



BLUEPRINT

for

EARLY CHILDHOOD SUCCESS



2020

ANNUAL REPORT

OUR MISSION

WE'RE ENSURING EVERY CHILD READS AT GRADE LEVEL BY THE END OF THIRD GRADE.

Three out of four Nashville third graders are not reading on grade level: a challenge Nashville has wrestled with for more than two decades. The impact that can have on a city like Nashville is exponential. The impact that can have on children and families is devastating. Yet, despite those facts, we have struggled to make meaningful improvements over the last 25 years. The Blueprint for Early Childhood Success is leading the charge to ensure that every child in our community has an equal chance to be successful in school and beyond. How? By thinking bigger, digging deeper and putting a plan in place that accelerates action.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

STEERING COMMITTEE

Elyse Adler, [Nashville Public Library](#)

Elizabeth Attack, [Nashville Public Library](#)

Dr. Adrienne Battle, [Metro Nashville Public Schools](#)

Dr. Mason Bellamy, [Metro Nashville Public Schools](#)

Dr. Deborah Boyd, [Lipscomb University, College of Education](#)

Robert Fisher, [Nashville Mayor's Office](#)

Brenda Haywood, [Nashville Mayor's Office](#)

Dean Hoskins, [Governor's Early Literacy Foundation](#)

Melissa Jagers, [Alignment Nashville](#)

Erica Mitchell, [United Way of Greater Nashville](#)

Tom Parrish, [Scarlett Family Foundation](#)

Samantha Perez, [Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce](#)

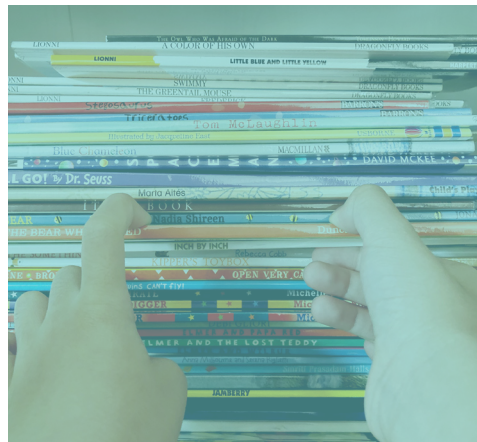
Dr. Susan Porter, [Metro Nashville Public Schools](#), Parent Advocate

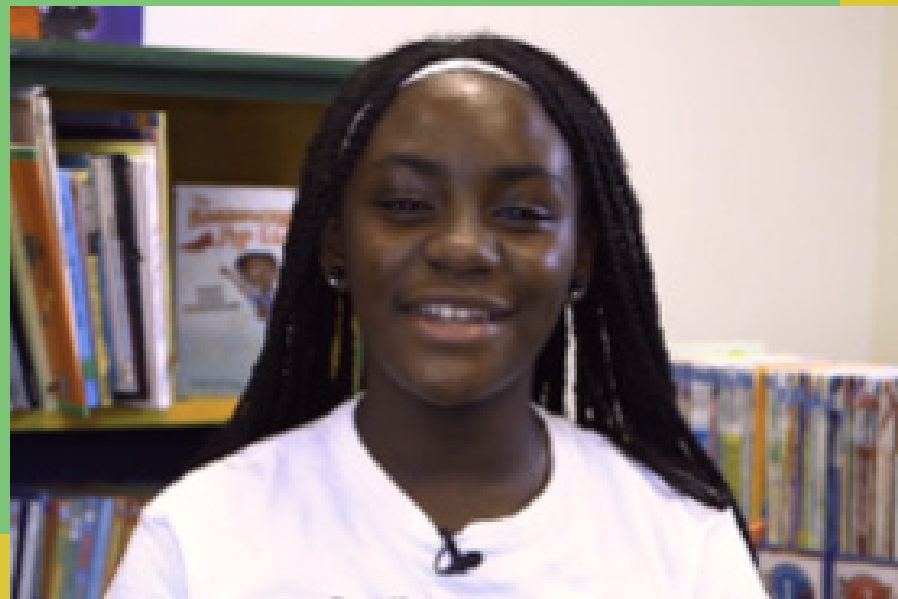
Hannah Strickland, [Metro Nashville Public Schools](#)

Dr. David Williams, [Metro Nashville Public Schools](#)

“ It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men. ”

— Frederick Douglass





“ I like to read because knowledge is power. You can do a lot of things with your life ... and with your education when you have power. I love when books create an image that I can relate to. ”

