



Item:

Comprehensive Literacy Plan and Assessment October 2024 Update

Requested Action:

The Board is asked to receive the update

Background:

In May 2023 the Children's Trust board had a joint meeting with the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners. During that meeting the Children's Trust staff were tasked with creating a Comprehensive Literacy Plan.

It was determined that a comprehensive needs assessment was needed to help inform the development of a comprehensive literacy plan aimed at improving literacy achievement for all students. In October 2023, Executive Director Kiner reached out to the UF Lastinger Center to begin a discussion about the plan development and a coordinator for the project.

Project Phases Update:

As of October, The UF Lastinger Center (UFLC) have completed 24 organization interviews and 16 focus groups with more scheduled. The team is aiming to reach a thousand responses to surveys and will exceed their goal of 50 respondents for focus groups soon. UFLC is still working with the Alachua County School District on scheduling focus groups with Alachua County Public Schools in the Fall. UFLC will be meeting with all Alachua County Commissioners individually in November and are working to schedule individual meetings with School Board Commissioners. The purpose of the focus groups and the individual meetings are for participants to share their own, or their children's, experiences with learning literacy skills in Alachua County and to give their opinions on programs and services that support developing these skills. Additionally, they will update the County Commissioners and School Board on the progress thus far.

At the last committee meeting held on October 21, the committee was tasked with:

- Reviewing the data findings and identifying gaps
- Determining roadblocks to conceptualize possible recommendations
- Share solutions already occurring
- Dream of the first 3-5 steps after the assessment is completed

UFLC discussed the need for more engagement with families and community members, particularly those from lower-income backgrounds. They discussed the importance of spreading the word about the project and the need for more support from the committee in doing so. The committee discussed strategies for outreach and partnering including using paper surveys at community events. They also

discussed re-engaging smaller rural community centers who completed an initial interview to determine if they are open to a focus group with their families and youth. Lastly, committee members discussed challenges of reading instruction and the need for a common understanding among decision-makers. It was agreed on the importance of identifying misconceptions and implementing programs appropriately and identifying possible frameworks to help with a community partnership approach.

The UFLC will continue to gather data through March, analyze both quantitative and qualitative data, and compile the data into a comprehensive report to be presented to all funders. The attachment to this update, provides preliminary data from focus groups and survey recommendations.

We are in Phase 2 of the project plan.

Three Phases of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment

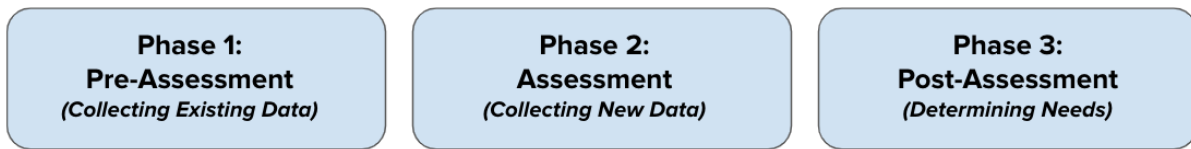


Figure 1: Three Phase of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment adapted from Witkin & Altschuld (1995).

Programmatic Impact:

Goal 2: Children & Youth Can Learn What They Need To Be Successful

Fiscal Impact:

\$175,000.00

Recommendation:

The Board is asked to receive the update.