



Building literacy success in and across Auckland

Insights from
Winston Churchill Memorial
Fellowship on city-wide literacy, 2015

Alison Sutton

www.cometauckland.org.nz

Insights

- **Literacy is a way out of poverty:** clearly linked to economic agenda
- **Raising literacy takes more than schools:** attendance; after school & holiday programmes; summer reading clinics; reading support from volunteers; raising healthy readers; language & literacy rich environments; engaging parents
- **Health is a major driver for improving literacy:** public health messages assume some literacy; communicating health issues requires oral language and (often) literacy
- **Many variations of systems:** everyone starts off having to work with who they can get in the room to prove deep collaboration works
- **Different approaches to scale**
 - 'proof of concept' in targeted communities
 - targeting groups (e.g. kids at risk in Year 6)
 - everything strategic and about the system'

Talking matters

Everyone is doing it!

- **National Literacy** Early Words Together
- **REAL** Sheffield - Raising Early Achievement in Literacy
- **Read On. Get On.** National campaign led by Save the Children UK
- **Grade Level Reading Campaign, USA** 140 communities
- **Strive Together**
- **30 Million Word Gap** - President Obama hosted conference December 2013
- **Talking is teaching** <http://talkingisteaching.org/about>

National literacy Trust



Words for life

10 literacy action hubs in 10 poorest communities

- School achievement
- Adult literacy rates
- Dep index

Committing to a decade of investment

- Start with who is in the room
- Surveys of student reading practices very powerful
- Link to health, employment & housing – places where low literacy is encountered
- Early Words Together, school leadership, networks, PD
- Council at the table



Middlesbrough Literacy Hub

Poor community

Thinking employability long term

Working with health on key
messages to parents

- Using Early Words Together
- Packs for parents of premature babies to read to their children
- Packs for children in hospitals
- Training Health staff & social housing providers to recognise literacy issues and know what to do

<http://www.turningpages.co.uk/>

**Give your baby
the best start in life**
by reading and sharing stories
with them from day one.



**Talking and
listening**

to babies from the moment they
are born helps them develop good
language and communication skills.

It's never too early to share a story with your baby.
This will help you bond with your baby, soothe
them and help them get to know your voice.

Making books a fun part of your baby's daily life
will help give them a good start at nursery school.



MIDDLESBROUGH
READING CAMPAIGN
turningpages.co.uk

National
Literacy
Trust

Middlesbrough
Reading Campaign

South Tees Hospitals
NHS

South Tees Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Whatever it takes Leicester



A decade of investment

- Primary & secondary school leads are co-chairs
- Whole school strategic approach
 - 8 city school clusters meeting half term
 - Reluctant readers/boys/ESOL
- Targeted support for boys on transition to high school (buddy, 6 book summer reading, synthetic phonics, inspirational day out)
- Inspire reading beyond the curriculum
- Big weeks - Storytelling & Everybody's reading
- Second most improved region

