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IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  **seeding success**



**Investing
Early in
Children and
Families**



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Introduction

Memphis remains entrenched in a persistent cycle of intergenerational poverty. This is particularly true for its majority black and Latino populations. Growing up in Memphis leaves poor families almost 8 times less likely to move out of the lowest income bracket, than if that same family lived in a place like San Diego or Salt Lake City, and half as likely as children in Spartanburg or Cleveland (Equality of Opportunity Project). For families in Memphis, there is a persistent, and significant gap in opportunity, income, health, and wealth between white families and black and Latino families. The median income levels for non-Hispanic white families is \$59,000, compared to \$31,000 for black families (ACS 2017, S1903). The unemployment rate is lower for non-Hispanic white residents (4.5%) than it is for black residents (14%) (ACS 2017, S2301). Half of the small businesses in Memphis are black-owned, but only 0.83% of all the revenue generated in the city is coming through black-owned businesses (Faber 2016). With less access to wealth, black families have less money to invest in education and businesses. It can also leave families more vulnerable, and more likely to fall into or back into poverty (Reicher and McKenzie 2017).

With 44% of children living in poverty (ACS 2017, B05010), and overall poverty rates increasing, especially for black families, how can we begin to build a system of greater opportunity? A comprehensive approach to improve economic mobility must be developed with a 2-generation approach because children's fates are intertwined with that of their families and neighborhoods. Early investments in children and families are the beginning of such a strategy, and intentional investment can significantly improve outcomes for the healthy development of children and the odds of moving up the economic ladder (Chetty and Hendren 2017).

As an organization, Seeding Success is looking for the right array of partners, interventions, investments, policies, and accountability systems to intentionally disrupt the current causes and effects of systemic poverty. We believe one of the cornerstones of this comprehensive approach is an investment in a high-quality Early Childhood Education (ECE) system. Without this, children at their earliest stage of development, and families, often at their most vulnerable, are left to navigate an adverse environment alone.

Over 260,000 individuals in Memphis live in poverty, with 13,000 individuals moving into this category in 2016 (Charlier 2017). Approximately 5,850 children are born every year into this high stress and, often, toxic environment. These children and families represent our greatest opportunity to mitigate the negative effects of poverty and adverse experiences for future generations. We can stabilize families by aligning ECE efforts with broader poverty mitigation strategies (e.g., Housing, Health, Transportation, Community and Neighborhood Development, Workforce, and inclusive Economic Development). Research shows that the effects of such strategies on long-term economic mobility are significantly higher for children earlier in life and



proportionally decline as a child get older, reinforcing the need to invest in the lives of children early (Chetty and Hendren 2017).

With the right array of interventions, investments, data, and collaboration, Seeding Success believes government, community-based organizations, and private philanthropy can serve the majority of our at-risk population at a level that will make sustained improvements in the lives of our citizens, and that will provide economic returns for the Memphis community.

ECE as a Core Economic Mobility Investment

Since 2015, Seeding Success has helped lead the implementation of the Shelby County Early Childhood Education Plan, a 23-strategy approach for improving early childhood outcomes. The effort is now at a point of implementation that will move the work from a programmatic approach into an integrated system. This will require aligned public and private dollars to support effective programs and strategies at scale. These scaled programs will function as an integrated system of supports for children and families through the backbone support and accountability structure provided by a new organization, First 8 Memphis.

High-quality Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs improve the nurturing and learning environments of children, provide connections for consistent and trusted family supports, and enable parents to return to, or enter, the workforce. Evaluations of long-standing ECE programs show favorable effects on high school graduation, long-term employment, and reduced criminal activity (Elango et al 2015). There are also beneficial effects on health outcomes. Economically, these integrated programs have produced a return of \$13 for every dollar of investment. Therefore, ECE programs, along with a 2-generational methodology of family supports, are an integral part of an economic mobility agenda for Memphis.

We Know What Works to Support Early Childhood Development

There is a growing body of evidence, from neuroscience and child development (Shonkoff 2006), as well as from long-term evaluation studies (Duncan 1997), that “success builds upon success,” and the start children receive in life sets them on a pathway to achievement both in and out of school (Schorr 2007).

Assessing this literature, Nobel Laureate James Heckman argues: “The highest rate of return in early childhood development comes from investing as early as possible, from birth through age five, in disadvantaged families. Starting at age three or four is too little too late, as it fails to recognize that skills beget skills in a complementary and dynamic way. Efforts should focus on the



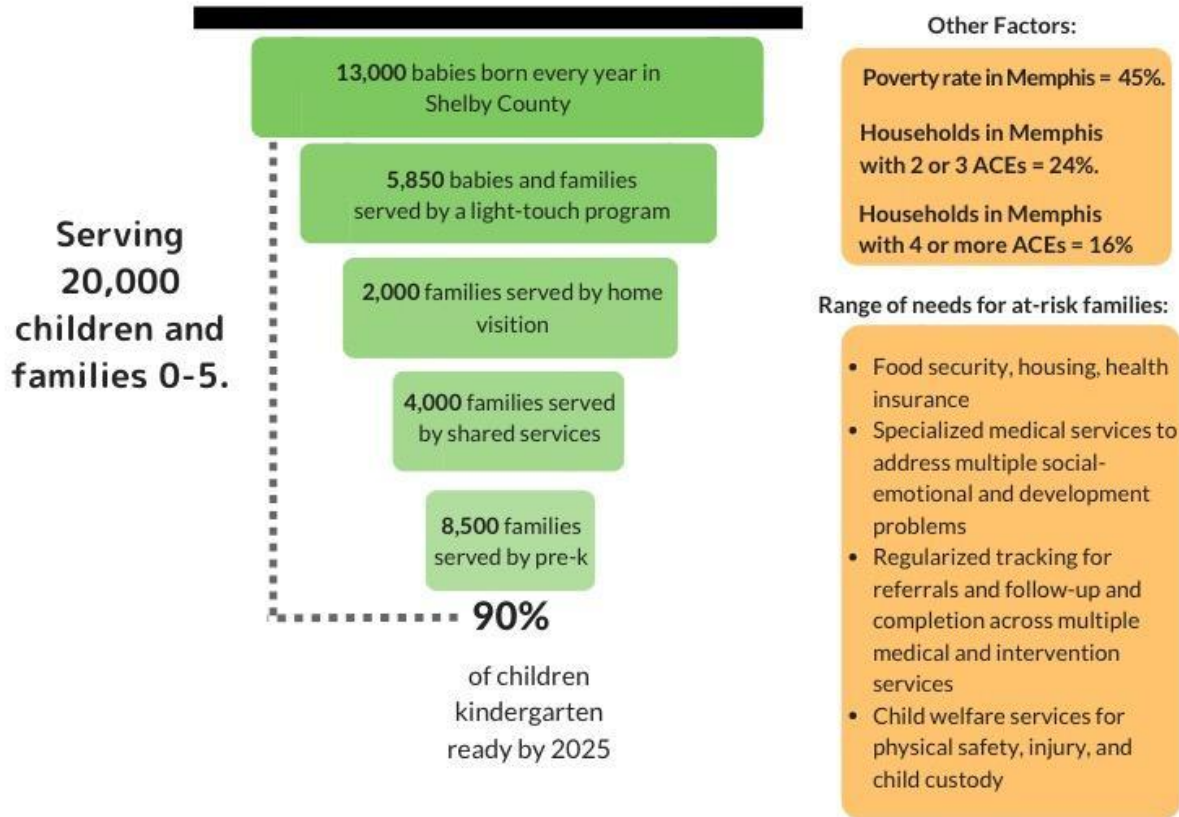
first years for the greatest efficiency and effectiveness. The best investment is in quality early childhood development from birth to five for disadvantaged children and their families.”

