



NORTH CAROLINA
RACE TO THE TOP
EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE

Status Report — July – September 2015

Reform Area A: Successful State Systems

Project 1: Overall Grant Management

Description: This Project involves programmatic and fiscal management of the grant, evaluation, technical assistance, and statewide support for work in the Transformation Zone strategy.

Activity 1.1: Overall Grant Management

Description: This Activity involves programmatic and fiscal management and monitoring of the grant.

Key Accomplishments:

- Completed federal desk monitoring of NC's RTT-ELC Grant projects and activities on August 12.
- Continued to complete contract amendments for projects according to the plan for the no-cost extension year (2016).
- Continued work with the NC Early Childhood Foundation on a communications plan to highlight the impact of NC's RTT-ELC grant on advancing the State's early learning goals and to build support to sustain and advance accomplishments for continued growth of NC's early learning system.
- Continued to hold meetings of a subcommittee of the NC ECAC – the NC Early Childhood Investment Group – to develop recommendations that will be presented to the full NCECAC and to the Governor on how to best invest in early childhood.
- Grant Management Team attended a Cross County Strategic Planning/Sustainability Retreat with Transformation Zone County Leadership and Implementation Teams.
- Engaged in planning for NC ECAC Meeting to be held in October 2015.
- Began planning for NC RTT-ELC Grant Partners Meeting to be held in December 2015.
- Held regular grant management staff meetings to coordinate efforts, problem-solve challenges, and support project implementation. Held regular communications committee meetings to continue implementation of communication strategies.
- Held monthly calls to communicate with the federal Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge Grant (ELC) team about progress, challenges, and other issues.
- Conducted monthly monitoring of all projects, and reviewed and enhanced monitoring processes.
- Managed budgets, tracked expenditures and processed payments.



- Engaged in ongoing project evaluation activities continuing to assess and discuss opportunities for process improvements.
- Developed, managed and/or revised contracts and Memorandums of Agreement with participating agencies and contractors, as needed.
- Revised GRADS to reflect approved updates and corrections to the RTT-ELC Scope of Work.
- Continued to provide e-newsletter.

Challenges:

- None to report this quarter.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Continue to develop and execute contract amendments to implement NC's approved plan for the no-cost extension year (2016).
- Hold the NC ECAC meeting scheduled for October 2015.
- Finalize plans and hold a second RTT-ELC Grant Partners' Meeting scheduled for December 2015.
- Continue to provide a monthly e-newsletter.

Activity 1.2: Transformation Zone Support and Capacity Building

Description: The Transformation Zone is a system building initiative that includes a set of four counties (Beaufort, Chowan, Bertie and Hyde Counties) in Northeastern NC and representation from key human service state agencies working with young children. Working with the local and state teams, the effort emphasizes community infrastructure and capacity building around implementation science to support high quality implementation of selected evidence-based/informed strategies to improve outcomes for young children in the Transformation Zone (TZ).

Key Accomplishments:

- State-level:
 - Funder work:
 - NIRN continues to support NC Partnership for Children in their efforts to grow internal capacity to use Implementation Science best practices internally and with Local Partnerships for Children.
 - NIRN supports NCPC staff in convening and facilitating a small team of NCPC leaders for learning and planning. This team met five times in the third Quarter, and will continue to meet in the fourth quarter of the year.
 - NIRN provided intensive coaching in Implementation Science and change agent skills to the NCPC Coach Coordinator, so that she may support local Implementation Coaches in their knowledge and skill development. NIRN staff met weekly with Coach Coordinator during the third quarter and will continue this work in the fourth quarter of the year.



- Purveyor work:
 - NIRN convened a State Implementation Team meeting on July 14 to continue discussion on building feedback loops between State and County system levels.
 - NIRN worked with the Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center and NCPC to determine infrastructure requirements for Child Care Health Consultation implementation, including planning for a meeting of local implementing agencies to gather their perspectives.
- County-level:
 - NIRN staff participated in extensive coordination work with NCPC and the ABLLe Systems Change team to ensure technical assistance for local counties was coordinated and aligned. NIRN staff also participated in ABLLe Systems Change county and cross county retreats in September 2015.
 - NIRN staff continues to successfully support local county infrastructure development to support County Leadership and Implementation Teams. This support includes County Capacity Assessments and facilitation for local county discussions related to infrastructure sustainability in the third Quarter.
 - NIRN staff focused efforts to build County Leadership and Implementation Teams' capacity to use and sustain feedback loops within the county and with state partners. NIRN staff provided training to Local Implementation Coaches and Coach Coordinator about the use of data within feedback loops, and then supported coaches in providing similar training to County Implementation Teams.

Challenges:

- At the County-level, County Implementation and Leadership Teams are working to identify how best to use technical assistance for the remainder of the no-cost extension, recognizing that the significant scope of work identified at the outset of the Transformation Zone must now be prioritized.

Next Steps:

- At the state level, NIRN will continue its work with NCPC to support implementation capacity development through individual coaching of NCPC staff and facilitation of NCPC group learning and application.
- At the county level, NIRN will work with NCPC to assess counties' current needs and goals for the remaining year of Transformation Zone funds. This will allow NCPC and NIRN to strategically target technical assistance efforts for county partners.
 - NIRN's county technical assistance will focus on:
 - County Capacity Assessments and facilitation for local county discussions related to infrastructure sustainability, and
 - Building County Leadership and Implementation Teams' capacity to use data as a part of feedback loops within the county and with state partners.



Activity 1.3: Evaluation

Description: This Activity provides a comprehensive evaluation of the Transformation Zone (TZ) Activities.

Key Accomplishments:

- Held regular staff meetings to discuss project activities and review data.
- Distributed third evaluation update newsletter and posted to Active Implementation Hub which serves as a share point for documents.
- Presented at State Implementation Team meeting on 7/14/15 in Raleigh.
- Completed interviews of County Implementation Coaches.
- Facilitated Evaluation Work Group meetings with Grants Management, NIRN and NCPC teams on 7/27/15, 8/18/15, and 9/15/15.
- Developed and finalized draft mid-point evaluation report and executive summary. Emailed mid-point report to Grants Management and the consultant to the evaluation team for feedback.
- Attended Cross-County Visioning Retreat on 9/24/15 in Plymouth.
- Attended coaches' priorities calls and team meetings, and ELC planning and TZ Coordination calls.
- Attended 45 meetings and phone conferences during the quarter.
- Reviewed ABL e Change Network Dropbox and other informational documents.
- Reviewed NIRN document files and NC-ELC TZ Sakai site.
- Monitored TZ Evaluation email account and responded as needed.

Challenges:

- None to report this quarter.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Finalize and distribute mid-point evaluation report and executive summary.
- Attend Leadership Team meetings in October and November.
- Interview state leadership regarding policy and practice shifts related to TZ engagement.
- Create protocols for focus groups with county teams and plan data collection visits. Draft protocols for interviews and surveys. Plan activities for case study of literacy strategies.
- Facilitate Evaluation Work Group meetings on 10/19/15, 11/17/15 and 12/15/15.
- Attend RTT-ELC partners meeting in December.
- Continue attending coaches' priorities calls and team meetings, and ELC planning and TZ Coordination calls.
- Continue document review of materials at NIRN, ABL e Change, RTT-ELC and TZ Sakai sites.
- Continue to monitor TZ Evaluation email and respond as needed.
- Continue to provide timely updates and feedback to TZ Evaluation leadership and stakeholders on findings/ recommendations.



Activity 1.4: RTT-ELC Technical Assistance (TA) Reserve

Description: Utilize TA funds to support the successful implementation of NC's RTT-ELC work; TA activities will be determined by mutual agreement between NC and federal team.

Key Accomplishments:

- Grant partners attended and presented at the 2015 BUILD QRIS National Meeting in July.

Challenges: None to report this quarter.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Continue to implement K-3 Assessment strategic communications/public awareness project.

Project 18: Partnership Initiatives - The North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc. (NCPC)

Description: *This Project will support six strategies that will be implemented through the statewide network of local partnerships established by Smart Start.*

Activity 18.1 Leaders Collaborative/Learning Community

Description: This Activity will engage local Smart Start partnerships to implement community-based initiatives that support the state ELC goals.

Key Accomplishments:

Over the third quarter, Leaders Collaborative Cohort IV members have convened three times for sessions focused on applying leadership skills developed during the first three training sessions:

- In a newly designed July session titled *Use of Self as an Instrument for Leadership and Change*, cohort members were provided with opportunities for continued application and exploration of key content from the Appreciative Leadership, Communities of Practice and Structural Equity sessions. In this session, participants assessed their developing leadership competencies and worked with small, facilitated coaching groups led by trainers from first quarter sessions to identify strengths, gaps and opportunities for greater growth.
- In August, Cohort members reconvened for a work session in which they prepared for their upcoming community convenings and equity retreats. Using protocols developed from the Community of Practice and other sessions, participants created invitations and agendas intended to engage targeted community members and inspire them to actively participate in closing a specific, data-substantiated disparity.
- In September, cohort members further developed their leadership skills in an equine leadership training session that provided active feedback and insights from interactions with horses.
- Technical, design and engagement work continues on the online community of practice, fabrikONE with a consultant joining NCPC as a staff member 10/19/15.



Challenges:

- Sustaining and maintaining leaders' engagement (virtually and in-person) after the cohort is completed. To that end, we are considering alumni retreats, a train-the-facilitator training model and actively inviting national partners to use and help fund our newly launched e-learning community of practice called fabrikONE where professionals can organize themselves, solve a problem together, develop best practice and exchange solutions to a dilemma.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Completion of the final cohort's training, creation of tools and work products to hold successful community meetings and implementation of Leading for Equity Retreats.
- Implementation of fabrikONE, the new e-learning community of practice for early childhood professionals, systems builders and subject matter experts to connect, engage and extend learning around topics relevant to their work.

Activity 18.2: Transformation Zone Implementation Team

Description: This Activity will provide the local community-building and support needed to effectively implement high-quality programs and practices in the Transformation Zone.

Key Accomplishments:

- Held regular staff meetings to discuss project activities and review data.
- Distributed third evaluation update newsletter and posted to Active Implementation Hub which serves as a share point for documents.
- Presented at State Implementation Team meeting on 7/14/15 in Raleigh.
- Completed interviews of County Implementation Coaches.
- Facilitated Evaluation Work Group meetings with Grants Management, NIRN and NCPC teams on 7/27/15, 8/18/15, and 9/15/15.
- Developed and finalized draft mid-point evaluation report and executive summary. Emailed mid-point report to Grants Management and the consultant to the evaluation team for feedback.
- Attended Cross-County Visioning Retreat on 9/24/15 in Plymouth.
- Attended coaches' priorities calls and team meetings, and ELC planning and TZ Coordination calls.
- Attended 45 meetings and phone conferences during the quarter.
- Reviewed ABL Change Network Dropbox and other informational documents.
- Reviewed NIRN document files and NC-ELC TZ Sakai site.
- Monitored TZ Evaluation email account and responded as needed.

Challenges:

- None to report this quarter.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Finalize and distribute mid-point evaluation report and executive summary.
- Attend Leadership Team meetings in October and November.



- Interview state leadership regarding policy and practice shifts related to TZ engagement.
- Create protocols for focus groups with county teams and plan data collection visits. Draft protocols for interviews and surveys. Plan activities for case study of literacy strategies.
- Facilitate Evaluation Work Group meetings on 10/19/15, 11/17/15 and 12/15/15.
- Attend RTT-ELC partners meeting in December.
- Continue attending coaches' priorities calls and team meetings, and ELC planning and TZ Coordination calls.
- Continue document review of materials at NIRN, ABL e Change, RTT-ELC and TZ Sakai sites.
- Continue to monitor TZ Evaluation email and respond as needed.
- Continue to provide timely updates and feedback to TZ Evaluation leadership and stakeholders on findings/ recommendations.

