

Birth to Grade 3 Alignment Initiatives: Designing, Implementing & Measuring Success

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Welcome!

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- Who Are the Presenters?
- Who is the Audience?
- Why Are We Attending?



Topics Covered

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- Alignment Goals
- Key Elements of an Alignment Framework
- Bird's Eye View of One Massachusetts Alignment Project
- Aerial View of Alignment Partnerships
- Themes and Patterns that Emerge
- Applying an Alignment Framework to Your Setting

**All children should have access to a high quality
educational continuum that connects all
programs from birth to 3rd grade in a coherent
system of services and supports**

Birth to 3rd Grade Approach to Educational Reform

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Building a Coherent Infrastructure

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Requires that standards, curricula, assessment and professional development are strongly aligned across and in the context of high quality developmentally appropriate early care and education settings

Where are you on the path toward Alignment?

Take a Few Minutes to Complete the Survey!

What did you learn?

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Debrief


Adopting a Framework

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If you do not
know where you
are going you
might end up
somewhere else.

(Yogi Berra)

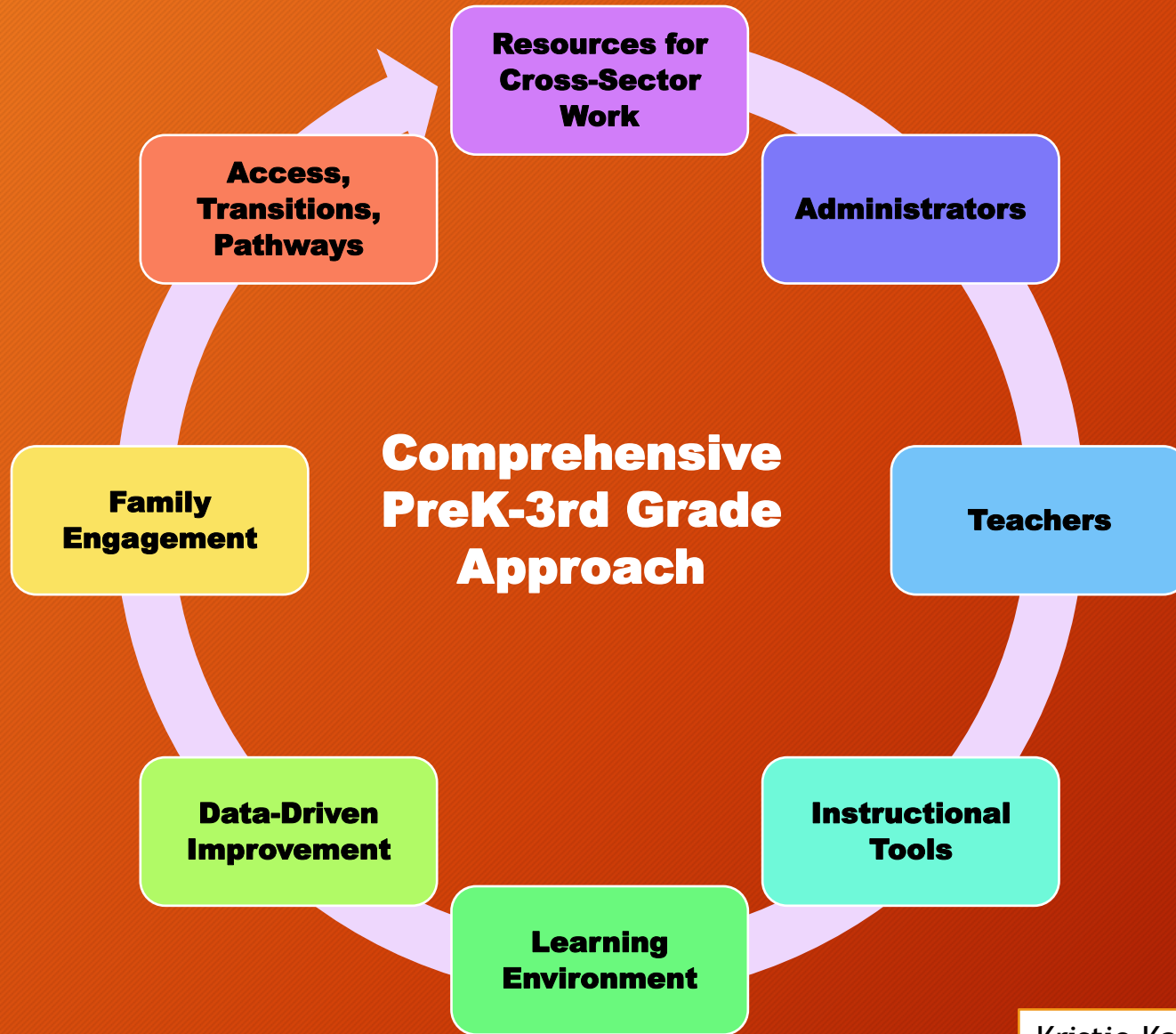




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MARCH 2013

Framework for Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating PreK-3rd Grade Approaches



