continued growth?</li> </ul>	<p>About five years ago, CDF staff met with Clarkston refugee families living in an apartment complex. Families voiced almost the same needs and ideas, and the READY School initiative was born, with a third program created in Stone Mountain. Scottdale Early Learning Inc. operates the two Central DeKalb READY Schools.</p> <p><b>How may school districts be engaged in this effort?</b> School districts may be engaged by working with the partner child care centers to support Pre-K to Kindergarten transitions and to help identify resources.</p> <p><b>How might the L4L network support continued growth?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying early learning centers that are interested in this strategy, helping to identify resources for start-up community develop work, including hosting family focus groups and finding a location, as well as introducing CDF to potential funders and resources for ongoing implementation</li> <li>Identifying resources to help with marketing and other communications “to tell the story.”</li> <li>Assisting with the READY School Tool Kit, evaluation, and logic model (in progress)</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Equitable</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Culturally Aware</li> <li>Community-Based</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Questions to Consider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What efforts are in place to define and close equity gaps across student populations?</li> <li>How are students and parents involved in strategy and implementation?</li> <li>Are there community collaborations currently in place that support this strategy?</li> </ul>	<p><b>What efforts are in place to define and close equity gaps across student populations?</b> The READY School was designed by parents and advocates to close equity gaps for pre-school immigrant and refugee children. For many children, the READY School is the first experience the child has with teachers or children outside their immediate family. Equity strategies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Fostering respect of culture and language.</b> Teachers speak the child’s first language and English. Activities are conducted in multiple languages. The curriculum especially at the beginning focuses on social-emotional aspects of learning, ensuring that that the child feels welcomed and safe.</li> <li><b>Accessible Early Learning.</b> The program is free and typically located in an apartment, close to where families live, offering a home-live environment, now often preferred by families because of COVID.</li> <li><b>Bi-lingual teachers.</b> The teachers are primarily former READY School parents who received their Child Development Associate (CDA), a national credential. The teachers are on the staff of a licensed, quality child care center and participate in ongoing professional development.</li> <li><b>Culturally appropriate assessments and materials.</b> Teachers assess each child’s readiness for Pre-K as well as identify potential developmental delays. Books are in multiple languages.</li> <li><b>Assistance with Georgia Pre-K registration.</b> Without this assistance, many families would be unaware of the Pre-K program, thus putting refugee and immigrant behind their peers</li> </ul> <p><b>How are students and parents involved in strategy and implementation?</b> Families are engaged in the start-up, design, and program operations. There are multiple opportunities for providing advice and feedback. Families contribute snacks, read stories, plan workshops and volunteer in the classroom. Staff are in ongoing conversations with parents to support their child’s early learning and to link the families to resources and to each other.</p> <p><b>Are there community collaborations currently in place that support the strategy?</b> The Clarkston Early Learning Network and the City of Clarkston Early Learning Task Force support the READY School strategy.</p>