

## **PURPOSE**

**The Austin VISION for School Readiness (*Child Well Being*): School readiness occurs when families, schools, and communities support and serve children effectively so that ALL children have the ability to succeed in various learning environments.**

### **Context/Assumptions/Guiding Principles**

All children are born ready to learn. The goals in this document depict what our community strives to have every child reach at the time they enter school at five years of age (kindergarten). The child goals in this document should not be used to exclude children from school attendance nor used to make decisions about program placement. The indicators are those things which should be promoted and encouraged in “pre-school” children (ages 0-5) and that will ensure they, in fact, attain the school readiness goals.

### **Purposes of document:**

- Assess current status of programs, services, and conditions that support early learning and identify areas of greatest need in getting children ready for school success
- Serve as a catalyst for community discussions of priorities for community advocacy
- Measure progress in improving conditions related to school readiness
- Provide a baseline of data to stimulate action at all funding levels (including local, state, foundations, etc.) and to assist in monitoring the impact of investments and policy choices that affect school readiness.

### **To be successful in effecting systems change, this document needs to stimulate these conditions:**

- Agencies and providers collaborate on planning, services, and data collection
- Adequate financial and human resources from public and private sources need to be infused into the system.
- The importance of early education needs to be universally acknowledged.
- Improved outcomes for children: Children are ready for school success, ultimately increasing high school graduation, post-secondary program completion (including college) and lifetime earnings.
- The field of early education and care is a respected profession with career tracks, appropriate pay, and stable, reasonable working conditions, (which ultimately should translate to better quality child care).
- Positive overall net gains occur. The dollar amount gained is ultimately more than the dollar amount spent.

**I. GOALS/OUTCOMES: What will my ‘audience’ look like or be able to do when we’re successful at getting children ready for school success?**

**GOALS FOR CHILDREN WHEN THEY ENTER KINDERGARTEN:**

1. They are **HEALTHY** (p.3)
2. By the time children enter kindergarten, they have formed an **APPROPRIATE ATTACHMENT** to a significant adult, display age-appropriate **SOCIAL COMPETENCIES**, and demonstrate a variety of **DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE APPROACHES** to learning that prepare them to succeed in school. (p. 4)
3. By the time they enter kindergarten, children have the **BASIC LANGUAGE SKILLS** and **GENERAL KNOWLEDGE OF CONCEPTUAL RELATIONSHIPS AND BASIC SCIENCE PROCESSES** needed to succeed in school. (p.5)
4. **ALL FAMILIES** have the **SUPPORT AND RESOURCES** necessary to help children get ready for success. (p.6)
5. **ALL COMMUNITIES** are safe and support learning, health and family services for young children. (p. 7)
6. **ALL SCHOOLS** are ready to support young children’s success with developmentally appropriate expectations and practices (p. 8)

**II. INDICATORS: What do they (children and/or parents/caregivers) need to know AND/OR do to get children ready for school success?**

**III. CCC FRAMEWORK: What services do they (children and/or parents/caregivers) need in order to acquire the knowledge as described by the INDICATORS?**

**IV. United Way SB6: How can we best configure these necessary services for effective and efficient delivery?**

**\*See Planning, Evaluation, and Coordination section of CCC Framework**

**I. What will my audience look like or be able to do when we're successful at getting children ready for school success?**

**GOAL 1: By the time children enter kindergarten they are HEALTHY.**

**Outcomes** shown when children enter kindergarten and are healthy include:

- Children demonstrate age-appropriate fine and gross motor skills.
- Children begin to demonstrate skills in self-care such as good hygiene and nutrition.
- Children have normal or corrected vision and hearing
- Children have up to date immunizations by age 2.
- Children are free from disease or chronic illnesses.
- Children have normal weight.
- Children have healthy teeth.

**II. What do they (children and/or parents/caregivers) need to know AND/OR do to reach that end?**

**INDICATORS:**

- 1- Parents prepare for a healthy pregnancy.
- 2- Parents access early prenatal care.
- 3- Parents practice healthy behaviors during pregnancy.
- 4- Parents seek professional consultation for possible developmental delays.
- 5- Parents/Caregivers provide quality nutrition for their children.
- 6- Parents ensure their children have good dental care.
- 7- Parents maintain a safe home for children.
- 8- Parents/Caregivers use safety seats when children are in a vehicle.
- 9- Parents and children are both medically insured.
- 10- Children are up to date with well-child checkups.
- 11- Children have up to date immunizations by age 2.
- 12- Children have 'normal' height/weight
- 13- Children have adequate opportunities for physical activity.
- 14- Children begin to develop self-care skills including good hygiene and nutrition.

