Early Childhood Solution Plan

For the Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ)

This document outlines the key activities ("essential active ingredients") that will help NAZ and its Partners work collaboratively to reach two overarching NAZ Early Childhood goals:

Early Childhood Goal 1:

Prenatally through age 3, children's age-appropriate development* toward kindergarten readiness will be monitored, and services and supports will be provided as needed.

*Developmental domains include cognition/language, social-emotional, gross and fine motor, and health.

Early Childhood Goal 2:

NAZ-enrolled children ages 3 through 5 will make adequate progress toward developing literacy, numeracy, socialemotional and other skills that contribute to kindergarten readiness.

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[1] Organization Commitment: Active Collaboration & NAZ Values

Organization-wide activities that build the collaborative process and embed the core NAZ values across the effort, including NAZ families, staff, and Partners.

_	including NAZ families, staff, and Partners. Frequency			
Esse	ential Active Ingredient	Necessary Conditions	(Dosage)	
(1)	 NAZ Partner embeds NAZ values organization-wide as key drivers to build a culture of achievement Zone-wide, including by: Posting NAZ Values in prominent public locations for staff, Including Values in staff meetings and other organizational use, and Contributing to the implementation of a developing operating plan designed to intentionally embed values across the collaboration. 	 Values are available for posting, distributing, and publishing. Operating plan concepts are developed for input and contributions. NAZ staff available for dialogue about embedding values. 	Ongoing	
(2)	 NAZ Partner participates in ongoing educational opportunities, with the intention of core 'NAZ Way 'concepts reaching staff who work with NAZ families, related to the following key NAZ values: Breaking the belief gap, Families as Leaders & Organizations as Partners to Families, Using Data to Drive Progress (results-based accountability), and Embedding cultural responsiveness within our work with families and scholars. 	NAZ develops and offers educational opportunities in a manner that works for Partners (such as through existing Action Team meetings).	Ongoing	
(3)	NAZ Partner ensures that lead staff attend the following collaborative gatherings: NAZ-wide collaborative meetings Action Team meetings	NAZ holds and publicizes meetings in a timely manner.	NAZ-wide meetings: 2 times/year Action Team meetings: Minimum of 4 times/year	
(4)	As specified in NAZ Collaborative Partner Memorandum of Understanding, agency hires staff who are interested in and committed to positive interactions with children and youth, and demonstrate a commitment to a culture of achievement.	Position posting language and hiring practices explicitly assess commitment to positive interactions and a culture of achievement.	On hire	
(5)	Program services are provided within a context that is positive, respectful, engaging, and fosters a culture of achievement.	 Hiring practices specify and select for staff who demonstrate respect. Scheduling of program services provides opportunities for social interaction. Professional development for staff continuously emphasizes respectful, engaging, and positive services. 	Each program day	
(6)	Program services are fully aligned with and reflect continuous participation in NAZ data collection, progress monitoring, coordination, review, and program improvement processes.	 Maintain regular data entry in NAZ Connect. Coordinate with NAZ program staff (Connectors and Academic Navigators). 	Each program day	

[2] Progress Monitoring, Screening, Observation & Referral

NAZ staff and Partner staff follow these essential active ingredients with all NAZ-enrolled families with 0-5 year olds.