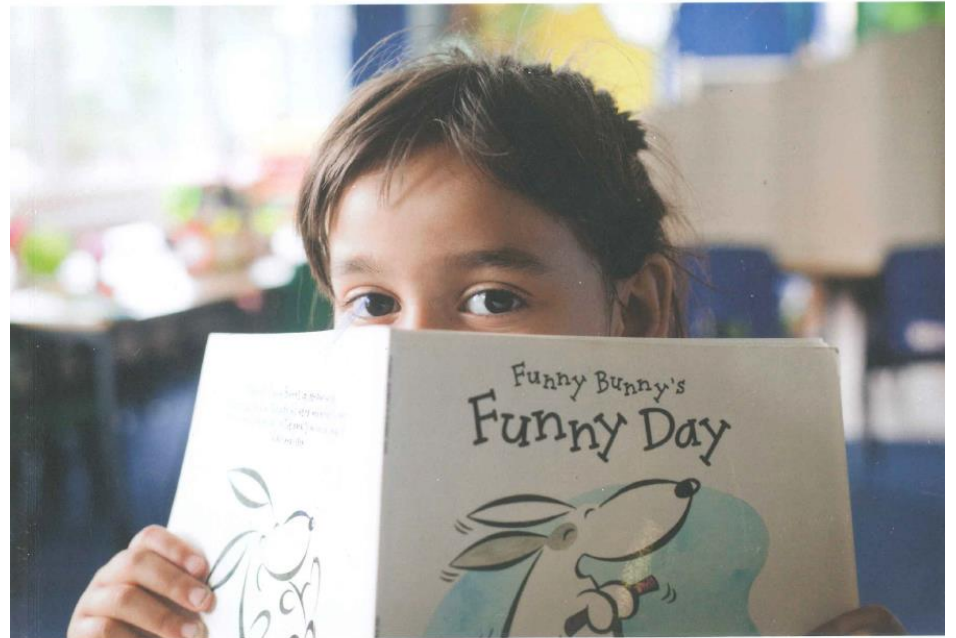


Save the Children

A national campaign to get every child in the UK reading well by the age of 11 by 2025

