Our Process

Over 150 ECAP participants, including parents, early childhood providers, and system leaders
More than 1,000 parents, caregivers, and guardians who shared their ideas
More than 50 early childhood educators and child care directors
More than 250 hours of cross-agency and community conversation on Zoom
13 conversations with early childhood-focused committees and taskforces
21 recommendations
58 strategies

In 2019, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services released North Carolina’s Early Childhood Action Plan (ECAP). The plan sets forth a bold vision for North Carolina’s children, focused on making steady progress towards achieving ambitious goals relating to children’s health and development, safety and well-being, and learning.

Governor Cooper visited Durham after the release of the statewide ECAP and Durham stakeholders expressed interest in being the first County to bring together our early childhood community to identify our own strategies to meet the goals of the NC ECAP.

The Durham Children’s Initiative (DCI) and Durham County launched a public-private partnership at the beginning of 2020, with funding and support from the county and facilitation, project management, partner coordination, and additional funding from DCI. While the decision to create a Durham plan was made by a small number of local leaders, along the way we have been working to engage parents, large institutions, and everyone in between—seeking to bring together our whole early childhood system to envision a better future for Durham’s young children.

The collaborative process has been made stronger by engaging community members with a diverse set of perspectives, experiences and expertise to work together on this plan. Parents and caregivers of young children, “community rooted” organizations and leaders, direct service providers like teachers and doulas, nonprofit leadership, and staff from local

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1 “Formal and informal groups that are owned, run, and operated by the people that live and work within their own communities. These organizations are not only run by the most impacted within the community context but they are directly accountable to their neighbors and members. They can operate as a non-profit, for-profit, faith community or other organized formal or informal community group. The main identifier is that the board, staff, and mission and vision were created and owned by those living within the community they are focusing their work or have been directly impacted by the area or context in which they serve.” (Source: Camryn Smith, edited by Niasha Frey, MPH, via the Durham Racial Equity Taskforce Report)
government, universities and institutions. Together, they have learned from existing collaboration in our community and have tried to deeply understand our local context and data, while exploring solutions from other communities, and lifting up the places where action and investment are needed.

The vision for this plan is to implement it as a “collective impact model” funded by weaving together public, private, and philanthropic resources. Collective impact approaches are structured to leverage the work of many partners toward common goals, with partners being willing to work differently in order to better achieve the desired impact. There are many strategies in this plan and many different potential implementation partners identified. There will need to be additional planning with willing implementation partners to identify funding sources, build out more detailed implementation plans, support the work, measure outcomes, and make improvements where needed. A representative steering committee is being launched to provide leadership and accountability to the implementation of the plan.

As we move from planning to implementation, we are taking time to reflect on the strengths and challenges of the planning process. As we have iterated and evolved this planning process over the course of more than a year, the single most important lesson learned for our planning team is that the people experiencing the problems must be at the center of the conversations and decisions about how to address those problems. While the planning process did not begin with this value in mind, the resulting plan is more focused on root causes and lifts up more and different potential partners and approaches because of our work as an ECAP community to do that. We are especially grateful to the parents and representatives of community-rooted organizations who advised us and held us accountable. We did not always get it right and there is more to do to make work related to the ECAP more accessible, especially as we form and facilitate the ECAP steering committee. Continued accountability related to how strategies are prioritized and funded will be critical to leveraging this plan to lift up and fund the solutions that have been proposed by the people most impacted. For more reflection on challenges and lessons learned, the “limitations” section later in this document provides a more thorough summary.
Grown in Durham: Durham County’s Early Childhood Action Plan (ECAP)
[Document Revised: September 2021]

Figure 1: Durham Early Childhood Action Plan Framework

Public-Private Partnership
- Funding and Countywide Support

Collaboration Across Durham
- Community members with a diverse set of perspectives, experiences, and expertise working together to create a plan.
- Parents and caregivers of young children
- "Community-rooted" organizations and leaders
- Nonprofit leadership and frontline staff
- Local government, universities, and other institutions

Collective Impact
- Braided funding strategy (public and philanthropic resources) to support the implementation.
- Collective implementation of the recommended strategies.

Leveraging and learning from the existing collaboration in our community—many cross-sector taskforces and committees.

Together, deeply understanding our local context, exploring solutions from other communities, and lifting up the places where action and investment are needed.

Figure 2: Durham Early Childhood Action Planning Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JAN</td>
<td>FEB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. ESTABLISH
2. PREPARE
3. DISCOVER
4. DESCRIBE
5. IDEATE
6. ITERATE
7. WRITE + REVIEW
8. PREPARE TO IMPLEMENT
Figure 3: Durham Early Childhood Action Planning Process

1. ESTABLISH
   - North Carolina created the Early Childhood Action Plan (ECAP).
   - Durham County and Durham Children’s Initiative partnered together to create the first County-level ECAP.

2. PREPARE
   - Hired planning team (DCI ECAP Project Manager and Durham County Early Childhood Coordinator).
   - Built relationships with early childhood and community leaders and prepared to launch the planning process.

3. DISCOVER
   - 100+ people came together into 4 ECAP Workgroups.
   - Listened to the wisdom of parents and communities about their experiences raising and supporting young children in Durham.
   - Examined local and comparative data for each of the NC ECAP targets and sub-targets.
   - Mapped all of the early childhood services and resources in Durham.

4. DESCRIBE
   - Identified our 12 goal areas, targets, and sub-targets to focus on in the Durham ECAP.
   - Documented the strengths and challenges of our early childhood system to meet the ECAP goals, targets, and sub-targets and our progress towards those targets.

5. IDEATE
   - Prioritized 200+ strategies identified by 1) 1,000+ Durham parents, guardians, and caregivers, 2) workgroup participants, and 3) existing local, state, and national reports.
   - Reorganized 80+ highest priority strategies into 21 Durham ECAP recommendations.

6. ITERATE
   - 21 small Action Planning Teams worked together to review ideas from parents, research and data to prioritize ~3 strategies to bring each recommendation to life.
   - Shared their proposed strategies with ECAP Reviewers, parents and community members, direct service providers, and other experts to revise their action plans.