[2.1] Noticing & Acting on Developmental Concerns

	ential Active Ingredient	Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	At least one NAZ or Partner staff member has in-person interactions with every NAZ-enrolled 0-5 year old on a regular basis.	 Partner staff receive training in NAZ's parent engagement protocols. Data entered in NAZ Connect via Developmental Concern Protocol guidelines. 	At least once per month
(2)	Informal Observations During in-person interactions with families of 0-5 year olds, NAZ staff and Partner staff follow NAZ Developmental Concern Protocol, which articulates process for noticing and acting on developmental concerns.	 NAZ staff and Partner staff receive training on Developmental Concern Protocol. Family achievement plans are up to date and accessible in NAZ Connect. Data entered in NAZ Connect via Developmental Concern Protocol guidelines. 	At every in-person interaction
(3)	Progress Monitoring Every NAZ child up to kindergarten entry participates in progress monitoring to determine if they are on track to reach developmental milestones.	 For Scholars enrolled in Partner programs, Partners administer ASQ and ASQ-SE to parents of 0-5 year olds and the Early Literacy & Early Numeracy IGDIs to 4-5 year olds, and enter results into NAZ Connect. For Scholars not enrolled in Partner programs, EC Navigator administers ASQ and ASQ-SE to parents of 0-5 year olds, and the Early Literacy & Early Numeracy IGDIs to 4-5 year olds, and enter results into NAZ Connect. 	Every 6 months
(4)	When developmental concerns are identified through informal observation or progress monitoring, NAZ staff or Partner staff follow Developmental Concern Protocol guidelines for referring family for further assessment or services.	 NAZ staff or Partner staff document all referrals in NAZ Connect. NAZ staff and Partner staff receive ongoing training on developmental concern protocol and NAZ Connect. Partner organizations collaborate with EC Navigator. NAZ Connect is kept up to date. 	As needed
(5)	NAZ staff follow up on every referral to ensure child is receiving services and document referral outcomes in NAZ Connect.	 NAZ staff review any concerns/referrals with parents. NAZ staff assist parents, as needed, to develop a plan to take action on referrals. NAZ staff document outcome of referrals and support ongoing next steps. NAZ Connect is updated with results. 	Upon referral and every 6 months following referral
(6)	NAZ staff ensure that parents are attending prenatal care and well-child doctor visits on schedule.	 NAZ staff review any concerns/referrals with parents. NAZ staff assist parents, as needed, to develop a plan to take action on referrals. NAZ staff document outcome of referrals and support ongoing next steps. NAZ Connect is updated with results. 	Following doctor recommendations for visit schedule

[2.2] Screen at 3 (Early Childhood Screening)

	ential Active Ingredient	Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	Every NAZ child is screened at age 3 (or earlier if developmental concerns are identified).	 NAZ staff and/or Partner staff implement referral process to state-mandated Early Childhood Screening organization for each child at age 3 (or earlier if developmental concerns are identified). Partner staff receive NAZ Connect training. Early Childhood Screening results are shared with parents and Partner program NAZ staff or Partner staff enter screening results into NAZ Connect. 	At age 3
(2)	State-mandated screening organizations review each screening result with parents and refer for services and/or further assessment.	 Partner staff receive NAZ Connect training. Partners communicate screening results and referrals made to each family's Connector and to EC Navigator. 	At age 3 Early Childhood Screening
(3)	NAZ staff follow up on every referral to ensure child is receiving services and document referral outcomes in NAZ Connect.	 NAZ staff review any concerns/referrals with parents. NAZ staff assist parents, as needed, to develop a plan to take action on referrals. NAZ staff document outcome of referrals and support ongoing next steps. NAZ Connect is updated with results. 	Upon referral and every 6 months following referral

[3] Prenatal Services

Partner organizations that offer prenatal services (including early identification and home visiting) follow these essential active ingredients with all NAZ-enrolled families they serve.

Esse	ential Active Ingredient	Necessary Conditions	
(1)	NAZ Partners maintain up- to-date information about prenatal resources and services in NAZ Connect.	Partner organizations have sufficient training and technical assistance to effectively use NAZ Connect.	Once initially; review and update at least every 6 months
(2)	Pregnant women enrolled in NAZ receive early and continuous medical care.	 Partner availability for acceptance into care in first trimester. Family understanding and acceptance of early prenatal care. Availability of child care, transportation and medical coverage. 	Per medical guidelines
(3)	Partners ensure that all prenatal and perinatal women they serve are screened for depression by medical providers and/or home visitors and referred to services as needed.	 Partners are aware of culturally sensitive resources. Availability of child care, transportation and medical coverage. Program is centered on preventing low birth weight babies and premature death. EC Navigator or Partner staff document screening occurrence and next steps. 	Initially and then as needed

[4] Targeted Home Visiting

Partner organizations that offer targeted home visiting services for families with infants and toddlers (up to 36 months of age) follow these essential active ingredients with all NAZ-enrolled families they serve.

Esse	ential Active Ingredient	Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	Partner organizations maintain up-to-date information about home visiting resources and services in NAZ Connect.	Partner organizations have sufficient training and technical assistance to effectively use NAZ Connect.	Once initially; review and update minimum of every 6 months
(2)	Partner organizations work with eligible and identified families using a federally recognized standardized home visiting model (Definition of "federally recognized" to be further specified by NAZ).	 Partner staff are trained to implement program with fidelity. Implementation fidelity of Partner staff checked at least annually. 	As specified in selected curriculum, but at least monthly
(3)	Partner staff utilize resources in NAZ Connect to support family success.	 Partner staff receive ongoing training on community supports and resources, how to refer. Partner staff maintain communication with NAZ staff to ensure families are receiving necessary supports. 	Ongoing

[5] High-Quality Care & Education

Partner organizations that offer care and education for families with 0-5 year old children follow these essential active ingredients with all NAZ-enrolled families they serve.