The mission of First 8 Memphis, therefore, is to offer a pipeline of integrated best-practice interventions that support at-risk children from birth through Age 8 and support their families through 2-generational comprehensive supports. Strong support during these formative years will propel children toward optimal development, school readiness, and academic achievement, and on-going family supports will improve family stability and access to resources.

Key components of the Early Childhood Strategy include:

- Home visitation
- High-Quality Childcare
- Shared Services
- Pre-Kindergarten
- K-2 interventions
- Family Supports
- Shared data infrastructure, common performance measures and outcomes, professional development, and accountability

Early Education System Interventions



Strategy I: Early Home Visitation

Over the past several years, child advocates and child-serving organizations in Tennessee have taken actionable steps to address the needs of families and children, ages 0-3 (e.g. Adverse Childhood Experiences Foundation, Project Launch, the Association of Infant Mental Health in Tennessee, etc.). Providers are increasingly aware of the importance of early childhood comprehensive supports and are working to improve practices and outcomes for communities. Shelby County has served as a model of collaborative action for cities and counties across the state. The Seeding Success partnership has secured various public and private investments in early childhood development, public will through the community-driven Shelby County Early Childhood Education Plan, and momentum from our current work with the Early Success Coalition Network. The stage is set for systems-change, but additional support is needed to scale and increase access to programs. Deep collaboration with national and local funders and experts will accelerate us toward serving our most vulnerable children and families at scale.



While efforts have been coordinated and achieved iterative improvements in service delivery, there is a recognized need for deeper, more meaningful collaboration to meet the demand. Establishing First 8 Memphis, beginning with an effective, coordinated portfolio of evidence-based home visitation programs at scale, will build on current progress and accomplish the following:

- Increase the number of families served in home visitation programs from currently 1,000 to 2,000 families and support 5,850 families through a light touch intervention within three years
- Identify essential milestones/benchmarks along the Prenatal to age three (PN-3) continuum, and develop/implement strategies to improve the number of children reaching those milestones on time
- Enhance awareness and use of evidence-based practices among our providers and other supports
- Enhance awareness and use of continuous improvement practices across the system such as continuous quality data collection and data-informed decision-making
- Enhance current training and professional development opportunities to improve the capability and capacity of the PN-3 service providers
- Strengthen formalized data sharing agreements between Porter-Leath, Seeding Success, and Early Success Coalition's home visitation providers to ensure warm handoffs between PN-3 providers, child care, and pre-school providers
- Improve external messaging of early childhood efforts to increase community engagement, trust, and buy-in.

What is the Home Visitation Strategy?

Evidence-based home visitation programs are the focus because they are a powerful and cost-effective way to support healthy births, care for young children, and the health of families. They also improve maternal and child health in the early years, strengthen parenting skills, and enhance children's cognitive and socio-emotional development. As the initial touch, many families will have with the Early Childhood Education strategy, home visitation comprised of trained professionals will provide regular, voluntary home visits to expectant and new parents to address early childhood needs that research has shown supports early childhood development and kindergarten readiness, and additional evidence-based supports to improve early outcomes. These programs act as the 'front door' to the system making referrals into other human services.



This work is critical due to the pressing issues faced in the prenatal to age 3 (PN-3) space in Shelby County including infant mortality, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), and late exposure to early educational opportunities. Through home visitation programs, children and families' needs will be addressed in these three critical areas:

- Infant Mortality: Premature births, low birth weights, and unplanned pregnancies significantly contribute to high rates of infant mortality in Shelby County (9.3% as of 2016). One of the factors often associated with low birth weights and premature births is inadequate access to early prenatal care. To that end, the Early Success Coalition and its partner agencies work to identify and recruit pregnant women early in their pregnancy to support them in obtaining access to prenatal care. These efforts have resulted in higher utilization rates among Early Success Coalition programs that support pregnant women. By improving this rate, our most vulnerable children will be able to begin a positive trajectory.
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): In January 2016, the ACE Awareness Foundation released a study linking childhood toxic stress to adult outcomes in Shelby County, TN. The study indicated that 52% of Shelby County's adult population, nearly 361,200 adults, reported having experienced at least one ACE. This finding was significant; experiencing just one ACE such as abuse, neglect, or household dysfunction, can cause excessive activation of physiological stress responses, which can disrupt proper physical development in children. The Centers for Disease Control suggests that the most effective way to prevent or mitigate the impact of ACEs is to provide children with safe and nurturing environments early and often. Given national research and local data, our partnership is committed to implementing and expanding evidence-based programs--such as home-visitation--to ensure our children begin with a foundation of safe and nurturing environments.
- Kindergarten Readiness: It is important for the community to implement strategies to prepare children for kindergarten as early as possible. When students enter kindergarten ready to learn, they are provided a foundation that supports future academic learning. PN-3 programs that help families build healthy child-parent relationships, provide knowledge pertaining to child development, and measure child progress toward key outcomes are instrumental in preparing students for kindergarten. Both Porter-Leath and the Early Success Coalition programs provide families with intensive case management, referrals to existing community services, and classes that enhance parents' knowledge base about safe and nurturing environments for their children. As Shelby County's largest pre-k



provider, Porter-Leath has played a crucial in improving rates of kindergarten readiness. During the four year partnership between Seeding Success and Porter-Leath, improvements in population-level outcomes in the preparedness of our four-year-olds are being realized. For the first time, students who participated in Pre-K outperformed non-socio-economically disadvantaged students. The partnership is committed to strengthening the alignment and coordination between PN-3 programs and pre-k programs so that students begin to prepare for kindergarten as early as possible.

Who Benefits from Home Visitation?

Currently, around 1,000 children and families in Shelby County benefit from home visitation services. There is an opportunity to expand services to reach the documented need. Further, home visiting can be strengthened by aligning providers with evidence-based best practices, and by focusing and strengthening their assessment and improvement efforts around child and family outcomes. Building capabilities and capacities in home visiting providers will amplify the reach and effectiveness in serving children and families.

