

“How a Community Coalition Mobilized for Early Learning Success”

April 11, 2023

@readingby3rd #GLReading #LearningTuesdays



CRUCIBLE
OF PRACTICE

Reflections on Lessons Learned

The Campaign for
GRADE-LEVEL
READING

Presenters



Bill Hammack
Partner
Link Restaurant Group



Ron McClain
Executive Director, Institute of
Mental Hygiene

Chair, Public Policy Committee,
United Way of Southeast
Louisiana



Jillian Delos Reyes
Director of Education and
Youth Initiatives

United Way of Southeast
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Morgan Shannon
Director of Strategic Partnerships

Power Coalition for Equity and
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Hamilton Simons-Jones
Founder and Principal

ResourceFull Consulting



Rochelle Wilcox
Owner and Director,
Wilcox Academy of Early Learning

Co-Founder,
For Providers by Providers



Michael Williamson
President and CEO

United Way of Southeast
Louisiana



**NEW ORLEANS
CAMPAIGN FOR
GRADE-LEVEL
READING**

A United Way of Southeast Louisiana Initiative

UNITED WAY BLUEPRINT

GOAL: We want to eradicate poverty in Southeast Louisiana.

VISION: Equitable communities where all individuals are healthy, educated and economically stable.

COLLECTIVE IMPACT

To propel our bold new vision, United Way of Southeast Louisiana will

42% of people are living with financial hardships

28% of children are living below the poverty line and are not having their basic needs met

23% of households are living paycheck to paycheck, are unable to save and are often one emergency from poverty

15% of households are living without quality health care insurance

7,000 violent crimes are being committed every year in Southeast Louisiana

IDENTIFYING THE ISSUES
In our Southeast Louisiana region



OUR APPROACH
How we work



OUTCOMES

Bringing the vision to life

INVEST
in programs and collaborations focused on poverty

INSPIRE
others to adopt our vision



INFORM
others with data and innovative practices so they can accelerate their own impact

INITIATE
new collaborations where they are needed most

We are **aligning grants** with programs while supporting existing collaborations that will help alleviate poverty in our community.

We are **laser focusing our public policy work** on poverty while creating a business coalition and educating donors on the importance of tackling the root causes.

We are identifying and bringing **innovative programming** and funding solutions to Southeast Louisiana.

We are creating a new collaborative effort in our financial stability and early education initiatives, that takes a holistic approach consistent with our new guiding principles and our vision.

United Way fights for the health, education and financial stability of every person in every community. We win by living united, by forging unlikely partnerships, by finding new solutions to old problems, by mobilizing the best resources and inspiring individuals to join the fight against each community's most daunting social crises.



Stability Today
All families have the skills, resources and opportunities to access basic needs



Prosperity Tomorrow
All families have the social, educational and financial assets to create a better future



Personal Wellness
People of all ages enjoy a high quality of life and wellbeing



Vibrant Communities
All communities are safe, thriving and equitable.

The Blueprint for Prosperity is a plan to move people out of poverty in our region and requires a change in the way our entire community approaches the issue, creating pathways for prosperity for generations to come.

Our Blueprint is driving our investments in the community to programs and collaborations that provide long-term solutions focused on ending poverty; we are inspiring others to adopt our vision; informing others with data and innovative practices so they can accelerate their own impact, and initiating new collaborations where there are gaps.

United Way of
Southeast Louisiana

United
Way



New Orleans Campaign Overview

Challenge: Only 34% of New Orleans third graders are reading on grade level.

Vision: All students in New Orleans read at grade-level by the end of 3rd grade.



The New Orleans Campaign for Grade-Level Reading is a collaboration of leaders from government, business, education, families, and the non-profit sector who have committed to working together for the next decade to increase the number of New Orleans students reading on grade level by the end of 3rd grade.

TIMELINE

New Orleans voters pass a ballot measure with 61% of the vote that will dedicate approximately \$21 million in property tax revenue annually to fund early childhood seats, teacher retention, and wrap around supports for families.



Why Invest in Early Child Care & Education?