The Framework for the Lowell Birth to Grade 3 Alignment Initiative

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Cross Sector Work
Curriculum and Assessment Alignment
Teacher and Caregiver Capacity
Instructional Environments
Data Use

Where did we start?

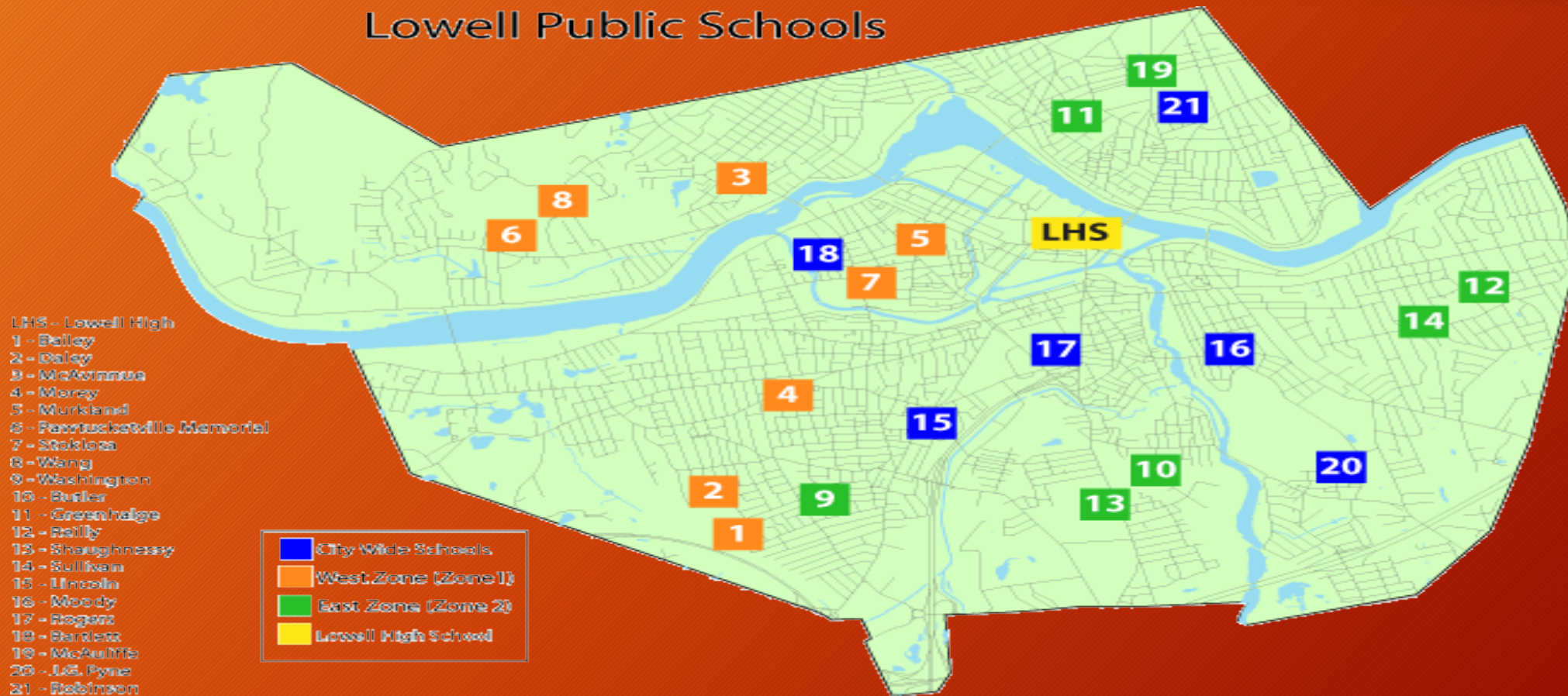
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- **Targeted 2 neighborhoods**

- 2 elementary schools
- 8 feeder programs
 - 2 center based programs
 - 5 family child care systems
 - Head Start