Activity 18.3: Transformation Zone Early Literacy

Description: This Activity will provide strategies (including Motherhead and Reach Out and Read) to improve early literacy in the Transformation Zone.

Key Accomplishments:

- Counties are continuing staggered initial implementation of Reach Out and Read and Motherhead:
 - New Motherhead/Fatheread and BABY classes have started in Beaufort and Bertie at local health departments and child care centers. Literacy Coordinators from both counties report good initial registration.
 - New Reach Out and Read sites have started in all four counties.
- Reach Out and Read Carolinas continues to provide information and application support for potential sites in Beaufort and Chowan counties.
- Motherhead has reached out to county Literacy Coordinators to provide support around recruitment and retention challenges. Bertie has a call pending. Motherhead will be providing an overview of recruitment and retention strategies at the next TZ cross-county early literacy meeting on 10/29/15.
- Counties received another round of Motherhead curricula training this summer. To date, the number trained in each Motherhead curricula in the transformation zone is:
 - Story Exploring – People trained: 117 (includes staff lost due to turnover, support staff, back-up facilitators).
 - BABY - People trained: 19 (includes staff lost due to turnover, support staff, back-up facilitators).
 - Motherhead/Fatheread – People trained: 37 (includes staff lost due to turnover, support staff, back-up facilitators).
- Counties are currently engaged in using the ABL e framework in completing community scans. Several of the counties state they are utilizing information gathered in this process to help inform challenges with “fit” of certain early literacy strategies and thus issues with site selection; participant recruitment and retention; facilitator/staff turnover; community awareness/understanding of programming & coordination.
- In August, NCPC provided a Coaching Refresher orientation to Literacy Coordinators.



- NCPC continues to facilitate monthly Reach Out and Read Project Coordinator calls, to which the transformation zone counties are invited to attend.
- In-person, cross-county TZ Early Literacy Meetings are held with the Literacy Coordinators, county support staff, literacy purveyors, NCPC, the contracted evaluator, and Transformation Zone Implementation coaches every other month to help support implementation practice and provide a networking forum.
- We are continuing to gather information from counties about implementation successes and challenges. Based in part on this feedback, Motherhead, NCPC, and the contracted evaluator released revised Motherhead evaluation and teaching tools for county use.
- The site visit summary report completed by the TZ Early Literacy contracted evaluator was completed and released to counties in July. The purpose of this first round of site visits was to augment survey data collected in the four counties and to gain a more vivid picture of the implementation of the Motherhead programs.

Challenges:

- Recently, the only child care center on Ocracoke closed, which was an implementing Story Exploring site. While Hyde will continue to look for other Story Exploring opportunities, Hyde is currently implementing in all available child care centers and Pre-K and Head Start classrooms.
- While counties still struggle with recruitment and retention of Motherhead/Fatheread and BABY sites and participants, several counties have been innovative in establishing new sites. At the next TZ cross-county early literacy meeting in October, we plan to have counties share these successes and innovate approaches with one another.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Next cross-county TZ Early Literacy meeting will be held in Williamston on 10/29/15.
- A new round of Motherhead curricula trainings will be held this winter. Counties have been asked to inform Motherhead and NCPC of their current training needs. Motherhead will work with literacy coordinators to deliver training reorientations later this summer.
- A second round of site visits by the contracted evaluator will occur in early 2016 as part of the no cost extension period.

Reform Area B: High-Quality, Accountable Programs

Project 4: Promoting Participation in Revised Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS) - Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE)



Description: *This Project has three main goals: revise the TQRIS, provide support to religious and public school ELDS that are currently exempt from TQRIS so that they can participate in TQRIS, and convene a Task Force to discuss the appropriateness and feasibility of licensing and regulating part-day Early Learning and Development (ELD) programs and family child care providers with fewer than three children.*

Activity 4.1: Revising TQRIS

Description: This Activity involves revising NC’s Star Rated License, also known as the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, to include a more rigorous set of standards and to better differentiate among the different star ratings.

Key Accomplishments:

- Sample recruitment was completed and TA providers began working with ELDS programs in the sample to meet the requirements in the test model of the TQRIS.
- Continued coordination between the TQRIS Validation Study and the Program Quality Measure, including timeline, comparison measures, and data sharing.
- See Project 7 on page 13 for the TQRIS Validation Study, which is supporting this activity.

Challenges:

- North Carolina does not anticipate implementing significant revisions to its TQRIS during the course of the RTT-ELC grant, but will continue to work toward well-grounded and meaningful recommended revisions that can be implemented following the completion of the TQRIS Validation Study. The TQRIS Validation Study will require additional time into 2016 to complete.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Continued meetings between the Validation Study and Program Quality Measure.
- Conclude child/family recruitment, begin child outcome (pre) data collection.
- Continue to plan for and schedule the data collection that will begin November 2.

Activity 4.2: Professional Development Bonus Program

Description: This Activity will offer Incentives to ELD programs that implement certain policies and practices related to staff professional development.

Key Accomplishments: (CCRI)

- The third quarter, 57 applications were submitted for the Professional Development Bonus Award. Of these, 29 were complete and have been paid or are being processed for payment.
- Of the complete applications, 14 were from child care centers and 15 were from family child care home providers.
- To date in calendar year 2015, 255 applications have been received for review.

**Challenges:**

- Due to lower summer enrollment patterns, applicants delayed submitting their applications so they could include September (Fall semester) enrollment data.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Continue statewide promotional efforts for the PD Bonus Award and process applications.
- Distribute online survey to all applicants to measure participant satisfaction with the administrative process regarding the bonus.
- Email survey in September/early October to reach programs returned from summer break.

Activity 4.3: Support to Enter the TQRIS

Description: This Activity provides technical assistance and mini-grants to bring unlicensed public school and faith-based ELD programs into the TQRIS.

Key Accomplishments:

- This project has received 91 applications from public school programs, and 88 of those have been awarded mini-grants.
- 86 of the Public Schools awarded mini-grants have achieved licensures, (5 stars: 48; 4 stars: 36; Special Provisional: 2).
- 5 of 8 GS-110 facilities have achieved a 3 or greater star license.

Challenges:

- None reported.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Follow-up with the remaining programs will continue.

Activity 4.4: Task Force on Licensure

Description: Regional meetings of programs not currently participating in (or required to participate in) NC's Star Rated License. These meetings will bring together part-day preschool and family/ friend/ neighbor care providers across the state, review current licensing requirements, and gather data for a report on the barriers that prevent these programs from participating in the Star Rated License.

Key Accomplishments:

- This project is completed. [Report](#) is posted on NC RTT-ELC website.

Project 5: New Program Quality Measurement Tool - Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE)



Description: *This project will create a new measurement tool that addresses important aspects of quality related to child outcomes and may be used in a TQRIS. NC will lead a consortium of states to develop and pilot-test the new quality assessment tool.*

Activity 5.1: Program Quality Measure Development

Key Accomplishments:

- Four new assessors and an administrative support associate were hired during this quarter.
- An amendment for 2015 and 2016 was submitted in order to accommodate the larger-than-originally-planned sample size.
- Document review items and the director interview were piloted with directors, revised and aligned with observation items and piloted again.
- Procedures manuals and other personnel training documents were developed.
- Observation items were tested in classrooms and further revised.
- Observation protocols were further revised.
- Materials and space items were revised and a score sheet was developed.
- Teacher interviews were piloted, revised and aligned with observation items, and piloted again.
- List of documents to be collected is being finalized (in coordination with the validation study and a letter to providers) is being developed.

Challenges:

- Timeline for hiring and training assessors.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Finalized measure components for large scale pilot.
- Train assessors on the new measure and complete training on comparison measures.
- Finalize cross-site data collection and reliability plans.
- Finalize procedures manual.
- Develop Family Child Care Home protocol.
- Align data collection procedures with validation study team.

Project 6: Increase Access to High Quality Early Learning and Development Programs (ELDs) - Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE)

Description: *This Project includes four activities to increase child access to high quality early learning and development programs.*

Activity 6.1: Support for 3 or More Stars

Description: This Activity will support one and two star programs toward attaining a three star or higher rating.

**Key Accomplishments:**

- Statewide, 120 of 154 temporary, 1- & 2- star programs currently working with CCR&R staff applied for a 3 or higher star rated license.
- Of those 120 who applied, 102 Temporary, 1- and 2- star programs achieved a 3- star rated license or higher in calendar year 2015.
- 62 participating programs have completed a Quality Improvement Plan and a TA evaluation survey and all documented increased knowledge of quality programming.

Challenges: None to report this quarter.

Upcoming Tasks:

- CCR&R will continue to provide technical assistance and professional development support services to the remaining 52 Temporary, 1-, and 2- star programs that committed by January 2015 to achieve higher star ratings.

Activity 6.2: 4 -5 Star Infant Toddler Slots in the Transformation Zone

Description: This Activity will create more subsidized Infant/Toddler slots in 4 and 5 star programs in the Transformation Zone with support from an Infant-Toddler Specialist.

Key Accomplishments:

- Enhanced payments were made to three Beaufort programs for the following service months:
 - June- 39 children total (15 infants, 24 one year olds)
 - July- 44 children total (16 infants, 28 one year olds)
 - August- 40 children total (14 infants, 26 one year olds)
- Six Infant-Toddler Expansion Grant programs received TA (43 consultations) in three TZ counties.

Challenges:

- Challenges related to turnover in a Chowan County GS-110 program working to obtain a star-rated license with Infant-Toddler Expansion Grant support may impact this program's ability to be successful. Support during this time is being provided by the Infant-Toddler Specialist in collaboration with the program's licensing consultant and the Chowan-Perquimans Smart Start Partnership staff.
- A site was discontinued in the Infant-Toddler Expansion Grant program in June due to the site's lack of progress and engagement in the quality improvement process over the past 15+ months.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Continue providing technical assistance based on improvement plans to expansion grant programs.



Activity 6.3: Part Day Infant Toddler Program in Transformation Zone (NC Babies First or NCB1)

Description: This Activity will create a high-quality part day program for high need infants and toddlers in the Transformation Zone with support from an Infant-Toddler Specialist.

Key Accomplishments:

- Beaufort County: 36 attending at month end; all double slot; 5 receiving transportation.
- Bertie County: 6 attending at month end; all double slot; 4 receiving transportation.
- Hyde County: 4 attending at month end; all double slot. NOTE: Center stopped delivering care temporarily on August 31 with the expectation that it will reopen early 2016.
- Hyde County program had Environment Rating Scale evaluation by NC Rated License Assessment Project and received notice of Environment Rating Scale scores to be eligible for 5 star licensure before closing.
- 58 parent surveys were distributed and 25 were returned.
 - 18 checked that NCB1 allowed them to keep or accept a job.
 - 17 checked that NCB1 allowed them to attend school.
 - Noted comment about financial help: “It (NCB1) has made it possible for his dad to go to school and for us to not have to worry about where the money will come from to eat.”
 - Noted comment about development: “My daughter is learning very well and it helps her to engage with other children.”

Challenges: None to report this quarter.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Provide TA support to current NCB1 sites.
- Continue Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised mock assessments of classrooms to ensure ongoing quality of care.
- Support the Bertie County site as NCB1 begins to end in the county.
- Begin preparation for Administrator community of practice in Beaufort Co. beginning with NCB1 site Directors.

Project 7: TQRIS Validation – Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE)

Description: *TQRIS Validation will conduct studies to provide information about how best to revise the TQRIS so that the tiers meaningfully differentiate levels of quality in ELD programs that correspond to changes in children’s progress.*

Activity 7.1: TQRIS Validation Study

Key Accomplishments

- Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, UNC (FPG) completed study recruitment on August 15th. 641 Child Care Centers and 664 Family Child Care Homes were approached for study recruitment. Of those, 176 CCCs and 70 Family Child Care Homes agreed to participate.