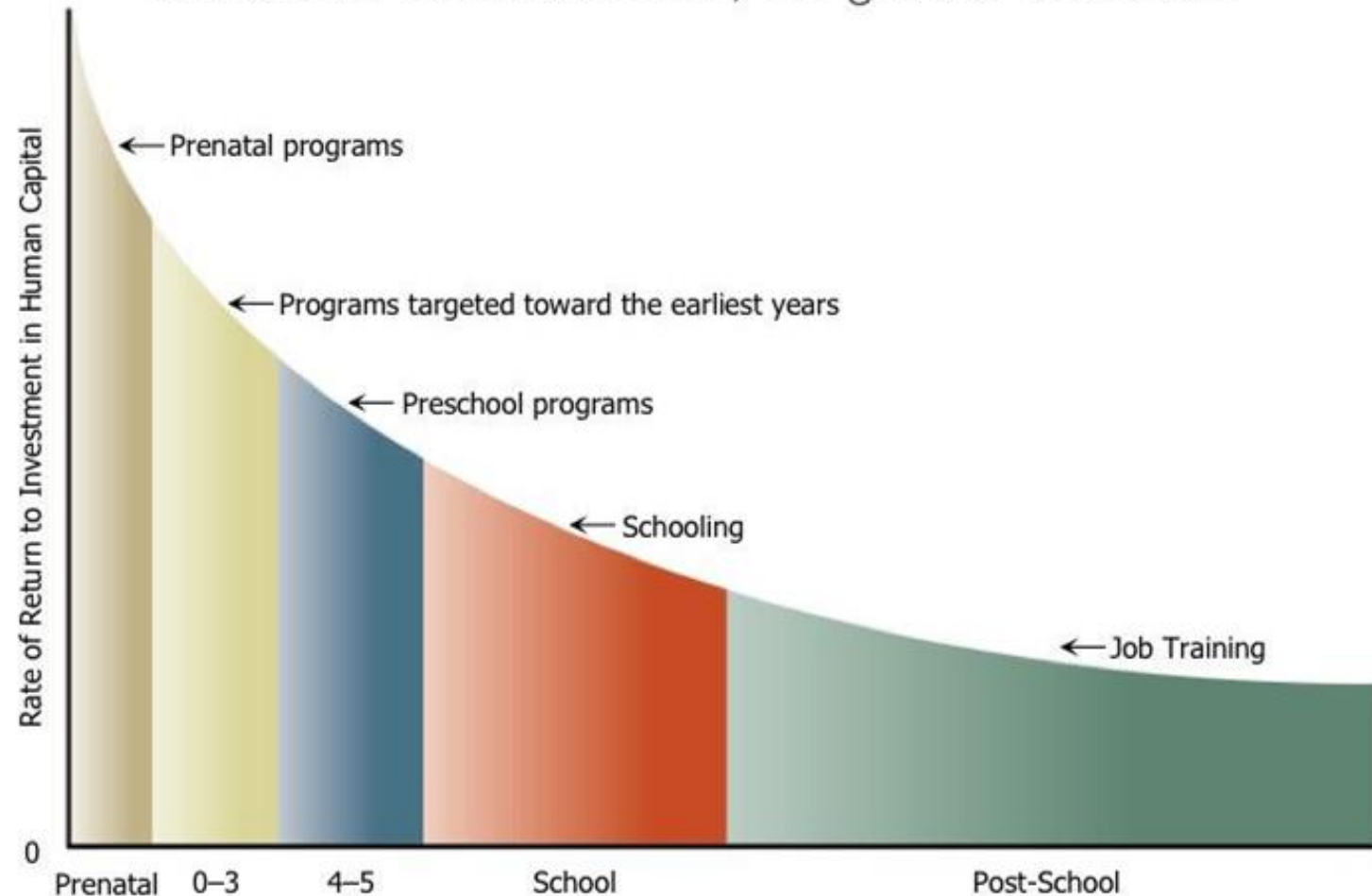
“Investing in the care and education of young children is the most efficient use of public resources.”

- James Heckman -- Nobel Laureate in Economics



EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT IS A **SMART INVESTMENT**

The earlier the investment, the greater the return



Source: James Heckman, Nobel Laureate in Economics

A Critical Time for our Kids

Providing funding for quality early childhood education should be a priority. **90% of brain development occurs before a child reaches kindergarten.**

Early experiences affect the quality of brain architecture.

The brain is like the foundation of a house – if it is not built right the first time, it is difficult and expensive to fix later.

Kids either establish a sturdy OR fragile foundation.

All learning, health and behavior outcomes are impacted by that foundation.