7. WRITE + REVIEW
   - Wrote the Durham Early Childhood Action Plan and reviewed with many stakeholders.

8. PREPARE TO IMPLEMENT
   - Launching an ongoing collective decision-making structure.
   - Prioritizing strategies for implementation and raising funds.
   - Setting up long-term staffing, communication and collaboration structures.
1) Establish
After conversations with Governor Cooper’s office about the benefits of having local communities develop action plans that were inspired by the state ECAP and informed by their local context, the County established a contract in January 2020 with the Durham Children’s Initiative to lead an ECAP planning process.

2) Prepare

**Launching the ECAP Planning Team**
Initial activities included assembling the Governing Body and then identifying co-chairs for the four ECAP workgroups.

DCI hired a project manager to facilitate and support the ECAP planning process. The County also invested in an Early Childhood Coordinator, a portion of whose responsibility was to oversee the ECAP work.

3) Discover

**Launching the ECAP Workgroups**
In partnership with the Governing Body and the co-chairs, the ECAP Support Team created a list of organizations, community groups, and taskforces to invite to participate in the ECAP workgroups. These identified partners reviewed a description of the workgroups, the anticipated commitment, and signed up for a workgroup.

In addition to organizational members of workgroups, the ECAP Support Team reviewed the ECAP goal areas and the lived experience which would be essential to understanding the challenges to meeting each goal in Durham and to creating recommendations and action plans to address those challenges. For example, in order to understand what is needed to reduce the racial disparity in infant mortality in Durham (NC ECAP Goal 1: “Healthy Babies”), it is essential to build relationships and reach out to community members in Durham who had recently given birth. We identified community organizations who have trusted relationships (in this case, H.E.A.R.T.S., MAAME, and other doula organizations) to invite more people to participate. We found that the virtual setting made it easier for some community members to participate, especially those with caregiving responsibilities. That said, there were barriers to community participation that are critical to name, including time of day, meeting pacing and content, and language. Lack of trust between communities and institutions also likely created barriers—some communities may not have been willing to engage because of the historical and ongoing exploitation, tokenism, and exclusion that happens when institutions are engaged in planning.
Grown in Durham: Durham County’s Early Childhood Action Plan (ECAP)
[Document Revised: September 2021]

processes. While some workgroups had strong parent and community representation, others did not. Please see the “limitations” section later in this document for more information.

Learning from and Listening to the Wisdom of Parents
The parents, guardians, and caregivers who are birthing, raising and supporting babies, toddlers, and young children in Durham deeply understand the challenges and strengths of our early childhood system and they have ideas and solutions that need attention and investment.

With the support and guidance of community leaders participating in the ECAP, we heard from over 1,000 parents and community members across Durham through focus groups, listening sessions and survey responses.

  a) Parent Survey:

While the ECAP planning team knew that a survey was not likely to give us a representative picture of parent experiences in Durham, we still decided to use it as a way to hear from a large number of parents. A parent survey was circulated through partner organizations including the Durham Housing Authority, the Department of Social Services, Durham Public Schools, Child Care Services Association, and many more child- and family-serving agencies, community-based organizations, and parent groups. The digital survey was also shared through handouts at basic needs distributions across Durham. The survey included questions about parent experience with services across early childhood sectors, concerns and hopes for their children, and ideas for how Durham can better support parents with young children. Almost 900 surveys were completed, and the data were analyzed and provided to work groups.

As we expected, the survey responses were not representative of Durham’s population. We realized that we needed to take a different approach in order to capture more representative feedback, especially from communities most largely impacted by early childhood disparities—and we knew we would need to rely on trusted community members to help implement these. We used other ways described below to ensure we heard directly from parents most likely to experience challenges and marginalization in our early childhood systems. For more information about the survey respondents, please see the “Limitations” section of this document. For more information about the survey results, please see the System Overview (documents 5-5c). While recognizing the limitations of this survey, the feedback that we have received from the survey, particularly from the open responses, was one useful component of our family engagement strategy, and helped us identify where more information was needed.
b) Focus Groups:

To provide a more accessible way for parents to make their voices heard and to prioritize the voices of parents whose children are most harmed by structural oppression, we reached out to trusted community leaders to help organize our first round of focus groups with populations who were underrepresented in the survey responses.

Three focus groups focused on gathering perspectives from Black parents and guardians in Durham (two with mothers and one with fathers), two focus groups heard from Spanish-speaking parents (two with mothers and one with fathers), a focus group with therapeutic foster parents, and a focus group for parents with concerns about potential or diagnosed developmental delays or other disabilities.

We also hoped to have a focus group with therapeutic foster parents and parents who had lived experience interacting with child protective services through the DSS Family Advisory Committee. That group did not have capacity to participate due to other projects, but remains willing to engage in future conversations.

Because many families are grappling with historical or ongoing harms caused by early childhood systems, the focus groups were intentionally designed and facilitated to create safe spaces that do not re-traumatize parents. Some of the ways we worked to create safe space included ensuring the focus groups were led by trusted community leaders during existing virtual parent meetings where possible, or new meetings where participants are recruited through community leaders and/or community-based organizations.

Understanding How Durham is Doing on the NC ECAP Goals

The NC ECAP identified targets and sub-targets to measure progress towards the goals. Many of the targets and sub-targets had a reliable, consistent statewide data source that can be disaggregated by county, race, ethnicity, or other demographics. Our first step was to review the NC ECAP’s [data report for Durham County](#) to see how we compare to the state and comparative counties.

The next step was to identify the measures for which the ECAP data sources are not available at the County level and, where possible, to find reliable, consistently collected local data sources. In some cases, we have relevant recent data (past 5 years) to report out on ECAP targets and sub-targets that can only be reported at the state-level using the ECAP data source, however our local data sources are not always consistently collected and would require funding to collect and report on that data in the future.
As strategies were prioritized based on workgroup conversations and parent and community findings, it was clear that some ECAP goals, targets, and sub-targets are more important to our Durham community than others. The recommendations and action plans focus more heavily on the goals, targets, and sub-targets where we lag behind significantly in outcomes or because these indicators track progress towards addressing root cause challenges.

