GRADE-LEVEL READING COMMUNITY

SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL
INTRODUCTION

In 2012, more than 100 communities filed Community Solutions Action Plans (CSAPs) with the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading. These CSAPs described in great detail how communities planned to make progress on school readiness, school attendance, summer learning and grade-level reading by 2016. Each CSAP addressed the following six assurances that were developed by communities in the Grade-Level Reading Communities Network:

1. **THE PROBLEM** Provide a data-rich description of the current situation and trend lines for high school graduation, grade-level reading, school readiness, school attendance and summer learning.

2. **DESTINATION DESIRED OUTCOMES AND IMPACT** Identify a set of ambitious but achievable goals, targets and milestones for each school year and provide a vision for where the community will be on school readiness, school attendance, summer learning and grade-level reading.

3. **STRATEGY INTEGRATED AND INTERTWINED** Outline the set(s) of coordinated activities, programs and initiatives designed to respond to each of the core challenges and indicate the extent to which the efforts focus on strengthening and scaling existing interventions, replicating model programs from outside the community and inventing new approaches.

4. **CONNECTING FOR SYNERGY** Describe how the effort will connect with, benefit from and/or support other ongoing efforts and initiatives.

5. **DATA** Explain the steps taken to ensure ongoing availability of and access to the data needed to set baselines, track progress and ensure accountability.

6. **SUCCESS AND SUSTAINABILITY** Explain the steps taken to ensure confidence that this effort will have broad-based support, capacity and resources to succeed and endure.
These six assurances continue to guide communities as they refine and implement their CSAPs. The Network Communities Support Center (NCSC) has heard from a number of communities that it would be helpful to have a tool that helped them take stock of where they are at this stage of implementation.

We have responded by engaging more than half of the Network in contributing to the development of this Grade-Level Reading Community Self-Assessment Tool. Whether your Sponsoring Coalition is well into implementation or just starting out, this tool can help you by:

- Providing an opportunity to re-engage and re-energize critical stakeholders and members of your local Sponsoring Coalition.

- Highlighting areas where the NCSC can offer brokered technical assistance, peer learning opportunities and capacity-building support.

- Identifying strategies that are working where additional investment, partners and support might be necessary in order to replicate, scale and sustain success.

- Offering useful information and stories to share with colleagues across the Network as we gather momentum and head for the 2016 All-America City Awards.

Based on the strength of the GLR Network, which now includes more than 150 communities, we anticipate at least 75 percent of the communities will compete for the 2016 All-America City Awards having made progress on at least two of the following success measures:

- School Readiness
- School Attendance
- Summer Learning

*Communities also will receive bonus points for the 2016 All-America City Awards for making progress on increasing reading proficiency of low-income children at the 1st, 2nd or 3rd grade levels.

Complete online: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/GLRselfassessment
We encourage you to print and share a copy of this tool at an upcoming meeting of your local Sponsoring Coalition. The self-assessment is a modular tool, which enables you to ask different Coalition members to lead the review of each of the six assurances based on their interests. That way, you can consider each in depth while being efficient with Coalition members’ time. Several communities that have already used the tool found it helpful to convene all Coalition members at the end of the process to review and discuss responses comprehensively.

**Please use the online portal** to share the results of your self-assessment with the Network Communities Support Center. While your participation in this process is completely voluntary, those communities who complete the self-assessment will be eligible for 2014 Pacesetter Honors and customized technical assistance offers from the NCSC. If you have any questions about the tool, please feel free to contact your point of contact with the NCSC, or Steve Greeley at sgreeley@dcaboston.com.

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________

Your name and contact information (while there may be more than one person completing this assessment, please provide the name of the main contact)

_______________________________________________________________________________

Your community

_______________________________________________________________________________

Month and year joined the Network

_______________________________________________________________________________

Approximate number of low-income children reached by your campaign
THE PROBLEM

1
The Problem: A data-rich description of the current situation and trend lines for high school graduation, grade-level reading, school readiness, school attendance and summer learning.

*Success in this area will enable your Sponsoring Coalition to make a compelling case for change, track progress clearly and assess where you should focus greatest attention.*

1A. We have established a baseline number and percentage of low-income children who are reading at the proficient level by the end of third grade.