– Makayla, 8th grader,
Rose Park Magnet,
Math and Science Middle School



“ I read graphic novels. I hope that counts. I get distracted easily. When I read a graphic novel, it’s more exciting. ”

– Michael, 8th grade,
J.T. Moore Middle School



THE ISSUE

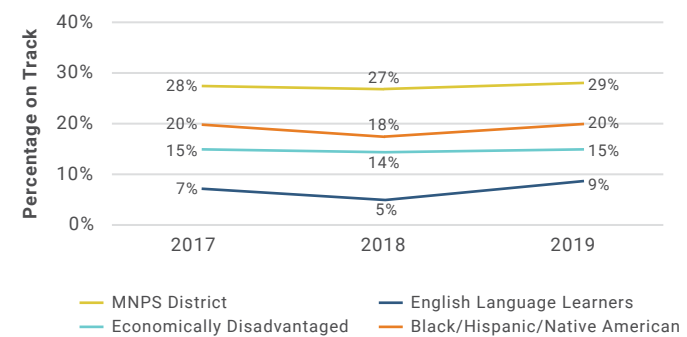
OUR CITY IS FACING A LITERACY EMERGENCY.

Why does third grade reading matter? Third-grade reading is a key indicator of future success. And when a child misses this early milestone, their chances of success are dramatically curtailed. They struggle to understand math problems, complete science experiments and comprehend their history lessons. The statistics are staggering for kids who miss this milestone:

- **1 in 6 drop out of high school without a diploma.**
- **They earn half the annual income of their peers.**
- **They have higher incidences of arrest or incarceration.**

Consequently, these students face a cascading number of other personal and social challenges that travel with them their entire lives.

3-Year Trend of Nashville's Third Grade Literacy



Third grade TNReady ELA data are available for the 2017, 2018, and 2019 school years. In Metro Nashville Public Schools, literacy rates have not changed significantly in three years—both district wide and among key student subgroups.

Data provided by the Scarlett Foundation.

HOW IT STARTED

In 2017, the City of Nashville convened The Nashville Literacy Collaborative, a group of more than 200 community leaders and 30 national experts. Over a six-month period, the group inventoried and collected data on existing early literacy efforts across the city, analyzing that data to identify gaps and deficiencies. They dug into state and local data about proficiency as well as demographic trends in the county that could affect proficiency. They surveyed schools about on-the-ground challenges, needs and perceptions, visiting classrooms to understand what literacy instruction looks like today and meeting with Metro Nashville Public School leaders to understand their vision for how that needed to improve.

They asked community partners to weigh in with their ideas, questions and concerns. They poured through evidence-based research from around the country to understand what has shown the most promising results in other communities and spoke at length with leaders in cities seen as doing the most innovative or impactful work.

The result: The Blueprint for Early Childhood Success.





“Community and literacy are at the heart of everything Nashville Public Library does. When three-quarters of our third graders don’t read on grade level, that’s a crisis that the entire community must work together to solve. NPL is honored to partner with the Blueprint in this endeavor. Not only do we have opportunities to connect families, children and educators with our resources and programs, but we also make sure our resources are the right ones for our community and its unique needs.”

– Liz Attack, Bringing Books to Life
Program Manager, Nashville
Public Library
Member, Steering Committee,
Blueprint for Early Childhood Success

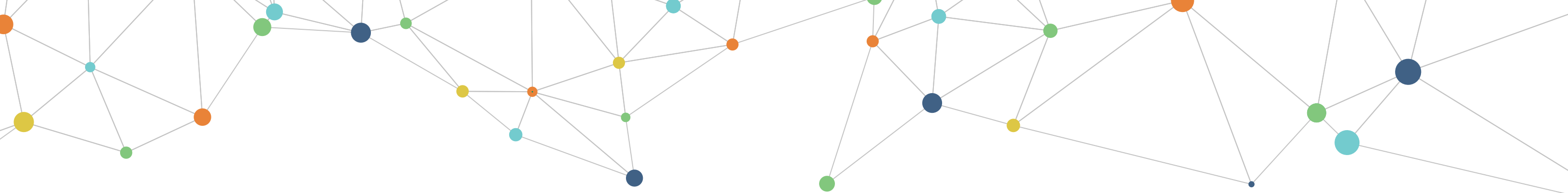




“ If I knew as a kid what I know now, I’d rather have a library on every corner rather than a gym. ”

– Tremayne Haymer, a North Nashville native and father to two sons who attend MNPS charter schools





THE BLUEPRINT IN ACTION

COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Forming a steering committee and creating a common agenda is hard work. However, it is what happens after the overall vision has been agreed upon that is key to the success of systems change.