**III. What services do they need to acquire the knowledge?**

**CCC FRAMEWORK:**

**HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

**PROMOTION:** *Prenatal care and support, Dental, Health Care, Medical Insurance, Primary Care Provider, Immunizations, Health Promotion, Dental Care, Early Mental Health Services, Services for Children with Special Needs, Linkages between Early Care and Education System and Health Care System, Childhood Safety, Child Abuse Prevention.*

**FAMILY SUPPORTS:** *Home Visiting and Parent Education*

**GOAL 2: By the time children enter kindergarten they have APPROPRIATE ATTACHMENT to a significant adult, age-appropriate SOCIAL COMPETENCIES, and demonstrate a variety of DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE APPROACHES to learning that prepare them to succeed in school.**

**Outcomes** shown when children enter kindergarten and have appropriate attachment to a significant adult include:

- Children are generally happy and secure.
- Children are able to seek comfort from a significant adult when distressed.
- Children who are able to trust significant adults.
- Children engage in positive play with peers.
- Children manage their own behavior and engage in social problem solving.
- Children cooperate with other children and adults.
- Children can follow directions.
- Children look forward to going to school.
- Children use words to solve conflicts.
- Children sustain attention through typical kindergarten activities.
- Children persist in learning new tasks.
- Children are eager to learn new things.
- Children demonstrate creativity in play and work activities.

**INDICATORS:**

- 1- Parents/Caregivers demonstrate skills in developing attachment with their young children.
- 2-Parents/Caregivers maintain stable relationships with their children over months/years.
- 3- Children learn basic social skills such as cooperation, empathy, problem solving, and following directions.
- 4-Children are supported in play-based, quality learning settings at home and in ECE environments.
- 5- Children enter school eager to learn new things.

**CCC FRAMEWORK:**

**EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION:**

*Quality, Affordable, and Available Child Care; Including children not cared for routinely outside of the home-Parents are both educated and knowledgeable about positive parenting practices*

**FAMILY SUPPORTS:** *Parent Preparation, Parent Education, Home Visiting, Family Resource Centers*

**PROGRAM SUPPORTS:**

*Professional development supports; Quality Standards: NAEYC, NAFCC, TX Rising Star; NSACA Workforce Supports*

**GOAL 3: By the time children enter kindergarten they have the BASIC LANGUAGE SKILLS and GENERAL KNOWLEDGE OF CONCEPTUAL RELATIONSHIPS AND BASIC SCIENCE PROCESSES needed to succeed in school.**

**Outcomes** that children should demonstrate when entering school include the following language skills:

- Children are able to communicate ideas, interests, needs, and understandings in their native language.
- Children can tell or retell a story that is read or told to them.
- Children know some songs and rhymes
- Children show an interest in books and are familiar with basic book conventions such as how to turn the pages of a book.
- Children recognize some environmental print, for example “McDonalds”
- Children recognize and name some letters.
- Children know that print is read when a book is shared with them.
- Children scribble or pretend to write
- Children can distinguish between and label basic shapes: square, rectangle, circle, and triangle.
- Children can distinguish between objects that are the same or different.
- Children have basic understandings of size and quantity relationships – big/small, bigger/smaller, more/ less.
- Children can sort objects into basic categories by color or other common shared characteristic.
- Children can count at least three objects.
- Children use their senses to describe and learn about the world.

### **INDICATORS:**

- 1- Parents/Caregivers practice early literacy skills with the young children in their care.  
Skills include:
  - phonemic awareness
  - phonological awareness (rhyming, blending, segmenting)
  - alphabet knowledge (letter recognition)
  - awareness of the conventions of print
  - oral language (expressive/receptive language including vocabulary)
- 2- Parents/Caregivers utilize resources and participate in activities that will assist them in encouraging age-appropriate development in young children.
- 3- Parents/Caregivers engage children in environments that allow them to construct knowledge about the world through active hands-on experiences and play.