Key Players

The Early Success Coalition (anchored at Porter-Leath) provide a variety of services and programs to impact PN-3 milestones. Porter-Leath delivers two evidence-based home visitation programs--Connections and Early Head Start-Home Visiting--and provides pre-kindergarten services in the city of Memphis. Additionally, Porter-Leath manages a Teacher Excellence Program, offering high-quality professional development opportunities to internal staff and administration. In the coming year, Porter-Leath will not only expand its Teacher Excellence Program to serve partnering child-care operators, but it will also offer a variety of subsidized operational services that will save time and resources for investment into center quality, professional development, and time with children and families. These services and professional development programs are meant to ensure that there is a critical mass of qualified and trained professionals prepared to serve children and families at every stage of development along the PN-3 continuum. This strategy will be implemented by a core of Early Home Visitation (EHV) programs coordinated by support staff anchored through Early Success Coalition and Porter Leath. The portfolio includes existing Memphis evidence-based EHV programs and recommends the implementation of a broader affordable 'light touch' model for less at-risk families. The strategy will support expansion in the following programs scaled at a different rate according to need, costs, and program performance:

Early Head Start-Home Visiting (EHS-HV): Early Head Start (EHS) focuses on low-income pregnant women and families with children from birth through age three, most of whom are at or below the federal poverty level or are eligible for Part C services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in their state. The program provides early, continuous, intensive, and comprehensive child development and family support services. EHS-HV services include weekly



90-minute home visits and two group socialization activities per month for parents and their children.

Healthy Families America (HFA)®: Healthy Families America (HFA) goals include reducing child maltreatment, improving parent-child interactions and children's social-emotional well-being, and promoting children's school readiness. Local HFA sites select the target population they plan to serve and offer hour-long home visits at least weekly until children are six months old, with the possibility for less frequent visits thereafter. Visits begin prenatally or within the first three months after a child's birth and continue until children are between three and five years old.

Nurse Family Partnership (NFP)®: The Nurse Family Partnership (NFP) is designed for first-time, low-income mothers and their children. It includes one-on-one home visits by a trained public health registered nurse to participating clients. The visits begin early in the pregnancy (with program enrollment no later than the 28th week of gestation) and conclude when the child turns two years old. NFP is designed to improve (1) prenatal health and outcomes, (2) child health and development, and (3) families' economic self-sufficiency and/or maternal life course development.

Parents as Teachers (PAT)®: The goal of the Parents as Teachers (PAT) program is to provide parents with child development knowledge and parenting support, provide early detection of developmental delays and health issues, prevent child abuse and neglect, and increase children's school readiness. The PAT model includes one-on-one home visits, monthly group meetings, developmental screenings, and linkages and connections for families to needed resources. Parent educators conduct home visits using structured visit plans and guided planning tools. Local sites offer at least 12 hour-long home visits annually with more offered to families with higher-needs. PAT serves families for at least two years between pregnancy and kindergarten.

Light touch model EHV: The proposed expansion of the capacity of home visitation programs also includes the recommendation of an affordable scaled 'light touch' model. Each year in Memphis, 13,000 babies are born and 45% of those, or 5,850 babies, are born into poverty. 5,850 families will receive a light touch intervention, costing \$400 per family. The light touch intervention will act as a screen for the home visitation program. Through the screening process, 1/3 of those families will potentially need more intense home visitation services. The light touch program would serve at-risk families who may or may not qualify per the program criterion of other existing programs. In partnership with the HUGS program and other state aligned resources, it will be possible to reach many of the remaining at-risk families for initial visits, screenings and to provide connections to needed services and resources.

A national example of such an Early Home Visitation (EHV) program is Durham Connects. It is a light touch program currently operating in North Carolina offering services to all families immediately following hospital discharge. Through the program, families receive a phone call from a registered nurse, who provides assessment and screening services and, if needed, referrals to community services, including more intensive home visitation services. Enrollees have greater



access to community resources, engage in stronger and more positive parenting behaviors, make use of higher quality child care, are less likely to suffer from postpartum anxiety and depression, and are much less likely to visit the emergency room for themselves or their children (Dodge et al. 2013). Return on investment of Durham Connects has shown reductions in visits to the Emergency Department. With the savings from the reduced visits, Durham Connects returns \$3.02 for every dollar invested (Dodge et al. 2013).

Supporting the Network

With the alignment and coordination of effort among home visitation providers within the Early Success Coalition Network (ESCN) supported by Seeding Success, partners will continue to use a shared database to collect data on key outcomes and performance metrics for the home visitation providers in order to conduct rapid-cycle PDSAs to guide program quality improvement efforts and ensure all babies are born healthy and live in a safe and nurturing environment.

To help sustain this system of EHV programs, it is imperative that its infrastructure is supported by a local trusted partner. This role is currently played by the ESCN. This plan recommends some elements of the current organization are retained to support the coordination and quality improvement of programs. For example, quality improvement efforts in other states like Virginia, New Jersey, and Maryland can be leveraged to inform the structure moving forward locally. Virginia has robust professional development opportunities for all home visitors across program models (Early Impact Virginia). Virginia, New Jersey, and Maryland are all incorporating CQI processes into their programs. New Jersey has a single coordinated early childcare system, including early education and home visitation, with families and children at the center of a multi-agency collaboration (Center for American Progress). The work of other states suggests that high-quality home visitation programs are responsive to local contexts, prioritize family engagement in the work, need additional supports to ensure data is collected and shared, and require legislative advocacy.



Timeline and Costs

Since 2009, the Early Success Coalition has been building a home visitation network in Shelby County, bringing together programs, service providers, and local leaders to guide home visitation. Once funds are secured, A competitive RFP will be released through First 8 Memphis for program expansion under this enhanced model with clear performance outcomes and rates of expansion for three years of growth. A separate RFP will be released to determine an appropriate provider of a 'light touch' EHV program as well. The run rates for expansion per program will be determined by expansion costs, target service goals, and feasibility.

The costs of home traditional visitation vary widely, from \$3,000 to \$5,000 per family - on average - \$4,000 per family annually. Program model, agency characteristics (including whether the program is new or established and type), and staffing requirements impact costs (Burwick et al. 2014). A conservative estimate would place the need for additional home visiting support in Shelby County at 3,000 slots, at an average cost of \$4,000 a family.

Implementing the scaled light touch intervention will serve as a front door to the First 8 Memphis system, enabling the expansion of traditional home visitation programs through referrals by additional 1,000 slots for a total of 2,000. When fully implemented, the light touch program and traditional home visitation will reach 7,850 families.

An investment of \$7.5M annually will be required to sustain the home visitation and light touch interventions.