Based on Minnesota's Parent Aware rating system (<u>www.parentawareratings.org</u>).

[5.1] High-Quality Care and Education for Infants & Toddlers

Partner organizations that offer childcare for families with infants and toddlers (up to 36 months of age) follow these essential active ingredients with all NAZ-enrolled families they serve.

Esse	ential Active Ingredient	Necessary Conditions		Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	Partner organizations maintain up-to-date information about infant and toddler care and education resources and services (including number of openings) in Think Small database.	•	NAZ Central sends out monthly reminders to update number of openings.	Once initially; review and update minimum of every 6 months
(2)	All NAZ-enrolled infants and toddlers that are attending an in-home or center-based program attend a 3 or 4 star-rated program.	•	Uninterrupted continuous care. Partners maintain status as a 3- or 4-star rated Parent Aware program. NAZ staff are trained to have discussions about early learning opportunities.	As specified based on family interest and need (indicated in Family Achievement Plan)
(3)	Partners refer families to available resources to assist with financial support of quality childcare experiences.	•	Partner staff trained on how to refer families to financial supports. Partner staff maintain communication with NAZ staff to ensure families are receiving necessary supports.	As needed

[5.2] Enrolling Preschoolers in 3 & 4 Star-rated Center and Family Care & Education Programs

Partner organizations, with support from NAZ, work to ensure enrollment in currently available services immediately after a child's 3^{rd} birthday.

	r a child's 3" birthday. ential Active Ingredient	Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	All NAZ-enrolled preschool children attend a 3 or 4 star-rated program.	 Uninterrupted continuous care. Partners maintain status as a 3 or 4 star-rated Parent Aware program. Connector begins discussing enrollment with family when child is 30 months old, or earlier depending on family or child needs. 	At least 15 hours/week, 38 weeks/year commencing at third birthday
(2)	Partner program offers a full range of early childhood educational services and accesses additional related services as needed.	 NAZ and Partner staff follow communication process with parents around assessment results and any identified needs. All children receive individualized services, either provided by the Partner or through a Partner and NAZ staff connecting with other organizations to ensure each child's full range of strengths and needs is being addressed. NAZ staff facilitate access to additional related services, as needed. NAZ facilitates and maintains resource options on NAZ Connect for Partner programs to use or refer to (organized by developmental domain). 	Daily; At least 15 hours/week, 38 weeks/year
(3)	Partner organizations maintain up-to- date information about preschool care and education resources and services (including number of openings) in Think Small database.	NAZ Central sends out monthly reminders to update number of openings.	Once initially; review and update minimum of every 6 months
(4)	NAZ staff develop plan for funding early childhood participation for each child and facilitate implementation of this plan.	NAZ Connect populated with funding opportunities.	Quarterly, or as needed
(5)	NAZ staff and parents of enrolled children review available centers with current openings and select one for enrollment.	 Partner ensures information is available in in Think Small database. EC Navigator reviews and communicates information about available slots in 3- and 4-star center and family care and education programs in and adjacent to the Zone. 	Prior to enrolled child's third birthday Available slots updated monthly
(6)	NAZ staff facilitate enrollment process and initial attendance at selected center. E.g. coordinating transportation	 NAZ staff and families have access to sufficient supportive resources (e.g. transportation). NAZ and/or Partner staff communicate expectations to families for being enrolled in care and education programming. 	Prior to enrolled child's third birthday
(7)	NAZ staff work with family and Partner organization to implement and expand Academic Achievement Plan.	Families have begun to develop Academic Achievement Plan with NAZ staff.	At enrollment, modified as needed

[5.3] Uninterrupted Care & Education Services

NAZ staff and Partners collaborate to preemptively address issues that are likely to lead to interruptions in childcare if not addressed. Efforts are focused around ensuring uninterrupted care and education for 3-5 year olds.

