**Birth – 3rd Grade Self-Assessment and Action Planning Guide**

**Developed for the Illinois Preschool Expansion Grant**

**B – 3 Institute**

**Cohort 1**

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**Section 1: Assessing the Characteristics, Strengths and Needs of Our Community**

The discussion and analysis from this section will be used to make the case for your B-3 initiative and to help you prioritize those B-3 strategies that will help you accomplish your goals. Using the Profiles and other accessible data in your community, answer the following questions:

**1. From the profiles and other data on children and families in your community, where do the data seem to indicate areas of need (disaggregated by income, race/ethnicity, gender, language diversity, etc.)?**

Possible data sources: Illinois School Report Card data, KIDS assessment results, reports on early learning data, reports on numbers of children and families accessing social and health services

Possible indicators: Reading and math proficiencies, KIDS whole child indicators, social-emotional indicators, absences, mobility rates, disciplinary data, referrals to interventions

**2. From the profiles and other data on education and child care programming and schools, what appears to be the areas of strength and need in terms of availability and accessibility of care and education?**

Possible data sources: IECAM data, Illinois School Report Card data

Possible indicators: Numbers of schools in a community, numbers of early learning programs (public, private, and family-based care), number of before- and after-school programs

**3. Does your community have an Early Learning Coalition or Collaborative? If yes, how developed is the coalition/collaborative?** (A well-developed collaborative is characterized as a cross-system collaboration including multiple sectors, a shared vision and mission, potentially dedicated coalition/collaborative staff and an action plan of data-driven strategies.) Describe it below in terms of its purpose and goals, the age/grade levels it covers, coalition/collaborative processes (e.g., meeting schedules and agenda, make-up of the group, organization chart), the activities it is supporting, and any achievements/outcomes.

**Directions: Using the discussion focused on characteristics, strengths and needs of the families and children in your communities, as well as the availability and accessibility of education and care schools and programs, use the following self-assessment and action plans to gauge the current implementation level in the following B-3 strategies (Section 2), and begin planning for improving your B-3 efforts (Section 3).**

**Step 1**. Conduct the self-assessment to rate your implementation level from Not Started to Well Developed. This is a scale based on a continuum.

* Not Started: There is no evidence that any policies or practices are in place to support the strategy.
* Beginning: There is some evidence that a group has begun discussing or planning to implement a strategy.
* Emerging: There is evidence that a group has begun systematic planning and begun to implement a strategy; however, the implementation is still in its infancy and not widespread in the community.
* Developed: There is adequate evidence to support that a strategy is well-implemented, has sufficient resources to support its implementation, and it is moderately widespread in the community.
* Well-developed: There is adequate evidence to support that a strategy is well-implemented, has sufficient resources to support its implementation and sustainability, is widespread throughout the community, and there is a continuous improvement mechanism in place for improving its implementation.

**Step 2**. Using the discussion assessing the characteristics, strengths, and needs of your community, return to the beginning of the self-assessment instrument and choose the Priority Level of the strategy (high, medium, or low).

**Step 3.** Section 3 contains the Action Plans for each of the B-3 Framework Strategies[[1]](#footnote-1) organized by the 8 elements:

1. Cross-Sector Work
2. Administrator Effectiveness
3. Teacher Effectiveness
4. Instructional Tools
5. Learning Environments
6. Data-Driven Improvement
7. Engaged Families
8. Continuity and Pathways

The action plans are the place to identify your high-priority goals, the persons responsible for working to achieve those goals (organized by short-term, medium-term, and long-term goals), a timeline for the work, a list of activities or actions to be taken, and evidence or measures that will indicate whether your initiative has met that goal (organized by short-term, medium-term, and long-term outcomes).

**NOTE:** It is not expected that your B-3 Initiative will implement all of the strategies listed in Section 2. These strategies have been identified by research in the B-3 field as common and effective strategies for achieving positive student outcomes. Using data analysis and deliberation among community members, your team can choose those B-3 strategies that you believe best fit the contexts of your schools, early learning programs/centers, and community partners, and best meet the needs of the children and their families in their communities.