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<th>Strongly agree</th>
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<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
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1B. There is more widespread knowledge of the problems we face related to grade-level reading proficiency in our community now than there was in 2012.

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1C. We have established baseline numbers and percentages of low-income children who are:

- ☐ Reading at the proficient level by the end of third grade: _____________ (baseline #) as of ________________ (date)

- ☐ Ready for kindergarten _____________ (baseline #) as defined by the following assessment: _____________ as of ________________ (date)

- ☐ Chronically absent from school in kindergarten _____________, 1st ____________, 2nd __________, and 3rd ____________ grade (missing 10 percent or more days per year) as of ________________ (date) for ________ school year for ________ district(s).

- ☐ Number of low-income K-3rd grade students that experience summer learning loss in reading ________________ (date)
1D. We have disaggregated our data by race, ethnicity, gender and zip code and have detailed information on where the greatest needs exist.

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1E. Please note any key findings based on your data disaggregation.

1F. Please describe your current priorities in terms of targeting particular subpopulations, schools and/or neighborhoods.
OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THIS SECTION:

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Anticipated next step(s):

Have you taken advantage of technical assistance provided by the Network Communities Support Center for these areas of work?

YES / NO

If yes, what types of assistance? (Select all that apply.)

☐ Webinars
☐ Phone consultations
☐ Publications/resource guides
☐ Peer learning opportunities
☐ Face-to-face meetings
☐ Online community
☐ Other: ________________________________

What type(s) of assistance would be most helpful going forward?
DESTINATION

DESIRED OUTCOMES AND IMPACT
Destination Desired Outcomes and Impact: A set of ambitious but achievable goals, targets and milestones for each school year and a vision for where the community will be on school readiness, school attendance, summer learning and grade-level reading.

Success in this area will help your Sponsoring Coalition get and use data to establish baselines, set targets, track results and promote shared accountability.

2A. We have adjusted the desired outcomes and impact of our campaign from the original CSAP filed in 2012.

   YES / NO

Please briefly describe any changes you have made and why.

2B. If you achieved measurable milestones in the school year 2012–2013, please list them below.

   □ Readiness: ____________________________________________

   □ Attendance: __________________________________________

   □ Summer: ______________________________________________

   □ Grade-level reading: __________________________________

If you didn’t achieve measurable milestones in 2012–2013, please explain below.
2C. If you achieved measurable milestones in the school year 2013–2014, please list them below.

☐ Readiness: ______________________________________________

☐ Attendance: ________________________________

☐ Summer: ________________________________

☐ Grade-level reading: ________________________________

If you didn’t achieve measurable milestones in 2013–2014, please explain below.

2D. We anticipate achieving the following measurable milestones by 2016.

☐ Readiness: ________________________________

☐ Attendance: ________________________________

☐ Summer: ________________________________

☐ Grade-level reading: ________________________________
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Anticipated next step(s):

Have you taken advantage of technical assistance provided by the Network Communities Support Center for these areas of work?

YES / NO

If yes, what types of assistance? (Select all that apply.)

☐ Webinars  ☐ Phone consultations

☐ Publications/resource guides  ☐ Peer learning opportunities

☐ Face-to-face meetings  ☐ Online community

☐ Other: _________________________________________________

What type(s) of assistance would be most helpful going forward?
Strategy *Integrated and Intertwined*: Set(s) of coordinated activities, programs and initiatives designed to respond to each of the core challenges and the extent to which the efforts focus on strengthening and scaling existing interventions, replicating model programs from outside the community and inventing new approaches.

*Success in this area will create strong clarity of purpose for your Sponsoring Coalition and community, provide a clear agenda for resource mobilization and help align your efforts for greatest impact.*

3A. Which school readiness strategies are you utilizing? Select all that apply.

(MORE INFORMATION ON THESE STRATEGIES IS AVAILABLE ON THE GLR HUDDLE.)

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Home visiting and other programs that offer messages, tools and supports to help parents and caregivers succeed in promoting early language and literacy and healthy on-track child development

| ○   | ○   | ○   |

Universal comprehensive health, social-emotional and developmental screening with appropriate follow-up, intervention and supports

| ○   | ○   | ○   |

Community-wide efforts to create language-rich and book-rich environments for children before they start school to help them build vocabulary

| ○   | ○   | ○   |

Policy supports, resources and programs to improve availability of and access to high-quality early care and learning opportunities for children across a variety of programs and settings

| ○   | ○   | ○   |

Other: _______________________________________

3B. Which school attendance strategies are you utilizing? Select all that apply.