The Blueprint adheres to the framework of collective impact to guide its work and operations. The core tenets of collective impact are:

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Common Agenda | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Common understanding of the problem• Shared vision for change |
| 2 | Shared Measurement | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collecting data and measuring results• Focus on performance management• Shared accountability |
| 3 | Mutually Reinforcing Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Differentiated approaches• Coordination through join plan of action |
| 4 | Continuous Communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consistent and open communication• Focus on building trust |
| 5 | Backbone Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Separate organization(s) with staff• Resources and skills to convene and coordinate participating organizations |

The **Blueprint for Early Childhood Success** is proud of the numerous working groups in Nashville that are striving to make a difference for children and families in their literacy journey.

After rigorous research, the Blueprint identified six pillars as the critical elements needed to carve a path forward for literacy in our community. Those six pillars are:

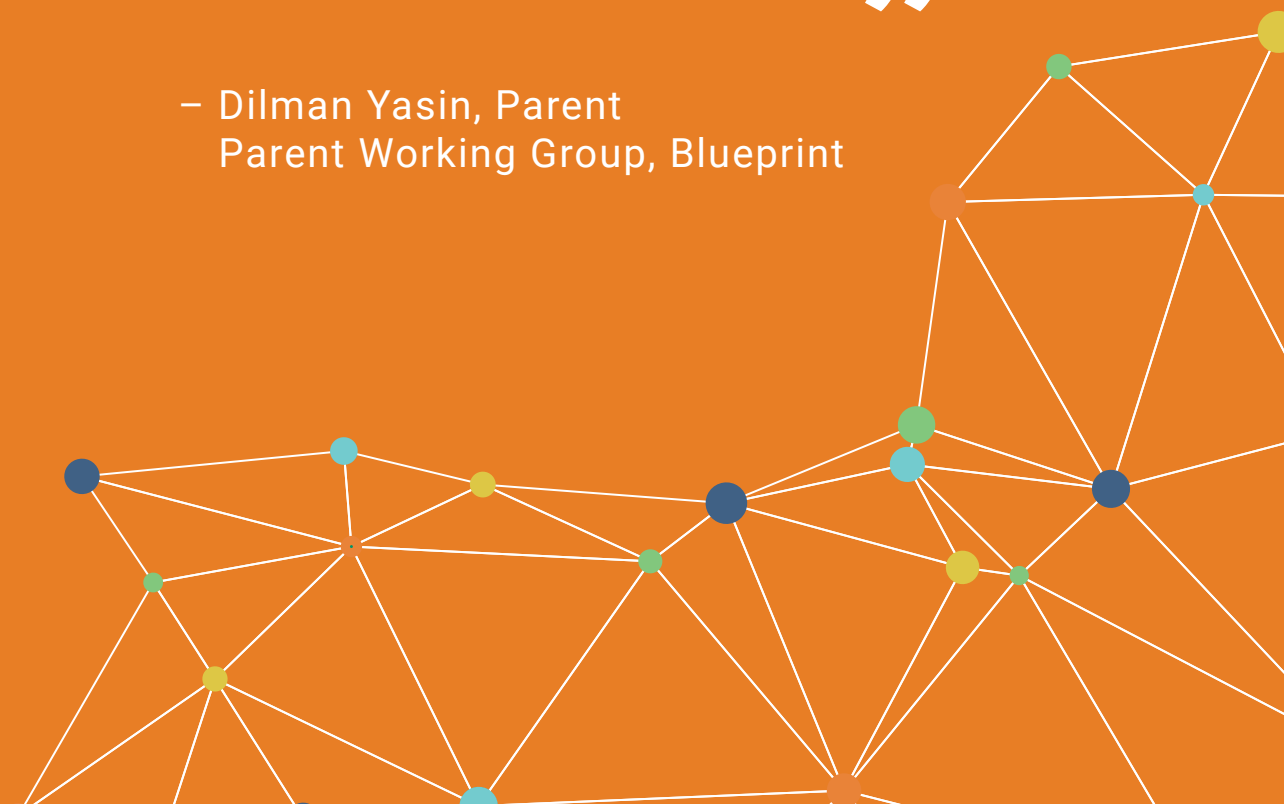
- **Strengthen birth through age three supports**
- **Improve pre-K quality and access**
- **Strengthen the district’s literacy approach**
- **Reduce chronic absence**
- **Address summer learning loss and maximize out of school time**
- **Rally the community**