Those outcomes impact all of us

Research consistently shows that children who participate in high-quality early care and education programs are less likely to:

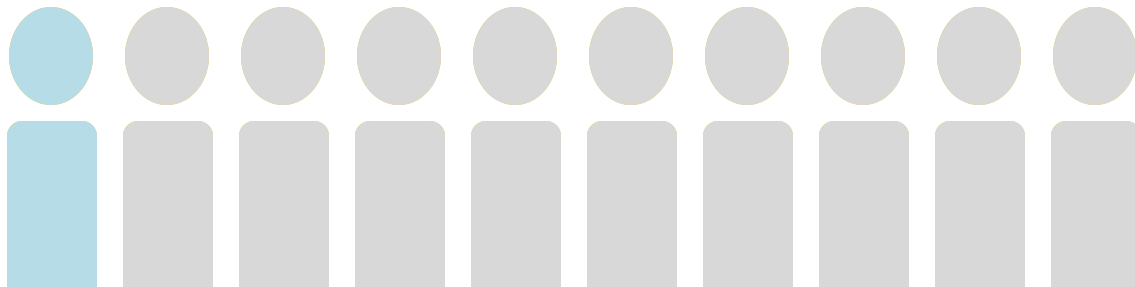
- ✓ Require special education services
- ✓ Be retained a grade in school
- ✓ Drop out before high school graduation
- ✓ Develop a chronic disease in adulthood
- ✓ Be engaged in the criminal justice system

Investing in ECE makes economic sense and helps our kids reach their full potential



New Orleans Can't Meet Demand

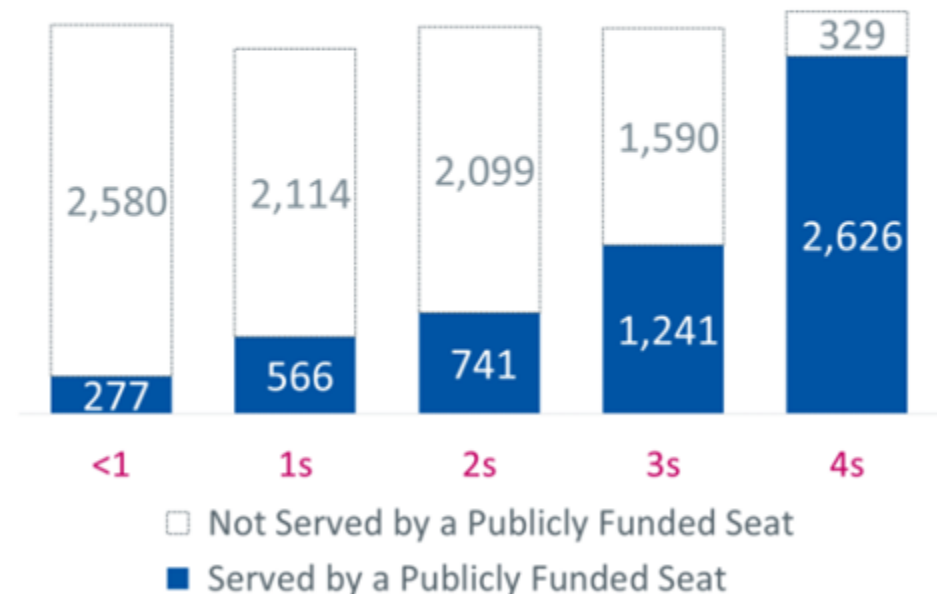
In Fall 2021, there were 10,641 economically disadvantaged children age birth to three living in New Orleans. Of that number, 8,383 lacked access to a publicly funded early childhood education programs.



Only 1 in 10 low-income **infants** had access to a publicly-funded early childhood seat.



Economically Disadvantaged Children's Access to Publicly Funded ECE in New Orleans (Fall 2021)



Source: Agenda for Children's Analysis of data collected through the Oct. 1, 2021 Child Count and data provided by the LA Dept. of Education