4) Describe

Documenting Our Goals for Durham

As a first step, the workgroups revisited the 10 goals of the NC ECAP and asked ourselves if there were additional goals that were important to use as a community that we could measure and hold ourselves accountable to. Through these discussions, the “Safe and Secure Housing” and “Food Security” goals were moved into the “Basic Needs” section.

Additionally, two more goals emerged from conversations. The first is “Family Essential Supplies” to ensure families have access to essential supplies like diapers, formula, beds, and carseats. The second was a “wrap-around” goal, “Family Economic Security.” Many of the 10 goals in the NC ECAP included a sub-target to decrease the “percent of families living at or below 200% of the federal poverty level.” In Durham, we believe that meeting this cross-goal sub-target is essential to addressing all of the goal areas, and we wanted to make such a foundational issue had sufficient attention and focus by adding it as a goal area.

Describing the Existing Resources and Community- and Agency- Collaboration in Durham

With the support of interns, the ECAP Support Team documented the existing resources, supports, and services in Durham for young children and their families and communities in four system dashboards: Healthy, Basic Needs, Safe and Nurtured, and Learning and Ready to
**Succeed.** We continue to learn about informal, community-rooted individuals and programs which support efforts to address ECAP goal areas—these will continue to be added. We encourage people to see step 3 on the dashboards to add a relevant program, initiative, organization or effort.

*Note: These dashboards were created for the workgroups to use and are intended to be living dashboards that can be consistently updated and used by people working collaboratively across early childhood systems in Durham. These dashboards are not intended to be used by families searching for available resources in Durham, however there is another initiative which does serve that purpose. Durham’s Early Childhood Mental Health Taskforce has created Nurturing Durham, a digital resource guide for Durham’s young children, parents and families, which is being piloted.*

**Documenting the Strengths and Challenges of Durham’s Early Childhood System**
To inform planning, the ECAP Support Team created needs and assets assessments for each workgroup: Healthy, Basic Needs, Safe and Nurtured, and Learning and Ready to Succeed. Efforts described above, including the data reviews and the system dashboards, as well as other local reports with recommendations to improve early childhood systems, were included in these assessments. The workgroups then reviewed the available data, findings from community and parent outreach, and their own lived and professional experience to document the greatest strengths and challenges to meeting those ECAP goal areas. These greatest strengths and challenges are highlighted in the ECAP document 5) Early Childhood System Overview. The workgroups focused on the root causes behind the challenges we see in Durham, which in so many cases come back to forced poverty and systemic racism which result in inequitable access.

**5) Ideate**

**Brainstorming and Prioritizing Strategies to Meet the ECAP Goals**
The ECAP Support Team documented a long list of potential strategies that could move the needle on the ECAP targets and sub-targets locally. These strategies came from:

1) Durham parents and caregivers (through focus groups and survey respondents responding to the question, “What ideas do you have that would make Durham a better place for families with young children?”)

2) Ideas proposed by workgroup participants in discussion, on Jamboards during workgroup meetings, or in a survey that workgroup participants took in November 2020 before the December workgroup meeting.
3) Existing local, state, and national research (see Appendix B)

Using all of the findings from parent and community outreach, and personal and professional experience, the workgroups prioritized more than 200 strategies. The workgroup participants completed a survey before the December workgroup meeting to review all the potential strategies for their specific workgroup. The survey had the workgroup participants indicate whether they thought the strategy was high priority, medium priority, or low priority; high value, medium value, or low value; and high effort, medium effort, or low effort.

**Figure 5: Sample Results from the Learning & Ready to Succeed Recommendations Survey in December 2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Recommendation to Consider</th>
<th>% Who Responded &quot;Yes&quot; This Recommendation Should be Included</th>
<th>Weighted Prioritization*</th>
<th>Average Effort</th>
<th>Average Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve the rigor and responsiveness of birth through third grade teacher and administrator preparation programs, such as aligning best practices and curriculum across grade levels</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>MED</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>MED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise wages to attract, recruit and retain highly-qualified birth through third grade teachers, by efforts such as increasing base salaries and/or promoting wage supplement programs</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invest in professional development opportunities for early child care educators</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>MED-HIGH</td>
<td>MED-HIGH</td>
<td>MED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct further research to better understand workforce turnover of ECE staff</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>MED</td>
<td>MED</td>
<td>MED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a curriculum and require teaching staff to receive training to prepare them to understand the unique needs of children whose parents suffer from addiction and children who are homeless and/or who do not have consistent housing</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>MED</td>
<td>MED</td>
<td>MED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct further research to better understand the ECE workforce and its needs, particularly as we recover from the pandemic</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>MED</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>MED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support child care programs to help with health insurance costs for their employees</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>MED-HIGH</td>
<td>MED-HIGH</td>
<td>MED-HIGH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The weighted prioritization score takes into account both the percentage of respondents who indicated this recommendation should be included and the prioritization level.*

The ECAP Support Team analyzed this data from 85 respondents to assign a score to potential strategies based both on the number of people who said, “Yes - the Durham Early Childhood Action Plan should include the following strategy” and the priority-level (high, medium and low) that respondents then assigned those strategies. The strategies with the highest weighted scores were mapped by anticipated value and effort. During the December workgroup meetings, the workgroup participants reviewed the medium priority strategies and, through discussion and voting using a live collaborative tool (Google Jamboard), reassigned several as “high priority.”
Co-Creating 21 Durham ECAP Recommendations

The ECAP Support Team then compiled the 80 high priority strategies across all workgroups. In parallel, the Support Team reviewed all findings from parent outreach, and ensured that parent ideas were reflected in the 80 high priority strategies, adding strategies where needed. The ideas that came from the focus groups were weighted more heavily. The highest priority strategies identified by workgroups and by parent outreach were then grouped into 21 recommendations.