Community support for
**10 minutes
reading a day**

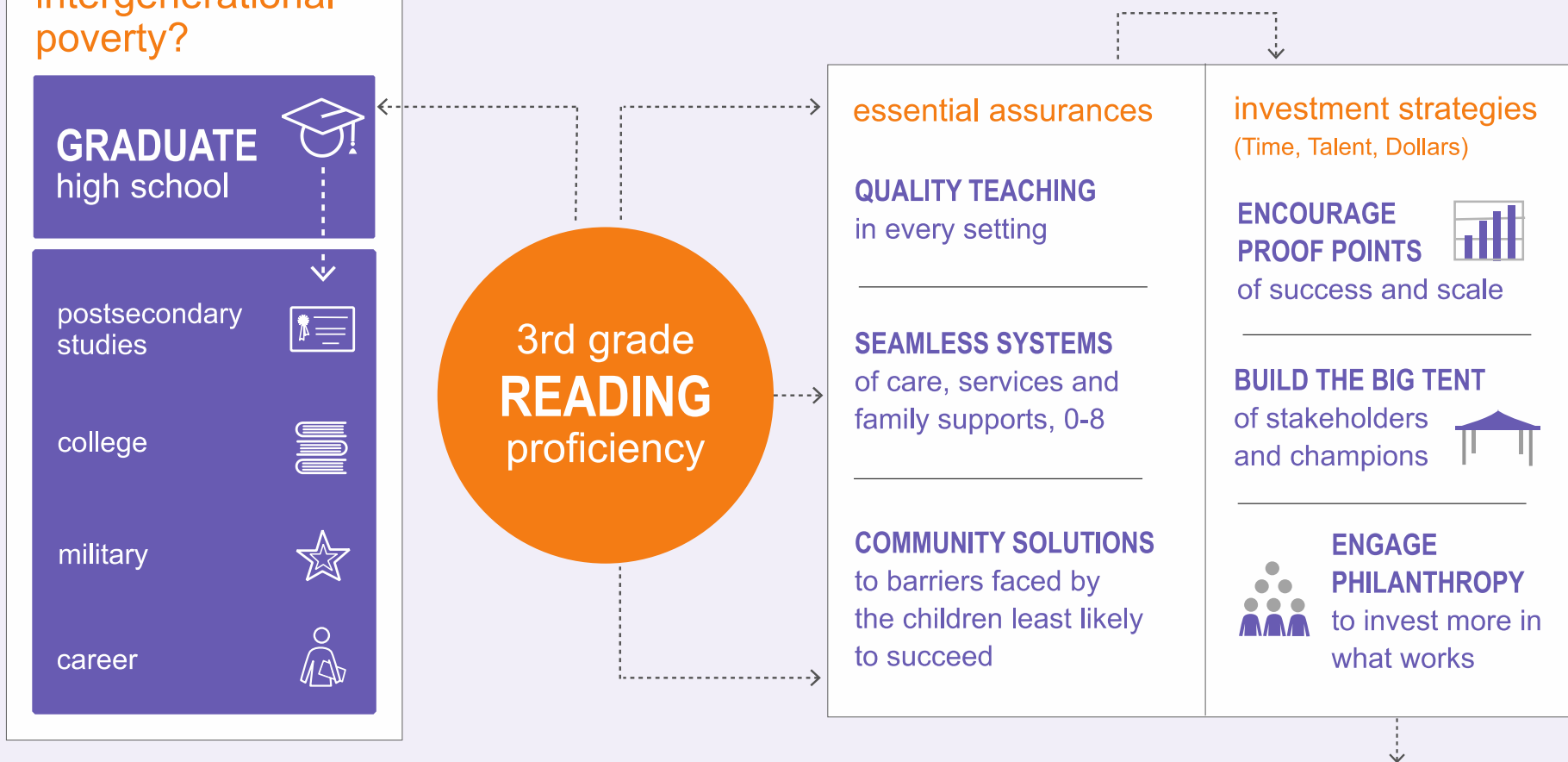
READ ON
GET ON



How reading can help children
escape poverty

how to
DISRUPT
intergenerational
poverty?

The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading



milestones



by 2015/2016

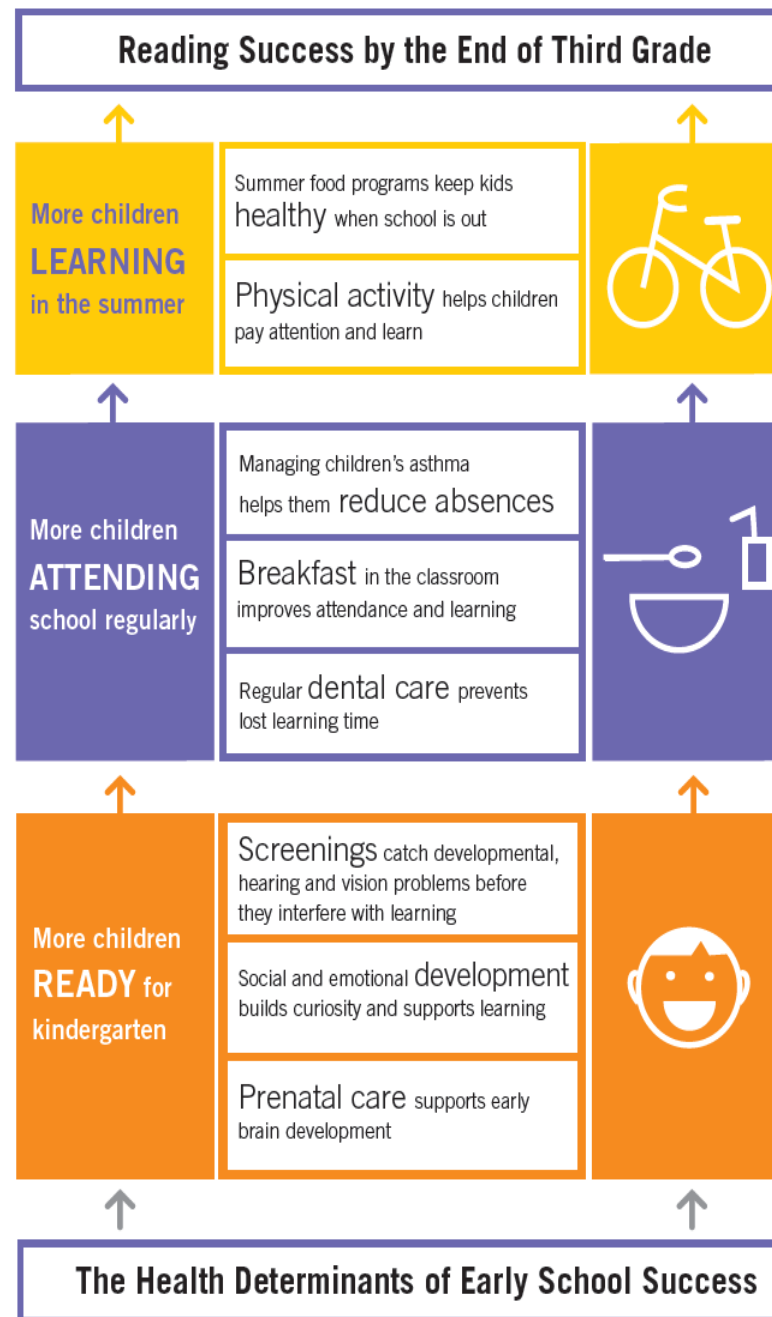
- Progress on the strategies
- Progress on the messaging
- Progress on leading indicators