**Section 2: Self-Assessing Implementation of Birth – 3rd Grade (B-3) Strategies**

**1. Cross-Sector Work:** Mechanisms, resources, and structures exist that reflect, support, and sustain shared vision, collaborative relationships, and mutual accountabilities between 0-5 and K-12.

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| **Birth – 3rd Grade Strategies**  | **Not Started** | **Beginning** | **Emerging** | **Developed** | **Well Developed**  | **Priority Level (High, Med, Low)** |
| **Governance**Establish and support collaborative (cross-organizational and cross-sector) board or committee that formalizes decision-making roles and responsibilities among partners and prioritizes B-3efforts. |
| District administrators and community leaders organize a recognized entity (e.g, board, committee, leadership team) and given it the charge to guide, monitor and make decisions regarding B-3 efforts. This B-3 leadership team consists of representatives from the school district(s), community-based early learning programs, community service partners (e.g., health, social service providers), and other education and community development/service organizations as deemed appropriate.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders build and sustain formal linkages between preschool providers and feeder elementary schools (e.g., B-3 professional learning communities) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders organize a B-3 leadership team that includes teachers and administrators from both school and community-based early learning programs, as well as community partners to guide, monitor and make decisions regarding school-program B-3 efforts.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers and families recognize and respect the viability and decision-making authority of the B-3 leadership teams. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers and families use shared language and have a common understanding of B-3.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Strategic Plans**Develop, share, and regularly update a strategic plan for the B-3 work that reflects shared commitment to improving outcomes for children. |
| District administrators and community leaders through the B-3 leadership team conduct and regularly update a community-wide needs assessment that identifies child/family demographics and mobility patterns.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The B-3 leadership team develops and communicates a shared vision and strategic plan for B-3 efforts.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leader, B-3 teachers, and community partners understand and implement their roles and responsibilities in the B-3 system. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Early learning programs/centers have a written policy or statement that recognizes that the care and education children receive affects how well children are ready for Kindergarten.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Birth – 3rd Grade Strategies**  | **Not Started** | **Beginning** | **Emerging** | **Developed** | **Well Developed**  | **Priority Level (High, Med, Low)** |
| The elementary schools have a written policy or statement that recognizes the learning and development of children ages birth to 5 as the foundation for students’ lifelong learning. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School improvement plans includes goals and activities for working with programs and services that children experience before they enter schools. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The schools and early learning programs use the same criteria for measuring a child’s readiness for Kindergarten. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators, school and early learning leaders collaborate across grade levels (B-3) to promote child and family transitions from preschool programs to Kindergarten.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Funding**Generate, reallocate, leverage, connect, and/or blend public and private funds to ensure that B-3 efforts are adequately funded to ensure effective implementation. |
| District and community leaders identify and map the various federal, state, local, and philanthropic funding streams for B-3 programs using the map to blend and braid funding streams to provide adequate funding and resources for B-3 programs and classrooms.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District and community leaders allocate funding for support positions such as a family resource coordinator or a school resource coordinator to assist school and early learning leaders, B-3 teachers and community partners in meeting the needs of the whole child and their families. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders allocate resources and funding in their B-3 programs and classrooms to provide adequate and quality staffing, instructional materials, family and community engagement strategies, etc.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**2. Administrator Effectiveness:** Administrators (district superintendents, school principals, early childhood directors) actively create a culture and organizational structures that ensure the quality of Birth - 3rd grade learning.

