

COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS ACTION PLAN (CSAP)

# FRAMEWORK



The Campaign for  
**GRADE-LEVEL  
READING**



The [Campaign for Grade-Level Reading](#) seeks to disrupt generational poverty and ensure more hopeful futures for children of economically challenged, fragile and otherwise marginalized communities. We support community-driven initiatives to improve the likelihood that these children will grasp the first rung of the success sequence ladder — graduation from high school. Since its launch in 2012, the GLR Communities Network has grown to include more than 350 communities, representing 46 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and two Canadian provinces — sponsored by 5,200+ local organizations, institutions and agencies and supported by 500+ state and local funders, including 200+ United Ways.

Development of the Community Solutions Action Plan (CSAP) represents an essential self-nomination for membership in the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading's Network of Proofpoint Communities. Creating a stakeholder coalition and having at least one sponsoring funder involved in the development of the CSAP are important as well. Joining the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (CGLR), gives communities the opportunity to be a part of a network of more than 350 communities that are learning from each other and sharing best practices and programs, tactics and strategies that work.

Another benefit of joining CGLR is that communities can access and participate in the GLR Community Learning for Impact and Improvement Platform ([CLIP](#)). This tool harnesses the collective knowledge, expertise and wisdom of the 350+ communities that are involved in the GLR Network for the purpose of driving impact and improvement on measures of early school success for low-income children. The platform enables you to:

- learn what's working by accessing in-depth data and stories about which communities are making measurable progress, under what conditions and why;
- strengthen your coalition by enhancing your communications capacity and enhancing your network;
- improve your performance by benchmarking against the best, most comprehensive, results-driven campaigns and refining your plans and strategies; and
- achieve game-changing impacts by adapting, aligning and replicating proven and promising solutions from other communities.

Once your community submits a letter of intent (*see page 3*), we will schedule an online walk-through that will introduce you to CLIP and highlight resources that you may find useful as you develop your CSAP. In addition, your community will have access to a team space where members of your coalition can share documents, comments and resources. Prior to being formally welcomed into the GLR Network, communities must have a presence on CLIP, including at least five coalition members in their community team space. To join CGLR, your community must also have philanthropic support (this includes community foundations, family foundations, United Ways, etc.) for implementation. Local funders play a crucial role in helping community coalitions to make measurable progress by providing consistent leadership and by playing “more than money” leadership roles in coalition planning and implementation.

In addition, communities joining CGLR should take advantage of GLR Learning Tuesdays webinars (you can find the recordings and resources from previous webinars [here](#)). Coalition members whose emails are included in their community's letter of intent will begin receiving emails about GLR Learning Tuesdays webinars. These learning and engagement opportunities can be invaluable to communities as they write their plans, providing information about what's working in CGLR communities across the network.

## GRADE-LEVEL READING COMMUNITIES NETWORK

# LETTER OF INTENT

*Yes, count us in! Our community would like to become a member of the Grade-Level Reading Communities Network.*

By submitting a letter of intent, your community will become eligible to receive valuable technical assistance and support from a growing national network of staff, consultants, funders and other cities involved in the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading (CGLR).

All letters of intent should address how your community is working to improve outcomes in grade-level reading, including in the following three areas:

- **school readiness** – too many young children show up for school not ready to learn
- **school attendance** – too many children in grades K–3 miss too many days of school
- **summer learning** – too many children in the early grades lose ground over the summer months

Letters of intent (3 pages maximum) should contain the following information:

1. Contact information of the leader(s) of your local campaign;
2. Evidence of significant cross-sector (public, private, civic, philanthropic and faith) leadership and support — for example, local elected officials, United Way representatives, school district officials, community foundations, community-based organizations and business and nonprofit leaders;
3. Description of the process and potential goals you will use to mobilize and sustain community action on the part of groups such as parents, child care providers and educators to improve school readiness, attendance and summer learning;
4. Baseline data (or a plan for how you will obtain it) on levels of third grade reading proficiency, school readiness, attendance and summer learning in your community.

Please contact Jenny Atkinson at 617-784-9089 or [jenny@smarterlearninggroup.com](mailto:jenny@smarterlearninggroup.com) if you would like assistance in developing your letter of intent or to submit it to CGLR.

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Once a community submits its CSAP and is taking advantage of CLIP and GLR Learning Tuesdays webinars, a group of coalition members meets with Ralph Smith, Managing Director of the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, for a conversation about their plan as well as their pivot to implementation as part of the onboarding process. Communities will also receive a fill-in-the-blank template press release to use if they'd like to announce that they have joined CGLR. For any questions, please contact Jenny Atkinson at [jenny@smarterlearninggroup.com](mailto:jenny@smarterlearninggroup.com).