As you can see by reading through these 21 recommendations, we made a choice to capture all of the information heard through the process and to create a very comprehensive plan that reaches beyond what are traditionally considered early childhood issues. We believe this was the right thing to do because root cause issues like racism and poverty have particularly harmful and long-lasting effects on our youngest children. It will be challenging to tackle all of these recommendations and the ~3 strategies within each recommendation at one time. Therefore, there will need to be a strong, equitable process in place to make decisions about what gets prioritized. See the ECAP document 7) “Our Next Steps” to learn more about proposed next steps to prioritize the Durham ECAP recommendations and strategies.
**Grown in Durham: Durham County’s Early Childhood Action Plan (ECAP)**

[Document Revised: September 2021]

**Figure 7: 21 Durham ECAP Recommendations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address Institutional Racism as a Root Cause and Share Power with Parents and Communities</th>
<th>Ensure Early Childhood Professionals Across Sectors are Respected, Well-Compensated, Highly Trained and Reflect the Communities They Serve</th>
<th>Facilitate Data Sharing Between Agencies and with Communities to Better Understand Areas of Greatest Need, Track Progress, and Promote Transparency and Accountability</th>
<th>Increase Resource Awareness and Create an Easily Navigable Service System for Families with Young Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advocate for Workplaces that Understand and Support the Needs of Families with Young Children</td>
<td>Provide Reliable and Free or Low-Cost Transportation to Early Childhood Services</td>
<td>Ensure Early Childhood Services Are Accessible and Welcoming to Families Regardless of Immigration Status or English Language Proficiency</td>
<td>Expand Opportunities for Accessible, Inclusive, Safe and Family-Friendly Enrichment Activities and Public Spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure Families with Young Children Have Economic Security and Opportunities for Wealth-Building and Long-Term Economic Prosperity</td>
<td>Promote Access to Safe, Stable, Affordable, and Healthy Housing for Families with Young Children</td>
<td>Ensure Families with Young Children Have Access to Enough Affordable, Culturally-Relevant, Healthy Food Every Day</td>
<td>Ensure Families Have the Essential Family Supplies Needed to Support Pre- and Post-Partum Health and to Care for Babies and Young Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create and Implement Standards for Culturally-Affirming, Anti-Racist Maternal and Child Healthcare</td>
<td>Ensure Families Have Access to Convenient, Affordable, Preventive and Responsive Maternal and Child Healthcare</td>
<td>Ensure Birth – 3rd Grade Classrooms and Schools Are Trauma-Informed, Culturally Affirming, and Focused on Social-Emotional Health</td>
<td>Promote Preventive and Responsive Approaches to Foster Social-Emotional, Mental Health and Resilience of Young Children and Their Families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reimagine Child Protective Services to Become More Trauma-Informed, Anti-Racist, and Focused on Prevention</td>
<td>Invest in a Sustainable Child Care System to Provide Developmentally-Appropriate Early Learning Experiences that are Affordable and Accessible to All</td>
<td>Develop A Coordinated Transition Between Early Childhood Education and K-12 Education</td>
<td>Ensure Children with Developmental Delays or Disabilities Learn in Environments Where They Can Thrive and Their Families Have the Support They Need to Advocate and Care for Their Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Promote and Support Early Literacy for Young Children Starting at Birth in Partnership with Parents, Guardians and Caregivers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6) Iterate

Creating Action Planning Teams

Once we identified our 21 recommendations, our next step was to build out action plans for those recommendations, including prioritizing strategies to bring the 21 recommendations to life.

Through group discussion with the workgroups and feedback from parents and community members who had been participating in the ECAP process in the fall and winter, we chose to establish small action planning teams to further narrow down strategies and build out action plans for each recommendation. We recognized that the larger workgroup format would have made it more difficult to have the tactical, longer conversations necessary to build out action plans. We also recognized there were critical perspectives missing in the workgroups and wanted to center the perspectives of parents in coming up with these action plans. The workgroups created several barriers to participation including timing, format, and language of the meetings. Transitioning to smaller action planning teams would enable for participation in Spanish-speaking teams, flexible scheduling during times more suitable for parents and community members, and would share ownership of the action plans with communities most impacted. To live into our belief that those closest to the problem and closest to the solution meant needing to reevaluate the structure of the process itself and shift gears.

Figure 8: Changes in Representation from Workgroup Model to Action Planning Model

However, there were other challenges that this choice created, including logistical difficulties in supporting so many teams, some teams not feeling like they had what they needed to create fully fleshed-out action plans, teams feeling overwhelmed, and more. See the “Limitations”
section below for more information about the challenges throughout the ECAP planning process.

**Action Planning, Sharing, Revising...Repeat**

![Figure 9: Durham ECAP Action Planning Process](image)

Through a series of 3+ meetings in the small teams and 3 reviews with a larger group of people, the teams were tasked with reviewing the high priority strategies that came out of workgroups and parent and community outreach; narrowing down to ~3 strategies; and doing early implementation planning for those ~3 strategies.

To equip action planning teams with as much information and context as possible, pre-reads were provided to each team that included 1) relevant ongoing Durham efforts related to the recommendation; 2) potential strategies that were identified as high-priority by ECAP workgroups; 3) local Durham data relevant to the challenge the recommendation seeks to address, if available; and 4) key findings from family engagement efforts that are relevant to the recommendation. To provide some structure for the action planning teams’ meetings, templates were provided which included goals for the conversation, questions to explore, and notes to capture.

The review meetings brought together former workgroup participants, action planning team members from several other action planning teams and reviewers (a small team of former workgroup co-chairs and parents and community members) who provided additional insights, asked questions, and shared feedback to strengthen the strategies and action plans as they formed.
As action plans started to take form, the ECAP Support Team and, in some cases, representatives from the action planning teams brought those plans to existing community
meetings and taskforces and also scheduled stakeholder interviews and focus groups with parents, frontline providers, and community leaders. See Appendix C for a complete list of these listening sessions, focus groups, and stakeholder interviews.

We also posted the recommendations to a public website in English and Spanish to solicit feedback from the Durham community. This website was shared broadly via ECAP partners on social media, email, and through personal networks. People submitted feedback through a survey form in English and Spanish on the website.

7) Write and Review

The ECAP Support Team compiled the 21 action plans into the report and wrote up this report, “Grown in Durham: Durham’s Early Childhood Action Plan.” This plan has been reviewed by over 30 community leaders, parents, and early childhood system leaders with an eye towards 1) racial equity, 2) consistent and clear language, 3) accuracy of the data used and descriptions of our early childhood system.