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| **Birth – 3rd Grade Strategies**  | **Not Started** | **Beginning** | **Emerging** | **Developed** | **Well Developed**  | **Priority Level (High, Med, Low)** |
| **Visible Leadership**Administrators demonstrate that B-3is a priority to both internal and external stakeholders. |
| District administrators and community leaders increase the number and strengthen their partnerships between districts, Head Start programs, child care organizations, extended learning programs (e.g., after-school programs), and other community-based B-3 care and development programs and support service organizations.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders develop a clear communication plan to share the B-3 vision and strategic plans both internally (within schools and programs) and externally (family and community-wide). |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders communicate the expectation to school leaders and early childhood administrators to focus on core B-3 goals and strategies and minimize barriers that compete for leaders’/administrators’ and teachers’ attention.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders increase the number of partnerships between schools, their feeder early childhood programs, and families.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders conduct partnership strategies consistently, and with the depth that is meaningful and mutually beneficial for all partners. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Foster Teamwork**Administrators foster teamwork among individuals, especially teachers, at all levels within the B-3 work. |
| District administrators and community leaders establish a support network among school and early learning leaders.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders institute a vision and set expectations for school and early learning leaders to build and foster teamwork among teachers.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders institute a vision and set expectations for school and early learning leaders to build and foster teamwork among teachers and community partners. |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Birth – 3rd Grade Strategies**  | **Not Started** | **Beginning** | **Emerging** | **Developed** | **Well Developed**  | **Priority Level (High, Med, Low)** |
| School and early learning leaders connect teachers at the elementary and preschool levels for joint professional development in age/grade-level teams (horizontal) and across age/grade-level teams (vertical), including both school-based and community-based teachers.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders involve teacher teams in setting professional development agendas and selecting materials.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders utilize innovative scheduling and collaborative strategies to engage B-3 teachers and community partners in teamwork/professional development.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers participate in regular professional learning communities with teachers in their grade level (horizontal) and in other grades (vertical).  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Instructional Leadership**Administrators are effective instructional leaders, B-3. |
| District administrators and community leaders participate in professional development to keep abreast of research and trends regarding the learning and development of children (0-8).  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators/community leaders grow their own and others’ leadership skills around improving learning opportunities for children. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders establish and implement effective induction programs and continuous supervision/evaluation of school and program administrators who work in B-3 settings.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders participate in professional development related to the learning and development of children, 0-8. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders use student outcome data to make decisions about instruction, learning environments, teacher assignments, and professional development. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders ensure that the school and center/program focuses on educating the whole child that includes using teaching strategies that develop children’s motor, social, cognitive, language, and emotional development. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders conduct regular classroom observations to provide constructive and supportive feedback to grow teachers’ practice in using research-based, developmentally appropriate practices and learning environments. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders assign teachers to B-3 classrooms who have the strongest knowledge of and practice of developmentally appropriate practice.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**3. Teacher Effectiveness:** Teachers are actively dedicated to providing high-quality instruction and effective learning experiences for all children, Birth - 3rd grade.

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| **Birth – 3rd Grade Strategies**  | **Not Started** | **Beginning** | **Emerging** | **Developed** | **Well Developed**  | **Priority Level (High, Med, Low)** |
| **Focus on Instruction**Teachers’ professional education and development are focused on effectively supporting children’s language/reading, math, social, and emotional development; and on differentiating instruction for all young learners. |
| District administrators and community leaders invest in systematic approach to teacher professional development grounded in child development & focused on effective instruction. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders implement cross-sector and cross-grade professional development opportunities for teachers that reflect best practices, including within age/grade and across age/grade classroom observations and professional learning communities, including teachers in community-based programs. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders ensure that the majority of teachers’’ annual professional development is informed by current research and student-based data, focused on effective instruction, and structured to build collaborative relationships among teachers.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers demonstrate effective support of children’s language/reading, math, and social and emotional development. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers demonstrate increased effectiveness in responding to individual children’s development and learning needs. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers demonstrate leadership in identifying, delivering, and evaluating timely content for their own professional development. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Visible Practice**Observations of classroom practices are regularly used to assess and improve teachers’ effectiveness in creating high-quality instructional, social, and emotional climates. |
| School and early learning leaders use observational tools to assess teacher practices and provide constructive feedback on areas of strength and improvement. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders support teachers in improving their practice. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders provide release time to teachers to observe classrooms (within age/grade levels and across age/grade levels).  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers use observational tools to observe each other’s classroom practices and effectiveness to identify areas of disconnect, and to provide peer-to-peer feedback (within age/grade levels and across age/grade levels). |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers use feedback received from supervisors and peers to improve their practice.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Birth – 3rd Grade Strategies**  | **Not Started** | **Beginning** | **Emerging** | **Developed** | **Well Developed**  | **Priority Level (High, Med, Low)** |
| **Work as Teams**Teachers work as teams, both horizontally and vertically, to improve instruction and effectiveness in the classroom. |
| School and early learning leaders utilize innovative scheduling and collaboration strategies to engage B-3 teachers in teamwork and professional development. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders collect evidence that teacher instruction and effectiveness are improving over time.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers engage with peers to assess, reflect on, and improve their teaching practices.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers collaborate regularly with instructional coaches and mentors.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers use a shared language about student learning.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers demonstrate common and cohesive instructional practices (across classrooms) that are developmentally appropriate and differentiated to meet the needs of all children. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers demonstrate knowledge of instructional practices across the full B-3 grade continuum, not just the age/grade level for which they are responsible.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**4. Instructional Tools:** Standards, curricula, and assessments focus on both academic and social-emotional skills, and are aligned to create instructional coherence, Birth -3rd grade.