by 2020

- A promising trend line and sustainable momentum toward closing the early achievement gap
- A dozen states or more have increased by at least 100% the number of low-income children reading proficiently by the end of third grade

Grade level reading

Growing healthy readers



Grade level reading

School readiness

Build on the work of others

Coordinate across

Build a policy alliance

Agree on a school readiness definition and measure

Work with schools

Align with health initiatives

What do we know about
NZ kids?

61 %

of low-income children have no children's books at home.

30 million word gap

Poor children hear as many as 30 million fewer words than their more affluent peers.

By **age 2**, poor children are already behind their peers in listening, counting, and other skills essential to literacy.

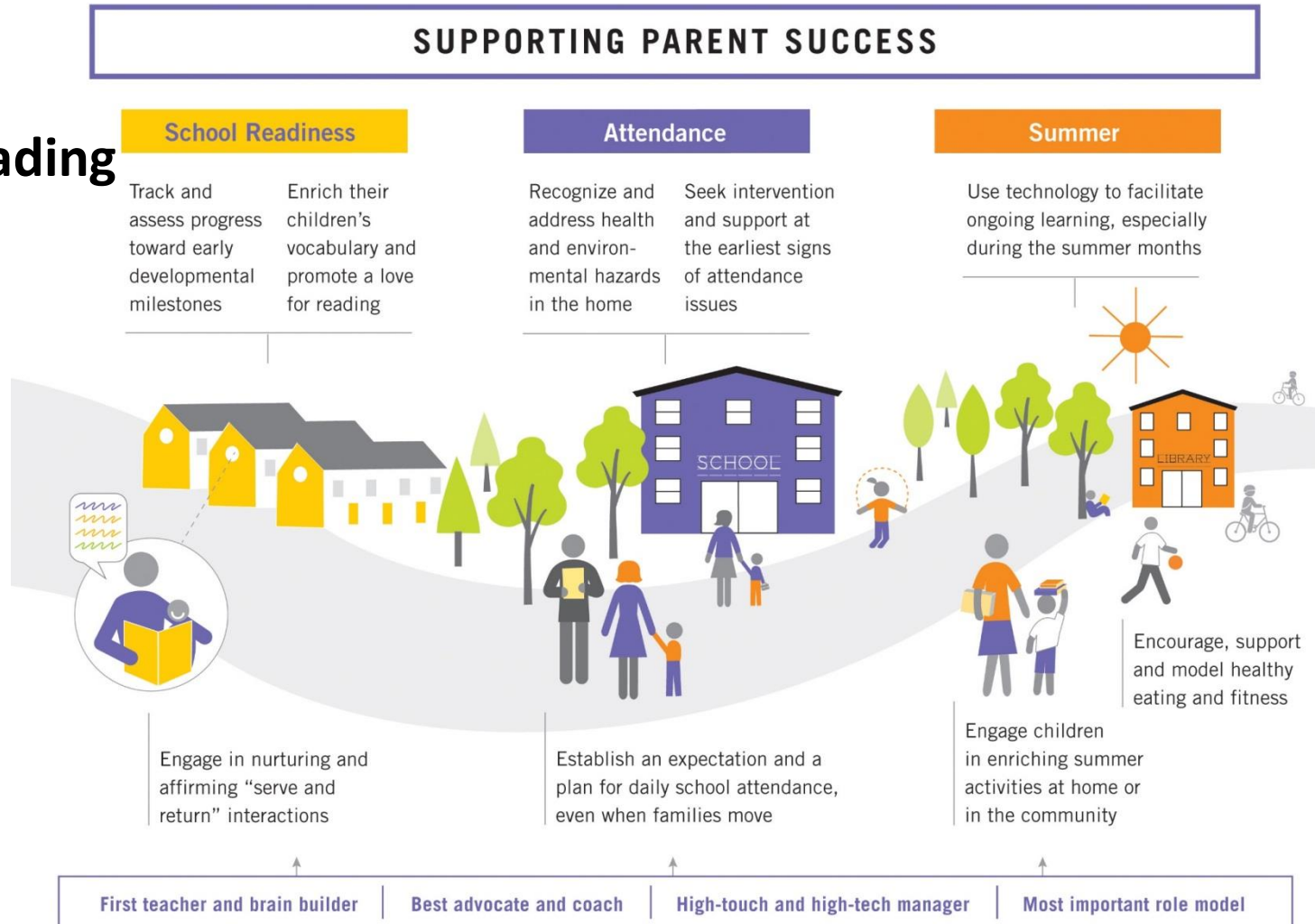
A child's vocabulary as early as **age 3** can predict third grade reading achievement.

