

Comprehensive Action Plan

Introduction:

The Pathways for Prosperity initiative emerged as a response to a 2015 Harvard University study ranking Fayetteville last among the country's 100 largest economic centers in earnings potential for children growing up in poverty. Convened by the City of Fayetteville, Pathways for Prosperity endeavors to improve economic prospects for all residents and to break the cycle of generational poverty by bringing together local government leaders, community based organizations and community members in a coordinated effort. In November of 2017, Pathways for Prosperity held a full day summit event, convening 250 local leaders and community members. Through the course of that event, the community chose five focus areas to drive the work going forward: Pre-Kindergarten Education, Quality K-12 Education, Life Skills, Affordable Housing, and Workforce-Industry Alignment. Over the past few months, workgroups empaneled around each of these focus areas have worked with agency leaders and community members to jointly develop a set of objectives and strategies to support measurable improvements in each area.

Communities of Focus:

In order to direct interventions and resources to areas of greatest need, the Pathways for Prosperity Core Leadership Team reviewed the most recent American Community Survey data. Based on that data, the team chose to focus on 11 communities comprised of 15 census tracts. The communities where poverty is most concentrated in Cumberland County include:

Old Wilmington Road / B Street Area – Census Tract 2
Massey Hill – Census Tract 5
Murchison Road – Census Tract 10
Murchison Road – Census Tract 11
Ramsey Street – Country Club Drive – Census Tract 12
Cedar Creek Road—Census Tract 14
Bonnie Doone – Census Tract 22
Bonnie Doone – Census Tract 23
Shaw Heights / University Estates – Census Tract 24.01
Shaw Heights / University Estates – Census Tract 24.02
SE Cumberland CO (unincorporated) – Census Tract 29
Bunce Road – Census Tract 33.02
Spring Lake – Census Tract 35
Spring Lake – Census Tract 36
Downtown Fayetteville – Census Tract 38

Key Objectives:

The objectives below are designed to build on assets and programs that already exist in the community and to create synergy between systems that sometimes operate in silos. For each objective, a lead agency is established and supportive strategies are listed. Many of the objectives require additional data in order to establish final measures.

Pre-Kindergarten Education:

Objective 1: We will increase pre-school attendance rates for four-year-olds in our 11 focus communities by 10 percentage points (from X to Y) within three years.

Lead Agency: Partnership for Children of Cumberland County

Strategies:

- Establish a baseline - it is currently estimated that 13% of children have chronic absences and approximately one out of eight students misses 15+ days of school.
- Educate childcare providers and parents of the importance of attendance through a local campaign. Emulate the “Every minute counts” that K-12 does. Promote September as attendance month; leverage pending American Academy of Pediatrics policy statement.
- Institute an evidence-based kindergarten readiness and transition program for pre-school aged children in our 11 focus communities.
- Institute an evidence-based program to reward good attendance for children enrolled in pre-kindergarten classes in our 11 focus communities.
- Reduce the no-show rate for pediatric well-child visits for uninsured, underinsured, and Medicaid recipients ages 0-5 years served by health care providers located in our 11 focus communities by ten percent (from X to Y) within three years.
 - Launch a local campaign to educate parents of very young children of the importance of completing well-child visits
 - Engage private pediatric providers
 - Direct contact with target audience (texting and other digital media)
 - Advocate for a policy requiring annual physicals for pre-k enrollment

Objective 2: We will increase the number of available slots in high-quality childcare centers (4 and 5 star centers) in our 11 focus communities by X percent (from X to Y) within three years.

Lead Agency: Partnership for Children of Cumberland County

Strategies:

- Establish a plan to address childcare “deserts” in our 11 focus communities; begin by mapping the communities and assessing need.
- Increase the number of parents/primary caregivers who attend a child development/parenting/parent education workshop by X percent (from X to Y) within three years.
- Increase the provider capacity in our private centers by leveraging model demonstration sites that facilitate observation and mentoring.

- Increase provider quality through access to professional development (form relationships with local colleges and universities to assist).
- Advocate for improving the attractiveness of the early childcare and early childhood education professions with competitive compensation with a priority for educators in the 11 focus areas.

Quality K-12 Education:

Objective 1: We will double enrollment in job-based/job skill learning opportunities (from X to Y) for Cumberland County high school graduates (who, as students, were eligible for free or reduced price lunch) within our 11 focus communities within three years.

Lead Agency: Community-Agency Council (to be empaneled)

Strategies:

- Build an awareness campaign for parents and students through communication channels (social media, application development, community channels, local community TV channel, organizations that provide access to technology within the 11 focus communities).
- Collaborate with Workforce-Industry Alignment and Life Skills lead agencies.
- Develop a community-agency council (comprised of community members and Cumberland County Schools staff) for this objective.

Objective 2: We will reduce suspensions for Cumberland County students in grades K-12 within our 11 focus neighborhoods by 15 percentage points (from X to Y) over three years.

Lead Agency: Community-Agency Council (to be empaneled)

Strategies:

- Implement evidence based practices to reduce suspension; focus on repeat offenders.
- Review alternatives to suspension listed in Duke University publication: https://law.duke.edu/childedlaw/schooldiscipline/downloads/instead_of_suspension.pdf
- Consider: alternative schools (with community service and job-based learning within the alternative schools), substance abuse interventions, community partnerships, community service programs, restorative justice, reviewing school district policies to reduce use of suspension as a discipline.
- Develop a community-agency council (comprised of community members and Cumberland County Schools staff) to support this objective.