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| **Birth – 3rd Grade Strategies**  | **Not Started** | **Beginning** | **Emerging** | **Developed** | **Well Developed**  | **Priority Level (High, Med, Low)** |
| **Standards**Meaningful, rigorous, and aligned standards are used to articulate what children are expected to learn. |
| All B-3 administrators and teachers have a developmentally informed understanding of what young children (0-8) need to know and be able to do.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| All B-3 administrators and teachers ensure that the classroom curriculum is aligned to the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards (0-5) and Illinois Learning Standards (K-3).  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| All B-3 administrators and teachers develop aligned learning progressions that support children’s continuous progress from year to year.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| All B-3 administrators and teachers use standards and learning progressions in professional development and family conferences. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Families understand that learning and development standards exist and how they are used and help their children learn.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Curricula**Curricula that are balanced, intentional, relevant, and developmental are selected and implemented. |
| District administrators and community leaders require and support the use of common curricula and assessments across B-3 classrooms.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders engage teachers in selecting common curricula and assessments and in developing a cohesive B-3 curricular framework.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders provide professional development for school- and community-based teachers around curricula, assessments, and their integration with classrooms practices.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers participate in selecting common curricula and assessments that address both academic skills and social-emotional well-being.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers engage in professional learning communities that address effective instruction and the linkages among curricular goals, content, and teaching strategies.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers use consistent instructional strategies across B-3 classrooms (as developmentally appropriate).  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Assessments**A comprehensive assessment system that includes diagnostic, formative, and summative tools is used to understand students’ progress. |
| District administrators and community leaders establish and regularly update district-level/community-level inventories of appropriate assessment tools and benchmarks. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Birth – 3rd Grade Strategies**  | **Not Started** | **Beginning** | **Emerging** | **Developed** | **Well Developed**  | **Priority Level (High, Med, Low)** |
| District administrators and community leaders implement a common data system that measures academic progress; social, emotional, and physical development; and other indicators of child learning and development. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders provide data to schools and early childhood programs in a timely manner so that data can be used to inform instruction and site-level decisions.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders use assessment data to monitor and improve individual student, school-wide, center/program-wide learning, and teaching practices.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders build assessment loops in which data are shared between early childhood programs and schools.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers use common and consistent diagnostic and screening assessments, across age/grade levels, to identify children who need extra help and connect them with support services and supplemental instruction.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers use common and consistent formative and summative child assessments to reflect on and improve their teaching practices.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Families participate in assessment efforts by both providing and receiving honest, accurate, and regular information about their child’s progress across multiple domains of learning.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| All B-3 administrators, teachers and families use assessment data to inform PreK to Kindergarten transition practices; sharing individual and aggregate student data so that B-3 leaders, teachers and families understand the learning and development achievements and needs of children.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**5. Learning Environment:** The physical space and emotional environment (campuses, buildings, schools, and classrooms) promote collaborative relationships, actively engage all children in a variety of learning experiences and settings, and supports the health and wellness of children and adults.