22 Letters

By age 5, a typical middle-class child recognizes 22 letters of the alphabet, compared to 9 for a child from a low-income family.

Grade level reading

Supporting parents



[illegible]

Education equals
economics.

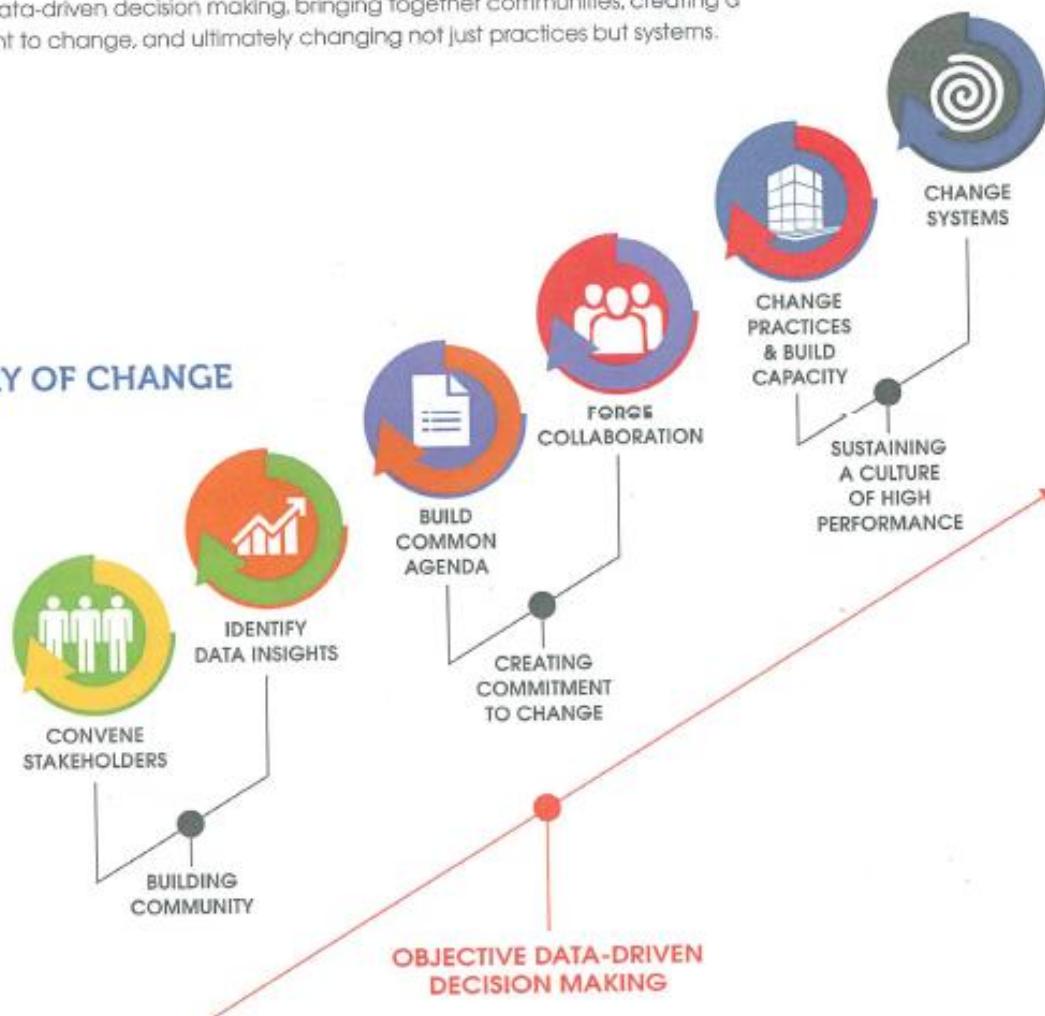
Our region's economic prosperity is at risk.