**PART ONE: COVER PAGE(S) Please provide the following data on your community:**

Specific geographic name by which the community lead wishes the community to be referenced on CGLR's website and in CGLR publications (e.g., Roanoke, Virginia; Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina; Suncoast, Florida)

Specific branded community name (e.g., for the same communities as listed above: Star City Reads, Read Charlotte, Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading)

Select one geographic boundary covered by the CSAP and served by the coalition (e.g., city, county, entire metro area, multiple counties, neighborhood, school district, school feeder pattern, small town, state, other) – City – County – Entire metro area – Multiple counties (Please list by name) – Neighborhood (Please list by name) – School district/s – State – Tribe – School – Other (Please specify)

Population of area covered by your campaign

Total number of school districts covered by/involved with your campaign (please include number of districts and names of each)

Total number of public schools covered by/involved with your campaign

Total number of students (K–3) in each district involved in your campaign

Total number of students (K–12) in each district involved in your campaign

Percent (and number) of K–12 students on free and reduced-price lunch for each district involved in your campaign (if free and reduced-price lunch information is not available, please include child poverty rate and indicate that)

Designated Learning and Data Partner information (This is the person who is most involved with data in your coalition and/or the person who will be responsible for ensuring information on CLIP for your community is updated periodically.)

Social links (website, Facebook, Twitter): Name and URL

Community Lead (primary contact) information, including name, position, organization, phone number and email — if noted on spreadsheet below, that will suffice

It is essential to list the members of the philanthropic/funder community who are committed to investing in and supporting your effort. Provide the names of local funder organizations involved in the work, along with names of the program officers and email addresses. Please provide any other helpful details (e.g., amount of funding? annual/multiyear?). Local funders receive emails from CGLR to help them stay informed about GLR Learning Tuesdays webinars developed specifically for funders (Funder-to-Funder Conversations) and other events developed especially for funders with an interested in early school success.

Finally, please submit a spreadsheet with the names of individuals serving on your sponsoring coalition — with title, organizational affiliation, mailing address and email address — and/or names/addresses of organizations represented on the sponsoring coalition.

It is important to include this list with your completed CSAP. Please do not make a PDF of the spreadsheet and add it as a part of your CSAP document. We need the information in the spreadsheet format. Members of your sponsoring coalition will receive emails from CGLR and are used in our roll-up numbers of total or partners involved in CGLR nationwide. Partner organizations will also be added to your community profile on CLIP.

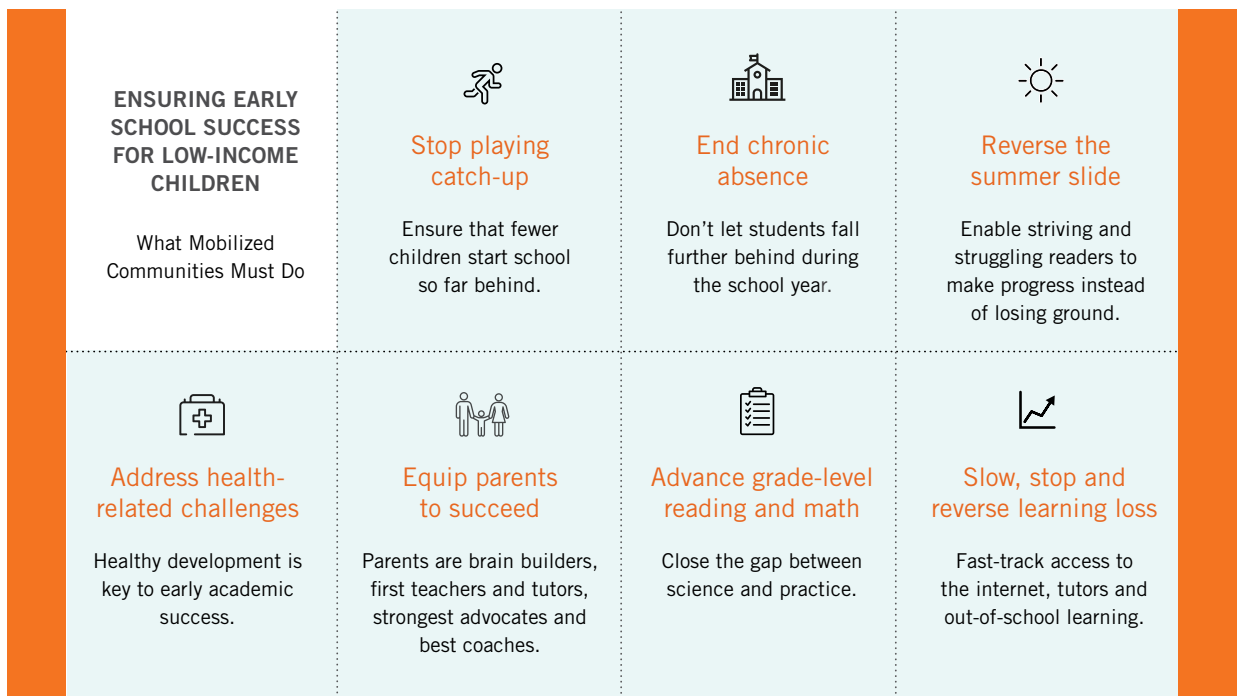
**PART TWO: COMMUNITY OVERVIEW (1 PAGE)**

Please summarize your community’s story including details to illuminate the history, character, strengths and challenges. Please include any additional demographic information that you think would be helpful, beyond the demographic information already provided in your cover page(s) above.