Academic Year	Funded Light Touch	Funded EHV	Additional Light Touch Needed	Additional EHV Needed	Additional Funds Required
2017-2018	0	1000	0	0	\$0
2018-2019	0	1350	0	350	\$1.3M
2019-2020	2925	1700	2925	350	\$3.2M
2020-2021	5850	2000	2925	300	\$3.0M
Total Recurring	5850	2000			\$7.5M



Return on Investment

The strongest returns on home visiting are based on findings from evaluations of the Nurse-Family Partnership program. Analysts at RAND calculated a benefit-cost ratio of \$5.68 for the high-risk sample in Elmira. An analysis of costs across the full samples at all three sites conducted for the Washington State legislature resulted in a benefit-cost ratio of \$2.88 (Aos et al. 2004).

Evaluation studies identify multiple buckets where savings are realized including reductions in the number of premature births, fewer Emergency Department visits, fewer referrals to special education, reduced grade retention, and fewer cases of child maltreatment (Olds et al. 2013).

Strategy II: High-Quality Child Care

The second key component of the Early Childhood Strategy is to elevate the quality and accessibility of high-quality child care in Shelby County.

Research indicates that education is one of the major keys to breaking the cycles of systemic, intergenerational poverty. It also shows that there are significant challenges for children to perform at grade level during K-12 if they enter kindergarten underprepared, which can negatively impact later life outcomes. Conversely, children who participate in high-quality early childhood education programs receive the developmentally appropriate experiences and resources that support healthy development and form foundations for success. Furthermore, children who come from disadvantaged circumstances see added benefits including reduced gaps in school readiness, and for children with multiple risk-factors, reduced levels of cortisol, a key indicator of acute and prolonged stress, which can be toxic to healthy development (Berry et al. 2014).

Today, 52% of Memphis children are entering school prepared, leaving much to be done within the Early Childhood Education (ECE) industry to support all families. To close the gap and achieve Shelby County School's 90% kindergarten readiness goal, Seeding Success worked with organizations and communities to co-develop the right set of interventions that will help move the industry toward enhanced quality. The final portfolio includes a shared services platform, wrap-around services for families, a new quality standard, and a strong data backbone to track outcomes and guide programs. If developed and executed to proper fidelity, these interventions will elevate the industry, make high-quality ECE more accessible to those who need it most, and situate these programs as critical cornerstones within communities.

With over 800 child care facilities in the Memphis area, the potential for impact is significant. There exist many strengths and assets to leverage in the community, including those of families, child care workers, and directors, which are often overlooked. Those that are interested in moving their centers forward will now have the supports to align to a new standard. By standardizing what high quality requires, elevating program performance system-wide, and supporting families, the early



childhood education industry will better prepare children and families for success in kindergarten and beyond.

Shared Services

Shared Service alliances are innovative strategies that improve outcomes for children and the financial sustainability of childcare centers. By creating an alliance, tasks and resources can be reorganized between the alliance hub and its partners in a way that allows childcare professionals to spend more time in classrooms and with families. In addition, an injection of resources and direct services will empower organizations to enhance program quality, build capacity, improve job quality, strengthen partnerships, and promote long-term sustainability (Opportunities Exchange).

The ECE industry in Shelby County demonstrates the need and desire for this innovation. During an 8-month research process, childcare operators expressed a range of challenges that present significant barriers to providing high-quality services. Time and resource constraints in the areas of training, administrative responsibilities, procurement, evaluations, business operations, and facility maintenance arose as critical themes to address in order to boost child outcomes. This is where shared service models thrive, and Shelby County has a unique resource to materialize this effort.

Implementation

Porter-Leath, who provided counsel during the research process, is uniquely equipped to develop and lead the shared services platform for Shelby County. Since its beginnings in 1850, the organization has prioritized adapting its services to meet community needs, which has taken the organization from its start as an orphanage to a dynamic community cornerstone that provides an array of services to support families in achieving a healthy, optimal, and independent lifestyle. Their responsive, community-centric focus positions them well to partner with the organizations necessary to create a rising tide for quality across the industry.



The following outlines the services they will offer:

Strengthening Infrastructure	Enhancing Quality	Uplifting the Community
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Business Development<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Training◦ Marketing◦ Enrollment• Back Office• Maintenance• I.T.• Food Supply & Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher Excellence Program<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Coaching◦ Evaluations• Curriculum• Tracking Outcomes• Professional Development• Screenings• Student Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wraparound Services• Cohort Meetings• Early Childhood Education Conference• Community Partner Supports

Timeline and Costs

Porter-Leath, in partnership with Seeding Success, initiated the implementation of this model in January 2018. With much of the internal cost-neutral planning and alignment work complete, Porter-Leath stands ready to implement the shared services platform with appropriate investment. The platform is now branded as Next Memphis. The goal is to serve 10 operators in Y1, 20 in Y2, and 40 in Y3. In total, Next Memphis will serve approximately 4,000 0-3-year-olds per year by 2020. The following provides a high-level roadmap of the goals and costs for the first three years of operation.

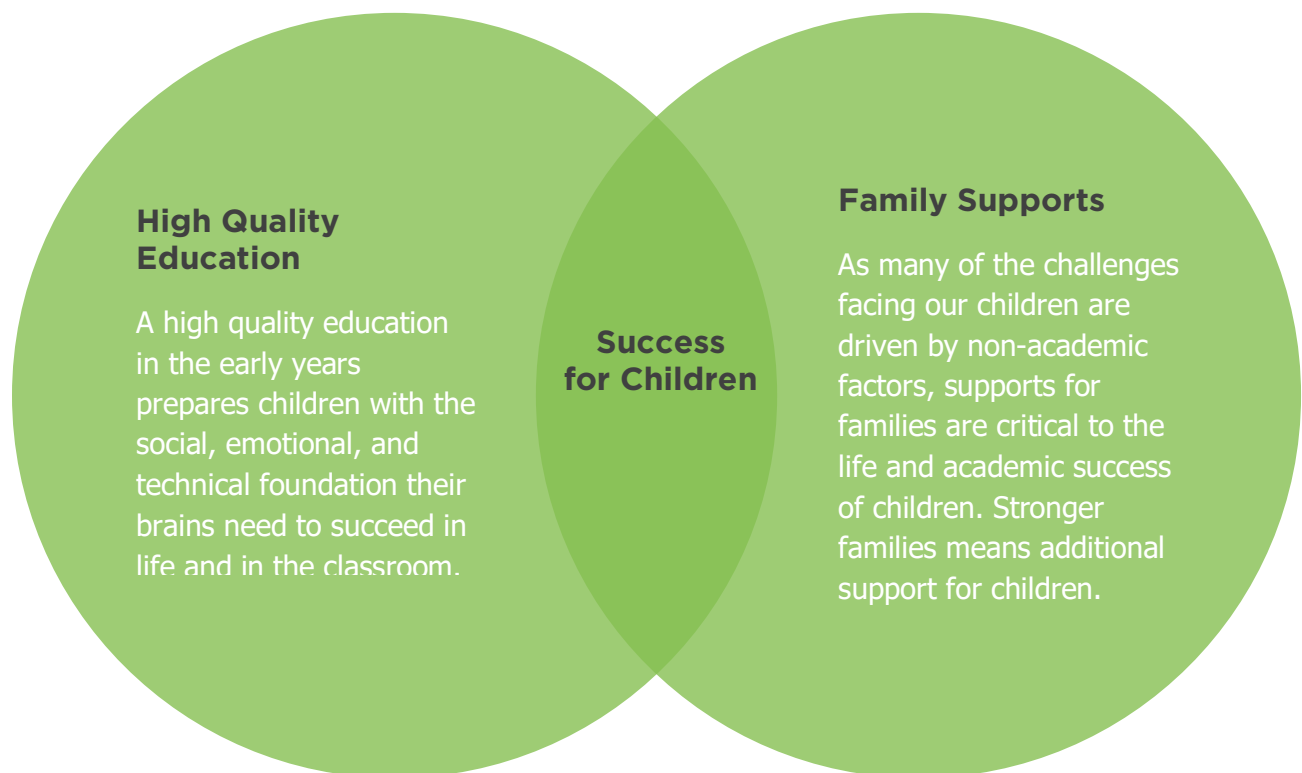
Academic Year	Children Served	Centers	Expanding Center Capacity	Total Funds Required
2019-2020	1000	10	\$2M	\$7.5M
2020-2021	2000	20	\$2M	\$8.7M
2021-2022	4000	40	\$4M	\$16M
Total Pilot	4000	40	-	\$32.2M