Priorities & Target Pilot Sites

Lowell Public Schools



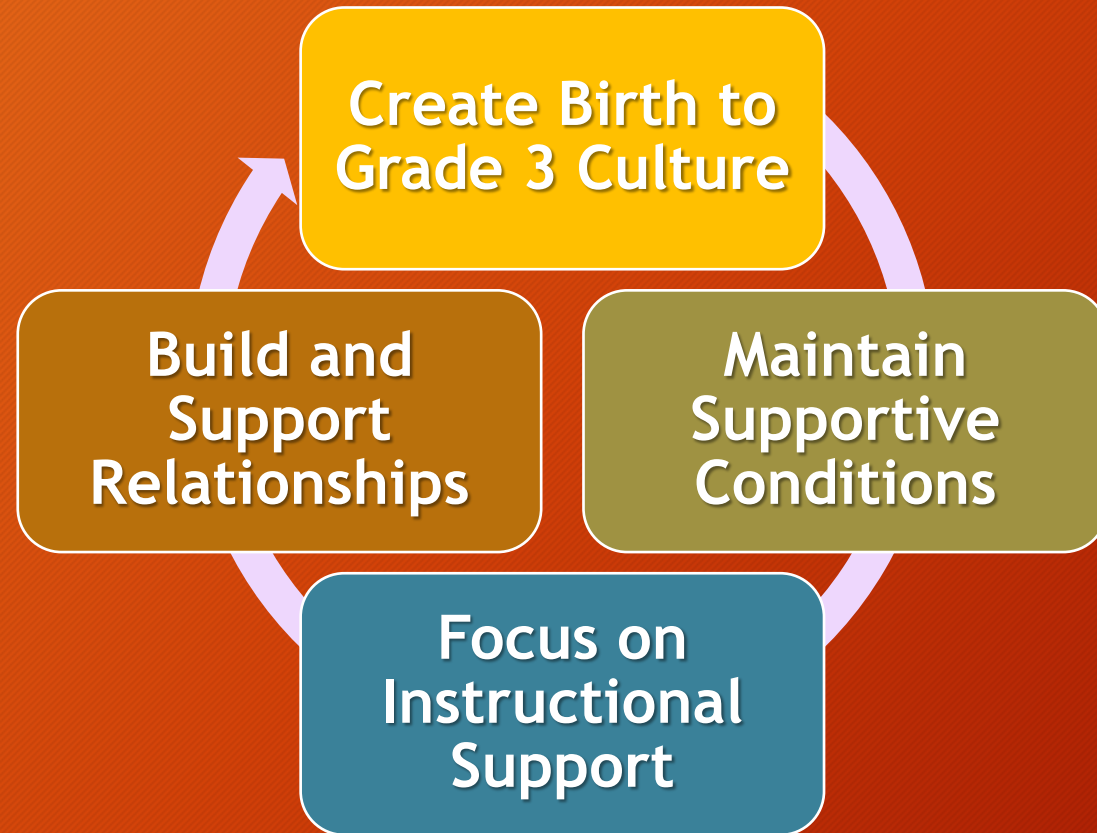
Established a Leadership Alignment Team

14

- 2 Elementary Schools
- 5 Family Child Care Systems
- 7 Center-Based Programs
- Head Start
- Public School Early Childhood Directors
-
- Independent Facilitator, ECA

18 Member Leadership Alignment Team

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Leadership Questions

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- What organizational supports and structures are needed to support the Alignment approach?
- What can we do to advance the approach?
- What critical changes in policy and services are needed to enhance our capacity to align the system?

Alignment Phase 1

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Goal: Consistency in Program Quality and Child Assessment

Assessments: CLASS, QRIS Measures, GOLD

Instruction based on Assessment and Quality Learning Environments

If we change our learning environments and differentiate and plan instruction based on child assessment data we will change student outcomes.