- The FPG team participated in 7 DCDEE-Child Trends-FPG project meeting calls to discuss plans for upcoming project tasks and the status of recruitment throughout the Quarter.
- Sixteen data collectors, including 1 bilingual data collector, were hired and began training this Quarter. Data collectors were trained and established reliability on the Program Administration Scale (PAS). Training on the Toddler Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) began on August 25th.

Challenges:

- Retention of programs has been more challenging than anticipated. Communication between DCDEE technical assistance providers and FPG data collectors will be critical to maintain participation of directors/providers.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Continue data collector training and certification.
- Begin study recruitment of teachers and families.
- Begin Child Assessments.

Project 12: Compensation and Retention – Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE)

Description: *This Project will fund the WAGE\$ ® salary supplement in the 17 counties that were eligible to apply for Transformation Zone status, as well as expanded TEACH scholarships in those 17 counties and additional TEACH scholarships statewide.*

Activity 12.2.7 – Infant Toddler Specialist in the Transformation Zone

This Activity has been completed.

- A qualified Infant-Toddler Program Specialist has been hired and trained to develop and provide coursework for NC-FITC (Foundations of Infant and Toddler Care) Scholarship.

Project 16: Family Engagement – Department of Public Instruction (DPI)

Description: *This Project will assist the Head Start Collaboration Office in working with local Head Start programs to serve as regional hubs for coaching, mentoring, and technical assistance to other child care programs in their service area for the purpose of strengthening family engagement activities.*

Activity 16.1: Competitive Selection of Head Start Hubs from Existing 58 Head Start Grantees in North Carolina

Description: This activity involves the competitive selection of Head Start Hubs from existing 58 Head Start Grantees in NC.



This Activity has been completed.

- Twenty-two hubs have been selected.

Activity 16.2: Technical Assistance, Demonstration, And Coaching Regarding Family Engagement Strategies Provided By Head Start Hub Sites To ECE Workforce In Non-Head Start ELD Programs.

Description: This activity provides technical assistance, demonstration, and coaching on family engagement strategies provided by Head Start Hubs to the ECE workforce in non-Head Start ELD programs.

Key Accomplishments:

- As of this reporting period, eleven (11) of the original 22 Training Hubs continue to operate. (A twelfth Hub will conclude its work at the end of October). All active Hubs continue to deliver training and other supports (*e.g.* coaching and follow-up as needed) to licensed child care providers across the State. (To date, ten Training Hubs have completed their scopes of work: Franklin-Vance-Warren, Inc. [#8], Western Carolina Community Action [#3], Blue Ridge Opportunity Commission [#4], Macon Program for Progress [#1], Cumberland Community Action Program [#12], Four Square Comm. Action [#18], WAGES [#9], Macon Program for Progress [#1], Western Carolina Community Action [#3], and Verner Center for Early Learning [#2].
- All Hubs (both active and inactive) have collectively reached about 29.3% of licensed childcare providers. The Hubs are still on pace to reach about one-third of all providers across the State by the end of this project in December.
- Many participating childcare providers are reporting changes in their practice as a result of the family engagement trainings that they are attending. Several examples of these were outlined in the April 2015 report. An exhaustive list will be included in the final January 2016 project report based on feedback provided by trained providers based on surveys that were administered between July and September 2015.
- The collaboration with Frank Porter Graham (UNC) to incorporate this content into North Carolina's Early Learning Foundations online modules has begun.

Challenges:

- Challenges persist with recruiting some local childcare providers for participation, in spite of receiving marketing assistance from the CCR&R network, Smart Start agencies, DCDEE, and the NC HSSCO. Training Hubs continue to employ various strategies to incentivize participation of providers (*e.g.* providing CEUs, conducting trainings at satellite sites to minimize travel burden, offering trainings on weekends and during evening hours, etc.).

Upcoming Tasks:

- Continue working with the Early Learning Network, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, UNC-CH, to incorporate this content into the development and offering of online



Foundations training modules for consumers to access after the project comes to an end in December 2015.

- Project Debrief meeting in January 2016 with all Hubs.

Activity 16.3: Formative Evaluation of the Saturation, Intensity, and Impact of the Head Start Hubs.

Description: This activity provides for the formative evaluation of the saturation, intensity, and impact of the Head Start Hubs.

Key Accomplishments:

- Ongoing formative evaluation and information gathering (reported to the NC HSSCO quarterly).
- Continued monitoring and evaluation of project impact.
- Coaching that goes along with the training provides the opportunity to observe changes.

Challenges: None to report this quarter.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Hubs continue to recruit providers, provide training, coaching.
- Evaluation of services continues.

Project 18: Partnership Initiatives – The North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc. (NCPC)

Description: This Project will support six strategies that will be implemented through the statewide network of local partnerships established by Smart Start.

Activity 18.4: Faith Summits

Description: This Activity is designed to reach out to faith-based child care programs to discuss and support their possible inclusion in the TQRIS system.

Key Accomplishments:

This Activity has been completed.

- Local faith summits continue to be held in twelve counties as a result of the regional summits provided through this grant. All are funded and implemented by private resources.



Reform Area C: Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

Project 8: Enhanced Professional Development – Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE)

Description: This Project includes three strategies to enhance NC's professional development.

Activity 8.1: Choosing & Using an Appropriate Curriculum & Instructional Assessment

Description: This Activity will allow a CEU-bearing course on Choosing and Using an Appropriate Curriculum and Instructional Assessment.

Key Accomplishments:

This Activity has been completed.

- This activity concluded in December of 2012, and Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies are now providing the training to child care providers in each of the 14 regions of the state through activity 8.3.

Activity 8.3: Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) Enhancement

Description: This Activity will support the Child Care Resource and Referral system to improve access to and the quality of professional development, coaching, mentoring, and technical assistance services through multiple strategies, including aligning efforts with the revised ELD standards, delivering new courses, and creating Communities of Practice to support quality improvement.

Key Accomplishments:

- *NC Foundations for Early Learning and Development* .5 CEU has been offered 99 times in calendar year 2015 statewide.
- *Choosing and Using an Approved Curriculum with Formative Assessment Strategies* .5 CEU has been offered 53 times in calendar year 2015.
- *Cultural Competence* .5 CEU has been offered 73 times in calendar year 2015 statewide.
- A total of 43 CLASS trainings have been offered statewide in calendar year 2015.

Challenges:

- None reported at this time.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Continue to offer courses.



Project 9: Early Learning and Development Standards – Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE)

Description: This project assists with the revision of NC’s Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS), or “Foundations”, and develops training and professional development for early childhood educators.

Activity 9.1: ELDS Foundations Revised

Description: This Activity will revise and roll-out (including training), new Early Learning and Development Standards.

This Activity has been completed.

- *North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development* has been completed.

Upcoming Task:

- Although this activity is operational, we anticipate an upcoming task in printing 50,000 additional copies of the document to meet high demand.

Activity 9.2: ELDS CEU and Professional Development

Description: This Activity will develop professional development materials and provide train-the-trainer sessions to support the early childhood workforce in its understanding and use of the revised ELD standards.

Key Accomplishments:

- The online CEU and Train the Trainer were piloted by Child Care Resources Inc. staff.
- Online NC Foundations practitioner module content was approved by DCDEE and then submitted to be added to Moodle.
- *Promising Practices* document has been drafted using input from the NC Foundations Higher Education/Technical Assistance institutes.
- Finalized new contract with the Early Learning Network, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, UNC-CH, to develop and make available advanced online Foundations training modules.

Challenges:

- None reported.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Finalize *Promising Practices* document and submit to DCDEE for review, editing and/or approval.
- Submit Train the Trainer module for addition to Moodle.



- Continue to work with the Early Learning Network, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, UNC-CH to develop advanced online Foundations training modules.

Project 15: K-3 Assessment – Department of Public Instruction (DPI)

Description: This Project will revise the NC K-3 Assessment to include all school readiness domains and provide information on children’s skills when they enter kindergarten.

Activity 15.1: Develop/revise K-3 Assessment to include a Kindergarten Entry Assessment and extend through third grade.

Key Accomplishments:

- Statewide launch of the first component, the Kindergarten Entry Assessment of the North Carolina K-3 Formative Assessment Process occurred July 2015.
- Platform improvement meetings continue to be held to enhance the Teaching Strategies technology into the format required for the NC content.
- The Implementation Design Team and Regional Implementation Teams continue to work closely to develop and coordinate Regional Implementation Team support to District Implementation Teams.
- K-3 Formative Assessment Usability Districts identified.

Challenges:

- Capacity to provide technical assistance and professional development for over 10,000 users.
- Technology glitches must be corrected on a short timeline.
- Implementation timeline differences within the legislation and Grant require balancing and management.
- Current assessments within Lead Education Agency’s vary and the implementation of a new process has a new set of challenges. Streamlining existing assessments and a new assessment requires intense professional development and technical assistance.
- Ensuring the data from the Formative Assessment process is used as intended will also require professional development and technical assistance support.

Upcoming Tasks:

- On- going implementation support to all District Implementation Teams.
- Regional Implementation Team technical assistance throughout the year.
- Usability Districts will pilot the K-3 process and implementation.
- Continue improvement of the technology component of the assessment.



Activity 15.2: Using Data to Improve Classroom Instruction

Description: This Activity strengthens the use of assessment to promote high quality instruction in Pre-K through 3rd grade, through implementation of FirstSchool, to produce equitable outcomes for African American, Latino, and low-income students in Bertie and Martin counties.

Key Accomplishments:

- Final PD in September.

Challenges: None to report this quarter.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Complete project December 2015.

(Repeated) Project 16: Family Engagement (see pages 14 – 16).

Project 17: Family Strengthening – Division of Public Health (DPH)

Description: This Project will provide Family Strengthening Initiatives in the Transformation Zone.

Activity 17.1: Family Connects

Description: This Activity will provide home visiting, screening, referral, and other services in the Transformation Zone (TZ).

Key Accomplishments:

- A Summary Report of progress through September 2015 was submitted to DPH.
 - There were a total of 168 eligible births this quarter.
 - Of these, a total of 141 home visits were scheduled.
- Family Connects in the Transformation Zone is the second replication of Family Connects Home Visiting in North Carolina. Data demonstrates that Family Connects in the Transformation Zone is performing above expectation and above the benchmarks established by the model developer. This is despite not being able to get into hospitals for the initial visit, the distance to travel in rural communities, and the challenge of identifying community resources to accept referrals.
- One of the nurse home visitors resigned and the vacancy was filled on September 10, 2015 to begin work October 5, 2015.

Challenges:

- Sustainability beyond the grant is the biggest challenge. We are looking at other funding sources (philanthropic, grants, etc.) to extend the program. In addition, some of the nurse home visits are billable through Medicaid as postpartum and newborn home assessment visits.

Upcoming Tasks:



- Continue to seek sources of other funding to sustain the program.
- Continue to track progress of the program and provide support.

Activity 17.2: Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)

Description: The Triple P Program, an evidence based family strengthening program, is designed to meet the needs of families with many programs and options available to them. Triple P will be working with the Transformation Zone to develop programming.

Key Accomplishments:

- Monthly implementation meetings have been completed. Each month a focus topic is discussed—July-Sustainability; August-Data Entry and Reporting in the NC Triple P State Database; and September-Using Data for Continuous Quality Improvement.
- Site visits have been completed to discuss use of data in making decisions about local implementation.
- Refresher classes for previously trained practitioners has been conducted to encourage them to incorporate Triple P into their practice.
- A Statewide Summary Data Report from January-June 2015 was released in August 2015.
- Triple P Online is now available statewide. Local coordinators are providing parent support for the online modules.