8) Prepare to Implement

See ECAP Document 7) “Our Next Steps” for information on the proposed next steps to prepare for implementation.
Values We Brought to the Planning Process

**Centering Family Voices:** Made intentional choices about the design of the planning process in an attempt to better center family voices. We centered family voice by:

- Shifting from a workgroup model to an action planning model to allow for weekend and evening meetings to facilitate parents’ participation
- Conducting outreach to have informal conversations or focus groups with underrepresented voices like families impacted by incarceration, LGBTQ+ parents, early childhood teachers, families raising children with developmental delays and/or disabilities, young moms, parents living in public housing, and more
- Placed heavier weight on ideas that came from parents and community when narrowing down strategies and recommendations
- Bringing in more parents and community members to determine which strategies should be included in the Durham ECAP and to write the action plans
- Bringing parents onto the review teams to ensure parents had a say in ECAP decision-making regarding sign-off on the action plans and next steps for implementation
- Seeking the coaching, advice and support from institutional leaders without having institutional leaders heavily engaged in action planning

**Equity:** Reflected on the inequitable early childhood outcomes, the inequitable ways that resources are distributed in our community, and strategies that seek to shift resource allocation, shift access to opportunities and power, and remove barriers to participation and access. We centered equity by:

**In the ‘Discover’ Phase**

- Taking an asset-based approach
- Disaggregating data by race and ethnicity wherever possible
- Reaching out to and building relationships with trusted community leaders to help bring community members and parents onto the workgroups
- Listening to families and communities
- Co-creating workgroup meeting guidelines to center equity (see Appendix X)

**In the ‘Describe’ Phase**

- Describing the strengths and challenges of our early childhood system by focusing heavily on what was learned from the parents and front-line providers who are most marginalized (see Systems Overviews chapters (5-5c)

**In the ‘Ideate’ Phase**
Co-creating action planning guidelines to center equity (see Appendix X)
Including parents in the process to share ideas for how Durham’s early childhood system could be improved
Weighting findings from communities most impacted more heavily

In the ‘Iterate’ Phase

- Adjusting the process to remove many barriers to parent and community participation
- Ensuring recommendations address root causes of inequities and disparities in outcomes
- Considering the implications and unintended consequences of proposed strategies on marginalized groups
- Reminding ourselves to consider race, gender, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, national origin, and immigration status in all conversations about the strategies and action plans
- Asking ourselves whether the proposed action plans address root causes and can measure progress to alleviating disparity

As We Plan for Implementation

- Considering how best to set-up equitable structures for funding, power-sharing, valuing community-rooted organizations and efforts
- Engaging the entire ECAP community in conversation about how best to implement the Durham ECAP and the desired use of this plan to improve early childhood outcomes

Collaboration: Brought decisions to the ECAP participants for discussion and consensus. We centered collaboration by:

- Utilizing collaborative tools that allow for anonymous, real-time idea generation and feedback
- Bringing proposals to the ECAP participants for feedback (e.g. a proposed list of stakeholders to engage in focus groups, a proposed process for action planning; proposed next steps to set-up implementation, etc.)
- Ensuring that we engaged existing early childhood committees and taskforces wherever possible, to avoid duplication, leverage existing collaboration, and honor the work people were doing to strengthen early childhood systems before this planning process started

Reflection: Built in opportunities to hear from ECAP participants on what was working well and what wasn’t about the process and the plans we were producing together. We created opportunities for reflection by:
• Consistently taking a step back at transition points to ask, “who is missing?” and identifying ways to bring those voices into the conversation
• Using surveys and forms to gather feedback from participants

*Iteration and Flexibility: Adjusted the process as needed based on the group’s reflections. We centered iteration and flexibility by:*
  • Working iteratively with the workgroups to prioritize strategies and to create 21 recommendations
  • Working iteratively with the action planning teams to narrow down strategies, draft action plans and share them with review teams, communities and key stakeholders, and continuing to revise
  • As people raised concerns or ideas about how to strengthen our process, particularly as it related to family and community engagement and equity, we worked to make changes to the process to address those concerns/ideas

*Transparency: Openly communicate how decisions are made. We centered transparency by:*
  • Identifying groups of diverse decision-makers and established a process for decision-making
  • Posting all meeting recordings and materials online
  • Building relationships along the way to build trust and openness

**Key Takeaways from this Process**

*Parents and communities already know what is needed.*
Listening to parents was the most important part of the Durham ECAP process. Parents who have navigated through Durham’s early childhood systems know what needs to change. We need to build institutional trust in parents and communities’ as leaders in systems change, and also community trust in our institutions’ willingness to do things differently—community trust has to be earned. That’s a long process and we’re only just beginning and learning from community leaders who have been hammering home this message for years.
Each person brings a unique perspective to change systems

Each person who participated in the Durham ECAP process on a workgroup, as a co-chair, on an action planning team, on a review team, on a focus group, in a stakeholder interview, or in a listening session brought a unique, valuable perspective. The people who participated reflected different parts of this stakeholder map—often more than one part at once. This process has been made much stronger because of the diversity of perspectives that came to the table. Beyond the planning, these perspectives will need to be valued through an actual transfer of power and resources.
Limitations

**Top-Down Origins**
The need for a Durham Early Childhood Action Plan was identified by a few early childhood systems leaders, not from the community. While that need may have been valid, the origins did create some distrust. There was also wariness from community-rooted leaders, organizations and people who have seen many planning processes during their time in Durham and little results. These planning processes launched top-down can continue to create harm and seed distrust.

“ECAP is currently a top down approach. We need to think about what we can do now to mitigate all the challenges to equity that naturally come along with a top down approach.” - ECAP participant

**Limited Time and COVID-19**
The process was time bound by a contract beginning in January 2020 to be completed by June 2021. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic caused delays as well, and the planning began in earnest in July 2020. Systems change work requires building trust and trust-building requires sustained time. Trust-building is also supported by in-person relationship-building, which was restricted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We hope that this planning effort is just the beginning of the relational work that is required of transformational systems change.