(MORE INFORMATION ON THESE STRATEGIES IS AVAILABLE ON THE GLR HUDDLE.)

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Community-wide attendance awareness campaigns to help parents understand and own the importance of good attendance and find out about supports that address barriers to getting to school

| ○   | ○   | ○   |
School-level messaging, modeling and incentives to nurture a culture and cultivate the habits of excellent attendance

Positive Priority Early Outreach starting at the beginning of the school year to prevent chronic absence

Cross-sector coordination to identify and ameliorate the health challenges that are the major contributors to chronic absence

Home visiting to help strengthen the parent/teacher relationship

Broader, ongoing efforts to build early warning and rapid response systems to reduce and prevent chronic absence across schools, districts and community partners

Other: _________________________________

3C. Which summer learning strategies are you utilizing? Select all that apply.

(MORE INFORMATION ON THESE STRATEGIES IS AVAILABLE ON THE GLR HUDDLE.)

Community-wide messaging about the importance of summer learning, including parents and caregivers reading to and with their children over the summer months, and about programs, services and opportunities that are available

Summer reading campaigns to encourage children to read over the summer and to increase access to books

School district and community partner integration of early literacy skill development within high-quality summer programs of all types

Cross-sector coordination to ensure access to summer meals, physical activities and health and nutrition information in a variety of settings

Other: _________________________________
3D. Which parent engagement strategies are you utilizing to help parents achieve success? Select all that apply.
(MORE INFORMATION ON THESE STRATEGIES IS AVAILABLE ON THE GLR HUDDLE.)

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<tr>
<td>Promote and track early childhood developmental milestones and recognize early warning signs of potential developmental delays</td>
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<td>Provide their children a wide range of age-appropriate books and reading materials in the home and in the community</td>
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<td>Close the word gap by talking, singing and reading to their children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engage in nurturing and responsive interactions with their young children</td>
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<td>Build the trusting relationships that will allow partnering with providers and teachers to co-produce good outcomes (attendance, academic performance and behavior) for their children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access and engage their children in summer activities and summer programs that match up with their children’s academic needs</td>
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<td>Other: __________________________</td>
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3E. Which healthy readers strategies are you utilizing? Select all that apply.
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<td>Access to high-quality prenatal care, adequate nutrition and home visiting programs for low-income mothers to reduce high risk for poor birth outcomes</td>
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<td>Universal comprehensive health, social-emotional and developmental screening, follow-up and support</td>
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<td>Partnerships to provide low-income children with vision, hearing and oral health care services</td>
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“Healthy homes” programs to address environmental hazards in homes and communities that lead to elevated blood lead levels, childhood injuries and triggers for asthma and other respiratory illnesses

Summer nutrition programs that reach more children and serve as community anchors for literacy enhancement and physical activity

Other: ______________________________________

3F. Which of the following promising and/or evidence-based programs are you utilizing across your strategies?

(Check all that apply.)

☐ AARP-Experience Corps
☐ Abriendo Puertas
☐ ACE Readers
☐ BELL
☐ Breakfast in the Classroom
☐ Children’s Literacy Initiative
☐ Early Learning Ventures
☐ Evidence-based home visiting programs, such as Nurse-Family Partnership, Parent-Child Home, Parents as Teachers, Early Head Start, and others
☐ Girls, Inc.
☐ Help Me Grow
☐ HIPPY
☐ Horizons
☐ Imagination Library
☐ Incredible Years
☐ Minnesota Reading Corps
☐ Nemours Bright Start
☐ Parent Leadership Training Institute
☐ Parents for Public Schools
☐ PBS Parents
☐ Playworks
☐ Raising A Reader
☐ Reach Out & Read
☐ Reading Partners
☐ Reading Recovery
☐ Save the Children
☐ Start Making A Reader Today (SMART)
☐ Success for All
☐ text4baby
☐ Triple P-Positive Parenting Program
☐ Y Readers

Other(s):
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Anticipated next step(s):

Have you taken advantage of technical assistance provided by the Network Communities Support Center for these areas of work?