Challenges:

- Because these are small counties, the challenge for local coordinators is to fill the 20 slots in training sessions. To address this challenge, local coordinators work together to support regional open enrollment training, whereby practitioners from counties outside the funded area can pay and fill a slot to assure a full training cohort.
- Peer-to-peer support is critical for model fidelity, but there are often not multiple practitioners training from any one clinical discipline. Peer-to-peer support networks often have to be facilitated by the local coordinator to assure that it happens.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Continue monthly implementation meetings.
- Continue refresher classes for previously trained practitioners.
- Continue to track progress of the program and provide support.

Project 18: Partnership Initiatives – The North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc. (NCPC)

Description: This Project will support six strategies that will be implemented through the statewide network of local partnerships established by Smart Start.

Activity 18.5: Child Care Health Consultants (CCHC)



Description: Child Care Health Consultants support child care programs in promoting children’s health and development. This Activity will strengthen statewide capacity by establishing a regional health consultant coaching model. It will also provide additional health consultants in the Transformation Zone counties.

Key Accomplishments:

- CCHC infrastructure sustainability conversations between the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE), the Division of Public Health (DPH), the North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC), and the NC Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center are on-going.
- NCPC has drafted a CCHC overview sheet, CCHC impact story, and an “ask letter” template for communities to consider utilizing when exploring local funding for CCHC services. These items will be reviewed during joint sustainability discussions with DCDEE, DPH, and NCPC.
- NCPC, DPH, the CCHC Association, the Resource Center, and other TA providers are beginning discussions with the NC Institute for Child Development Professionals about developing a CCHC Certification process. The discussions have included how to align with and support the CCHC work being supported by the RTT-ELC.
- New CCHC’s continue to receive the coaching module and introduction to the NC CCHC Model as part of the CCHC training course to become a qualified in NC to deliver CCHC services.
- CCHCs statewide continue to deliver services with a coaching approach with the support of the CCHC Regional Coaches.
- The Regional CCHC Coaches continue to provide coaching, consultation, and advocacy to CCHCs and their host agencies. Based on information gained from the field, gathered by the Regional CCHC Coaches, we continue to hone existing tools, such as the NC CCHC Model, and develop new supports, like the series of orientation manuals.
- The NC Child Care Nurse Consultant continues to provide ongoing technical assistance to the CCHC network and works collaboratively with NCPC and the Regional Coaches.
- A growing small group of CCHCs are utilizing the NC Child Care Health and Safety Assessment APP in the delivery of CCHC coaching and consultation. The NC Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center has been providing training, on-going support, and gathering usage feedback.
- The CCHC Coaching evaluation collection is ongoing. Early qualitative information gathered from the interviews places value on support offered from the Regional CCHC Coach and CCHC services received by child care facilities.
- Beaufort, Bertie, Chowan, and Hyde counties (in the Transformation Zone) continue to implement CCHC services and have worked with their agencies and stakeholders to identify child care centers and homes prioritized for intensive health and safety consultation.

Challenges: None to report this quarter.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Preliminary CCHC Coaching Evaluation data should be available in October.
- The hiring Agency Manual/Orientation Workgroup has been rescheduled for 10/9/15.



- A NC Child Care Health and Safety Assessment APP introduction webinar will be held on 10/27/15.
- An updated CCHC model and NCPC endorsed logic model will be released in February 2016. The new CCHC model will include an introduction, frequently asked questions list, and clarification of certain tasks designated for only RNs versus a CCHC generalist.

Activity 18.6: Assuring Better Child Development (ABCD)

Description: This activity will expand statewide the ABCD program through which young children are screened at pediatric visits.

Key Accomplishments:

- All regional projects are now in implementation mode as we have entered the final year of the grant period.
- Technical assistance to ABCD coordinators continues as needed. Coordinators make great use of the monthly technical assistance phone calls, sharing successes, discussing challenges, and exchanging information.
- Meetings occurred this quarter between NCPC staff, project evaluator, and Part C data manager to discuss use of Part C data. Part C has agreed to send the same type of data once it has been cleaned up for the previous year, 2014. The ABCD data evaluator will then be able to complete data analysis and make some comparison between the 2013 and 2014 data.
- The evaluator collected medical practice information from each coordinator to conduct the medical provider surveys. The evaluator collected data from 7 level 1 practices, 18 level 2 practices, and 13 level 3 practices. The ABCD evaluator was also able to complete 8 medical practice interviews but there were concerns over the small sample. The evaluator continued making efforts to connect with the remaining practices, and feedback for engaging with practices was sought from the coordinators in the September monthly call.
- The regional progress reports were submitted to NCPC mid-July. Eight partnerships requested No-Cost Extensions to support the integration of their work into the community further.
- In August 2015, the monthly coordinator call was used to discuss the evaluation updates regarding the medical practice surveys being conducted, the no-cost extension requests, and the online-training module draft. Coordinators provided updates/questions for each region, especially in terms of sustainability and multiple connections were made amongst the network.
- In September 2015, the quarterly ABCD Quality Improvement (QI) meeting and the ABCD State Advisory Committee meetings took place.
 - The QI meeting was well attended in Greensboro, NC. Dr. Marian Earls provided state and national updates, including that North Carolina is ranked #1 on the National Survey of Children's health Indicator 4.16 regarding screening with a 58% screening rate. The meeting also included presentations on the Child Care Health Consultants (CCHC) state program and connections that can be made between ABCD and the CCHC, and the Survey Well-being of Young Children screening tools (SWYC). And the project coordinator presented a draft



outline of the on-line training toolkit manual and the group took time to discuss the draft and provided valuable feedback to move forward.

- The Advisory Committee meeting had a variety of state stakeholders represented. Updates were provided from Dr. Earls, Part C, and Part B. The committee discussed sustainability of the ABCD program including the online training manual, some new grant opportunities a researcher at RTI International is interested in exploring, as well as a newly developed *draft* info graphic that will be useful when explaining the program to possible funders.

Challenges:

- The ABCD data evaluator has had a difficult time reaching the medical practices to conduct the practice survey. The number is slowly increasing and we are still making efforts to contact more practices. The ABCD coordinators and Dr. Marian Earls have been helpful in reaching the practices.
- The final region, via the NW Community Care network and Forsyth Partnership, continues to have challenges hiring a coordinator for the additional region they took on the final year. They continue to seek someone to fill this position; in the meantime the existing coordinator is doing extensive work. Once the hiring is finalized, the existing coordinator will provide training and close mentoring and the NCPC project manager will provide resources and training handouts. We are hopeful now that the no-cost extension has been finalized they will be able to hire someone since they can ensure a longer employment date than December of 2015.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Continue TA to all regions, specifically the ones who have entered into implementation in 2015.
- Finalize the online-training toolkit manual.
- Finalize and release the RFA for a videographer/e-learning designer for the online training project.
- Continued work with contracted evaluator on data collection and evaluation.
- Continued discussions around sustainability regionally and at the state level.

Reform Area D: A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

Project 3: Professional Development Capacity Building

Description: *This Project will improve the performance of Early Childhood caretakers and educators by improving access to training. The Project will also coordinate the creation of the NC Council on Early Childhood Professional Development with a goal of improving the coordination and alignment of professional development.*



Activity 3.1: NC Early Childhood Professional Development Support

Description: Through this Activity, specific professional development needs in the state will be identified and supported.

Key Accomplishments:

- This Activity is completed. NC Early Childhood Professional Development Support funding is being used to support the On-Line Master's Degree Program.

Activity 3.2: On-Line Master's Degree Program

Description: This Activity will create a new online Master's Degree in Early Childhood Program Leadership and Management through NC's higher education system to offer a next step on our professional development pathway for early childhood educators.

Key Accomplishments:

- 156 students currently enrolled at two universities, UNCG and UNCW.
- 22 additional students began classes at UNCG during summer session and 20 additional students began classes during fall session at UNCW.
- T.E.A.C.H. Scholarships (Task 12.2.15 in GRADS – Develop and implement outreach plan for Master's Degree in Early Childhood Program Leadership and Management Scholarship) are being offered for coursework that will contribute to the online Master's Degree (see page 31).
- Course evaluation data shows high levels of satisfaction and learning in both programs.

Challenges:

- Some students struggle with the rigor of the coursework, especially in the area of academic writing.
- Three students have withdrawn from the two programs and two deferred admission or deferred taking courses.
- Staffing/course offerings to accommodate the total number of students is challenging for university staff.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Complete amendments to contracts to continue support for the two On-Line Master's degree programs.
- Continue advising, recruiting and support of current students.
- Monitor waiting list of applicants in case seats become available due to attrition.

Project 6: Increase Access to High Quality Early Learning and Development Programs (ELDs) - Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE)



Description: This Project includes four activities to increase child access to high quality early learning and development programs.

Activity 6.4: Workforce Study

Description: This Activity will conduct an annual workforce study of early childhood educators' education, compensation, and retention levels to better identify the strategies needed to improve child access to high quality ELD programs.

Key Accomplishments:

- The final study is wrapping up data collection.
- Director weights for analysis determined.
- Final mailing sent to secure teacher participation for two regions.
- Continued data entry and checking.
- Contacted lead agencies to request help with teacher surveys.
- Participation rates are 71% for directors (goal of 70%) and 51% for teachers (goal of 50%)

Challenges: None to report this quarter.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Complete survey collection.
- Complete data entry and checking.
- Clean teacher data and prepare for weighting.
- Analyze data and write report.

Project 8: Enhanced Professional Development – Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE)

Description: This Project includes three strategies to enhance NC's professional development.

Activity 8.2: Course on Mentoring and Technical Assistance

Description: This Activity will allow a Coaching, Mentoring, and Technical Assistance Course to be developed for those providing such services to ELD programs and staff.

Key Accomplishments:

- The syllabus for the three semester credit hour course was approved by DCDEE.
- Course developer is completing course content.
- Course is registered for January term 2016 (per DCDEE approval) at The University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

Challenges: None to report this quarter.

Upcoming Tasks



- Course content will be finalized and submitted to DCDEE for approval.

(Repeated) Activity 8.3: Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) Enhancement (see page 17)

Activity 8.4: Healthy, Social Behavior (HSB) Specialist in Transformation Zone

Description: This Activity will provide a Healthy Social Behavior Specialist who will provide technical assistance and training to ELD programs in the Transformation Zone (TZ) to improve program capacity to support the healthy social/emotional development of the children in their care, using the teaching pyramid framework and strategies.

Key Accomplishments:

- Part time Region 1 and Region 2 HSB Statewide Behavior Specialists have committed to providing technical assistance for HSB TZ project classrooms through grant ending.
- Specialists have transitioned active classrooms and are making steady progress on action plans as well as scheduling ongoing training with cohorts.
- The Statewide Project Manager attended the Statewide Implementation Team meeting in Raleigh on July 14.

Challenges: None to report this quarter.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Contact classrooms which have been on hiatus since May to explain staff transition, offer to continue technical assistance/training, and arrange for final Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) assessment under the TZ project. Classrooms will be offered the opportunity to transition to statewide services.
- Monitor continued technical assistance & training and plans for TPOT assessments in October & November by regional specialists.

Project 10: Certification and Licensure – Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE)

Description: *Certification and Licensure provides coaching and support to teachers working with children with high needs in non-public school, non-NC Pre-K classrooms who are working to earn the full B-K teacher licensure; develops a Technical Assistance Endorsement for professionals who provide technical assistance, coaching, and mentoring to early childhood teachers; and provides support for Early Educator Certification at a reduced cost for the early care and education workforce.*

Activity 10.1: Support for BK Teacher Licensure

Description: This Activity will provide coaching and support to teachers working with children with high needs in non-public school, non-NC Pre-K classrooms who are working to earn the full B-K teacher licensure (SP2).