“The time and virtual context limits relational and deep equity work” - ECAP participant

“Recognize COVID as a challenge but don’t let it be an excuse for why we can’t achieve equity. We need to do everything we can to achieve equity even amidst COVID.” - ECAP participant

**Parent Survey**
Despite efforts to ensure that the survey reached populations who are most impacted by disparities in early childhood outcomes, the survey respondents were not representative of Durham’s population. 1,104 surveys were attempted or completed. 873 responses were included in the analysis after excluding surveys that were not completed. The survey responses overrepresented White, Latinx/Hispanic, and higher-income families and female-identifying parents/caregivers and underrepresented Black and working class families and male-identifying parents/caregivers. In hindsight, we realize it would have also been helpful to collect additional demographic information like ability, sexual orientation, and relationship to child (e.g.
grandmother, foster parent, etc). We chose not to include certain demographic information like immigration status to protect the respondents. We understand that in general, online survey respondents tend to skew wealthier, whiter, and more educated, and MUST be prepared to implement other research methods to truly hear the voice of a representative group of parents.

Community Outreach for Focus Groups, Interviews, and Workgroup Participation
Despite outreach efforts, there were several groups of parents and caregivers who we were not able to successfully engage including parents who have been impacted by mass incarcerations, parents with developmental delays and/or disabilities, parents who are refugees, LGBTQI+ parents, and AAPI parents. Throughout the process we asked, “who is missing?” to guide intentional outreach. However, given limited time, relationships, and barriers to participation in the process itself, we were not able to hear from several groups of parents in the ways we would have wanted. We also recognized that we missed an opportunity to more thoughtfully engage our business and philanthropic communities in the planning efforts.

Barriers to Community Participation
During September 2020 through January 2021, four ECAP workgroups met consistently. These workgroups presented several barriers to participation. The first was timing, as meetings were conducted during the work day which was easier for professionals than for many of the parents and some frontline workers like early childhood educators. Meetings were also conducted in English and we ran into many technical challenges with simultaneous interpretation into Spanish. We unfortunately were not able to accommodate other languages besides English and Spanish, which meant that we missed out on hearing from parents who speak other languages in this discussion format. The meetings also leveraged virtual technology like Jamboards which may have created technological barriers for participants on phones. They also often required significant review of lengthy pre-reads, which could be difficult to digest and written at a literacy level that was not accessible for everyone. While we tried to be flexible with agendas and integrate many modes of participation for different learning and communication styles, we recognize that the ECAP Support Team’s own professional experience, cultural backgrounds, and communication preferences influenced the meeting format. These meetings with euro-centric structures can limit creativity in creating space for people to come together and can unintentionally value certain types of communication, experience, and working styles over others.

The ECAP Support Team has reflections and learnings on creating multilingual spaces and utilizing meeting formats and facilitation styles that value multiple forms of communication to bring into the next phase of ECAP work to set-up implementation.
“We often create opps for families to join, but create barriers to participation. For example, our meeting today is midday on a workday (same is true for work group meetings).” - ECAP participant
“Better practices for language access are needed for Spanish-speaking ECAP participants.” - ECAP participant

We took many of the lessons learned about the barriers in the workgroup model (four ~30 person meetings) to attempt an action planning model (twenty-one ~5 person meetings) which enabled more flexibility in scheduling, languages, and allowed for deeper relationship building. The key challenges that the teams faced were related to scheduling (we did not have a coordinator for each group to assist with scheduling), following a set agenda and template that did not always capture the essence of the discussion the teams had, not feeling like they had sufficient information, and feeling disconnected from the plan as a whole. Some groups also found the amount of information that they needed to review to build on the initial work of the workgroups and all of the data and research that we had gathered was overwhelming. As a result of the challenges, we did see parent participation drop off between March and May 2021 (8 parents of the 49 who signed up participated in 0-1 meeting). The process was also logistically more challenging for the ECAP Support Team. The use of smaller action teams was ultimately a mixed bag in terms of its success in centering parent voices, but we are proud of the work that the teams were able to do and stand behind the intent to transfer power and leadership to a larger and more diverse group of people.
Appendix A: Participation Calculations

Over 150 ECAP participants
- 14 co-chairs
- 112 workgroup participants
- 28 reviewers
- 91 action planning team members

More than 1,000 parents, guardians and caregivers who reflected on their experience raising young children in Durham—the greatest strengths and challenges of Durham and their ideas to make Durham a better place for families with young children.
- 1,104 survey respondents (873 surveys included in analysis—answered 50% or more)
- 55 focus group participants
- 15+ interviews and conversations

More than 100 early childhood educators and child care directors.
- 13 early childhood educators who participated in workgroups and action planning teams
- 4 child care director meetings
- 18 early childhood educators (birth through age 5) who participated in 2 focus groups
- 3 K-3 teachers who participated in a focus group

More than 250 hours of cross-agency and community conversation on Zoom during 12 months
- 130+ hours of action planning team meetings
- 70+ hours of workgroup meetings
- 30+ hours of focus groups and community conversations
- 24 hours of co-chair meetings
- 10 hours of Governing Body meetings
Appendix B: Strategies Were Gathered from these Local, State, and National Reports to Prioritize in Durham

**Durham County-Level Recommendations Pulled from the Following Reports**
- State of Durham County’s Young Children
- Durham Racial Equity Task Force Report: An Urgent and Loving Call to Action
- Durham County Pre-K Supply and Demand Study
- Durham County Community Health Assessment (2017 and 2020)

**Statewide Recommendations Pulled from the Following Reports**
- North Carolina Early Childhood Action Plan
- Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Action Framework
- NCECF Child Development at Kindergarten Entry Data Workgroup Report
- NCECF Children’s Social-Emotional Health Data Workgroup Report
- CCSA Early Childhood Education Workforce Turnover Report
- CCSA Working in Early Care and Education in NC
- NCIOM Healthy North Carolina 2030
- NC Family Engagement and Leadership Framework
- NC Perinatal Health Strategic Plan: 2016-2020
- NCIOM Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies

**National Recommendations Pulled from the Following Reports**
- Prenatal-to-3 State Policy Roadmap 2020
- CDC Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Center for the Study of Social Policy Manifesto for Race Equity and Parent Leadership in Early Childhood Systems
- ZERO TO THREE State of Babies Yearbook: 2020
- Vibrant and Healthy Kids: Aligning Science, Practice, and Policy to Advance Health Equity
- National Partnership for Women and Families’ Black Women’s Maternal Health Report
- Breastfeeding Friendly Communities
- Center for American Progress’s Report: Eliminating Racial Disparities in Maternal and Infant Mortality
Appendix C: Family and Community Leadership and Engagement

Survey Respondents
1,104 survey respondents (873 surveys included in analysis—answered 50% or more)
Focus Groups

Round 1 Focus Groups - “Discovery” Phase (December 2020 - January 2021)

- Black mothers
- Black fathers
- 2x Latinx mothers
- Latinx fathers
- Parents who live in public housing
- Parents with children with developmental delays and/or disabilities
- Child care directors (centers and family child care homes)
- Young moms through the program H.E.A.R.T.S.