YES / NO

If yes, what types of assistance? (Select all that apply.)

- Webinars
- Phone consultations
- Publications/resource guides
- Peer learning opportunities
- Face-to-face meetings
- Online community
- Other: _________________________________________________

What type(s) of assistance would be most helpful going forward?
CONNECTING FOR SYNERGY
Connecting for Synergy: How your community’s grade-level reading campaign will benefit from and/or support other ongoing efforts and initiatives.

Success in this area will help your campaign build upon existing collaboration and momentum within your community.

4A. We have made changes to our Sponsoring Coalition in order to strengthen connections to other initiatives and integrate grade-level reading as a priority across our community.

4B. Have you identified and affiliated with one or more change initiatives underway in your community? YES / NO

If yes, please check all that apply:

☐ Promise Neighborhoods
☐ Ready by 21
☐ Community Schools
☐ Strive
☐ United Way
☐ Educational improvement or reform initiatives — e.g., school improvement, PBIS (positive behavior intervention supports), RTI (Response to Intervention), etc. Please explain in the “Other” field
☐ Other: _______________________________________________________________________

4C. What benefits have you realized from connecting your campaign to other change initiatives?

4D. What challenges have you encountered from connecting your campaign to other change initiatives?
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YES / NO

If yes, what types of assistance? (Select all that apply.)

- [ ] Webinars
- [ ] Phone consultations
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- [ ] Online community
- [ ] Other: _______________________________________________

What type(s) of assistance would be most helpful going forward?
DATA

5
Data: The steps taken to ensure ongoing availability of, and access to, the data needed to set baselines, track progress and ensure accountability.

*Success in this area will provide your Sponsoring Coalition with the tools needed to inform its efforts, make collaboration easier and report results to the community.*

5A. We monitor data regularly and use it actively to guide implementation and track progress.
   
   YES / NO

5B. We have data-sharing agreements in place with all the necessary agencies.
   
   YES / NO

   If you do have data-sharing agreements, with whom:
   
   - [ ] School system
   - [ ] Public health
   - [ ] Local government
   - [ ] Local data entity: (name) __________________________________________________________
   - [ ] Other: (name) ________________________________________________________________

5C. We use data tools and systems such as the Results Scorecard* to gather relevant data on key campaign indicators.

   YES / NO

   If no, would you be interested in learning more about data tools that are available to Network communities?

   YES / NO

*The Results Scorecard is a resource available to all members of the Grade-Level Reading Communities Network. It allows Sponsoring Coalitions to create real-time, interactive scorecards to monitor population results and indicators, and the performance of programs and services.*
5D. We track the following indicators:

(Check all that apply.)

**Readiness**

- Percent of children from low-income families in accredited child-care settings, including publicly funded programs, Head Start and home-based providers
- Percent of children from low-income families who use a medical home, which is regular source of health care for both well-child and urgent health care needs
- Percent of children from low-income families ages 1–5 whose families read to them three days or more per week (Kids Count)
- Percent of children from low-income families ages 1–5 whose families talk or sing to them every day
- Percent of children from low-income families ages 1–5 who receive a developmental screening
- Percent of low-income parents participating in home visiting programs

**Attendance**

- Percent of K–3 students from low-income families who are chronically absent
- Percent of students from low-income families in publicly funded pre-K and Head Start who are chronically absent

**Summer Learning**

- Percent of children from low-income families who participate in pre-K high-quality summer learning opportunities that include a literacy or pre-literacy component
- Percent of children from low-income families who participate in a summer reading program
- Percent of children from low-income families who participate in summer meals programs

**Snapshot**

- Percent of children eligible for free and reduced price lunch
- High school graduation rate
- Percent of kids in full-day kindergarten
- Total investment in grade-level reading
Grade-Level Reading

☐ Percent of third graders reading on grade level

☐ Percent of second graders reading on grade level

☐ Percent of first graders reading on grade level

☐ Percent of kindergartners reading on grade level

5E. We face the most significant challenges tracking the following indicators:

1. 

2. 

3. 

5F. We share relevant data with parents and the community about key campaign indicators.

YES / NO

If no, would you be interested in learning more about data tools that are available to Network communities?

YES / NO

5G. There is shared accountability across our community for making progress on school readiness, school attendance, summer learning and grade-level reading by 2016.