New Orleanians can't afford childcare

Income spent on infant care by a family of 3 living at the poverty line

\$9,360

median cost of infant care in Type III center

=

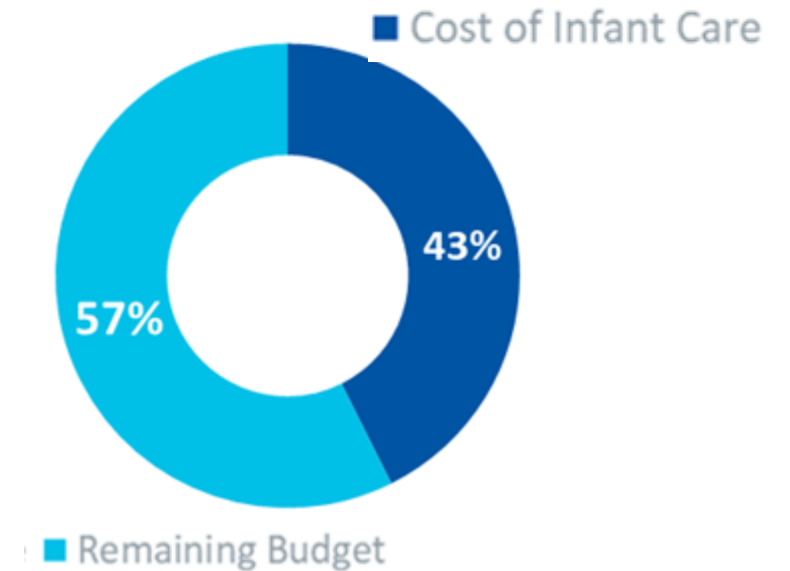
Public University Semester Fees:

University of New Orleans: \$4,677

Southern: \$6,630

LSU: \$5,980

Southeastern: \$5,315.



This Millage will make a difference

Will allow up to 2,000 children to be served (1,000 from the millage + 1,000 from state match), up from just 50 children served in 2018.

70%

of the funding will go towards:

- 1,000 **high-quality seats** with wrap around supports

30%

of the funding will go towards :

- **Center expansion and startup grants**
- **Family outreach and enrollment coordination, executed by NOLA-PS** to help create more classrooms and spaces for high-quality seats for children
- **Teacher training and professional development** to help ensure we have the high-quality teachers we need
- **Staffing, program evaluation and oversight**

The EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

proposition language reads:

“Shall the City of New Orleans be authorized to enhance early childhood development and education in New Orleans through the levy of a special tax of 5 mills on all taxable property within Orleans Parish for a period of twenty years (January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2042), with all tax proceeds dedicated exclusively to programs and capital investments that provide childcare and educational opportunities for Orleans Parish children who have not yet entered kindergarten, and with an estimated collection during the initial year of \$21,274,959 if the foregoing special tax is levied in full?”

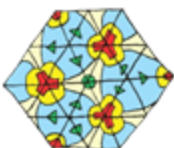


An increasing percentage of the funds will be invested in seats over time as capacity is built.

Partners



United Way of Southeast Louisiana



The Critical Role of Early Learning Providers



FOR PROVIDERS BY PROVIDERS



ADVOCACY TIMELINE

- 2012** Louisiana passed Act 3
- 2015** Provider joins Agenda for Children Board as a Member
- 2015** Provider joins Agenda for Children Steering Committee
- 2016** First provider joins Grade Level Reading Steering Committee
- 2018** Provider joins the Orleans Parish School Board Workgroup to find permanent funding sources for ECE
- 2019** New Orleans received \$750,000 to fund City Seats. Only 50 children were served.
- 2020** City Seats funding increased to \$1.5 Million. For Providers By Providers was established. 4PXP began supporting providers using group text threads with only 9 providers and grew into Let's Talk Advocacy Calls. We made our first attempt at getting millage passed to permanently fund ECE.
- 2021** City Seats funding increased to \$3 Million
- 2022** Another provider joins Agenda for Children Steering Committee. We helped to push true cost of care recommendations to NOEEN which resulted in CCAP expansions and rate increases, engaged over 200 early learning providers in policy efforts toward the ECE Millage win to increase available City Seats for providers and improve family access to quality childcare, and supported the approval of ECE teacher occupations now recognized as in-demand occupations.

MILLAGE DATA

- January 2022** Volunteers dedicated over 100 hours to the Getting Registered to Vote Drive
- February 2022** Volunteers dedicated over 400 hours to the Advocacy Phone Bank
- April 2022** Volunteers dedicated over 800 hours to the Voting Phone Bank
- April 2022** Volunteers dedicated over 300 hours to the Early Voting Meal Drive