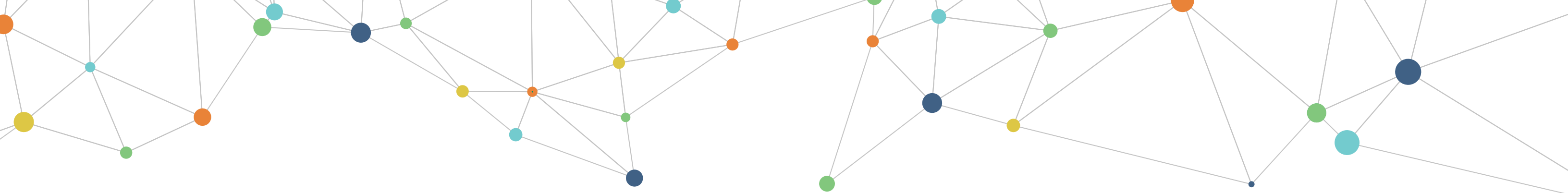
Outcomes in each pillar are accomplished through a growing number of working groups. In Collective Impact, **Working Groups** is where the work happens. These strategy teams are the heartbeat of the initiative. It is where the action occurs, and goals are brought to life. Working groups are comprised of individuals representing multiple sectors of the community including parents, nonprofits, school district leadership and government. Groups develop action plans, including goals and measurable outcomes, to advance the work. These teams are vital to moving the Blueprint in the direction of the common agenda.



“ Literacy success is important to my family because it helps us develop healthy habits in navigating the world around us. We are able to read and learn about commonalities and differences to embrace one another through the love of reading, play and discussion. ”

– Dilman Yasin, Parent
Parent Working Group, Blueprint





2019-20 WORKING GROUPS

TEACHER PIPELINE

The Teacher Pipeline working group addresses the professional challenges of early educators including wage and benefits disparities, incongruent professional standards and competencies and lack of career mobility. [Click here to learn more.](#)

PARENT GROUP

The Parent working group brings parent voice to the table to inform Blueprint priorities as well as raise parental awareness on the importance of literacy and connect parents to resources.

EARLY LEARNING ACCESS 4 ALL

The Early Learning Access 4 All working group addresses inequitable access to early childhood education opportunities. The group works to ensure ease of access to childcare centers, resources and information for all families across Davidson County. [Click here to learn more.](#)

LITERACY CHAT

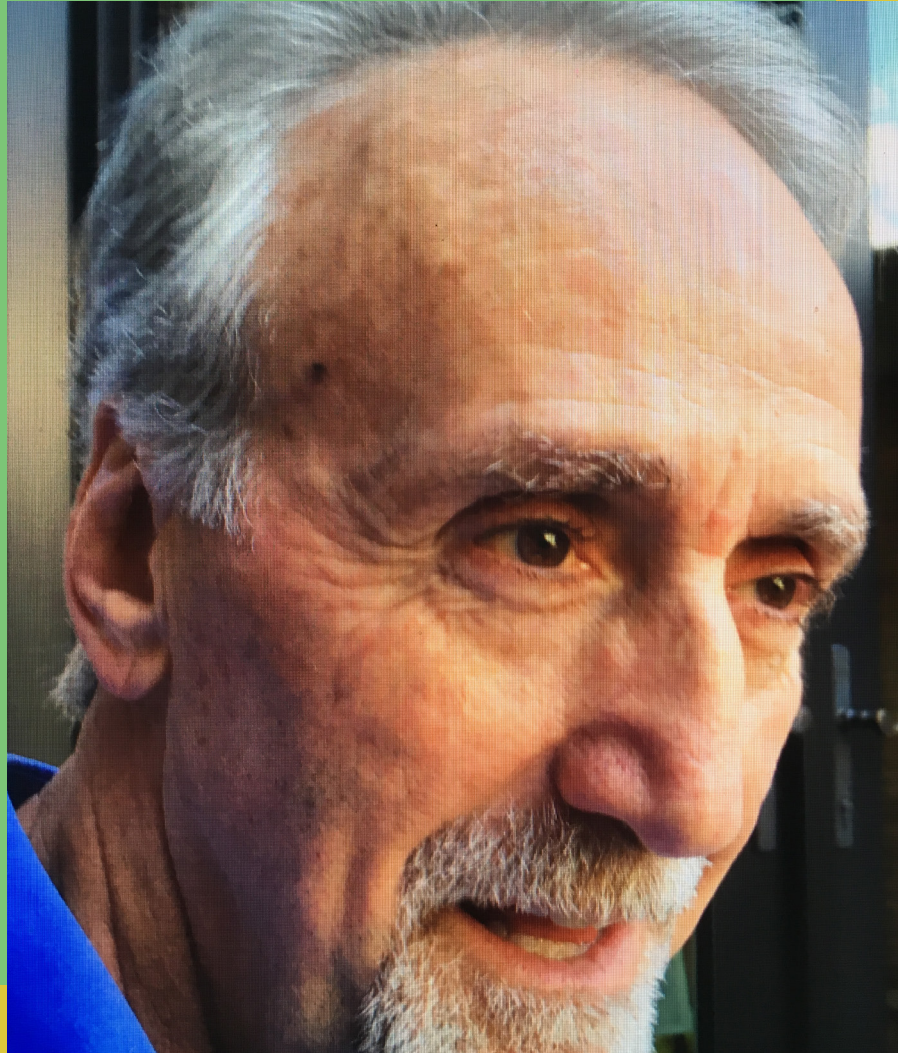
The Literacy Chat working group raises community awareness on important literacy topics and seeks to rally the community around the importance of the community role in addressing the literacy crisis. [Click here to see past literacy conversations.](#)