2 Generation Approach

A critical factor in the success of children is the well-being of their families. Research indicates that non-academic factors, such as unemployment for caregivers, have a significant impact on a child's well-being in school. Thus, to best support each child, an effective early childhood system must support their families as well.

Porter-Leath will offer wraparound support services to each family connected to the shared services model. Upon enrolling their child, each caregiver is automatically paired with a parent liaison, who meets with the caregivers to set goals and connect them to resources.

In addition to the automatic support of wraparound services, the shared services model has partnered with the Workforce Investment Network to staff a case manager that specifically serves families with a child enrolled in a member program. This staff person provides families with a direct line to the services and trainings needed to secure better jobs.



Uniform High-Quality Standard

Early Childhood Education programs function as ecosystems and should be evaluated as such. As the current evaluations by the State focus on health and safety, it was understood that a set of standards that measured program quality was needed to complement the work of the Department of Human Services Childcare Licensing Office. The following Quality Indicators, see *Appendix A*, provide an overview of what components contribute to program quality.

The ultimate goal is for these indicators to be included in the state's evaluation of childcare providers, which may result in an addition of a 4th or 5th star to the QRIS standards. These standards are also informed by and align to new pre-K quality standards adopted by the State of TN.

EDUCATIONAL QUALITY	ENGAGEMENT QUALITY	ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	STRUCTURAL QUALITY
Credentials	Staff – Parent Alignment	Top DHS Star Rating	Staff Compensation
Temperament and Ability	Community Responsiveness	Skilled Support Staff	Teacher Support
Educational Curriculum	Director Accessibility	Learning Environment	Data Informed Leadership
Healthy Foods	Utilizes Community Organizations		Financial Stability
Assessments			Pedagogical Leadership
Kindergarten Ready			Business Leadership
			Stable Workforce

Vision for the Industry

The goal is to support every child in Shelby County in rising to meet their full potential, starting with reaching success in Kindergarten. Success in entering Kindergarten is crucial for children to read on level by third grade, which is one of the strongest indicators for poverty-risk later in life. By coordinating a system of high-quality, early childhood education supports that serve whole families and children, the community will see population-level outcomes that move the needle on economic mobility and poverty alleviation in Shelby County.

In terms of the ECE industry, this set of innovations and supports is designed to standardize educational quality, strengthen businesses, improve training opportunities, expand access to



resources, and support those professionals who are raising our children. The result is a rising tide of comprehensive excellence that uplifts children, families, childcare operators, and the community at large.

Strategy III: Full-Needs Based Enrollment for Pre-K

What is Full-Need Based Enrollment?

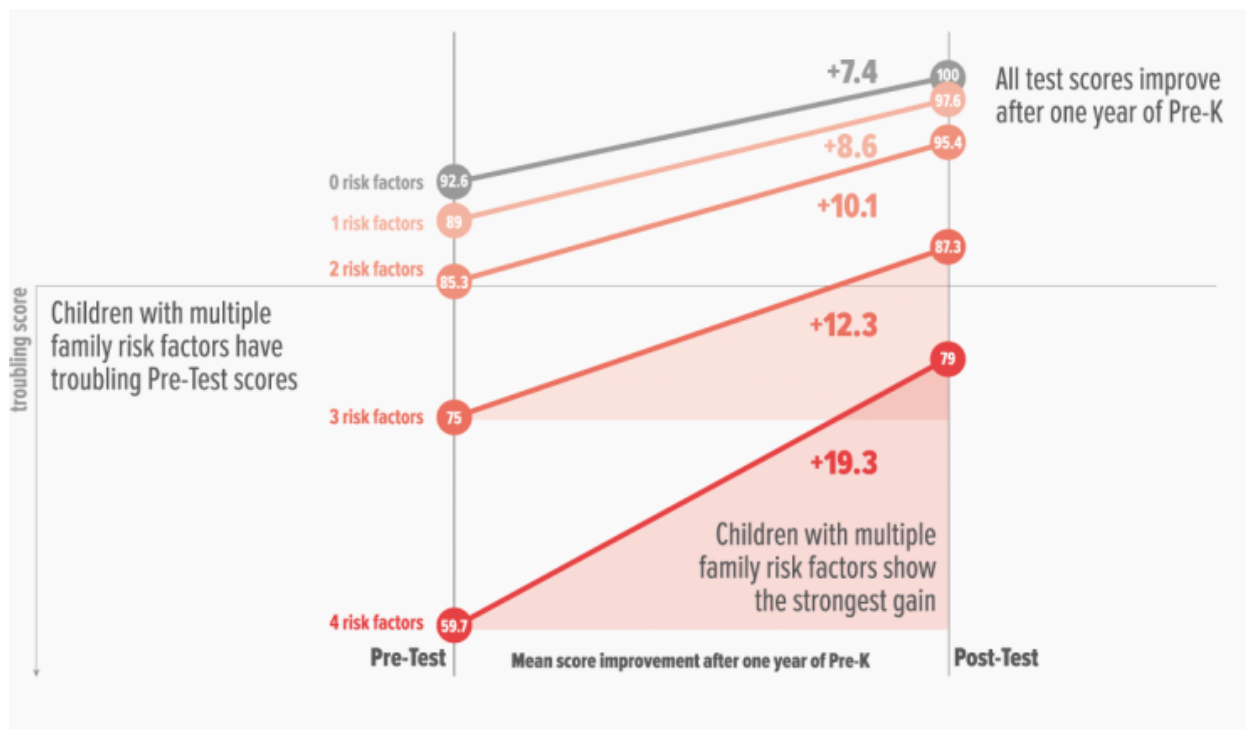
Pre-kindergarten refers to programs that provide a year of education prior to entry into kindergarten. Currently, the need for pre-k is greater than the number of available seats. In a system designed to meet the full-need based enrollment, all children in Shelby County who qualify under the current criterion would have access to a seat in a high-quality pre-k program. As the transitional stage of the pipeline to formal K-12 education, ideally, these children will have already received three years of support through home visitation, early child care, wrap-around services.