Alignment: Start-Up Years

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- Assessed Quality Using CLASS (33 family child care & programs)
- Trained 60 practitioners on Teaching Strategies Gold and purchased online licenses
- Launched a PD program targeting Early Learning Standards & the Common Core
- Created QRIS communities of practice
- Developed a comprehensive School Readiness Agenda

Communities of Practice

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- For Family Child Care Providers
- For Center-Based Providers
- Better align the QRIS system with other work
- Understand how classrooms look different at various QRIS levels
 - Network, problem solve
- Share successes and opportunities relative to quality improvement efforts

School Readiness

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The Framework

School Readiness Plan

- Evolved from discussions on Learning Standards
- Formed a Subcommittee of the Leadership Alignment Team
- Reviewed Resources on School Readiness
 - Work of other States in defining the concept
 - Research on Skills that Constitute School Readiness in Children
 - School Readiness Plans developed by other communities in MA and beyond
 - College to Career Readiness Concept Paper
- Surveyed School Administrators & K Teachers and Synthesized Results
- Agreed on a Definition and Created a School Readiness Brief
- Developed a Strategic Plan

Aligns with the National Governors' Association Task Force on School Readiness

Develop a vision and strategic plan for school readiness that considers the role of families, schools, and communities and that addresses the developmental needs of children beginning before birth to kindergarten and beyond.