STAFFING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Staffing and Professional Development working group addresses inequitable access to high-quality, literacy-focused early childhood professional development. The group has its sights on growing a statewide community of practice. [Click here to learn more.](#)

SUMMER LEARNING

Summer Learning partners are developing into a robust working group. They are working to align goals and have a common set of practices and outcomes across multiple summer learning partners. [Click here to learn more.](#)



“ On a simplistic level, our future will be successful if today’s children have mastered literacy. On a higher level, depriving young people of the tools to literacy is almost as heartbreaking as depriving them of the air we breathe. Greater literacy allows them to be curious, to use their imaginations, to discover their inner selves and to become more productive citizens of our world. ”

– Kevin Warner, Community Member

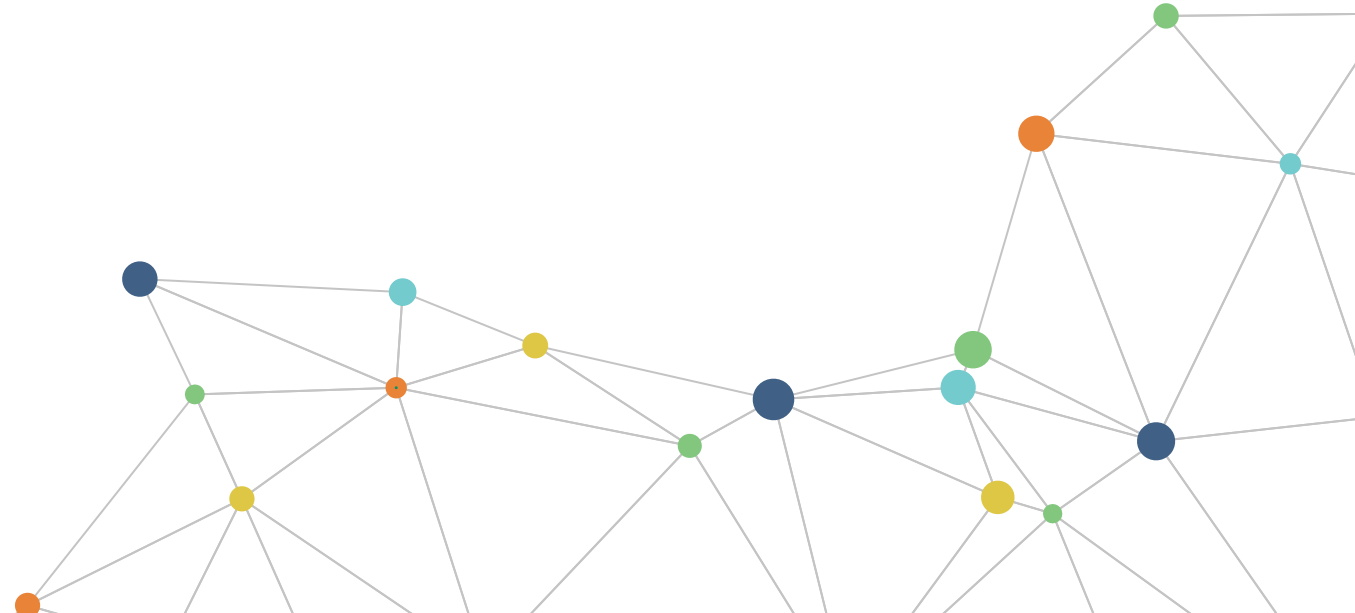




IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

- Supported **120 teachers and 1,380* student participants** in virtual summer sessions
- Supported **735 teachers and nearly 12,500 students** with core texts for kindergarten through second grade ([texts supported literacy and learning throughout 2020–21 school year](#))
- Developed high quality, DHS-approved virtual professional development modules for early educators in partnership with Lipscomb Ayers Institute (*more than **250 pre-K educators** have taken advantage of free, professional development webinars accessed through [Edutoolbox](#)*)
- Provided **2,271 teacher training hours** for early educators
- Increased the number of childcare centers listed on [ChildcareNashville.com](#) by **69 percent**, which bolsters the visibility of childcare options for families

**Student number includes duplicates from those participating in multiple sessions.*

- Created [high-quality pre-K checklist](#) as resource to equip families seeking quality pre-K options (*checklist has received more than **500 page views***)
 - Formed Teacher Pipeline working group of **19 cross-sector organizations** to develop solutions around building a stronger, sustainable early education teacher pipeline.
 - Cross-walked **three frameworks** and created **one list** of high-quality teacher standards comprised of five categories of competencies
 - Recognized by Campaign for Grade Level Reading with Pacesetter Honors and Bright Spot award for [summer literacy work](#): Summer Reading Partners
- 



“ To amplify the capabilities of children and their families, and the funds of resource within their communities, is what drew me to the work of Blueprint. It has been a privilege to serve with so many dedicated people volunteering their expertise in support of children’s development. ”

– Kathleen Seabolt, Ed.D.
Executive Director,
Vanderbilt Child and Family Center,