Data Justification

Research shows that pre-k programs are typically of higher quality than other preschools or center-based programs and that pre-k children are better prepared for school (Barnett 2008, Magnuson 2007). For states that have already implemented universal pre-k, the results have been impressive. In Oklahoma, pre-k programs had significant impacts on test scores, language development, and motor skills when students entered kindergarten (Gormley 2005). The gains from pre-k were still present in third grade (Hill 2012). Pre-k students in Georgia had stronger cognitive and language skills in kindergarten than their peers without pre-k (Henry 2006).

Tennessee's targeted pre-k program has been shown to boost school readiness. Children enrolled in pre-k developed literacy, language, and math skills faster than non-participating children. Those gains are 37 to 176% greater than non-participating children and persist into elementary school. In kindergarten, pre-k children are rated as being more school ready than their peers on teachers' assessments. (Lipsey 2011, SRG 2008). In Shelby County, researchers compared the language development and reading readiness scores of four-year-olds at the beginning and at the end of their pre-kindergarten year and found that all children saw improvements after participating in a year of pre-k (Sell, Samiei & Imig 2015). Moreover, the level of improvement was greatest for those children who entered pre-k with the highest risk factors, including income level and developmental screening results.

As the following graphic makes clear, the greater the number of risk factors a child brought with them to pre-k the greater the gains they made during their pre-k year. Perhaps most importantly, almost all pre-kindergartners ended the year with scores that set them up for success later.



The benefits of pre-k are not limited to test scores. Children who receive high-quality pre-k have better attendance, fewer behavior problems, and increased chances of reading at grade level in 4th grade (Hill 2006, Gormley 2011).

Pre-K Strategy

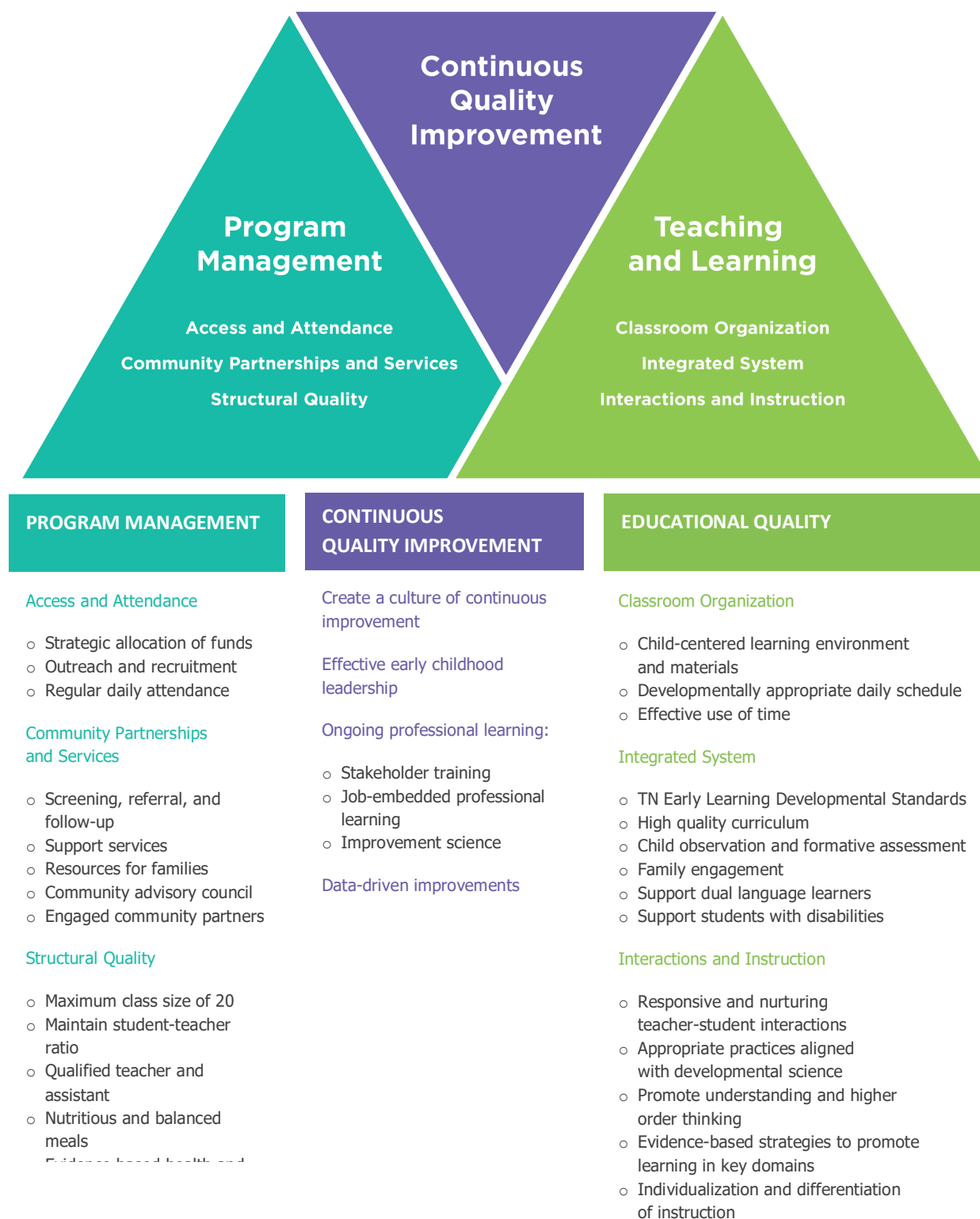
Over the last five years, Seeding Success has worked with both private and public (federal, state, and local) partners to expand pre-K services in Shelby County. Today, more four-year-olds are enrolled in pre-K than ever before, with approximately 7,500 funded seats. The pre-K model has also been refined using a federal Pre-K Development Grant (PDG) and Head Start funds to enable the inclusion of wrap-around services, as a core component of the pre-K model. Since 2013, local data show every cohort of pre-K students outperforms their similar peers, and these gains continue into 3rd grade (Seeding Success 2017). In the most recent cohort data (Fall 2017), kindergarten students who received the pre-K interventions outperformed even their non-economically disadvantaged peers, and effectively increased the total K-readiness scores for the district by three percentage points (52%). The goal is to continue the expansion and quality improvement of pre-K, and to provide a funded seat to every four year old, who qualifies under current eligibility criterion. This goal will require 1,000 newly funded seats, and additional local funds are committed over the next three years to mitigate the loss of 1,000 seats in May 2019 and expand to full enrollment.