Key Accomplishments:



- Continue to process new enrollments and employment changes in all data systems. A total of 241 teachers, identified as RTT, were enrolled with the Early Educator Support, Licensure, and Professional Development (EESLPD) Office as of July 15, 2015. At this time in the year, enrollment numbers change daily.
- Licensure Staff has changed and new people are oriented. Licensure action request were processed for submission to the NC Department of Public Instruction (NC DPI).
- Proposal for four sustainability activities was approved under the no cost extension provision of the RTT-ELC Grant. While waiting for contract amendment to be executed, initial planning meetings were held for the following:
 - Recruit, train & support new early childhood professionals as partners to continue services for up to 145 teachers.
 - Offer training to teachers on the waitlist and their site administrators and develop professional development modules.
 - Revision of the *Resource Manual for Administrators and Principals Supervising and Evaluating Teachers of Young Children*.

Challenges:

- Mentors, evaluators, and regional leads have been off for the summer.
- The need for mentor and evaluation service to licensed early childhood teachers in nonpublic, non-NC Pre-K programs is greater than available staff/funding can handle.
- Developing effective, independent on-line learning modules requires much time and expertise.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Redesign teacher surveys to evaluate services and service delivery system.
- Continue support for the non-public demonstration classroom pilot where teachers can go for guided observations of high quality classroom practices with their mentor. A proposal for expansion of demonstration classrooms has been submitted.
- Ongoing close coordination between State EESLPD Office and two universities to plan for professional development and review/revise all EESLPD documents and forms.
- Plan training sessions to be recorded for new teachers: NC Educator Effectiveness System (NCEES) Guidance for Teachers. Make taped sessions available to teachers for independent use.

Activity 10.2: Develop and Offer Technical Assistance (TA) Endorsement

Description: This Activity will allow a Technical Assistance Endorsement to be developed for professionals who provide technical assistance, coaching, and mentoring to early childhood teachers.

Key Accomplishments:

- A total of 117 endorsement have been issued as of 8/31/15.

Challenges:

- Staff turnover and changes in positions.
- Need to allow potential applicants to complete education or training needed to apply.



Upcoming Tasks:

- Continue recruitment efforts.
- Survey CCR&R agencies to determine what supports are needed to reach the NC RTT-ELC application stated goal of 90% of CCR&R staff in technical assistance or professional development positions becoming certified and endorsed.

Activity 10.3: Offer Early Educator Certification at reduced cost

Description: This Activity will provide reduced fees for Certification to encourage full participation in the system.

Key Accomplishments:

- 287 ECE professionals were certified through this grant during this quarter. (164 initial certifications and 123 renewals)
- Currently a total of 12,437 early educators hold an active certification.
- Ongoing recruitment occurred.
- A renewal reminder was emailed to individuals whose certification is expiring in coming months.
- CEU opportunities were shared via Facebook and website.

Challenges:

- DCDEE is recognizing the education levels on expired EEC certificates, which may be having a negative impact (disincentive) on the renewal application rate.
- The Administrator Endorsement is not currently in rule, limiting its impact.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Recruiting new and renewal applicants.
- Sending reminders to early educators due to renew in upcoming months.
- Processing applications and issuing certifications to early educators who have applied.
- Seek funding to support expansion of the EEC system.
- Survey those who choose not to renew to determining why and how to support them in renewing.
- Survey those who elect to certify (initial and renewal) to determine why they applied and what is need to support them remaining certified.
- Respond to emails and telephone calls about EEC application and renewal.

Project 11: Access and Accreditation – Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE)

Description: This Project will work with community colleges to establish Early Childhood Associate Degree Programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). It also creates an innovation fund to increase access and student success.

Activity 11.1: NAEYC Accreditation of Community College Early Childhood Programs



Description: This Activity will provide grants to assist community colleges to achieve the National Association for the Education of Young Children's Early Childhood Associate Degree accreditation.

Key Accomplishments:

- The following colleges have received their NAEYC accreditation:
 - Bladen Community College
 - Catawba Valley Community College
 - Edgecombe Community College
 - Halifax Community College
 - Haywood Community College

Challenges: None to report this quarter.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Durham Tech Community College is scheduled to have the peer review site visit in March 2016.
- Southeastern Community College is scheduled to have the peer review site visit in October 2015.

Activity 11.2: Community College Innovation Fund

Description: This Activity provides a fund that will support innovative strategies that expand access and improve student success in early childhood associate degree programs.

Key Accomplishments:

- NC Script webinar on Child Guidance was presented August 4, 2015. (This series has reached full capacity.)
- Finalized plans with the EDU 146 using Foundations in dealing with extreme behavior issues in the early childhood classroom.
- Received email from DCDEE with approval for course description and SLO revisions for EDU 261.
- The committee determined that *Career in Early Childhood*, a North Carolina Directory, 4th edition, 2015, is an existing tool to increase awareness of career options.
- Continued conversations and plans with Institute for Ed2 Career Summit continuation.
- 2nd Ed2 Career Summit on September 17th.

Challenges:

- Scheduling is a problem.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Continued work on content around formative assessment for upcoming Script NC webinars.
- Provide a printed copy and the *Careers in Early Childhood*, a North Carolina Directory, 4th edition pdf to all ECE Faculty.



Project 12: Compensation and Retention – Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE)

Description: *This Project will fund the WAGE\$ ® salary supplement in the 17 counties that were eligible to apply for Transformation Zone status, as well as expanded TEACH scholarships in those 17 counties and additional TEACH scholarships statewide.*

Activity 12.1 WAGE\$ in the Transformation Zone

Description: This Activity allows WAGE\$ supplements to be offered in the Transformation Zone. WAGE\$ is an education based salary supplement designed to incentivize and reward teacher education and retention.

Key Accomplishments:

- Data listed reflects the year to date.
 - 574 participants did or will receive RTT-ELC funds for completing commitment periods during the reporting period (January-July).
 - 327 did or will receive full RTT-ELC supplements
 - 247 did or will receive Smart Start supplements plus RTT-ELC enhancements.
- WAGE\$ provided an insert with each payment to remind participants that the RTT-ELC fund ends in 12-15. This in in addition the letter itself, which also states the funding dates.
- WAGE\$ recruited people with their Early Educator Certification who had not yet applied to WAGE\$.
- CCSA’s research manage officially began the survey process for WAGE4 participants fully funded through the RTT-ELC grant.

Challenges:

- As of January 2016, Smart Start partnerships will need to be prepared to cover payments for individuals eligible for Smart Start but previously paid by the RTT-ELC grant due to funding availability. WAGE\$ will provide strategies to adjust funding needs if/as applicable.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Process applications.
- Process increases in education.
- Complete employment confirmations.
- Issue payments.
- Continue recruitment activities.
- Offer and provide requested outreach opportunities.
- Remind participants of funding end date.

Activity 12.2 T.E.A.C.H. Scholarships



Description: This Activity will provide enhanced T.E.A.C.H.® Scholarships in the 17 Transformation Zone-eligible counties, as well as new scholarships for other members of the early childhood workforce (e.g., home visitors, TA/PD providers, coaches, etc.) across the state, and a new Infant Toddler program of study and related scholarship (NC-FITC) for teachers working with children birth to 36 months of age.

Key Accomplishments:

- 14 Early Care and Education Community Specialist Scholarships were awarded during the reporting period.
 - 10 recipients have submitted enrollment for Fall 2015 and stipends have been requested.
 - 7 recipients are employed at a Smart Start partnership agency.
 - 6 recipients are employed at a resource and referral agency.
 - 1 recipient is employed as a home visitor in a Head Start program.
- NC Foundation of Infant and Toddler Care Mentor Teacher Scholarship (NC-FITC)
 - Completed 2 week-long summer institutes for a total of 34 community college instructors.
 - Updated FITC Course Learning Table with NC FELD aligned modules.
 - Submitted grades from TITC-CC Institutes 1&2 to Meredith College.
 - Secured dated and location for FITC-TA Institute.
 - Schedule and emailed and FITC-CC Instructor participants dated and times for Community of Practice calls.
- Early Care and Education Enhancement Scholarship in the Transformation Zone (TZ)
 - 34 T.E.A.C.H. recipients participating on an enhanced Transformation Zone scholarship at this time.
 - 31 Associate Degree recipients.
 - 1 Bachelor Degree recipient.
 - 2 Birth-Kindergarten Licensure recipients.
- Master's Degree Scholarship.
 - UNC-Greensboro.
 - 43 scholarships awarded to date.
 - 39 participants registered for Fall 2015.
 - UNC-Wilmington.
 - 99 scholarships awarded to date.
 - 85 participants registered for Fall 2015.
- NC Articulation Agreement Project.
 - NC Higher Education Project Director mad direct contact to introduce the project to early childhood program chairs from 20 independent colleges and 14 public universities.
 - Articulation Leadership Team made final revisions to the articulation transfer guide.
 - Continued obtaining articulation agreements for the repository. To date the following 6 colleges and universities have summited agreements to the Project Director: East Carolina University, UNC-Pembroke, UNC-Wilmington, UNC-Greensboro, Fayetteville State University, and Barton College.



- Met with UNC Charlotte B-K licensure program faculty to negotiate changes or modifications to their revised articulation agreement.
- Finalized participation in the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood National Articulation Project. No future funding is anticipated from the Center to help sustain the coordination of articulation work in NC.
- Submitted final project report to the T.E.A.C.H. National Center that included an Accomplishments and Activities Summary.

Challenges:

- NC Foundation of Infant and Toddler Care Mentor Teacher Scholarship (NC-FITC).
- A new challenge is determining an agenda for each Community of Practice call that addresses the diverse needs of the CC instructors participating. The first call (Sept.) will provide time for a check in and identification of topics for future calls to support ongoing use of FITC content in courses. Early Care and Education Enhancement Scholarship in the T-Zone.
 - Although 9 new recipients from the TZ were gained, 17 recipients from the last reporting period are not continuing at this time. (Of the 17 recipients not continuing: 13 of them had contracts that ended Summer 2015 but have chosen not to renew, 1 is on medical leave, 1 quit their sponsoring center, 1 changed their major, and 1 was being sponsored by a center that is now under new ownership.)
- NC Articulation Agreement Project
 - The continued stigma placed on ECE associate degree students and graduated by some in the four year sector has created barriers to the expansion or enhancement of articulation agreements by more B-K licensure program coordinators.
 - Comprehensive articulation agreements within the independent and public sector do not mirror each other.
 - Independent college program representatives expressed differing knowledge about AA and AAS degrees.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Early Care and Education Community Specialist Program.
 - Collect documentation for Fall 2015 semester.
- NC Foundation of Infant and Toddler Care Mentor Teacher Scholarship (NC-FITC).
 - Make final arrangements for TA Institute in October.
 - Start to review and adapt course material to fit the needs to TA providers.
- Early Care and Education Enhancement Scholarship in the TZ.
 - Process applications and claims for individuals in the Transformation Zone eligible counties.
- Master's Degree Scholarship.
 - Create contract addendums to extend recipients contracts who were awarded two term contracts prior to funding being extended.
- NC Articulation Agreement Project.



- UNC Wilmington's articulation agreement will be reviewed and assessed by the Project Director in tandem with the Articulation Leadership Team.