Our Team



Kristi Givens
4PXP Co-Founder
Kids of Excellence,
Owner



Rochelle Wilcox
4PXP Co-Founder
Wilcox's Academy Early
Learning Center, Owner

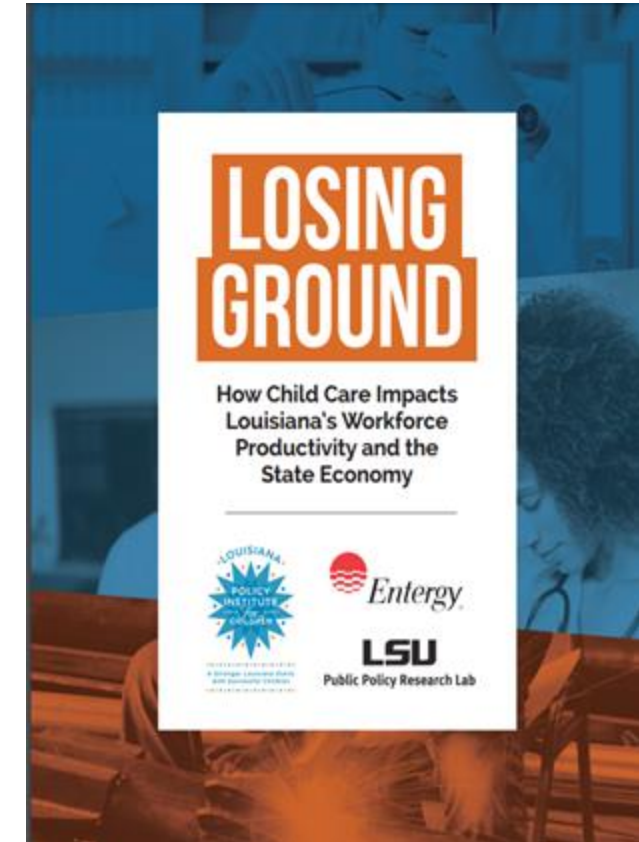


Laneir Landry
4PXP Executive



Engagement of Business Leaders and Media

- For parents with children age 4 and under, childcare issues resulted in **more than 16% quitting their jobs**, nearly **14% turning down a promotion**, and **18% going from full time to part time**.
- Of those parents surveyed, almost 50% have **missed work regularly due to childcare issues over the last 90 days**.
- **71% of young children in New Orleans have all available parents in the workforce**, making reliable childcare critical to our economy. *(Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2015-2019.)*
- The bottom line: Childcare issues **cost Louisiana employers \$762 million per year** due to absences and turnover. The total impact on the Louisiana economy is **a loss of more than \$1.3 billion**.





YES
FOR NOLA KIDS

Ensuring Accountability & Results

- This program is administered by the New Orleans Early Education Network.
- Builds on **proven New Orleans City Seats program** that is modeled after Early Head Start and includes an independent annual evaluation.
- Operates under a **Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA)** between the City of New Orleans and the two co-lead agencies for the state-recognized New Orleans Early Education Network (NOEEN), approved by the City Council.
- Requires monthly **reporting** on use of funds and progress toward achieving benchmarks as well as quarterly reports and presentations to the City Council.
- Annual plans and partners are also approved by the **NOEEN Steering Committee**, which is made up of local early childhood experts and stakeholders and **complies with all public meeting laws.**

BGR Supports this Proposition



BGR POSITION

FOR. The tax would provide a stable revenue stream for significantly expanding City Seats, a well-designed early childhood education program established with City funding that serves economically disadvantaged New Orleans children ages 0 to 3. While substantial costs and limited public funding make access to early childhood education particularly challenging for this group, national research finds that providing high-quality early learning programs to low-income children can generate strong returns by increasing incomes, reducing crime and improving health. City Seats incorporates several practices that research links to improved social development, school readiness and later-life outcomes. Although during much of City Seats' four-year existence pandemic factors have limited the reliability of the nationally recognized assessments the program uses to measure early learning center and child performance, City Seats centers showed some early positive results. The program's age and income requirements also ensure that the tax revenue is eligible for a 100% match from the State of Louisiana, which could double the tax's impact and allow City Seats to serve at least 2,000 children annually – five times the current number. The spending plan for the tax revenue also includes critical funding to increase the capacity and quality of New Orleans' early childhood education sector so it can meet the projected citywide need.

The City and New Orleans' lead agencies for early childhood education have approved an agreement that would govern the tax revenue and direct it to various initiatives designed to grow City Seats, increase the capacity and quality of local early learning centers and improve the enrollment system for publicly funded programs. The agreement includes financial and programmatic reporting requirements that are essential for strong accountability. Its requirement for an annual external evaluation of program performance further supports effective use of the tax revenue. If properly fulfilled – and extended beyond the agreement's five-year term – these requirements should provide the City Council with the information necessary to evaluate the revenue needs of the tax-funded initiatives during the tax's 20-year duration.