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| **Birth – 3rd Grade Strategies**  | **Not Started** | **Beginning** | **Emerging** | **Developed** | **Well Developed**  | **Priority Level (High, Med, Low)** |
| **Culturally Inclusive**Learning environments are welcoming and reflect the community of children and their families, home communities, cultures, and languages. |
| District administrators, school leaders, and early childhood administrators use nationally recognized tools/rubrics to evaluate and rate the quality of learning environments, B-3 (e.g., school climate surveys, ECERS-R).  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Dedicated space and resources are provided for families to meet with teachers and community service providers in order to access culturally inclusive resources and support services that support children’s learning and development and families’ needs.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators, school leaders, and early childhood administrators ensure that cultural and linguistic responsiveness is a priority for all staff.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers demonstrate an understanding of how to create and maintain cultural and linguistic responsiveness in their classrooms.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers increase the availability and use of a variety of objects and materials (e.g., books, technology, manipulatives) that reflect diverse language, cultures, and home communities.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Promote Relationships**Learning environments provide a climate that promotes positive interactions and supportive relationships for children and adults. |
| District administrators, school and early learning leaders establish priorities and plans for every building to have dedicated resources that promote staff collaboration, adult learning, and joint-decision-making (e.g., time, opportunity, space for collaboration). |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators, school leaders, and early childhood administrators support teachers’ efforts to improve quality (e.g., professional development, resource allocation).  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers demonstrate an understanding of creating and maintaining environments that are conducive to child learning (e.g., well-managed classrooms that promote executive functioning, including self-regulation of emotions/behavior).  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers report satisfaction about the space, materials, and climate for their teamwork, on-going professional development, and partnerships with families.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Families report that the schools, centers/ programs, and classrooms are welcoming, respectful, inclusive environments that enable partnerships with staff in their children’s education and development. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Birth – 3rd Grade Strategies**  | **Not Started** | **Beginning** | **Emerging** | **Developed** | **Well Developed**  | **Priority Level (High, Med, Low)** |
| **Structured to Support Diverse Learners**Learning environments are organized and provided with resources to support a wide range of development, abilities, and interests. |
| District administrators, school and early learning leaders ensure multiple indoor/outdoor spaces exist that support active project-based learning. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators, school and early learning leaders ensure learning environments provide appropriate space for individualized instruction.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators, school and early learning leaders ensure learning environments provide access for children and adults with disabilities.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers establish environments that support individual, small-group, and whole-group learning. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers organize classrooms and learning environments that exhibit order, safety, and clear routines so that children are not distracted or spend excessive time in transitions. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers have well-organized classrooms that exhibit clear access to high-quality materials that support diverse learning activities.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers increase availability and use a rich variety of objects and materials (e.g, books, math materials, technology, manipulatives) in classrooms, B-3.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**6. Data-Driven Improvement:** Current, relevant, and high-quality data from multiple sources are used to improve schools, programs, classrooms, instruction, professional development, and other systems.

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| **Birth – 3rd Grade Strategies**  | **Not Started** | **Beginning** | **Emerging** | **Developed** | **Well Developed**  | **Priority Level (High, Med, Low)** |
| **Child-based Data**Data from child-based assessments are used to identify achievement gaps and to drive instructional improvement. |
| District administrators and community leaders understand appropriate uses of data and support data systems that gather, store, disseminate data. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders identify and support common measurements and consistent data reporting mechanisms across schools and programs.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders commit to using data to identify and address achievement gaps by providing data disaggregated by student sub-groups (e.g., dual language learners; race/ethnicity; socio-economic status).  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders ensure aggregated data are available by classroom, age/grade level, and school wide.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders use data to allocate resources to provide tiered levels of intervention. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders use data to inform, establish, and deliver professional development priorities.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders share data within and across sectors (e.g., assessment loops) (e.g., across schools, early learning programs, and with community partners) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers know what data are available on students, classrooms, and schools and demonstrate understanding of how to use data to improve and differentiate instruction.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers use progress monitoring tools to understand children’s strengths and needs.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Families have access to data and information about their own child, classrooms, and programs/schools.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Families understand the data available and how to use the data to support their child’s learning. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **School/Program-based Data**Other meaningful data markers (e.g., classroom observations; student attendance; family engagement) are used to identify areas for improvement and to realign resources to support B-3 efforts.  |
| School and early learning leaders develop expectations and processes that ensure multiple data sources are used to understand student progress, instructional effectiveness, and overall program improvement. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders ensure teachers receive professional development on data availability, accessibility, and use. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Birth – 3rd Grade Strategies**  | **Not Started** | **Beginning** | **Emerging** | **Developed** | **Well Developed**  | **Priority Level (High, Med, Low)** |
| School and early learning leaders discuss data on instructional quality with teachers in across grade-level meetings.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders discuss data on children’s learning progressions, social-emotional progression, and health needs with community partners to plan and implement in-school/program and out-of-school/program supports and services.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers participate in training on data availability and use.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers incorporate data into family conferences. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers use data to understand and reduce achievement disparities.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Families discuss data with their child’s teacher, and participate in problem-solving discussions to identify appropriate supports and instructional strategies to promote their child’s learning and development.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Families understand what the data mean for their children, both inside and outside of the classroom.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**7. Engaged Families:** Families are actively and systematically involved with Birth - 3rd grade teachers and administrators as full partners in helping their children develop, learn, and achieve.