A regional strategy to prepare children to succeed.

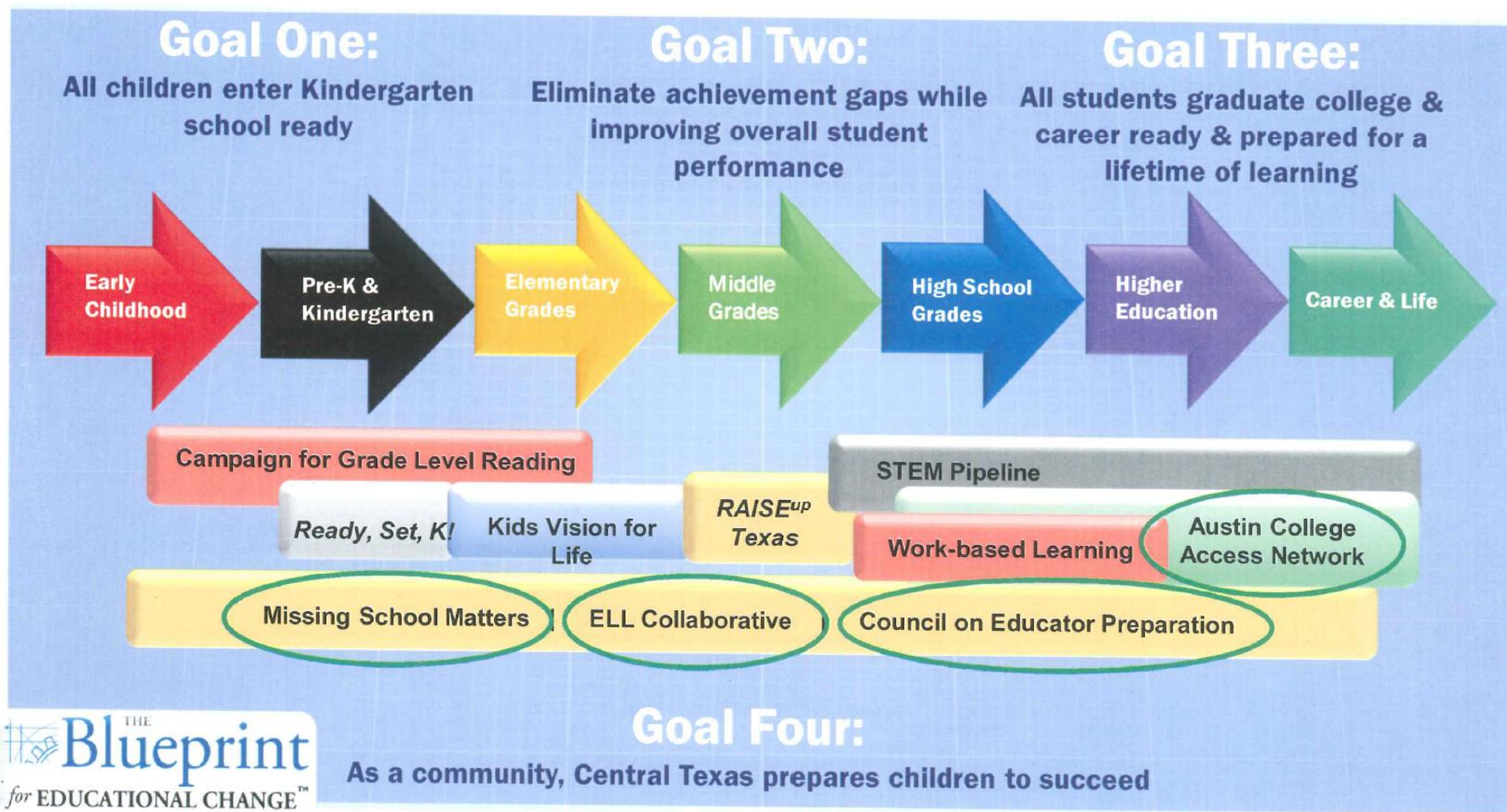
Improve student
outcomes from cradle to
career.