Local Media Supports this Proposition

WWW.BESTOFNEWORLEANS.COM
gambit

“In New Orleans, we support the proposed 5-mill property tax for enhanced early childhood education programs. If approved by voters, the tax would generate about \$21 million a year and would significantly increase access to vital early childhood programs across the city...”



The Times-Picayune

“The Times-Picayune makes the following recommendations:

Orleans Parish Early Childhood Millage: Yes

There can be no debate over the value of investing in early childhood education. Research shows it helps kids thrive in school, prepare to enter the workforce and avoid bad outcomes in adulthood, from disease to poverty to involvement in crime. It also enables their parents to fully participate in the economy.”

Mobilizing Voters



We Did It!

The New Orleans Early Childhood Proposition passed on Saturday! **Thank you for saying YES for NOLA Kids!**

YES
FOR NOLA KIDS




PowerCoalition.org

New Orleans, here's how far \$5.20 a month can go...

\$5.20 a month can increase access to HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

- ➔ More than 6,500 children, birth to age three, in New Orleans **do not have access to early care and education** their families can afford.
- ➔ Providing funding for quality early childhood education should be a priority for us all as **90% of brain development occurs**




Let's put New Orleans on the map by focusing funding on the future of the city.

Vote Yes!
On the Early Childhood Education Proposition

EARLY VOTING: April 16-23
(Excluding Sunday, April 17)

ELECTION DAY: April 30



YesforNOLAKids.com PowerCoalition.org/Vote

Mobilizing Voters

New Orleans, here's how far
\$5.20 a month can go...

\$5.20 a month can HELP PARENTS GET BACK TO WORK

- ➔ For parents with children ages 4 and under, childcare issues resulted in more than 16% quitting their jobs, nearly 14% turning down a promotion, and 18% going from full time to part time.
- ➔ **Almost 50% of parents have missed work regularly due to childcare issues in the last three months.**
- ➔ Nearly half of working parents have changed employment, reduced working hours or have quit because of childcare needs.
- ➔ 71% of young children in New Orleans have all available parents in the workforce, **making reliable childcare critical to our economy.** (Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2015-2019.)
- ➔ **Childcare issues cost Louisiana employers \$762 million** per year due to absences and turnover and resulted in a loss of more than \$1.3 billion for the state's economy.

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on the map by
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Key Takeaways

1

Build a broad coalition. Grow your base by drawing from the people who truly appreciate the importance of quality early education.

2

Root your case for action with solid data (both quantifiable and qualitative).

3

Lay the groundwork! Building community trust takes time and effort and is essential to reach your goals.

4

Engage a cadre of diverse stakeholders that have the ability to access various levers of power in your community (*nonprofit partners and advocates, early learning operators, parents and caregivers, K-12 teachers, for-profit businesses, local and state government actors, media*)

Key Takeaways

5 Tailor messaging that speaks to the distinct values of your different stakeholder groups.

6 Educate yourself on policy and procedures for your municipality and enlist support of experts for guidance. People want to help!

7 Know your opposition and why they stand opposed.

8 Never give up! Failure may be a step on the path to success. The loss in 2020 provided important campaigning experience and taught the coalition many valuable lessons that would be critical to achieving even greater success in 2022.

Q/A



**NEW ORLEANS
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GRADE-LEVEL
READING**

A United Way of Southeast Louisiana Initiative

Upcoming GLR Learning Tuesdays Webinars:

LEARNING LOSS RECOVERY CHALLENGE

“Beyond the ESSER ‘Funding Cliff’; Local Supports to Sustain High-Impact Tutoring”

Tuesday, April 11, 3:00–4:30 p.m. ET/12:00–1:30 p.m. PT

FUNDER TO FUNDER

“Investing in Kindergarten as a ‘Sturdy Bridge’: Philanthropic Opportunities”

Tuesday, April 18, 12:30–2:00 p.m. ET/9:30–11:00 a.m. PT

LEARNING LOSS RECOVERY CHALLENGE

“Building a Parent-Centered Ecosystem for Out-of-School Learning”

Tuesday, April 18, 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. ET/12:00-1:30 p.m. PT

LEARNING LOSS RECOVERY CHALLENGE

“Community Engagement Initiative: A Framework for Sustainable, Systemic Change”

Tuesday, April 25, 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. ET/12:00-1:30 p.m. PT