Current Eligibility Criterion:

- 1st Priority (Tier 1) - Pursuant to state law 49-6-101: students identified as economically disadvantaged. This identification is based on income levels set each year by the Department of Health and Human Services. and used during the application process to determine income eligibility for enrollment.
- 2nd Priority (Tier 2) - Students with disabilities, students identified as English Language Learners (ELL), in state custody, or those identified as educationally at-risk for failure due to circumstances of abuse or neglect.
- 3rd Priority (Tier 3) - If space for enrollment remains after identifying children who meet Tier 1 or 2, the LEA may enroll any child that meets the age requirement and the requirements set forth by the Community Pre-K Advisory Council (C-PAC). These students are considered unserved or underserved and may be enrolled by the process established by the C-PAC.

Pre-K Quality Model





Community Impact

Pre-K programs provide children and families in Shelby County with a nurturing space to begin the transition to K-12 schooling. This is a primary equity strategy for ensuring underserved students have an equal footing when compulsory education begins. As a continuation of the First 8 Memphis strategy, high-quality pre-K will provide children with the next steps to being kindergarten ready and help establish the foundations of academic and social emotional success. Children and their families will continue to benefit from wrap-around services and coordinated interventions, and if integrated with broader neighborhood and community investments, pre-K can be a powerful recruitment tool to help stabilize communities and result in the strengthening of residential or choice feeder patterns.

A successfully integrated early childhood system will leverage pre-K as an effective transition milestone to bolster school success, reducing the need for special education services, RTI interventions, and other costs associated with underprepared students. This warm handoff element of the recommended infrastructure will help ensure children have had the benefit of a safe and nurturing environment and high-quality adult child interactions and families receive services, which allow parents to (re)connect to education or return to the workforce, save on childcare costs, and increase their incomes (Heckman 2017).

Key Players

First 8 Memphis will act as the Fiscal Agent for local pre-K investments secured from the City of Memphis and Shelby County Government. This investment will bolster a community of families, providers, and systems to support children as they grow. Existing providers, their staff, families, and children will be integral to this strategy. Currently, Seeding Success works with a consortium of pre-K providers including, districts (4), Porter-Leath, and Independent Childcare providers (31) to execute this strategy. To continue this expansion, First 8 Memphis plans to fund all current PDG funded classrooms and plans to establish a performance-based RFP process for new and existing providers to meet expansion demands and quality expectations.

Timeline and Costs

By 2021, an additional 2,000 seats will be sustainably funded. With the additional capacity, Shelby County will have met its goal of full-need based capacity. This expansion can happen over the next three academic years, with a gradual increase every year as funding and operators are secured.

To fully implement a high-quality pre-k strategy in Shelby County, the cost would be an additional 16 million, with each classroom costing approximately \$160,000, serving 8,500 four-year-olds.

Implementation Timeline

Academic Year	Funded seats	Classrooms	Current Funding	Additional Seats Needed	Additional Funds Needed
2018-2019	7500	375	60M	-	-
2019-2020	7500	375	60M	1000*	\$8M
2020-2021	8000	400	62.4M	500	\$12M
2021-2022	8500	425	64M	500	\$16M
Total Recurring	8500	425	68M**	2000	\$16M

*In 2019-2020, the PDG will expire, leaving 1,000 additional seats to be filled.

** This amount comes from a combination of State, VBK, HeadStart, District, and Private funds.

Return on Investment

A recent cost-benefit study of Georgia's pre-k program finds that the benefits will exceed the costs by 2030. The study defines universal pre-k as reaching 82% of four-year-olds (Similar to the expected rate of enrollment in Shelby County, 85%). Savings are related to juvenile justice, welfare, and education. In about 40 years, the study predicts that for every dollar spent by Georgia for pre-k, the state government would receive \$1.59 in savings and added tax revenues. Total savings to citizens and to local, state, and federal governments would produce a return of \$5.12 for every \$1 invested (Suitts 2011).

Pre-k can also have a strong 2-generation impact on families. An evaluation in Tulsa found that pre-k positively impacted adult earnings. Only looking at adult earnings, the program returned 3 to 4 dollars for every dollar spent on pre-k (Bartik 2012). Recent economic mobility research (Chetty 2016) also suggests that earlier investments in education and supportive environments increase the likelihood for that child to move out of a lower income quintile into a higher one.



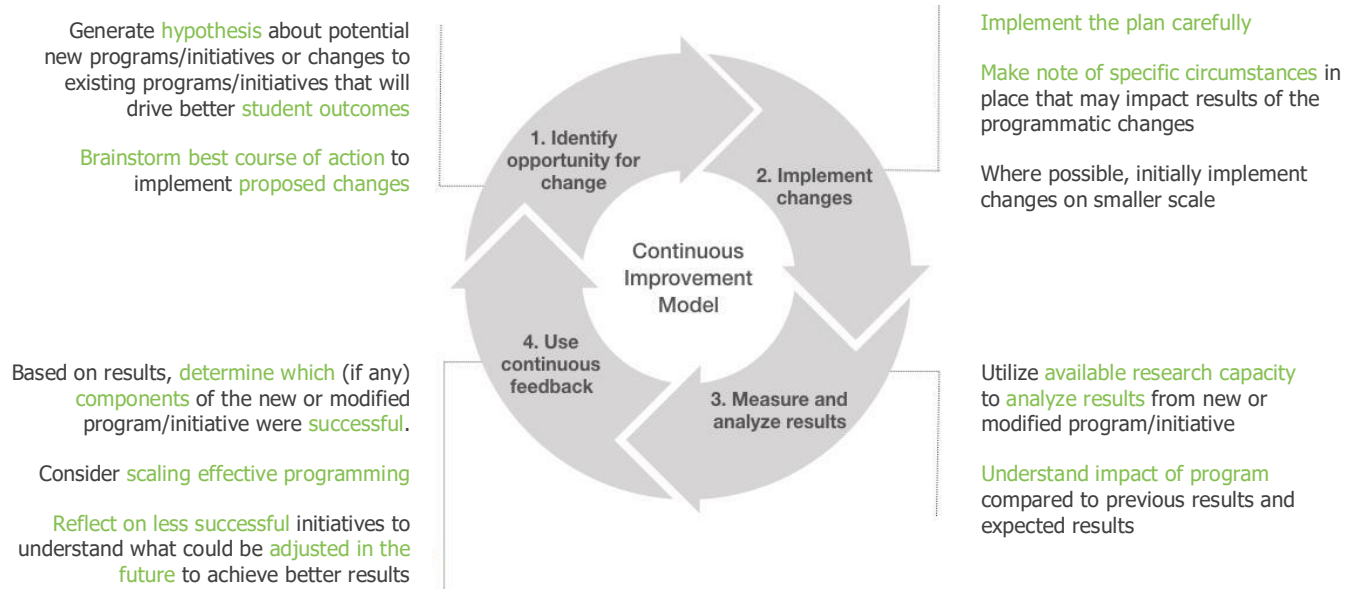
Data Infrastructure and Backbone Support