Project 13: Cultural Competence – Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE)

Description: *This Project will work with 100 early care and education teachers/directors and 75 TA providers to develop curriculum (.5 CEU course), training, coaching and assessment tools through an intentional learning process called the Breakthrough Series Collaborative. The goal is to increase the cultural competence of the early childhood workforce who are directly participating in the learning communities, and to extend this learning to the larger ECE workforce through the .5 CEU course that will be delivered through the Child Care Resource and Referral system starting in 2015.*

Activity 13.1: Cultural Competence Support

Key Accomplishments:

- Winston Salem State University (WSSU) submitted first partial draft of WSSU Cultural Competence Breakthrough Series Collaborative Final Report and submitted it to DCDEE for feedback as well.
- WSSU continued compiling Appendices for final report.
- WSSU continued analysis of data from project documents.

Challenges: None to report this quarter.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Complete Final Report in response to DCDEE.
- Publish CLC and deliver to DCDEE.
- Publish Final Report.

Project 14: ECDL (Early Childhood Director Leadership) – Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE)

Description: *This Project will develop intensive training for child care administrators to improve their leadership and program management skills.*

Activity 14.1: Early Childhood Director Leadership Institute (ECDLI)

Key Accomplishments:

- All post-Program Administrator Scale (PAS) assessments are complete.
- Coaches completed face-to-face visits with participants.
- 99% of participant completed PAS assessment goals.
- The ECDLI Project Manager resigned. Prior to her resignation a budget was submitted as requested by DCDEE for the project to continue into calendar year 2016.



Challenges:

- ECDLI Project Coordinator resigned.
- Pending the outcome of budget review and approval, CCRI will conduct a search for a lead staff member to complete new deliverables.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Hire replacement Project Coordinator (Target start by end of September 2015).

Reform Area E: Measuring Outcomes and Progress

Project 2: Data Systems and Management

Description: These projects aim to establish state data systems capable of collecting and integrating high quality data from multiple state agency partners serving children 0-5. The NC ECIDS will focus on the design, development, and implementation of an early childhood data system capable of integrating early childhood data from state agencies serving young children and will link to and align with the longitudinal P-20W (Pre-K to age 20/ workforce) system.

Activity 2.1: NC Early Childhood Integrated Data System (NC ECIDS).

Description: This Activity is focused on developing and implementing an early childhood data system (NC ECIDS).

Activity 2.1: NC ECIDS.

Description: This Activity is focused on developing and implementing an early childhood data system (NC ECIDS).

Key Accomplishments:

- The Executive Committee and the Program Management Committee of the Governance Council continues to meet on a bimonthly schedule.
- The Data Use Agreement for researchers who make data requests was approved by the Executive Committee.
- The Agency MOA, which key participating agencies will sign that establishes data sharing through the system, has been approved and signed by designated parties.
- The first four standard reports that have been reviewed and signed off by the Program Management and Executive Committees.
- The web portal pages have been “mocked up” by ABT for the web site. These are currently under final review by staff, and are being built by OITS.



- OITS continues to hold regular meetings with the technology representatives from the participating programs and agencies to discuss the architecture of the system and the next steps in moving forward in terms of roles and responsibilities.
- A statement of work was approved and signed off on for the work with CSDW, the data warehouse at DHHS that outlines the work needed to be done to establish a connection between it and the NC ECIDS application.
- OITS has worked with DPI to establish a connection between CEDARS (the DPI data warehouse) and ECIDS to be able to connect the systems together to retrieve data when needed.
- The NC ECIDS team reviewed and signed off on a number of business requirements packages which will be used to build the system. This phase of development is coming to a close.
- Working with Atlantic BT, a web development firm, we have developed much of the “front end” of the user interface for the web portal. OITS developers are working on the “back end” Mock ups of the home page, Reports Page, Query Options are available. Data Request page will follow.
- The NC ECIDS team and several program members received training from the federal State Support Team in mapping our data elements to CEDS elements. All program data elements have now been mapped to CEDS.
- We are working with Program Managers to get the final text for the web page for Programs in NC ECIDS.
- The amended contract for purchase of eScholar software has been signed by NCDPI and sent to eScholar. After the MOU between DHHS and DPI is signed, DCDEE can pay the invoice for the UIDs to eScholar and we can begin that UID assignment work.

Challenges:

- While it appears to be nearing completion, there has been a significant delay in getting a complete contract in place for eScholar due to the existing policies and procedures within the participating agencies. This work is still dependent on the MOU being signed between the agencies, and it has been over 14 months of waiting for this to be finalized.
- There have been staffing challenges within OITS with the lead website developer resigning and another developer needing to travel outside of the country due to a death in the family. Both of these challenges affect the timeline of the first release of the web portal and standard reports.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Continue to hold Executive and Program Management Committee meetings to be able to make policy decisions about the system and approve key documents.
- Continue to work with P20W to ensure that our systems can be aligned once they are built.
- Continue the development of the NC ECIDS application.
- Continue to review and approve business requirements packages.
- Pursue the development of a Research Stakeholders group to provide input to a possible research agenda, feedback on the web portal and data request process, and other relevant aspects of the NC ECIDS system. This group has been approved by the Executive Committee.
- Pursue the use of an external consultant through the Early Learning Challenge Grant work to develop a communication and messaging plan for NC ECIDS to coincide with the first release.



- Continue to work with source system data warehouse personnel on technology needed to connect the warehouses to the NC ECIDS application.

Activity 2.2: Smart Start Data Project

Description: This Activity will enable North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC) to provide resources necessary for the 76 local Smart Start partnerships to collect and provide data to a unified system that will ultimately link to ECIDS.

Key Accomplishments:

- Smart Start Outcomes and Data Reporting System
 - Local partnerships selected their outcome measures during the month of July. This work generated many technical assistance calls with partnerships. Measures selection has gone quite well with strong praise for the new online system used to make these selections.
 - Development of the system for outputs data collection was completed during this quarter. Testing and training will occur in October.
 - The Data Advisory Group met in Burke County to review the new outputs data reporting system, discuss potential for collecting additional Smart Start data to share with ECIDS, and to discuss data governance, consent, and security.
 - Data collection for Outcomes measures is under construction. The Measures Guide is updated and frequently asked questions/additional guidance for measures is being finalized.
 - A per-child-care-facility outputs data collection, to be piloted, is under construction. Data Advisory Group's concerns about logistics of this data entry will be considered in the design process.
- Data Mini Grants.
 - Check-in calls were made to all Round 1 recipients. They indicate they are making progress and beginning to use their new software in the new Smart Start fiscal year.
 - Contracts were established for Round 2 mini grants which were announced in June.
 - Developed and released the Round 3 RFA to Smart Start Partnerships on August 31st. All partnerships are eligible to apply for a Round 3 mini-grant; those that had not previously received one are prioritized. This is the final round of mini grants.
 - Technical assistance outreach calls were made to all LPs that have not yet received mini grants. Developing ideas for mini grants, guidance and connection to resources for ideas development, including cross-partnership connections are in process.



- Web-based videos, brief “spotlights” on mini grants projects, were recorded to provide Round 3 mini grant seekers with examples of how others’ promising (Round 1) data projects have been established.
- Parents and Teachers Data for ECIDS
 - The National Privacy Technical Assistance Center, PTAC, gave final recommendations for the parent/guardian consent and authorization form proposed by NCPC for parent/guardian permission. This form fits the National PAT’s requirement that local affiliates obtain authorization or consent for PAT’s National Center to have access to, use or disclose of local affiliate’s data.
 - An RFP is has been drafted and is under review for the development of a series of trainings for data collection planning and management including collecting, using and sharing data (i.e. data governance). Input from Data Advisory Group has been incorporated
- Planning for communities of practice to support the use of KIPS (Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale) and CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) has started through cross-department input and feedback from the KIPS author.
- NC ECIDS.
 - NCPC held two meetings with the NC ECIDS leadership team to discuss additional family support data that Smart Start might be able to provide to NC ECIDS.
 - Planning continues for exploring the feasibility and logistics for collecting additional family support data for NC ECIDS.
 - Held meetings to review and select indicators from Smart Start subsidy to share with NC ECIDS.
 - NCPC staff attended the NC ECIDS Program Manager Committee meeting.

Challenges: None to report this quarter.

Upcoming Tasks (expectations for the upcoming month):

- The creation of customized fields for Smart Start measures data reporting will be built into Fabrik Activities Management.
- Outcomes and outputs reports for NCPC and partnerships will be specified.
- Phone-based technical assistance for prospective applicants for mini grants Round 3 will continue.
- Outcomes measurement technical assistance planning will be developed in consultation with QA specialists.



Activity 2.3: Workforce Data Project (WORKS)

Description: This Activity will establish an improved early childhood workforce data system, WORKS, that will replace the current system, and, in addition, link to the NC ECIDS.

Key Accomplishments:

- Established the DHHS DCDEE WORKS Review Committee.
- Updated WORKS project artifacts including staffing plan, communication plan, risks & issues log, and project schedule.
- Obtained approval for RTT federal grant extension.
- Obtained approval for request to waive competition for procurement of design, development and implementation services.
- Finalized WORKS Business Requirements package.
- Collaborated with UNC EMSPIC to draft WORKS Scope of Work.
- Reviewed University of NC Emergency Medical Services Performance Improvement Center proposed Service Level Agreement and Budget Narrative.
- Collaborated with UNC Emergency Medical Services Performance Improvement Center to update the DCDEE WORKS Technical Architecture System Design.
- Initiated draft contract to design, develop and implement the WORKS solution based on the Scope of Work, Service Level Agreement and Budget Narrative.

Challenges:

- Internal procurement processes to execute a government to government contract are not clear and all stakeholders do not agree on required steps which may result in delay of project activities.
- Multiple exceptions to state IT processes are being identified which must be justified and approved before the project can move forward with design, development and implementation.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Obtain DHHS and State Security and Architecture approval for the WORKS Technical Architecture System Design.
- Obtain State CIO approval for the WORKS hosting exception request.
- Obtain State CIO approval for the WORKS authentication web services protocol exception request.
- Finalize requirements and obtain estimates to complete the known system interfaces.
- Obtain DHHS OPCS approval to execute the WORKS contract.
- Develop the WORKS data model.
- Document WORKS user stories.
- Draft WORKS user training plan.

(Repeated) Activity 15.1: Develop/revise K-3 Assessment to include a Kindergarten Entry Assessment and extend through third grade (see page 19-20).



(Repeated) Activity 15.2: Using Data to Improve Classroom Instruction (see page 20).

**NORTH CAROLINA RACE TO THE TOP- EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE
TRANSFORMATION ZONE**

The Transformation Zone is a system building initiative that includes a set of four counties (Beaufort, Chowan, Bertie and Hyde Counties) in Northeastern NC and representation from key human service state agencies working with young children. Working with the local and state teams, the effort emphasizes community infrastructure and capacity building around implementation science to support high quality implementation of selected evidence-based/informed strategies to improve outcomes for young children.

This report extracts the related Transformation Zone projects from the existing quarterly report and consolidates information to present the Transformation Zone as an initiative and provide a more holistic perspective of the Transformation Zone work. The various projects are coupled according to their strategy focus, including: Transformation Zone Support and Capacity Building activities, Child Care Strategies, Family Strengthening Strategies, Early Literacy Strategies, and the Transformation Zone Evaluation. A diagram depicting each strategy by implementation phase is also included to present information using the Applied Implementation Frameworks.

Transformation Zone Support and Capacity Building (Activities 1.2 and 18.2)

Description: These activities emphasize work with the local and state teams to enhance community infrastructure and capacity building around implementation science to support high quality implementation of selected evidence-based/informed strategies to improve outcomes for young children in the Transformation Zone.

Activity 1.2: Transformation Zone Support and Capacity Building (National Implementation Research Network)

Description: The Transformation Zone is a system building initiative that includes a set of four counties (Beaufort, Chowan, Bertie and Hyde Counties) in Northeastern NC and representation from key human service state agencies working with young children. Working with the local and state teams, the effort emphasizes community infrastructure and capacity building around implementation science to support high quality implementation of selected evidence-based/informed strategies to improve outcomes for young children in the Transformation Zone.