Vanderbilt University
Co-Chair, Staffing & Professional
Development, Blueprint





“That book showed me
that I can make better
friendships too.”

– ZaKiyah, 5th grade,
J.T. Moore Middle School

FINANCIALS

Beginning Budget Balance as of 1/1/2020	\$586,953.94
2020 Cash Received	\$77,152.97
Less: 2020 Community Investment	(\$488,734.96)
Ending Budget Balance as of 12/31/2020	\$175,371.95

LITERACY ACTION SUMMIT

From October 2020 through January 2021, more than 70 community members convened and collaborated to identify a set of priorities that would guide the work of the Blueprint. All these priorities were deeply rooted in a commitment to **equity**, ensuring that all kids have the support *they* need to succeed. These priorities, in the form of new working groups include:

- Ensuring evidence-based, whole child learning in every classroom
- Activating the community in our literacy emergency
- Connecting children and families to literacy resources



INVESTORS

AllianceBernstein
Dollar General Literacy Foundation
HCA Healthcare Foundation
Ingram Charities
Joe C. Davis Foundation
Maddox Charitable Fund
Memorial Foundation
Nashville Mayor’s Office
Nashville Predators Foundation
PNC Foundation
Scarlett Family Foundation
United Way of Greater Nashville

TEACHER PIPELINE

Ayers Institute for Teacher, Learning and Innovation,
Lipscomb University
Department of Human Services
Early Literacy Matters, Tennessee Department of Education
Ezell Consulting
Fannie Battle Day Home for Children
Global Education Center
Head Start
McNeilly Center for Children
MetrixIQ
Metropolitan Action Commission
Metro Nashville Public Schools Pre-K
Middle Tennessee State University
Nashville Area Association for the Education of Young Children
Nashville Mayor’s Office
Nashville State Community College
National Association for the Education of Young Children
National Center for Families Learning
Never Grow Up, Inc.
St. Luke’s Community House
Tennesseans for Quality Early Education
Tennessee Child Care Resource and Referral Network
Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance
Tennessee State University Early Learning Center
Tennessee State University
The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee
Trevecca University
United Way of Greater Nashville’s Read to Succeed
Vanderbilt University

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Reduce Chronic Absenteeism

Communities In Schools of Tennessee
Everyday Labs
Metro Nashville Public Schools

Strengthen District’s Literacy Approach

Alignment Nashville
Governor’s Early Literacy Foundation
Metro Nashville Public Schools
Nashville Mayor’s Office
Nashville Public Library
Tennessee Department of Education
United Way of Greater Nashville

Increase Access to Books

Governor’s Early Literacy Foundation
Imagination Library of Middle Tennessee
Nashville Public Library
United Way of Greater Nashville’s Level Up for Literacy Day of Action

