



PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT B-5 SURVEY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION DATA USERS

FINAL REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

North Carolina recently launched the statewide Early Childhood Action Plan, which outlines a set of ten priorities to change outcomes in early childhood health, safety, and education by 2025. Each goal area of the North Carolina Early Childhood Action Plan is anchored by specific objectives and measurable outcomes. Effectively tracking outcomes requires strong data systems and prepared professionals. A statewide survey of data users was developed to assess the types of data that are currently available and being used in the state. Responses confirm that data is currently being collected in all target areas of the Early Childhood Action Plan; this indicates a strong foundation for monitoring state progress through 2025. The Preschool Development Grant B-5 (PDG B-5) provides an opportunity for the state of North Carolina to align systems and improve access to high-quality early childhood care and education, one of the goals of the North Carolina Early Childhood Action Plan. Survey respondents expressed enthusiasm about the opportunity to improve the collection and use of early childhood data in the state. Responders also provided detailed feedback on what they need to partner with the state to achieve the shared goals of the Early Childhood Action Plan. These recommendations are synthesized from the survey findings, and informed by the best practices identified in national initiatives to improve use of early childhood data.

Recommendation One: Data quality and management. Build internal capacity in early childhood settings at the community level to collect, manage, and use data.

Recommendation Two: Data sharing. Support the sharing of data between organizations by providing legal, procedural, and policy guidance.

Recommendation Three: Purposeful data use. Provide technical assistance to early childhood organizations to access and leverage existing early childhood data from available public sources.

Recommendation Four: Data transparency at the state level. Provide accessible and timely information to improve access to state administrative data.

Recommendation Five: User-centered system. Better aligning data systems to equitably support the needs of all users.

The next phase of the planning and system building process should include detailed feedback from data users and stakeholders on how to best address these identified needs. Suggestions are provided in this report. Using data effectively can allow early childhood systems to support the healthy development of North Carolina's children with data-informed policies, practices, and programs.

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THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

Katherine Bryant
Paul Lanier
Elizabeth Nicholls



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