Life Skills:

Objective 1: We will increase parental resilience by connecting 500 families (of children enrolled in pre-school and elementary schools in our 11 focus communities) to community resources within three years.

Lead Agency: Communities in Schools

Strategies:

- Leverage the Communities in Schools model to engage parents of children in preschool and elementary school (expand Walker-Spivey Elementary School model across 11 focus communities).
- Coordinate and deliver annual resource fairs in schools located in our 11 focus communities (include resources/local expertise on: job training, access to health care, social services, housing, financial literacy, parenting resources (e.g., Triple P) and community programs).

Objective 2: We will recruit and mentor 10% of parent participants to pursue leadership development opportunities in order to serve as mentors themselves.

Lead Agency: Communities in Schools

Strategies:

- Coordinate leadership development workshops for first year parent participants of the Communities in Schools model to train and empower five prospective parents for mentorship in each of the 11 focus communities.
 - By mid-year, provide one to one mentorship; reward with certificate of leadership
 - By end of year, host community leaders celebration

Affordable Housing:

Objective 1: We will increase the inventory of safe, affordable housing available to households earning at or below 50% of Annual Median Income (AMI) who are severely cost burdened (paying more than 50% of their income in rent/housing (currently 9,110 households in Fayetteville) in our 11 focus communities within three years.

Lead Agency: TBD

Strategies:

- Establish a dedicated revenue source to support a Housing Trust Fund for construction and rehabilitation.

Objective 2: We will build capacity for community members living in the 11 focus areas to engage in local housing policy development and resource allocation decisions (currently 9,110 households in Fayetteville) within three years.

Lead Agency: TBD

Strategies:

- Engage community members from the 11 focus communities to participate in Community Development Block Grant spending decisions.
- Complete a review of expiring rent restraints in Cumberland County.
- Complete a study to understand why clients/customers are not being approved for or denied housing opportunities.
- Establish a homeless services committee to align organizations (such as the Continuum of Care) in supporting and advocating for homeless individuals in the 11 focus communities.
- Coordinate with Communities in Schools in building a curriculum for parent education/life skills training that includes a housing resource component.

Workforce-Industry Alignment:

Objective 1: We will improve alignment and coordination between regional industry demand/opportunity and education/training resources available to individuals living in our 11 focus communities.

Lead Agency: Cumberland County Workforce Development Board/K-12 Community-Agency Committee

Strategies:

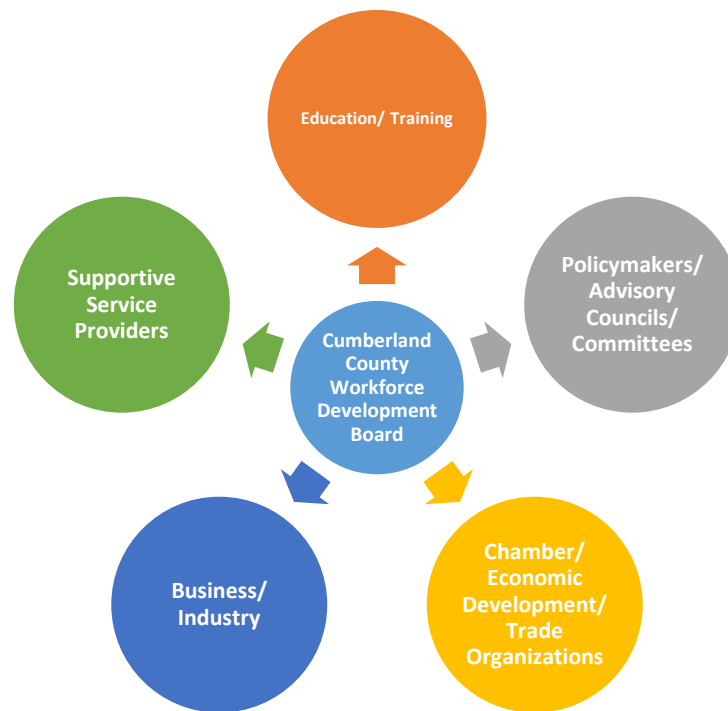
- Build an effective partnership/network among 11 focus community anchor institutions, Cumberland County Workforce Development Board, high schools serving our 11 focus communities, and local employers to drive candidate identification and recruitment for job training and placement.
 - Establish a forum for lead agencies named in this plan to meet semiannually with stakeholders in the workforce development space
- Based on a review of promising industry sectors, increase the number of certified NC Works career pathways from two to five within three years.
- Explore the merits of instituting a first source hiring program in Cumberland County; align with Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) utilization and employment.
- Launch a HUB certification campaign for businesses operating in our 11 focus communities.

Objective 2: We will increase capacity for the local education and training system to serve individuals living in our 11 focus communities.

Lead Agency: Cumberland County Workforce Development Board/K-12 Community-Agency Committee

Strategies:

- Increase completion rates for training programs that lead to employment for individuals living in our 11 focus communities (from X to Y).
- Develop a process for entrepreneurship training with a focus on transitioning veterans, family owned businesses, and young adults.
- Explore programs to support remote workers in partnership with the Cumberland County library system.



Next Steps:

The next phase of planning will require identification of revenue sources (e.g., foundation grants, federal grants, local government financing) as well as appropriate fiscal agents. The Pathways for Prosperity Core Leadership Team will work with lead agencies to support grant applications and program/operational expansion. In tandem, the initiative will begin establishing neighborhood revitalization teams in each of the 11 communities of focus. These teams will be responsible for building networks in their communities and implementing the plan at the local level. They will also serve as a bridge to lead agencies and the leadership team.