**PART THREE: THE CSAP (15 PAGES, plus up to a 5-page appendix for data and/or other explanatory information)**

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has not changed the conditions that made the CGLR necessary, it has exacerbated those conditions in seismic ways, shifting the ground beneath us. It has also made more visible to more people the urgency and need for equitable learning loss recovery.

While planning the ways your community can and will act to increase the number of children reading proficiently by the end of third grade, please refer to the graphic, “Ensuring Early School Success for Low-Income Children: What Mobilized Communities Must Do”:



The CSAP should address “early school success” (as measured primarily by grade-level proficiency in reading and math) and where appropriate should address equitable learning recovery.

## ASSURANCE #1

**The Problem:** Please provide a data-rich description of the current situation and recent trend lines for high school graduation, grade-level reading (third and/or fourth grade), school readiness, student attendance and summer and afterschool learning (summer school/program participation). Where possible, please disaggregate the data to illuminate the performance of children from low-income families, including race/ethnicity and English language learners, if available, and to spot outliers, trends and anomalies that could inform the thinking and work. If possible, include one to two years of data prior to the pandemic as well as any additional data that was collected during the time when schools were closed (acknowledging that in most places little data was collected during this time) and since.

Please provide an overview of the range of services and supports currently focused on addressing aspects of the problems described above. Where possible identify where key supports and services are missing and/or unavailable, as well as how they have changed during the pandemic.

What conclusions have you drawn about the extent to which some, most or all the following contribute to the performance gaps between children from low-income families and their peers?

- Problems/issues identified above are not a high priority for leaders in our community
- Too little information about what works
- Insufficient coordination among the key stakeholders and actors
- Inadequate resources
- Ineffective use of available resources
- Insufficient access to otherwise available resources
- Mismatch between the interventions and the needs
- Insufficient engagement of and support for parents
- Insufficient attention to the Health Determinants of Early School Success (refer to [Healthy Reader Resource Guides](#))

## ASSURANCE #2

**Destination (Desired Outcomes and Impact):** Please identify what your community has set as ambitious but achievable goals, targets and milestones for the current and successive four school years. Also, please provide an overarching vision for where your community will be in five years for each of the seven must-do areas of focus in the framework at the beginning of PART THREE above.

## ASSURANCE #3

**Strategy (Integrated and Intertwined):** Please outline the set(s) of coordinated activities, programs and initiatives designed to respond to each of the seven must-do areas of focus in the framework above – (stop playing catch-up, end chronic absence, reverse the summer slide, address health-related challenges, equip parents to succeed, advance grade-level reading and math, and stop, slow and reverse learning loss) with the following questions in mind:

- Strengthening, expanding, scaling and coordinating existing programs and interventions.
- How are you improving the conditions of existing services and programs by leveraging resources more effectively?
- How will you address gaps by importing, replicating and adapting promising practices and model programs from outside the community?
- In what areas are you developing and inventing new and innovative approaches?
- How are you addressing digital equity (internet access, individual devices, technical assistance) across the must-do areas of focus?
- How are you providing relational supports for children and families (tutors, mentors, coaches)?
- What are you doing to transform non-school places and spaces into learning-rich environments?

Because no coalition can do everything at once, it is important to stage and sequence strategies, layering them so families and children get supports across the birth to third-grade continuum. Please include information about what you believe will be more important for your coalition to accomplish first and how you will prioritize the remaining strategies in the CSAP.

While reflecting on and designing new strategies and responses, consider referring to the [What's Working Exchange](#) where programs, tactics and strategies used by communities in the GLR Network are highlighted. In particular, you can access practice briefs on the following topics — [school readiness](#), [school attendance](#), [summer and afterschool learning](#), [addressing health-related challenges](#), [equipping parents to succeed](#), [advancing grade-level reading and math](#), [learning pods](#), [digital equity](#), [providing virtual \(online\) supports to economically challenged parents of young children](#), [local grade-level reading campaign partnerships with institutions of higher learning](#) and [supporting positive changes in school-home-community partnerships and teacher-parent relationships](#).

Similarly, you can review CSAPs from other communities [here](#) and [here](#).