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| **Birth – 3rd Grade Strategies**  | **Not Started** | **Beginning** | **Emerging** | **Developed** | **Well Developed**  | **Priority Level (High, Med, Low)** |
| **Core Priority**Teachers, administrators, and all staff in schools and programs understand the importance of, and employ strategies for, engaging families. |
| District administrators and community leaders include positive family engagement into strategic plans.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders include indicators of family engagement in evaluations of school leaders and early childhood administrators.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders adopt or support the development of guidebooks or toolkits based on research to support culturally responsive family engagement practices in schools and programs/centers.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders designate a senior-level position responsible for family engagement, or add it to a senior-level administrator’s job responsibilities.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders assign a family engagement resource and/or school resource coordinator in schools and programs/centers where there is highest need.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders include indicators of positive family engagement in teacher and staff evaluations.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders provide ongoing professional development and support focused on family engagement for teachers and staff.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders designate a welcoming space where families can gather and meet with teachers (e.g., family resource room).  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers make family engagement one of their top priorities of their jobs. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers celebrate the cultural and linguistic diversity of their children and families and link instruction with family backgrounds of students utilizing culturally responsive teaching practices.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Two-Way Communication**Schools and programs establish regular two-way communication approaches to share data with, and to learn from, families. |
| District administrators and community leaders link family engagement to district’s or communities’ B-3 goals. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders set the expectations that schools and programs/centers will provide families with a rich array of data on their child (e.g., attendance, academic progress, social-emotional progress).  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Birth – 3rd Grade Strategies**  | **Not Started** | **Beginning** | **Emerging** | **Developed** | **Well Developed**  | **Priority Level (High, Med, Low)** |
| District administrators/community leaders set the expectations that schools/programs/centers will share an array of data on children to community partners for program/service planning, coordination, and implementation. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders (or a family/school resource coordinator) link families to community partners who provide support resources (e.g., GED preparation, social services) through collaborations with community partners. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders will establish culturally responsive, multi-modal systems of communication with families (e.g., policies and rules, available services and supports, family and child activities, data), including handbooks, newsletters, websites, email, etc.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Teachers provide regular, accessible, and multi-modal opportunities for engaging families in understanding/supporting their child’s progress (e.g., parent-teacher conferences, home visits).  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers initiate opportunities to engage with families to develop deeper understanding of each child’s progress from home, community, and cultural perspectives.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Families report back to the school that there are adequate opportunities for engagement in their children’s education.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Families report back to the school that they feel welcomed and respected in the communications they receive from the school or program/center.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Families sustain engagement in their children’s care and education through elementary school.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Shared-Leadership/Decision-making**Families, teachers, and administrators share decision-making for student success. |
| District administrators and community leaders designate teams of teachers, administrators and families that build site-level capacity for family engagement.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders host parent academies or family leadership institutes where families learn how to guide their children’s educational success.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders support families to share their cultural wisdom to inform definitions of and strategies to achieve educational success.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers engage families in the setting of educational goals for their children. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Families participate in setting goals for their child’s/school/program through leadership roles on site-based leadership teams.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Families report back to the school/program/ center that they feel they are partners with teachers in setting goals for their own children.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**8. Continuity and Pathways:** Every child, especially those most at risk for school failure, has access to a continuity of services and a clear pathway of high-quality education from Birth through 3rd grade.