School Readiness

- **Ready School and Teachers**

- **Ready Systems**

- **Ready Community**

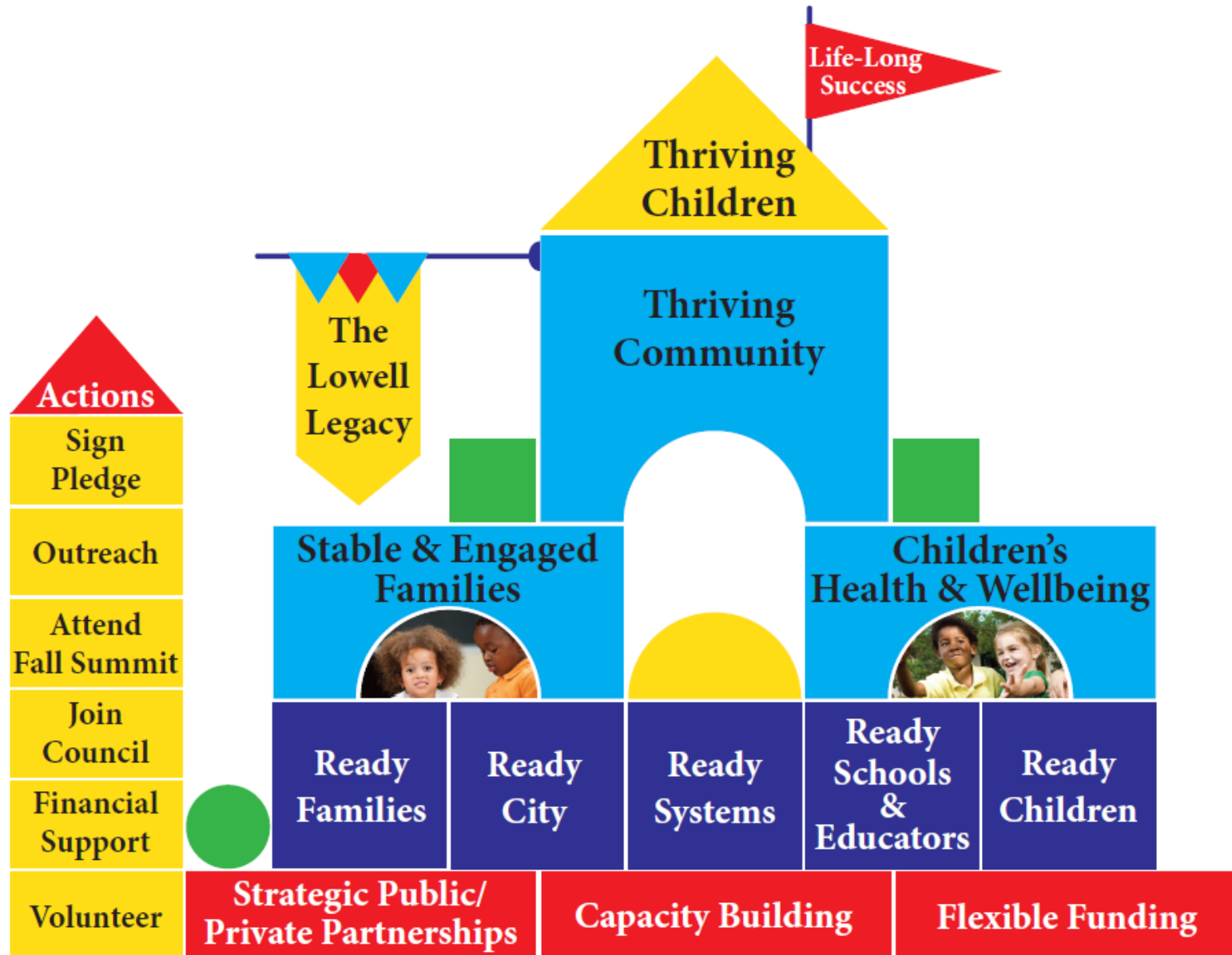


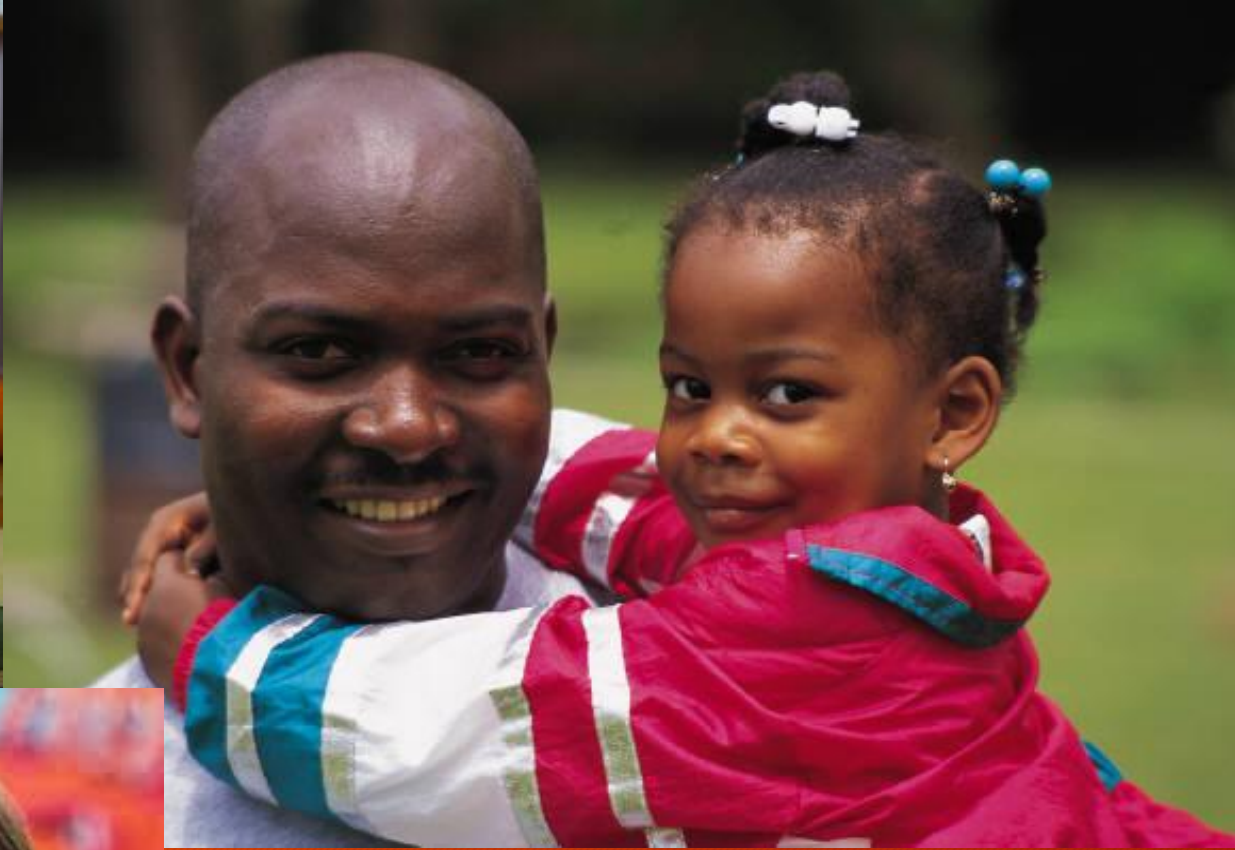
- **Ready Families**

- **Ready Children**

THE LOWELL LEGACY

SCHOOL READINESS BUILDING BLOCKS





Mid Level Alignment

Phase 2

Mid Level Alignment: Priority Areas

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- **Learning Standards**
- **Health, Family Support and Learning**
- **Accountability**

Learning Standards

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- Training
- Communities of Practice & Coaching
- CLASS Assessments
- Leadership Institute
- City-Wide School Readiness Summit

Communities of Practice

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Educators

Aligning curriculum, assessment strategies and developmentally appropriate practices

30 participants

Weekly 2.5 hour sessions in 6 month cycles

Membership in a Professional Organization plus stipend

Administrators

Presenting challenges and getting group feedback on supporting teachers in implementing standards in developmentally appropriate contexts