Key Accomplishments:

- State-level:
 - Funder work:
 - NIRN continues to support NC Partnership for Children in their efforts to grow internal capacity to use Implementation Science best practices internally and with Local Partnerships for Children.



- NIRN supports NCPC staff in convening and facilitating a small team of NCPC leaders for learning and planning. This team met five times in the third Quarter, and will continue to meet in the fourth quarter of the year.
- NIRN provided intensive coaching in Implementation Science and change agent skills to the NCPC Coach Coordinator, so that she may support local Implementation Coaches in their knowledge and skill development. NIRN staff met weekly with Coach Coordinator during the third quarter and will continue this work in the fourth quarter of the year.
- Purveyor work:
 - NIRN convened a State Implementation Team meeting on July 14 to continue discussion on building feedback loops between State and County system levels.
 - NIRN worked with the Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center and NCPC to determine infrastructure requirements for Child Care Health Consultation implementation, including planning for a meeting of local implementing agencies to gather their perspectives.
- County-level:
 - NIRN staff participated in extensive coordination work with NCPC and the ABLe Systems Change team to ensure technical assistance for local counties was coordinated and aligned. NIRN staff also participated in ABLe Systems Change county and cross county retreats in September 2015.
 - NIRN staff continues to successfully support local county infrastructure development to support County Leadership and Implementation Teams. This support includes County Capacity Assessments and facilitation for local county discussions related to infrastructure sustainability in the third Quarter.
 - NIRN staff focused efforts to build County Leadership and Implementation Teams' capacity to use and sustain feedback loops within the county and with state partners. NIRN staff provided training to Local Implementation Coaches and Coach Coordinator about the use of data within feedback loops, and then supported coaches in providing similar training to County Implementation Teams.

Challenges:

- At the County-level, County Implementation and Leadership Teams are working to identify how best to use technical assistance for the remainder of the no-cost extension, recognizing that the significant scope of work identified at the outset of the Transformation Zone must now be prioritized.

Next Steps:

- At the state level, NIRN will continue its work with NCPC to support implementation capacity development through individual coaching of NCPC staff and facilitation of NCPC group learning and application.



- At the county level, NIRN will work with NCPC to assess counties' current needs and goals for the remaining year of Transformation Zone funds. This will allow NCPC and NIRN to strategically target technical assistance efforts for county partners.
 - NIRN's county technical assistance will focus on:
 - County Capacity Assessments and facilitation for local county discussions related to infrastructure sustainability, and
 - Building County Leadership and Implementation Teams' capacity to use data as a part of feedback loops within the county and with state partners.

Activity 18.2 (North Carolina Partnership for Children)

Key Accomplishments:

- Held regular staff meetings to discuss project activities and review data.
- Distributed third evaluation update newsletter and posted to Active Implementation Hub which serves as a share point for documents.
- Presented at State Implementation Team meeting on 7/14/15 in Raleigh.
- Completed interviews of County Implementation Coaches.
- Facilitated Evaluation Work Group meetings with Grants Management, NIRN and NCPC teams on 7/27/15, 8/18/15, and 9/15/15.
- Developed and finalized draft mid-point evaluation report and executive summary. Emailed mid-point report to Grants Management and the consultant to the evaluation team for feedback.
- Attended Cross-County Visioning Retreat on 9/24/15 in Plymouth.
- Attended coaches' priorities calls and team meetings, and ELC planning and TZ Coordination calls.
- Attended 45 meetings and phone conferences during the quarter.
- Reviewed ABL e Change Network Dropbox and other informational documents.
- Reviewed NIRN document files and NC-ELC TZ Sakai site.
- Monitored TZ Evaluation email account and responded as needed.

Challenges:

- None to report this quarter.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Finalize and distribute mid-point evaluation report and executive summary.
- Attend Leadership Team meetings in October and November.
- Interview state leadership regarding policy and practice shifts related to TZ engagement.
- Create protocols for focus groups with county teams and plan data collection visits. Draft protocols for interviews and surveys. Plan activities for case study of literacy strategies.
- Facilitate Evaluation Work Group meetings on 10/19/15, 11/17/15 and 12/15/15.
- Attend RTT-ELC partners meeting in December.



- Continue attending coaches' priorities calls and team meetings, and ELC planning and TZ Coordination calls.
- Continue document review of materials at NIRN, ABL e Change, RTT-ELC and TZ Sakai sites.
- Continue to monitor TZ Evaluation email and respond as needed.
- Continue to provide timely updates and feedback to TZ Evaluation leadership and stakeholders on findings/ recommendations.

Child Care Strategies

4 -5 Star Infant Toddler Slots in the Transformation Zone (Activity 6.2)

Description: This Activity will create more subsidized Infant/Toddler slots in 4 and 5 star programs in the Transformation Zone with support from an Infant-Toddler Specialist.

Key Accomplishments:

- Enhanced payments were made to three Beaufort programs for the following service months:
 - June- 39 children total (15 infants, 24 one year olds)
 - July- 44 children total (16 infants, 28 one year olds)
 - August- 40 children total (14 infants, 26 one year olds)
- Six Infant-Toddler Expansion Grant programs received TA (43 consultations) in three TZ counties.

Challenges:

- Challenges related to turnover in a Chowan County GS-110 program working to obtain a star-rated license with Infant-Toddler Expansion Grant support may impact this program's ability to be successful. Support during this time is being provided by the Infant-Toddler Specialist in collaboration with the program's licensing consultant and the Chowan-Perquimans Smart Start Partnership staff.
- A site was discontinued in the Infant-Toddler Expansion Grant program in June due to the site's lack of progress and engagement in the quality improvement process over the past 15+ months.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Continue providing technical assistance based on improvement plans to expansion grant programs.

Part Day Infant Toddler Program in Transformation Zone (NC Babies First/NCB1 - Activity 6.3)

Description: This Activity will create a high-quality part day program for high need infants and toddlers in the Transformation Zone with support from an Infant-Toddler Specialist.

Key Accomplishments:

- Beaufort County: 36 attending at month end; all double slot; 5 receiving transportation.



- Bertie County: 6 attending at month end; all double slot; 4 receiving transportation.
- Hyde County: 4 attending at month end; all double slot. NOTE: Center stopped delivering care temporarily on August 31 with the expectation that it will reopen early 2016.
- Hyde County program had Environment Rating Scale evaluation by NC Rated License Assessment Project and received notice of Environment Rating Scale scores to be eligible for 5 star licensure before closing.
- 58 parent surveys were distributed and 25 were returned.
 - 18 checked that NCB1 allowed them to keep or accept a job.
 - 17 checked that NCB1 allowed them to attend school.
 - Noted comment about financial help: “It (NCB1) has made it possible for his dad to go to school and for us to not have to worry about where the money will come from to eat.”
 - Noted comment about development: “My daughter is learning very well and it helps her to engage with other children.”

Challenges: None to report this quarter.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Provide TA support to current NCB1 sites.
- Continue Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised mock assessments of classrooms to ensure ongoing quality of care.
- Support the Bertie County site as NCB1 begins to end in the county.
- Begin preparation for Administrator community of practice in Beaufort Co. beginning with NCB1 site Directors.

Healthy, Social Behavior (HSB) Specialist in Transformation Zone (Activity 8.4)

Description: This Activity will provide a Healthy Social Behavior Specialist who will provide technical assistance and training to ELD programs in the Transformation Zone (TZ) to improve program capacity to support the healthy social/emotional development of the children in their care, using the teaching pyramid framework and strategies.

Key Accomplishments:

- Part time Region 1 and Region 2 HSB Statewide Behavior Specialists have committed to providing technical assistance for HSB TZ project classrooms through grant ending.
- Specialists have transitioned active classrooms and are making steady progress on action plans as well as scheduling ongoing training with cohorts.
- The Statewide Project Manager attended the Statewide Implementation Team meeting in Raleigh on July 14.

Challenges: None to report this quarter.

Upcoming Tasks:



- Contact classrooms which have been on hiatus since May to explain staff transition, offer to continue technical assistance/training, and arrange for final Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) assessment under the TZ project. Classrooms will be offered the opportunity to transition to statewide services.
- Monitor continued technical assistance & training and plans for TPOT assessments in October & November by regional specialists.

Child Care Health Consultants (CCHC - Activity 18.5)

Description: Child Care Health Consultants support child care programs in promoting children’s health and development. This Activity will strengthen statewide capacity by establishing a regional health consultant coaching model. It will also provide additional health consultants in the Transformation Zone counties.

Key Accomplishments:

- CCHC infrastructure sustainability conversations between the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE), the Division of Public Health (DPH), the North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC), and the NC Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center are on-going.
- NCPC has drafted a CCHC overview sheet, CCHC impact story, and an “ask letter” template for communities to consider utilizing when exploring local funding for CCHC services. These items will be reviewed during joint sustainability discussions with DCDEE, DPH, and NCPC.
- NCPC, DPH, the CCHC Association, the Resource Center, and other TA providers are beginning discussions with the NC Institute for Child Development Professionals about developing a CCHC Certification process. The discussions have included how to align with and support the CCHC work being supported by the RTT-ELC.
- New CCHC’s continue to receive the coaching module and introduction to the NC CCHC Model as part of the CCHC training course to become a qualified in NC to deliver CCHC services.
- CCHCs statewide continue to deliver services with a coaching approach with the support of the CCHC Regional Coaches.
- The Regional CCHC Coaches continue to provide coaching, consultation, and advocacy to CCHCs and their host agencies. Based on information gained from the field, gathered by the Regional CCHC Coaches, we continue to hone existing tools, such as the NC CCHC Model, and develop new supports, like the series of orientation manuals.
- The NC Child Care Nurse Consultant continues to provide ongoing technical assistance to the CCHC network and works collaboratively with NCPC and the Regional Coaches.
- A growing small group of CCHCs are utilizing the NC Child Care Health and Safety Assessment APP in the delivery of CCHC coaching and consultation. The NC Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center has been providing training, on-going support, and gathering usage feedback.
- The CCHC Coaching evaluation collection is ongoing. Early qualitative information gathered from the interviews places value on support offered from the Regional CCHC Coach and CCHC services received by child care facilities.



- Beaufort, Bertie, Chowan, and Hyde counties (in the Transformation Zone) continue to implement CCHC services and have worked with their agencies and stakeholders to identify child care centers and homes prioritized for intensive health and safety consultation.

Challenges: None to report this quarter.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Preliminary CCHC Coaching Evaluation data should be available in October.
- The hiring Agency Manual/Orientation Workgroup has been rescheduled for 10/9/15.
- A NC Child Care Health and Safety Assessment APP introduction webinar will be held on 10/27/15.
- An updated CCHC model and NCPC endorsed logic model will be released in February 2016. The new CCHC model will include an introduction, frequently asked questions list, and clarification of certain tasks designated for only RNs versus a CCHC generalist.

Family Strengthening Strategies

Activity 17.1: Family Connects

Description: This Activity will provide home visiting, screening, referral, and other services in the Transformation Zone (TZ).

Key Accomplishments:

- A Summary Report of progress through September 2015 was submitted to DPH.
 - There were a total of 168 eligible births this quarter.
 - Of these, a total of 141 home visits were scheduled.
- Family Connects in the Transformation Zone is the second replication of Family Connects Home Visiting in North Carolina. Data demonstrates that Family Connects in the Transformation Zone is performing above expectation and above the benchmarks established by the model developer. This is despite not being able to get into hospitals for the initial visit, the distance to travel in rural communities, and the challenge of identifying community resources to accept referrals.
- One of the nurse home visitors resigned and the vacancy was filled on September 10, 2015 to begin work October 5, 2015.