Support Summer Learning

Alignment Nashville
Governor’s Early Literacy Foundation
Metro Nashville Public Schools, Extended Learning
Nashville Public Library/Read to Rise

COLLECTIVE IMPACT CAPACITY BUILDING

Campaign for Grade Level Reading
CivicLab
Earnest Journey
Elevate Consulting
FSG

FOUNDING - MEMBERS NASHVILLE LITERACY COLLABORATIVE

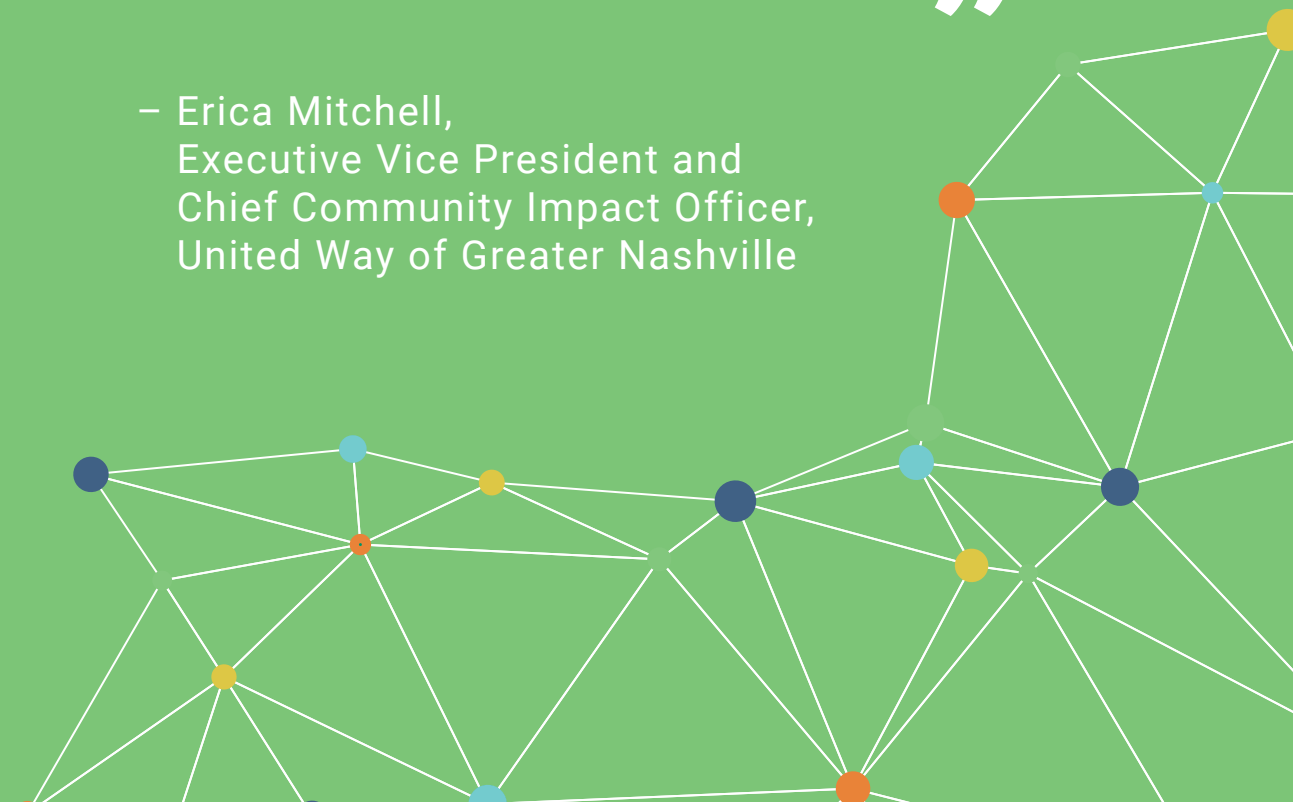
Alignment Nashville
Book’em
Center for Nonprofit Management
Conexión Américas
Dollar General Literacy Foundation
Metro Nashville Public Schools
Nashville Adult Literacy Council





“ There is no more important work than investing in our children. Nashville’s grade level literacy rate has remained stagnant for decades—leaving thousands of children without the basic skills they need for success in life. As the backbone organization for the Blueprint, we are committed to identifying root causes and working collaboratively toward solutions that result in high quality, measurable outcomes. We know that, together, we can create change by forging unlikely partnerships and finding new solutions to persistent problems. The future of Nashville will be a direct reflection of the decisions we make for our children today. ”