The success of First 8 Memphis depends on the people and organizations committed to children, families, and community. Their efforts depend on a foundation of data and evidence, which make a shared commitment to improving the well-being of young children tangible. As the backbone, First 8 Memphis, in partnership with Seeding Success, will provide the infrastructure to collect and manage data, to engage in continuous improvement, and to look for alignment across the cradle to career continuum. Providing the capacity to collect and manage data allows the Early Childhood Education partners to know what's working and how to scale and replicate those initiatives. Conversely, through the data, we will know where opportunities for improvement exist, where efforts are not working, and how, where, and when to modify, redirect, and end those efforts not contributing to children's success.

To be effective, providers must align their missions to outcomes, use data to inform their planning, and engage in continuous improvement to ensure their systems and practices are moving them toward better results. Effective partners are results-based and align organizational resources to support the necessary capacity and programming. The ultimate success and sustainability of the First 8 Memphis Strategy will be our ability to measure its impact and ensure quality at scale.

Through the partnerships and associated data-sharing agreements it has developed, Seeding Success has built a longitudinal database linking the contact of service providers with student achievement. That infrastructure will be augmented with the addition of early childhood developmental assessment data, and other Early Childhood Strategy data. The result is a capacity to identify the association between the efforts of partners and related measures of child development and student achievement. Further, the resulting data makes it possible for First 8 Memphis to understand the relative influence of single versus multiple program exposures and the cumulative influence of strings of program exposures over time. The data also allows for comparisons between groups of children who receive program services and those who do not by key outcome measures such as third-grade reading achievement.

The strategy will create a closed loop model for continuous improvement, so that future funding decisions will be based on previous performance and data. To ensure children in Shelby County are receiving the best services, programs will be developed, analyzed, and modified based on performance.



Strong analytical capacity is critical to the effective implementation of the continuous improvement model.

Over the course of the three year implementation period, Seeding Success will support First 8 Memphis through the design of strategy specific RFPs, Performance-based contracts, and on-going accountability and continuous quality improvement of funded partners. The backbone will support key convening and implementation partners in performance management, results-based practices, and CQI capabilities. The First 8 Memphis staff will also help coordinate and facilitate the regular collaboration and alignment of the ECE system partners for collective impact through strategy specific working groups. These networks collectively make up the ECE system, and help partners continuously improve outcomes and address system needs.

Further, Seeding Success along with its partners will coordinate policy and advocacy efforts to sustain and fund the ECE system at scale, and to target policy barriers that inhibit families from accessing the full array of ECE services and supports.

The full cost for backbone support for First 8 Memphis and Seeding Success to implement this strategy over the next three years is 1M annually, with associated costs going to staff, data infrastructure, trainings, and technical assistance to providers during the ramp up of programs and the fund.



Overall Community Impact

This investment will fundamentally change the way the city feels and demonstrates authentic care and support for the well-being of children and families. The tangible returns on this investment include:

- An increase in the ECE labor force and increased wages associated with this investment will bring investment to an industry often underpaid and undersupported.
- Communities will understand what services are available, how important they are, and how to access them.
- Childhood environments and experience will improve in communities, reducing adverse childhood experiences.
- Schools will benefit from students and families more equitably supported for success in school.
- School Districts will see a reduced cost for special education and remediation.
- Families can more readily further their education or enter the workforce with greater access to affordable high-quality child care and education programs.
- A generation of Memphis children will accrue the long-term benefits of a high-quality early childhood education system.

Financing Program

Seeding Success plans to support the aggregation of public and private capital into a Not-for-profit, LLC, First 8 Memphis, that will invest in programs through strategy specific RFP processes and execute funding through managed performance based contracts. This fund will be directed by a Board of Directors. The fund will provide the public and its investors' annual reports on performance and ROI.

There are many national benchmarks and technical assistance partners Seeding Success is leveraging to build out this structure and financing model including the Government Performance Lab, Maycomb Capital, StriveTogether, and the Ballmer Group.

Sustainability

Overtime Seeding Success believes private capital will taper and public financing will sustain the most effective programs. Seeding Success is already in the process of raising public dollars for scaling pre-K, including 16 million in new commitments by 2021. The total run rate for this investment package is projected to be approximately 40 million annually, but as with all strategies these costs can shift or be reduced by efficiencies, new revenue streams, or greater public investment in children. The policy change and advocacy work associated with this plan will ensure that private dollars are not perpetually supporting programs, but rather accelerate the pathway to scale and efficacy.



Conclusion

Early investments in families can change a lifetime of outcomes for children. The data and evidence across many outcomes suggest it is one of the most important investments Memphis can make is to support young children and their families. Currently, black and Latino children in Memphis have fewer opportunities to move out of poverty than their peers in other cities; they are less likely than their white peers locally to move into the middle class. The poverty rate in Memphis is decreasing too slowly, making it harder and harder for children in Memphis to grow up and enter the middle class. These children's lives are lived in a constant barrage of adverse experience, often reinforced by policymakers and underfunded programs.

With a coordinated approach to supporting children and families, from their earliest moments of life, we believe these realities can change.

Supporting parents in creating safe and nurturing homes, raising the quality of childcare centers that parents already trust and utilize, professionalizing and expanding the early childhood education spaces, and improving access to high-quality early education will help bolster families. If these interventions can be aligned with broader poverty mitigation efforts, long-term economic mobility is more likely.



As an organization, First 8 Memphis will look to support for the right array of interventions, investments policies, and accountability systems birth to eight, to work with its partners to intentionally disrupt the current causes and effects of systemic poverty. The cornerstones of this comprehensive approach are an investment in a high-quality Early Childhood Education system. Without this, children at their earliest stage of development, and families, often at their most vulnerable, are left to navigate an adverse environment alone.

Organizations across Memphis have been working on building an Early Childhood Education system. They have achieved much of the organizational capacity, local-evidence base, and contextual understanding to develop a system of supports for Memphis' youngest families. The time is now to go to scale and bring real change within the lifetime of the next generation. We look forward to formally launching First 8 Memphis in July 2019.

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