Round 2 Focus Groups - “Iterate” Phase (May - June 2021)

- Child care directors (centers and family child care homes)
- 2x Early childhood educators (infant-toddler through Pre-K)
- Early elementary school teachers (kindergarten through 3rd grade)
- Families who have been impacted by incarceration
- Youth Leadership Council (YLC)
Community Interviews

- Dr. Ronda Bullock (we are) to learn about racial equity training for educators and culturally affirming classroom strategies
- Tschaina Taylor and Dexter Richardson (Partnership Effort for the Advancement of Children’s Health - PEACH Durham) to learn about lead prevention and remediation in environments where children live and play
- Gann Herman to learn about economic justice efforts in Durham (Poor People’s Campaign, Fed Up, Showing Up for Racial Justice, End Poverty Durham)
- Jessica Hulick (Equality NC) to learn about parent organizing in Durham and the intersectionality of LGBTQ+ issues with early childhood (for both young children and families)
- Jovonia Lewis (Empowered Parents in Community - EPIC) to learn about Black parent organizing to fight for a better education for Black children
- Melissa Radcliff (Our Children’s Place of Coastal Horizons Center) to learn about creating early learning environments that better incorporate incarcerated or returning parents into young children’s lives and better support children with incarcerated family members
- Jenice Ramirez (ISLA) to learn about the creating culturally-affirming spaces for our Latinx communities in Durham
- Quinny Sanchez Lopez (NCCARE360) to learn about efforts to improve referrals between early childhood providers in Durham
- Bryan Fox (Durham Chamber of Commerce) to learn about ways to engage the business community in plan implementation
- Jesse Huddleston (Nasher and Organizing Against Racism) to learn about amplifying and supporting community-rooted efforts through the Durham ECAP
- Aaron Cain and Brooke Ganser (Durham County Transit Plan) to learn about how Durham’s parents with young children can make their voices heard in the Transit Planning processes
- Kweli Rashied-Henry (Durham County Racial Equity Officer) to ensure that the ECAP uplifts and supports the County’s racial equity plans for action
- Erik Landfried (Transit Equity Campaign) to learn about how Durham’s parents with young children can influence public decisions about public transportation
- Lisa Miller (City and Durham Comprehensive Plan) to identify areas of alignment between the Durham ECAP and the Comprehensive Plan
Grown in Durham: Durham County’s Early Childhood Action Plan (ECAP)
[Document Revised: September 2021]

- Melissa Black (Durham County Master Aging Plan) to identify areas of alignment between the Durham ECAP and the Master Aging Plan
- Meagan Clawar and Katherine Ward (Refugee Community Partnership) to learn about ways to better engage refugee parents in the Durham ECAP