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| **Birth – 3rd Grade Strategies**  | **Not Started** | **Beginning** | **Emerging** | **Developed** | **Well Developed**  | **Priority Level (High, Med, Low)** |
| **Access and Continuity of Services**Children’s access to high-quality learning opportunities is expanded and extended, especially for children most at risk. |
| District administrators and community leaders analyze data to understand the demographic characteristics of children in their community and the availability of high-quality programs/centers/schools in the community.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders annually update a map of the feeder patterns of children into public schools and of the mobility patterns of children, B-3.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders (or the B-3 leadership team) regularly conduct an asset map of resources and supports available in the community that could partner with and coordinate with elementary schools and early learning programs/centers.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders increase the number of slots available for children to attend full-day Kindergarten.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders co-locate or situate early learning programs/centers close-by feeder elementary schools to foster instructional alignment and smooth PreK – Kindergarten transitions for children and families.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| District administrators and community leaders increase children’s access to after-school, extended learning opportunities, and community supports.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers have a clear understanding of the demographic characteristics and learning and development strengths and needs of children in their classrooms.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers know of and communicate with families the resources available to extend children’s learning time, in both school-based and community-based programs.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Families receive accessible information about early learning, after-school programs, extended learning opportunities and community supports.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Birth – 3rd Grade Pathways** Policies and practices are in place that focuses on ensuring a stable pathway of high-quality learning opportunities for every child from Birth – 3rd grade. |
| District administrators and community leaders develop data-informed systems to understand feeder patterns into elementary schools and student mobility across schools/programs/ centers.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Birth – 3rd Grade Strategies**  | **Not Started** | **Beginning** | **Emerging** | **Developed** | **Well Developed**  | **Priority Level (High, Med, Low)** |
| District administrators and community leaders create new feeder patterns by aligning eligibility and enrollment policies and practices.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders expand and strengthen partnerships across early learning/school feeder patterns.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders use common transition forms and processes across all classrooms, settings, and age/grade levels.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders establish policies and practices that match the most at-risk students with the teachers who can best support them, year after year (e.g., intentional classrooms assignments, teacher looping).  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| School and early learning leaders establish connections with after- and non-school supports and services (e.g., early intervention, child welfare systems, health services).  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers use common transition forms and processes.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers review incoming students’ files/portfolios prior to the start of the school year and provide similar information to their students’ next-year teachers.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B-3 teachers (or a family resource coordinator) connect students and families with after-school and non-school supports and services.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Families report that their child is receiving a high-quality continuum of learning, B-3.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Families know how and why to advocate for their child to have a clear, high-quality educational pathway from birth through 3rd grade.  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Section 3: Action Planning for Short-Term, Mid-Term, and Long-Term Goals**

**1. Cross-Sector Action Plan**

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| **Action Plan for Continuous Improvement** |  |  |
| **Short-Term, Medium, Term, and Long-Term Goals** | **Timeline** | **Persons Responsible** | **Activities or Actions to be Taken** | **Evaluation Plan** **(Indicators and Evidence of Implementation and Effectiveness)****Short-Term, Medium, Term, and Long-Term Outcomes** |
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**2. Administrator Effectiveness Action Plan**

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| **Action Plan for Continuous Improvement** |  |  |
| **Short-Term, Medium, Term, and Long-Term Goals** | **Timeline** | **Persons Responsible** | **Activities or Actions to be Taken** | **Evaluation Plan** **(Indicators and Evidence of Implementation and Effectiveness)****Short-Term, Medium, Term, and Long-Term Outcomes** |
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**3. Teacher Effectiveness Action Plan**

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| **Action Plan for Continuous Improvement** |  |  |
| **Short-Term, Medium, Term, and Long-Term Goals** | **Timeline** | **Persons Responsible** | **Activities or Actions to be Taken** | **Evaluation Plan** **(Indicators and Evidence of Implementation and Effectiveness)****Short-Term, Medium, Term, and Long-Term Outcomes** |
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**4. Instructional Tools Action Plan**