– Erica Mitchell,
Executive Vice President and
Chief Community Impact Officer,
United Way of Greater Nashville





Nashville After Zone Alliance
Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce
Nashville Mayor’s Office
Nashville Public Education Foundation
Nashville Public Library
Nashville Public Library Foundation
PENCIL
Scarlett Family Foundation
Studio Bank
United Way of Greater Nashville
Vanderbilt Pediatric Hospital
Whitney Works Consulting

WORKING GROUPS

Early Learning Access 4 All

Alignment Nashville
Ayers Institute for Professional Learning
Childcare Services, Department of Human Services
Conexión Américas
Elevate Evaluation
Ezell Consulting
Fannie Battle Day Home for Children
Head Start
Mayor’s Office
McNeilly Center for Children
Metro Action Commission
Metro Nashville Public Schools
Nashville Association for the Education of Young Children
Nashville Public Library
Office of Early Learning, Tennessee Department of Education
Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance
The Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee
United Way of Greater Nashville

Literacy Chat

Conexión Américas
Junior League of Nashville
Mayor’s Office
Metro Nashville Public Schools
Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce
Northwest Family YMCA
Vanderbilt University

Parent Working Group

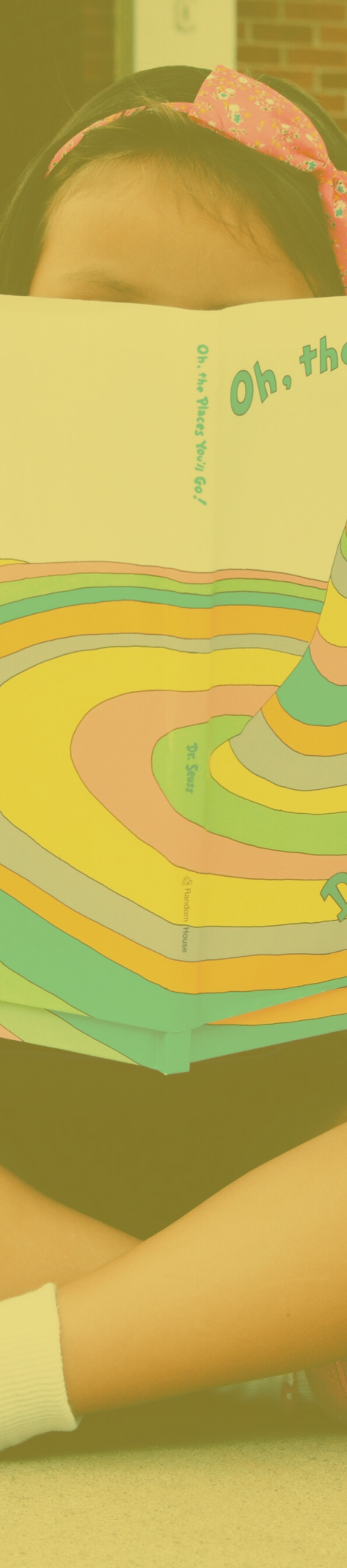
Cassie Mae Beasley
Nathan Fields
Tremayne Haymer
Tara Johnson
Dustin Jones
Nina Lockert
Viva Price
Clay Welch
LaTonya Winfrey

Staffing and Professional Development

Ayers Institute for Professional Learning
Governor’s Early Literacy Foundation
McNeilly Center for Children
Metro Action Commission
Metro Nashville Public Schools
Mid-Cumberland Childcare Resource and Referral
Middle Tennessee State University
Nashville Area Association for the Education of Young Children
Nashville Public Library
National Center for Families Learning
Never Grow Up, Inc.
Office of Early Literacy, Tennessee Department of Education
St. Luke’s Community House
Tennessee Childcare Resource and Referral Network
Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance, Tennessee State University
Tennessee State University Early Head Start
Tennessee State University Early Learning Center
United Way of Greater Nashville
Vanderbilt Child and Family Center
Vanderbilt University

Summer Reading

Book’em
College of Education, Lipscomb University
Imagination Library of Middle Tennessee
Martha O’Bryan Center
Metro Nashville Public Schools
Nashville Public Library, Bringing Books to Life
Project Transformation
Schrader Lane Childcare Center
Southeast Community Center, Metro Parks and Recreation
United Way of Greater Nashville
Youth Encouragement Services



Thank you for joining us
in this important work.

To learn more or to get involved,
visit **blueprintnashville.org**.



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