### **CCC FRAMEWORK:**

**EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION:**  
*Including children not routinely cared for outside of the home*

**PROGRAM SUPPORTS:**  
*Regulations/ Licensing/ Accreditation/ Quality Standards*

**FAMILY SUPPORTS:**  
*Identification/Referral/ Linkages; Family Resource Centers*

**GOAL 4: All families have the support and resources necessary to help their children get ready for success.**

**Outcomes** for families include:

- Children live in safe and stable families that support learning.
- Children live in homes free of violence.
- Children live in families that can afford basic necessities.

**INDICATORS:**

- 1- Parents maintain a home free of domestic violence and/or child abuse.
- 2- Parents/Caregivers use materials in their home to support early learning.
- 3- Parents have high school diploma or GED certificates.
- 4- Families live above the federal poverty level.
- 5- Parents participate in their children's school activities.

**CCC FRAMEWORK:**

**FAMILY SUPPORTS:** *Respite care, Emergency and Crisis Support, Family Resource Centers, Wrap-around Services, Identification/Referral/Linkages*

**HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

**PROMOTION:** *Child Abuse Prevention*

**EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE:** *Programs extend links to the home and the schools, which will help to identify with special needs and improve family-provider communication*

**GOAL 5: All children will live in safe communities that support learning, health, and family services**

**Outcomes** for communities includes:

- Children grow up in safe, healthy neighborhoods.
- Children benefit from high quality early childhood programs.
- Parents have access to continuous learning opportunities.
- Families benefit from family support programs.

**INDICATORS:**

- 1- Community based services are available and accessible for families with children who are routinely cared for inside the home.
- 2-Early childhood programs meet high quality standards: well educated faculty, low teacher turnover rate, small group sizes, and low staff/child ratios.
- 3-Quality early childhood programs are affordable and accessible.
- 4-All children are eligible for publicly funded early childhood programs.
- 5- Family resource centers are accessible, available, and affordable.
- 6- Teens are informed about the difficulties in giving birth to and raising a child at their age.
- 7- Workforce supports are available to income-eligible families.
- 8-The community advocates for services for families with young children.
- 9- Families of young children live in neighborhoods with low crime rates.
- 10- Homes with young children have few environmental hazards and a low occurrence of unintentional injuries.
- 11-Families live in neighborhoods with outdoor play spaces safe for children.
- 12-Parents have access to ESL classes.

**CCC FRAMWORK:**

**FAMILY SUPPORTS:** *Emergency crisis and support, Family Resource Centers, Wraparound services, Parent Preparation*

**HEALTH AND WELLNESS:**

*Childhood Safety*

**EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION:**

*Early childhood programs*

**PROGRAM SUPPORTS:** *Quality Standards, Professional Development Supports, Financial supports for Early Care and Education Professionals, Quality Supports to programs, Workforce Supports, Resource and Referral System for Consumer of Early Childhood Programs*

**EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION:** *Affordability, Quality, and Availability of Early Childhood Programs*

**ADVOCACY:** *Public Engagement and Awareness, Lobbying for Children, Development of Broad Based Support for Children and Their Families.*

**GOAL 6: All schools are ready to support young children's success with developmentally appropriate expectations and practices.**

**Outcomes for schools:**

- Schools provide high-quality learning environments.
- Schools have strong relationships with parents and communities
- Schools measure children's learning in meaningful ways.
- Schools implement positive transition to school strategies.
- Schools provide supportive learning environments for children regardless of developmental level, early experiences, cultural background or native language.

**INDICATORS:**

- 1- Schools have low teacher/child ratio in early grades
- 2- PreK, K, 1<sup>st</sup>, and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers are trained in early childhood education
- 3- PreK classrooms are rated as high-quality
- 4- Parent outreach experts are available to encourage family involvement
- 5- Families are involved with local schools prior to child's enrollment in kindergarten
- 6- Schools sponsor or host community events regarding early learning, family literacy, or health
- 7- Schools provide outreach to area early childhood programs about expectations, available programs, and school policies
- 8- Schools have transition plans for young children prior to them entering school
- 9- Appropriate child assessment is implemented and used as a basis for planning supportive learning strategies for individuals
- 10- Schools reduce or minimize the number of children who are retained in 1<sup>st</sup> grade
- 11- Parents are welcomed in the schools and/or classrooms as volunteers and tutors.