45 participants

Weekly sessions in 3 month cycles

Membership in a Professional Organization

Parents

Working as partners with educators and administrators in helping children develop, learn and achieve

30 participants

Weekly sessions in 6 month cycles

Stipends and child care provided

City Wide School Readiness Summit

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Purpose

Ensure all Stakeholders understand School Readiness Vision & Strategic Plan

Increase awareness of the importance of the Early Years in building the foundation for College and Career Success

Audience

- Elected Officials
- Business leaders
- School and community officials
- Parents
- Educators

Features

- Keynote Speakers
- Plenary Sessions
- Panels
- Networking Opportunities

Leadership Institute for Administrators

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- **Purpose**

Increase understanding of child development and developmentally appropriate practices and they both inform standards driven instruction

- **Format**

- Key note speaker, plenary session and 2 hour break-out sessions
- 16 hrs.- face to face and virtual study groups

Health, Family Support and Learning

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- **City Wide Assessment of**

What Constitutes Effective Family Engagement

- **Pilot Model of Training and Communities of Practice**

- **Mapp Model and Epstein's Framework of Family Engagement**
- **Communities of Practice for families, educators and administrators led by Social Worker and Parent Coach**

Family Touchpoints-Thinking Strategically

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- What are all the Touchpoints with parents seeking support for healthy development and well-being of their children or when they are looking for child care, entering their children into an early education program or transitioning to a new setting?
- How do these Touchpoints vary for different segments of the population of children with high needs? In different neighborhoods? In different family structures? Characteristics?
- How could each of these Touchpoints be used more strategically to engage more deeply with parents, provide better information, and reinforce a message of support and guidance?
- What new Touchpoints might we creatively consider such as social media, events and partner organizations' communication channels?

Data Days

Monthly data discussions

Instructional Support Coaches:

Work with center-based and family child care homes to use TSG DATA to assess progress and plan instruction

Build Infrastructure:

- Manage, analyze and report TSG and CLASS data
- Create City wide plan for improving quality and student outcomes

Reflection

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**A thought going
around in
my head...**

**Some ideas that square
with my thinking...**

**Three points I would like to
remember...**

Putting the Lowell Project in Context

The Massachusetts EEC Birth to 3rd Grade Alignment
Partnerships


Questions & Discussion

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Applying the Alignment Framework to Your Setting

Review the Framework
Choose One or Two Target Areas
Complete the Self Assessment



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Framework for Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating PreK-3rd Grade Approaches

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Purpose of this framework:

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- Builds a foundation of content, process, and norms for professional collaboration
- Establishes a shared vision of high-quality developmentally based learning
- Details implementation plans that establish accountability for improving child outcomes and closing achievement gaps
- Targets evaluation strategies to ensure activities are in place to impact child outcomes

Bucket

The eight major categories of effort that structure a comprehensive approach to PreK-3rd grade reform.



GOAL:

Overarching Goal

A broad statement of what each bucket/category of effort aims to achieve.

PreK-3rd Strategies

Culled from research and evidence-based practices, these activities are essential to a comprehensive PreK-3rd grade approach.

Example Implementation Indicators

Effective PreK-3rd reforms require stakeholders across the system to act in different ways in order to change the overall system so that high-quality, developmentally based instruction is prioritized.

This column highlights sample indicators, categorized by key stakeholder group, of changed actions at the system level.

These indicators map directly back to the PreK-3rd activities in the prior column.

Self-Assess Depth of Implementation/Alignment

This column provides a means for self-assessing the robustness of PreK-3rd activities.

To be doing the most comprehensive PreK-3rd work, all circles should be checked.

If only one or two circles are checked, this can serve as a guide for how to strengthen or enhance a PreK-3rd grade strategy.

These self-assessment checklists are neither comprehensive nor exhaustive, but provide quick examples of how to think about the depth of a PreK-3rd approach.

Example Evaluation Approach

This column provides a definition of the purpose(s) for evaluating the activities within this bucket and example methods and tools for evaluating them.

Most methods should be administered early in implementation to collect baseline data and then repeated later to allow for comparisons.

Whenever possible, methods to assess activities should be triangulated (using two or more methods to assess the same activities).

Application Activity

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- One you have completed the Self Assessment, think about ways to apply the results to your setting.
- Use the Application Planning form to create a plan of action.
- Share your plan with another Session participant.



Application Activity Debrief

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Wrap up & Evaluation

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