Esse	ential Active Ingredient	Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	NAZ staff monitor and support families in initiating and maintaining CCAP enrollment (as eligible) in a timely and efficient manner, such that any child care assistance is secured and maintained throughout a child's preschool years.	 Types of CCAP are: Basic Sliding Fee CCAP through MFIP For families receiving CCAP through MFIP, NAZ staff maintain relationship with MFIP employment service providers to be aware of process changes and to secure timely assistance when needed. 	As needed
(2)	NAZ staff collaborate with Partner staff to ensure that families have adequate and reliable funding by reviewing and revising childcare funding plan.	 Partner staff monitor adequacy of funding plan for individual children and communicate this via NAZ Connect. Families are able to access sufficient funding resources to fill gaps in funding plan. 	When Partner staff notice inadequate childcare funding
(3)	NAZ staff collaborate with Partner staff to ensure that families have reliable transportation to the school or center (e.g. assisting a family with car repairs).	 Partner staff use NAZ Connect to relay concerns about attendance. NAZ and Partner staff have access to sufficient resources to support families' transportation needs. 	As needed
(4)	Partner staff collaborate with NAZ EC staff to identify solutions when a breakdown in family communication with school or center occurs (e.g. facilitating discussions between school or centers and families).	 Families understand the expectations that NAZ and Partners have for families enrolled in childcare. EC Navigator does training to NAZ families receiving scholarships and NAZ Partners on receiving scholarship families. Partner staff and NAZ staff use NAZ Connect to relay concerns about communication. 	As needed
(5)	Partner staff collaborate with family to identify cause of irregular attendance pattern and develop solutions.	 Partner staff inform NAZ staff when families are experiencing irregular attendance. Engagement team supports plan and refers to other services or action areas as needed. 	As needed

[6] Expanding Opportunities & Resources

NAZ and EC Action Team contribute to planning for expanding early childhood opportunities and resources in the Zone and participate in implementation of specified plans.

[6.1] System Monitoring & Capacity Assurance

NAZ and system/capacity Partners work to ensure that there are an adequate number of high-quality early childhood programs and "slots" to allow for participation of all NAZ children.

Essential Active Ingredient	Necessary i anaitions	Frequency (Dosage)
Assess zone's "enrollment capacity" NAZ staff, EC Action Team Partners and Think Small collaborate in order to assess total number of slots in 3- and 4-star center and family programs (including MPS and Head Start) in and adjacent to the Zone.	 Partners maintain status as a 3- or 4-star rated in-home or center-based Parent Aware program. Determine current and forecast number of NAZ-eligible preschool children and slots needed for full participation. 	Annually

Esse	ential Active Ingredient	Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(2)	 Map out how to increase Zone's "enrollment capacity" NAZ staff and Action Team leadership build a plan to: Help existing programs receive 3- and 4-star Parent Aware ratings Increase number of available slots through creating new programs and increasing number of slots in existing programs Coordinate with other early learning initiatives that support increasing enrollment capacity in the Zone 	 Current and forecast numbers of NAZ-eligible preschool children and slots needed for full participation have been determined. EC Navigator does outreach, along with Think Small, to potential in-home providers about becoming Parent Aware rated. 	Revisit and revise plan annually
(3)	Help existing programs receive 3- and 4-star ratings Think Small, NAZ staff, and Action Team leadership implement plan to increase available slots by increasing quality of existing programs not yet rated at 3 or 4 stars.	Plan to increase Zone's enrollment capacity has been developed.	Annually (or as specified by plan)
(4)	Increase number of available slots NAZ Action Team Partners and NAZ staff, with support from Think Small, implement plan to create new programs and increase number of slots in existing programs in order to produce sufficient capacity for forecast number of NAZ preschool children.	Plan to increase Zone's enrollment capacity has been developed.	Annually (or as specified by plan)
(5)	Coordinate with other early learning initiatives NAZ Action Team Partners and NAZ staff implement plan to maintain awareness of and coordinate with other early learning initiatives that support increasing enrollment capacity in the Zone.	Plan to increase Zone's enrollment capacity has been developed.	Annually (or as specified by plan)

[6.2] Funding Solutions

Creating funding solutions that facilitate continuous enrollment for preschool children in 3- and 4-star programs.