Transforming systems is much more than just partnering or sharing common metrics — it means investment, shared ownership and sustained commitment. The commitment is not to change the lives of a handful of children in a given school or neighborhood through one program (no matter how strong). Instead, such commitment means that we expect results not for 60 children but for 60,000; not for one middle school but for all our 68 middle schools; not for one demographic but for all. E3 Alliance helps to facilitate and orchestrate transformation through collaborative action, fueling the work of the Blueprint through objective data-driven decision making, bringing together communities, creating a commitment to change, and ultimately changing not just practices but systems.

THEORY OF CHANGE



E³ Alliance Cradle-to-Career Continuum



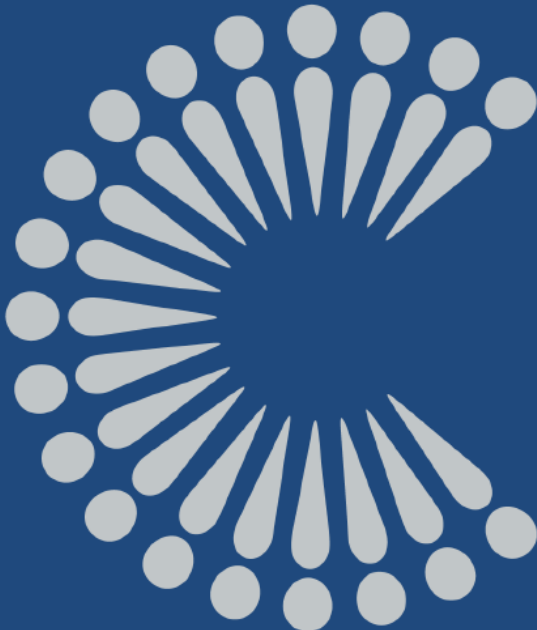
Driving collective impact

- **What is the issue(s) that needs to be addressed in your community?** Do you have data? Is it compelling? Is the issue urgent? Do enough people care?
- **How would you know that things had improved?** Where would the data come from? Who collects it? What access do you have to that? How often can meaningful change be reported?
- When you know what you want to change and how to measure it, **do you have the 10, 20 or 100 people around the table who, if they all acted together, would bring about the change you want?** Sometimes fewer people are better, if they are the people who can really make the change happen.
- **What is the system change that is needed?** What evidence-informed action can you take that would change the data?

The reason for a 12 month journey is to collectively understand and commit to the change we need.

Discuss this quote:

“if we knew what to do we most likely would already be doing it



Keep focused

- Move at the speed of trust
- Read your purpose statement at every meeting
- Ask what each organisation at the table can do to change the dial
 - right now
 - within three months
 - over the next year
 - over the next 3-5 years

COMET Auckland & Learning Auckland

- Start at community level, not schools
- Align on Pathways to Success
- Shift SOI projects to strategic identification of systems change
- COMET Board
 - Champions for Learning Auckland
 - Strategic connection /steering group
 - Help identify the right leader
 - Steering Group membership
 - Share metrics