Challenges:

- Sustainability beyond the grant is the biggest challenge. We are looking at other funding sources (philanthropic, grants, etc.) to extend the program. In addition, some of the nurse home visits are billable through Medicaid as postpartum and newborn home assessment visits.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Continue to seek sources of other funding to sustain the program.
- Continue to track progress of the program and provide support.



Activity 17.2: Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)

Description: The Triple P Program, an evidence based family strengthening program, is designed to meet the needs of families with many programs and options available to them. Triple P will be working with the Transformation Zone to develop programming.

Key Accomplishments:

- Monthly implementation meetings have been completed. Each month a focus topic is discussed—July-Sustainability; August-Data Entry and Reporting in the NC Triple P State Database; and September-Using Data for Continuous Quality Improvement.
- Site visits have been completed to discuss use of data in making decisions about local implementation.
- Refresher classes for previously trained practitioners has been conducted to encourage them to incorporate Triple P into their practice.
- A Statewide Summary Data Report from January-June 2015 was released in August 2015.
- Triple P Online is now available statewide. Local coordinators are providing parent support for the online modules.

Challenges:

- Because these are small counties, the challenge for local coordinators is to fill the 20 slots in training sessions. To address this challenge, local coordinators work together to support regional open enrollment training, whereby practitioners from counties outside the funded area can pay and fill a slot to assure a full training cohort.
- Peer-to-peer support is critical for model fidelity, but there are often not multiple practitioners training from any one clinical discipline. Peer-to-peer support networks often have to be facilitated by the local coordinator to assure that it happens.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Continue monthly implementation meetings.
- Continue refresher classes for previously trained practitioners.
- Continue to track progress of the program and provide support.

Early Literacy Strategies

Transformation Zone Early Literacy (Activity 18.3)

Description: This Activity will provide strategies (including Motherread and Reach Out and Read) to improve early literacy in the Transformation Zone.

Key Accomplishments:

- Counties are continuing staggered initial implementation of Reach Out and Read and Motherread:



- New Motherread/Fatheread and BABY classes have started in Beaufort and Bertie at local health departments and child care centers. Literacy Coordinators from both counties report good initial registration.
- New Reach Out and Read sites have started in all four counties.
- Reach Out and Read Carolinas continues to provide information and application support for potential sites in Beaufort and Chowan counties.
- Motherread has reached out to county Literacy Coordinators to provide support around recruitment and retention challenges. Bertie has a call pending. Motherread will be providing an overview of recruitment and retention strategies at the next TZ cross-county early literacy meeting on 10/29/15.
- Counties received another round of Motherread curricula training this summer. To date, the number trained in each Motherread curricula in the transformation zone is:
 - Story Exploring – People trained: 117 (includes staff lost due to turnover, support staff, back-up facilitators).
 - BABY - People trained: 19 (includes staff lost due to turnover, support staff, back-up facilitators).
 - Motherread/Fatheread – People trained: 37 (includes staff lost due to turnover, support staff, back-up facilitators).
- Counties are currently engaged in using the ABLE framework in completing community scans. Several of the counties state they are utilizing information gathered in this process to help inform challenges with “fit” of certain early literacy strategies and thus issues with site selection; participant recruitment and retention; facilitator/staff turnover; community awareness/understanding of programming & coordination.
- In August, NCPC provided a Coaching Refresher orientation to Literacy Coordinators.
- NCPC continues to facilitate monthly Reach Out and Read Project Coordinator calls, to which the transformation zone counties are invited to attend.
- In-person, cross-county TZ Early Literacy Meetings are held with the Literacy Coordinators, county support staff, literacy purveyors, NCPC, the contracted evaluator, and Transformation Zone Implementation coaches every other month to help support implementation practice and provide a networking forum.
- We are continuing to gather information from counties about implementation successes and challenges. Based in part on this feedback, Motherread, NCPC, and the contracted evaluator released revised Motherread evaluation and teaching tools for county use.
- The site visit summary report completed by the TZ Early Literacy contracted evaluator was completed and released to counties in July. The purpose of this first round of site visits was to augment survey data collected in the four counties and to gain a more vivid picture of the implementation of the Motherread programs.

Challenges:

- Recently, the only child care center on Ocracoke closed, which was an implementing Story Exploring site. While Hyde will continue to look for other Story Exploring opportunities, Hyde is currently implementing in all available child care centers and Pre-K and Head Start classrooms.



- While counties still struggle with recruitment and retention of Motherread/Fatheread and BABY sites and participants, several counties have been innovative in establishing new sites. At the next TZ cross-county early literacy meeting in October, we plan to have counties share these successes and innovate approaches with one another.

Upcoming Tasks:

- Next cross-county TZ Early Literacy meeting will be held in Williamston on 10/29/15.
- A new round of Motherread curricula trainings will be held this winter. Counties have been asked to inform Motherread and NCPC of their current training needs. Motherread will work with literacy coordinators to deliver training reorientations later this summer.
- A second round of site visits by the contracted evaluator will occur in early 2016 as part of the no cost extension period.

Transformation Zone Evaluation (Activity 1.3)

Description: This Activity provides a comprehensive evaluation of the Transformation Zone Activities.

Key Accomplishments:

- Held regular staff meetings to discuss project activities and review data.
- Distributed third evaluation update newsletter and posted to Active Implementation Hub which serves as a share point for documents.
- Presented at State Implementation Team meeting on 7/14/15 in Raleigh.
- Completed interviews of County Implementation Coaches.
- Facilitated Evaluation Work Group meetings with Grants Management, NIRN and NCPC teams on 7/27/15, 8/18/15, and 9/15/15.
- Developed and finalized draft mid-point evaluation report and executive summary. Emailed mid-point report to Grants Management and the consultant to the evaluation team for feedback.
- Attended Cross-County Visioning Retreat on 9/24/15 in Plymouth.
- Attended coaches' priorities calls and team meetings, and ELC planning and TZ Coordination calls.
- Attended 45 meetings and phone conferences during the quarter.
- Reviewed ABL Change Network Dropbox and other informational documents.
- Reviewed NIRN document files and NC-ELC TZ Sakai site.
- Monitored TZ Evaluation email account and responded as needed.

Challenges:

- None to report this quarter.

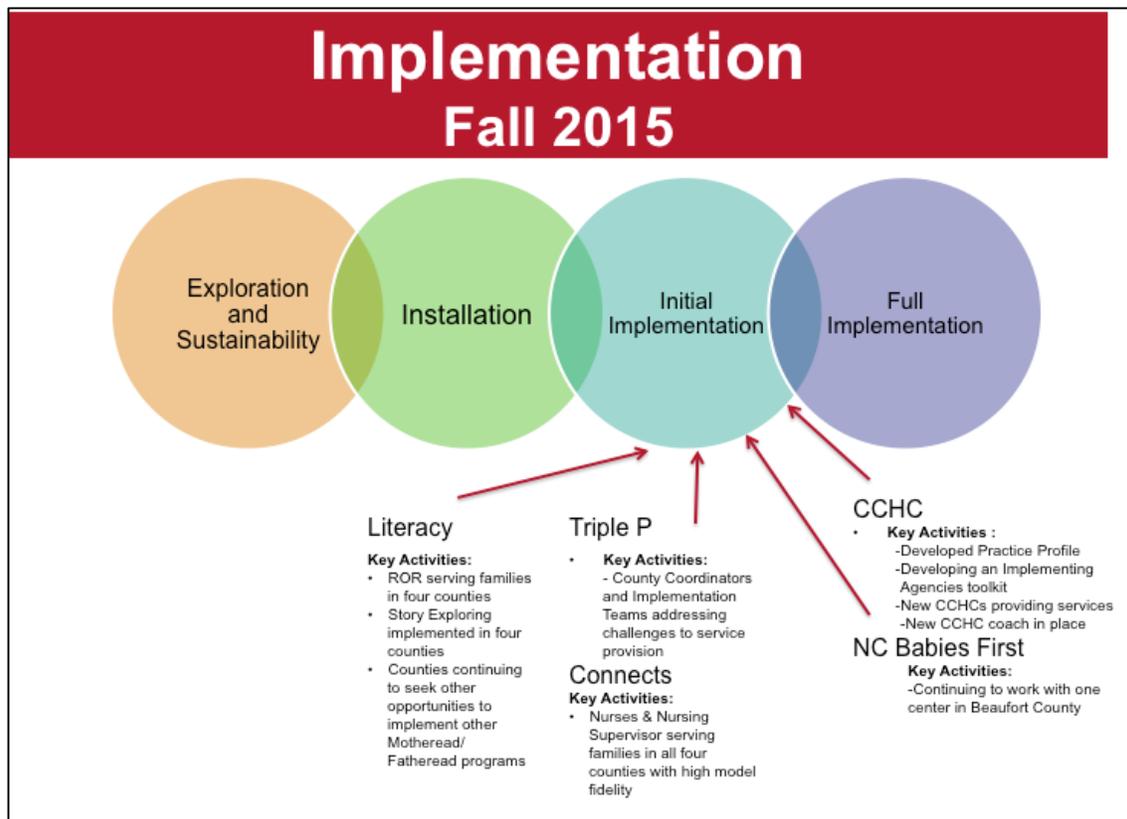
Upcoming Tasks:

- Finalize and distribute mid-point evaluation report and executive summary.
- Attend Leadership Team meetings in October and November.
- Interview state leadership regarding policy and practice shifts related to TZ engagement.



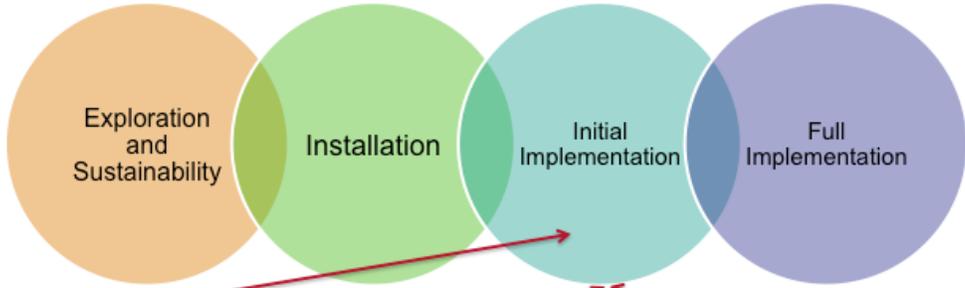
- Create protocols for focus groups with county teams and plan data collection visits. Draft protocols for interviews and surveys. Plan activities for case study of literacy strategies.
- Facilitate Evaluation Work Group meetings on 10/19/15, 11/17/15 and 12/15/15.
- Attend RTT-ELC partners meeting in December.
- Continue attending coaches' priorities calls and team meetings, and ELC planning and TZ Coordination calls.
- Continue document review of materials at NIRN, ABL e Change, RTT-ELC and TZ Sakai sites.
- Continue to monitor TZ Evaluation email and respond as needed.
- Continue to provide timely updates and feedback to TZ Evaluation leadership and stakeholders on findings/ recommendations.

Transformation Zone Strategy by Implementation Phase





Implementation Continues (Fall 2015)



- **County Implementation Coaches**
 - Weekly individual coaching from Coach Coordinator
 - Weekly team meeting/in-service
 - Coaches use active implementation concepts & tools with teams, including facilitating regular team meetings
 - Facilitate ABLe Systems Change work through stakeholder engagement

- **County Implementation Teams**
 - Support for regular monthly meetings
 - Supporting community awareness/engagement activities

- **County Leadership Teams**
 - Clarifying vision, goals and objectives for the county
 - Continue to add key stakeholders to the teams
 - Learning to use data to assess implementation and system challenges