Esse	ential Active Ingredient	Necessary Conditions Frequ	iency (Dosage)
(1)	NAZ staff and EC Action Team collaborate to create a list of available public and private sources of tuition and related resources to support continuous enrollment of preschool children in 3- and 4-star rated programs. E.g. CCAP, Scholarships	 List of funding solutions maintained in NAZ Connect. Full funding gap for all 3 and 4 year olds in the Zone is identified and communicated to EC Action Team and NAZ board. 	te annually, or eded
(2)	 NAZ staff and EC Action Team collaborate to identify gaps in financial opportunities that families can use for preschool by answering these questions: Which populations are not eligible for funding? Which eligible populations do not have sufficient funding because of limited funding per family? Which eligible populations do not have sufficient funding because of limited funding pool? 	 List of funding solutions maintained in NAZ Connect. Process map for funding solutions. Team has reviewed NAZ Connect data to gain understanding of NAZ family characteristics. 	te annually, or eded
(3)	EC Action Team task force develops multi-pronged approach to increase capacity of CCAP and scholarship funding.	• Financial gaps for NAZ annual families have been identified.	force meets ally, or as ed (when rtunities arise)

[7] Developmentally Rich Home- & Community-based Experiences

Skill-building experiences in the domains of early literacy, early numeracy, executive functioning and other domains of child development outside of formal classroom experiences described in section [5].

Essential Active Ingredient		Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	All families enroll in and attend NAZ Family Academy offerings that match their child(ren)'s age.	 Connector facilitates enrollment process and communicates with Family Academy Coordinator to support family attendance. All families complete NAZ Foundations Training. NAZ offers Family Academy courses: On a regular and consistent basis At times and locations that are accessible to families With enough capacity to meet the needs of all NAZ families 	As specified in Family Academy Solution Plan
(2)	 EC Navigator maintains in NAZ Connect an updated tracking of opportunities in the community that provide: Skill-building opportunities in the domains of early literacy, early numeracy, executive functioning and other domains of child development (e.g. library events) and/or Parent education around supporting their child's development (e.g. ECFE) 	 NAZ staff and EC Action Team make connections and develop relationships to enhance opportunities available. EC Action Team communicates opportunities they offer or hear about to EC Navigator. EC Navigator shares community opportunities with Connectors and EC Partners via NAZ Connect, and serves as a resource when questions arise. 	Biannually, or as opportunities arise
(3)	Skill-building Opportunities for Children NAZ staff and parents of 3 and 4 year-old children review and select from available skill-building opportunities in the domains of early literacy, early numeracy, executive functioning and other domains of child development (e.g. library events).	 EC Navigator shares community opportunities with Connectors and EC Partners via NAZ Connect, and serves as a resource when questions arise. Enough slots available in relevant programs. Empirically supported program services (definition of "empirically-supported" to be specified by NAZ). 	Initially: When child is 30 months old Ongoing: As needed based on Achievement Plan goals
(4)	Parent Education NAZ staff and parents of 0-5 year-old children review and select from available parent education programs to support their child's development (e.g. ECFE).	 EC Navigator shares community opportunities with Connectors and EC Partners via NAZ Connect, and serves as a resource when questions arise. Enough slots available in relevant programs. Empirically supported program services (definition of "empirically-supported" to be specified by NAZ). 	When Achievement Plan goals indicate a need for additional parent support beyond Family Academy

[8] Parent & Child Preparation for the Transition to Kindergarten

NAZ and EC Partners collaborate to ensure parents and children are prepared for the transition to kindergarten by following these essential active ingredients.

Essential Active Ingredient		Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	Partners who provide care and education services to families with 4-5 year olds offer services aimed at supporting both the parent and child as they prepare for the transition to kindergarten.	 Partners communicate their transition to K process to NAZ Central. NAZ Staff are aware of each Partner's transition to K process and collaborate with Partners in order to coordinate alignment with NAZ's transition to K process. 	Annually (timing specified by each Partner)
(2)	NAZ staff identify kindergarten programs in Anchor Schools and other appropriate locations and gather information about program, enrollment requirements, and test scores/outcomes for enrolled children.	Anchor Schools collaborate with NAZ staff to keep this information updated.	Annually (early Fall, prior to transition plan implementation)
(3)	NAZ staff share enrollment options with families (either one-on-one or at a NAZ-specific "kindergarten round-up fair").	 NAZ-Specific Transition Plan. Communication with kindergarten transition teams from Anchor Schools. 	Annually (Fall before K enrollment)
(4)	NAZ staff and families of enrolled children review available kindergarten options and select one for enrollment.	 NAZ-Specific Transition Plan. Communication with kindergarten transition teams from Anchor Schools. 	Annually (January prior to K)
(5)	NAZ and Partner staff support families in the process of enrolling scholars in Kindergarten at selected school.	 NAZ-Specific Transition Plan Communication with kindergarten transition teams from Anchor Schools. 	As needed, following timeline specified by selected school