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| **Action Plan for Continuous Improvement** |  |  |
| **Short-Term, Medium, Term, and Long-Term Goals** | **Timeline** | **Persons Responsible** | **Activities or Actions to be Taken** | **Evaluation Plan** **(Indicators and Evidence of Implementation and Effectiveness)****Short-Term, Medium, Term, and Long-Term Outcomes** |
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**5. Learning Environment Action Plan**

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| **Action Plan for Continuous Improvement** |  |  |
| **Short-Term, Medium, Term, and Long-Term Goals** | **Timeline** | **Persons Responsible** | **Activities or Actions to be Taken** | **Evaluation Plan** **(Indicators and Evidence of Implementation and Effectiveness)****Short-Term, Medium, Term, and Long-Term Outcomes** |
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**6. Data-Driven Improvement Action Plan**

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| **Action Plan for Continuous Improvement** |  |  |
| **Short-Term, Medium, Term, and Long-Term Goals** | **Timeline** | **Persons Responsible** | **Activities or Actions to be Taken** | **Evaluation Plan** **(Indicators and Evidence of Implementation and Effectiveness)****Short-Term, Medium, Term, and Long-Term Outcomes** |
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**7. Engaged Families Action Plan**

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| **Action Plan for Continuous Improvement** |  |  |
| **Short-Term, Medium, Term, and Long-Term Goals** | **Timeline** | **Persons Responsible** | **Activities or Actions to be Taken** | **Evaluation Plan** **(Indicators and Evidence of Implementation and Effectiveness)****Short-Term, Medium, Term, and Long-Term Outcomes** |
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**8. Continuity and Pathways Action Plan**

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| **Action Plan for Continuous Improvement** |  |  |
| **Short-Term, Medium, Term, and Long-Term Goals** | **Timeline** | **Persons Responsible** | **Activities or Actions to be Taken** | **Evaluation Plan** **(Indicators and Evidence of Implementation and Effectiveness)****Short-Term, Medium, Term, and Long-Term Outcomes** |
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**Glossary of Terms**

The terms in this self-assessment are intentionally inclusive and can be tailored to fit the nomenclature used in your communities. Here are definitions of some of the terms used in this document.

**Early Learning Programs:** In order to distinguish between elementary schools and 0 – age 5 programs, we used the term early learning programs and early learning leaders rather than early childhood (which for this project denotes a 0 – 8 age span).

**B-3:** This term refers to the 0 (birth) through 8 age span. Although many districts do not offer services and programming for birth to age 2, the focus of the PreK Expansion Grants are to connect schools to community services, including community centers and programs that serve children starting at birth.

**District administrators and community leaders:** Any person whose position resides within the district’s central office (e.g., superintendent, assistant superintendent, curriculum and instruction coordinator). A community leader is someone within the community who is recognized as a leader for supporting early childhood programming (e.g., Head Start Director, Early Learning Center Director).

**School and Early Learning Leaders:** A person who holds a leadership position in a school building or early learning program/center (e.g., principal, assistant principal, teacher leader, early childhood program director, early childhood program coordinator).

**B-3 Teachers:** A person who works within the classroom providing instruction and emotional support to children within a grade of the Birth through Grade 3 continuum (e.g., teacher, lead teacher, teacher’s aide, assistant teacher).

**Community partners:** These are typically state or local level organizations that support services to families and their children. These services may include: health care (mental and physical health), income assistance, job training, child welfare, etc. Community partners may also include organizations that provide extended learning opportunities such as museums, YMCA/YWCA, Girl Scouts/Boy Scouts, etc.

1. This B-3 Framework and the strategies is an adapted model of Prek-3 researchers Kristie Kauerz and Julia Coffman (2013). Elements from research conducted by B-3 researchers and policy analysts in the Center for the Study of Education Policy at Illinois State University, the Human Capital Research Collaborative at the University of Minnesota on Child Parent Centers, and the Coalition of Community Schools has been threaded throughout the strategies to modify Kauerz and Coffman’s framework. References and a glossary of terms are on the last page of this document. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)