Task Forces Across Durham that Provided Input to the Durham ECAP
- Born in Durham Healthy for Life
- Community Advisory Board
- Durham ACEs and Resilience Taskforce (DART)
- Durham Campaign for Grade Level Reading (DCGLR)
- Durham NC Pre-K/School Readiness Committee
- Durham Pre-K Governance Committee
- Durham Pre-K Partner Meeting
- Early Childhood Mental Health Taskforce (ECMHTF)
- Food Security Taskforce
- Literacy Partners
- Local Interagency Coordinating Council (LICC)
- Partnership for a Healthy Durham
- Young Child Wellness Council (YCWC)
### Appendix D: ECAP Group Meeting Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Attendees</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
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| **February 2020 Governing Body Meeting** | Governing Body Members | - Understand what the ECAP is, and the general roadmap for how Durham is going to create a localized version  
- Establish the responsibilities of the ECAP Governing Body and Workgroups  
- Determine what organizations, and who from the Governing Body, will be represented on each of the workgroups as chairs/co-chairs and members |
| **July 2020 Governing Body Meeting** | Governing Body Members | - Understand the ECAP and general roadmap for Durham to create localized version  
- Establish the responsibilities of the ECAP Governing Body and Workgroups  
- Determine what organizations, and who from the Governing Body, will be represented on each of the workgroups as chairs/co-chairs and members  
- Align on the importance of community engagement and review plans to embed community engagement into the ECAP process.  
- Learn about the Early Childhood Services Inventory |
| **September 2020 Workgroup Launch** | All workgroup members | - Learn about the ECAP, why this is happening now, and how we will create the Durham ECAP  
- Ground the Durham ECAP work in equity  
- Explore our social identities, how those carry advantages, and how we will share power through this process  
- Learn about your workgroup - the objectives and next steps together |
| **October 2020 Workgroup Meetings** | All workgroup members | - Review key findings from the pre-read reflecting on the local data to report on ECAP targets  
- Identify the greatest strengths and challenges of our early childhood system to meet those targets  
- Brainstorm ways to creatively engage the community beyond workgroups and survey |
<p>| <strong>November 2020</strong> | All workgroup | - Review parent survey data |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workgroup Meetings</td>
<td>members</td>
<td>• Debrief October meeting findings</td>
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<td>• Prepare to begin reviewing strategies to consider in the Durham ECAP</td>
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<td>November 2020 Governing Body Meeting</td>
<td>Governing Body Members</td>
<td>• Provide an update on the work of the workgroups and community engagement</td>
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<td>• Prioritize systems level strengths and challenges and brainstorm strategies to address</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2020 Workgroup Meetings</td>
<td>All workgroup members</td>
<td>• Review and brainstorm strategies</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Prioritize strategies</td>
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<td>January 2021 Midpoint Check-In</td>
<td>All workgroup members Governors Body Open to the public</td>
<td>• Share our systems-level strengths and challenges as identified by workgroups and community engagement</td>
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<td>• Share identified targets, sub-targets, and highest priority recommendations from all workgroups</td>
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<td>• Check-in on how the ECAP planning process is doing with regards to equity and how we can create a more equitable process going forward</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2021 Workgroup Meetings</td>
<td>All workgroup members</td>
<td>• Reflect on the midpoint check-in</td>
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<td>• Review the proposed 21 recommendations and share feedback</td>
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<td>• Review qualitative survey and focus group findings</td>
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<td>• Discuss next steps to build out action plans and identify a format that will work to move forward</td>
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<td>February 2021 Governing Body Meeting</td>
<td>Governing Body Members</td>
<td>• Share an ECAP update</td>
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<td>• Discuss vision for ECAP implementation and funding</td>
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<td>• Align on criteria to identify highest priority recommendations to share with the BOCC</td>
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<td>• Align on duration of the ECAP</td>
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<td>February 2021 Action Planning Kickoff</td>
<td>All action planning team members</td>
<td>• Learn about the Durham Early Childhood Action Plan and the planning process so far</td>
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<td>• Share what the Action Planning process will look like</td>
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<td>• Prepare for first March action planning meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2021 Action Planning Team Meetings</td>
<td>21 different action planning team meetings</td>
<td>• Get to know one another and create a safe, shared space</td>
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<td>• Review the existing research in the pre-read</td>
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<td>• Begin discussing potential strategies to implement the recommendation in Durham</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Identify stakeholder groups who need to inform</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grown in Durham: Durham County’s Early Childhood Action Plan (ECAP)</strong></td>
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| **March 2021 Review Meeting** | **All reviewers**  
**All action planning team members** | **• Share a few key takeaways from each action planning teams’ discussions**  
**• Ask questions that would be helpful for action planning team to get feedback on**  
**• Hear from review team and other meeting attendees to bring additional perspectives to each action planning team** |
| **April 2021 Action Planning Team Meetings** | **21 different action planning team meetings** | **• Refine the proposed strategies in the pre-read that were identified by parent outreach and the ECAP workgroups**  
**• Narrow down to ~3 strategies that the action planning team thinks are the most important** |
| **April 2021 Review Meeting** | **All reviewers**  
**All action planning team members** | **• Invite all ECAP participants to a meeting to discuss next steps to move into implementation**  
**• Share key takeaways from discussion and proposed ~3 strategies per team**  
**• Provide feedback and thoughts for each action planning team** |
| **April 2021 Implementation Meeting #1** | **Optional meeting for reviewers, action planning team members, former workgroup members, and governing body members** | **• Gather perspectives, concerns and questions about Durham ECAP implementation**  
**• Determine next steps to launch implementation structure** |
| **May 2021 Action Planning Team Meetings** | **21 different action planning team meetings** | **• Continue building out draft action plans for the ~3 strategies that each group narrowed down to** |
| **May 2021 Review Meeting** | **All reviewers**  
**All action planning team members** | **• Identify anything that needs to change in order for people to be comfortable with the action plan being in the Durham ECAP** |
| **June 2021 Implementation Meeting #2** | **Optional meeting for reviewers, action planning team members, former workgroup members, and governing body members** | **• Share a revised proposal to launch an “implementation preparation” phase**  
**• Gather feedback on proposed next steps** |
| **June 2021 Review** | **Reviewers** | **• Approve the action plans** |
Meeting

- Approve next steps to move into an “implementation preparation” phase

Appendix E: Workgroup Agreements*

- Respect every individual and idea
  - Value all workgroup participants’ ideas and insights.
- Speak plainly
  - Avoid acronyms and jargon.
- Work towards consensus
  - "Even though the decision might not be exactly what I want, I can live with it and publicly support it.”
- Share space and focus on equity. Listen.
  - Recognize privilege, creating space for diverse opinions and backgrounds.
    Support shared access to resources, opportunities, power, and responsibility.
- Work collectively
  - Be guided by our shared passion for our young children in Durham.
- Transparency and inclusion
  - Communicate openly and invite differing perspectives.

*Inspired by the Group Agreements established at the NC Early Childhood Foundation’s Children’s Social-Emotional Health Data Workgroup

Appendix F: Action Planning Principles

- We will share decision-making power with parents and community leaders
- We will be informed by and hold ourselves accountable to families and communities
- We will be transparent, collaborative and accountable to one another
- We will work towards consensus: “Even though the decision might not be exactly what I want, I can live with it and publicly support it”
- We will share space and focus on equity, creating space for diverse opinions and background
- We will make decisions based on the interest of young children and their families and the objective evidence to identify the best possible solutions so as not to favor the priorities of one organization over another
- We will acknowledge power at the beginning of each conversation in order to actively address power imbalances
- We will build off planning efforts and ongoing work here in Durham
Grown in Durham: Durham County’s Early Childhood Action Plan (ECAP)
[Document Revised: September 2021]

- We will work collectively, guided by our shared passion for Durham’s young children and families
- We will actively address the underlying root causes of oppression, like systemic racism and forced poverty, that perpetuate disparities in early childhood outcomes
- We will focus on the whole child, birth to 8, in the context of his or her family and community
- We will be data- and research-driven informed by developmental science
- We will create action plans that are culturally relevant, trauma-informed, and anti-racist
- We will ensure community-rooted strategies recommended in the plan are owned, led, designed, and driven by community-rooted leaders
- We will be strengths-based, highlighting protective factors, preventive solutions and uplifting community assets
- We will be willing to redesign systems to create more equitable outcomes, embracing innovation and seeing change as opportunity
- We will create action plans that are actionable, feasible, sustainable and measurable
- We will make sure that we truly understand the needs of the families, direct service providers and, above all, the children based on rich and accurate data

For questions about this report, please contact Bonnie Delaune at bonnie.delaune@dci-nc.org or Cate Elander at celander@dconc.gov.