## ASSURANCE #4

**(Connecting for Synergy):** Please describe how your community's grade-level reading campaign will connect with, benefit from and/or support other ongoing efforts and initiatives in your community. Who are additional potential partners to include in your work? How are you working to minimize duplication of effort as well as expand the number of people who care about early school success, reaching new audiences and creating a larger tent and bigger movement. Depending on your community, these could include some or all the following:

- Opportunities for people to pursue the potential and share the joy of transforming ordinary places and spaces into learning-rich environments accessible to the children of economically challenged, fragile and otherwise marginalized families. Such spaces could include museums, zoos, parks, libraries, barber shops, laundromats and grocery stores as well as office and waiting rooms in medical, housing and other offices, etc.
- Partnerships with Public Housing Authorities and affordable housing organizations. For more information on the case for using housing as a platform, springboard and catapult to promote early school success and equitable learning recovery, please click [here](#).

- Connecting local school improvement, education reform and/or school district initiatives with the work of other members of the sponsoring coalition
- Coordinating local youth, child and family-centered work led by a colleges, universities or institutions of higher education, health departments and other public agencies.
- Stacking, bundling and concentrating the work of the affiliates of national organizations within your community so that you create a coordinated pipeline of services and opportunities for children and families with the most significant needs.
- Aligning local government initiatives and priorities with state-level initiatives and other regional priorities.

## **ASSURANCE #5**

**Data:** Please explain the steps taken to ensure ongoing availability of and access to the data needed to set baselines, track progress and ensure accountability. Describe your data plan — including both how you will determine if your coalition is working well and whether children and families in your community are doing better. It would help to provide specifics on the following:

- Who has what data?
- What data will you collect and how will you review it and use it to make decisions?
- What type of dashboards or scorecards will you use to help you communicate the story behind the data?
- What understandings have been reached and what agreements have been made to ensure ongoing access to needed data?

## **ASSURANCE #6**

**(Success and Sustainability):** Please explain the steps taken to ensure confidence that this effort will have the broad-based support, capacity and resources to succeed and endure. Considerations include:

- Mobilizing key stakeholders and important constituencies, including teachers and school/district officials; elected officials; key leaders of public, business, civic and philanthropic organizations; public and private health providers, organizations and institutions; parents, caregivers and parent-serving organizations; service providers; program operators; and funders.
- Identifying the tables, venues and forums for conversation, ongoing joint planning, tracking progress/making improvements and collective action.
- New and re-directed public, private and philanthropic dollars as well as dedicated citizen service and volunteer contributions. As a reminder, to join the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, your community must have philanthropic support (this includes community foundations, family foundations, United Ways, etc.).



## PART FOUR: OVERVIEW OF THE CSAP DEVELOPMENT PROCESS (1 PAGE)

Please describe the process utilized to develop the CSAP. It would help to provide examples of special success, particular challenges and lessons learned.

## CSAP REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT

Before submitting your CSAP to CGLR, please take time to review it using the following items as guides. These represent key considerations that your coalition should use while developing your CSAP to strengthen its potential for generating the outcomes you envision. Please note that you do not need to provide written responses to the following as part of your CSAP.

### OUTCOMES

**How likely is it that this plan will work?**

### IMPACT

**How likely is it that this plan will work at scale?**

### SUSTAINABILITY

**How likely is it that this plan will work at scale within 5 years?**

### INNOVATION

**Does the plan propose:** (a) One or more “out-of-the-box” but replicable solutions?  
(b) Especially energizing ideas, new formulations or more compelling re-framing?

(c) Creative ways to align and/or integrate different programs and interventions? (d) New approaches to braiding and blending resources and funding streams? (e) Promising models for deploying and using technology?

### CSAP Process Considerations

**Cross-Sector Collaboration** — How effective was the CSAP process at providing elected officials and other key leaders of public, business, civic and philanthropic organizations with a meaningful opportunity to share in the development of the plan and commit to its implementation?

**Stakeholder Engagement** — How effective was the CSAP process at providing parents and caregivers, service providers, program operators and funders with a meaningful opportunity to share in the development of the plan and commit to its implementation?

**Community Outreach and Involvement (with special attention to diversity and inclusion)** — How effective was the CSAP process at providing the community (including English language learners and hard-to-reach families) with a meaningful opportunity to learn about the process and have their views and voices heard on the framing of the problem and the solutions proposed?

### Ongoing Use of CSAP

A community’s CSAP is a living document that can and should change over time. As an anchor for the work, many communities find it helpful to review and revisit their CSAP regularly in steering committee, work group and overall coalition meetings. Over time, it can be helpful to assess whether you want to change, add or refine strategies. Similarly, you can use the CSAP to engage and re-engage partners you would like to have involved in the work of your community.