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Anticipated next step(s):

Have you taken advantage of technical assistance provided by the Network Communities Support Center for these areas of work?

YES / NO

If yes, what types of assistance? (Select all that apply.)

- [ ] Webinars
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- [ ] Peer learning opportunities
- [ ] Face-to-face meetings
- [ ] Online community
- [ ] Other: _________________________________________________

What type(s) of assistance would be most helpful going forward?
SUCCESS AND SUSTAINABILITY
Success and Sustainability: The steps taken to ensure confidence that this effort will have broad-based support, capacity and resources to succeed and endure.

Success in this area will ensure that your Sponsoring Coalition has the institutional and financial resources and level of organization needed to achieve its goals.

6A. The Sponsoring Coalition is coordinated by an organization that views the campaign as a top priority and has the capacities needed for its leadership role.

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6B. There is a solid core of partners that are taking the lead in managing strategy implementation and are performing effectively in their roles.

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6C. What key organizations are consistently involved in your campaign’s Sponsoring Coalition? (Check all that apply.)

- □ Business
- □ Chamber of Commerce
- □ City/County Agency
- □ Community Foundation
- □ Community Program Provider
- □ Faith-Based Organization
- □ Foundation
- □ Higher Education
- □ Intermediary Organization
- □ Library
- □ Literacy Coalition
- □ Local Education Fund
- □ Mayor’s Office or Other Political Leader
- □ Media
- □ Municipal Leadership or Agency
- □ Museum
- □ Neighborhood Center
- □ Philanthropy
- □ Public/Private Health Partner(s)
- □ School District(s)
- □ Service
- □ United Way
- □ YMCA

If you selected school district(s) as a consistently involved organization of your campaign’s Sponsoring Coalition, please name them:
6D. Which community partner(s) do you need the most help engaging?

6E. We have secured funding to support the infrastructure and management of our campaign.

   YES / NO

6F. We have engaged at least one funder on our Sponsoring Coalitions.

   YES / NO. If yes, what is the nature of their involvement?

   (Check all that apply.)
   
   □ In-kind support
   
   □ Funding of campaign strategies
   
   □ Direct support of the Sponsoring Coalition
   
   □ Leadership
   
   □ Other: ________________________________________________________

6G. We have a state and/or regional funder coalition in place to support our Campaign? YES / NO

   If no, are you interested in working with other communities in your state to support the development of a state and/or regional funder coalition? YES / NO

6H. We have engaged parents and caregivers in our campaign. YES / NO

   If yes, in what ways have parents/caregivers been engaged?

   (Check all that apply.)
   
   □ They are members of our Sponsoring Coalition and/or subcommittees
   
   □ Surveys and/or focus groups of parents/caregivers have informed our work
   
   □ Parents/caregivers have been co-designers (from the very beginning of any activity) of our work
   
   □ Every campaign goal or strategy has an explicit focus on parents/caregivers
6I. We have evidence of support for our campaign from elected officials and civic leaders.

YES / NO. If yes, what type of support:

6J. We have mobilized volunteers to support the goals of the campaign.

YES / NO. If yes, how many: ____________________________ (insert number)

What types of activities have they been engaged in?
(Check all that apply.)

☐ Tutoring

☐ Mentoring Reading

☐ Offering targeted outreach and supports using academic and attendance indicators

☐ Data analysis

☐ Family engagement and education

☐ Classroom support

☐ Advocacy

☐ Fundraising

☐ Contributing to school readiness

☐ Contributing to summer learning

☐ Contributing to school attendance

☐ Other
OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF YOUR PROGRESS IN THIS SECTION:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Needs more development.</td>
<td>Promising, but not fully developed.</td>
<td>Good, strong effort. Hits all the key points.</td>
<td>Nailed it! Exemplary! Outstanding!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Anticipated next step(s):

Have you taken advantage of technical assistance provided by the Network Communities Support Center for these areas of work?

YES / NO

If yes, what types of assistance? (Select all that apply.)

- [ ] Webinars
- [ ] Phone consultations
- [ ] Publications/resource guides
- [ ] Peer learning opportunities
- [ ] Face-to-face meetings
- [ ] Online community
- [ ] Other: __________________________________________________________

What type(s) of assistance would be most helpful going forward?