



NAZ OVERVIEW 2011

January, 2011

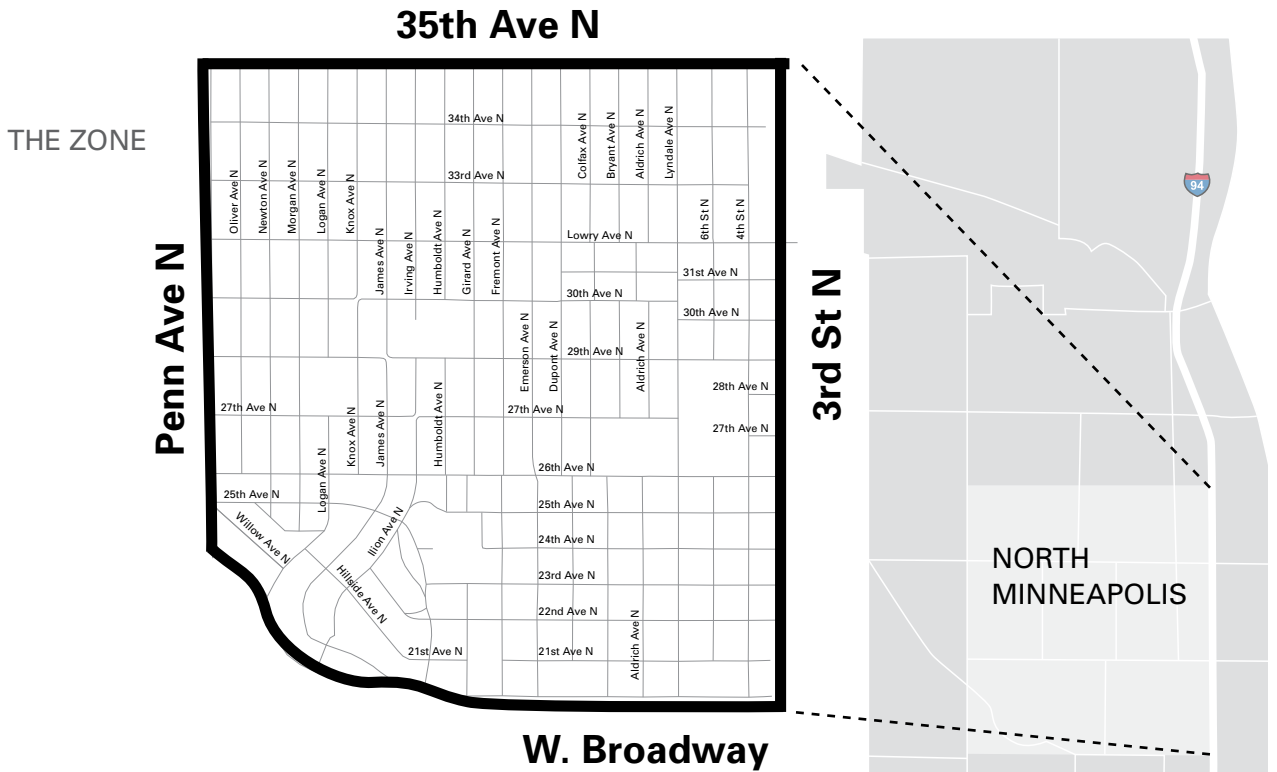


NAZ OVERVIEW 2011

Minnesota's achievement gap is consistently among the largest in the nation. The negative indicators that produce this gap are most pronounced on Minneapolis's Northside, a community of color plagued by high crime and low educational achievement. With a concentration of isolated poverty, one of the highest teen pregnancy rates in the nation, and an epidemic of youth violence, black students on the Northside succeed only by beating the odds. They face fragmented service-delivery and education systems, largely without clear expectations or coordinated strategies for supporting success. Currently, only four out of ten black students on the Northside will graduate from high school in four years (*Minnesota Department of Education, 2010*). **These odds will change.**

In 2008, community organizations and school leaders began gathering to explore the potential to apply the promise of the nationally recognized Harlem Children's Zone effort to North Minneapolis. After a preliminary needs assessment, strategic conversations among stakeholders, and analysis of lessons learned from previous collaborations of this kind, the Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ) was formed. Its collaborative **mission is to build a culture of achievement in a geographic Zone in North Minneapolis to ensure all youth graduate from high school college-ready.**

In 2010 the PEACE Foundation, with expertise in grassroots community organizing, violence reduction and successful collaboration building, emerged as the NAZ lead organization. As over sixty committed local organizational and school partners develop plans to execute the on-the-ground work of NAZ, the PEACE Foundation DBA Northside Achievement Zone has transformed its organizational structure and now functions solely to manage this initiative. It facilitates collaboration, executes fundraising and financial management, oversees evaluation processes and operates family engagement solutions.



TARGET ENROLLMENT

NAZ will enroll any family with children prenatal to 18 years who live in the Zone and demonstrate a commitment to support our college-ready focus. But, our target population are those who have been most left behind, low income African American children and families who have fallen through the cracks in our educational and social service systems. Through doorknocking in the Zone and targeted recruitment from

Anchor Schools and organizational partners, NAZ intends to enroll families in the Zone with the most need who have children with the lowest education outcomes. By targeting and supporting the children in America most left behind, NAZ leaders believe, all children will better succeed.

NAZ manages with multiple levels of leadership, including NAZ Board of Directors, collaborative partner leadership, and NAZ Central leadership staff.

The PEACE Foundation DBA NAZ **Board of Directors** is responsible for governance and fundraising. The Board was transformed by June 2010 to include members able to bring high-level leadership, accountability and resource development support to NAZ.



NAZ MANAGEMENT

PEACE FOUNDATION DBA NAZ BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Stuart Ackerberg

CEO, Ackerberg Group/Catalyst
Community Partners

Peter Bell

Chair, Metropolitan Council

Erika Binger

Former Chair, McKnight Foundation Board

Linda Higgins

Minnesota State Senator, District 58

Dr. Robert Jones

Sr. Vice President, System Academic
Administration, University of Minnesota

Kristina Lemmer

Early Childhood Education Policy Manager,
Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board

Anne Long

Executive Director, Capri Theater and
Plymouth Christian Youth Center

Michelle Martin*

COO, Northside Achievement Zone

Ann Masten

Professor, University of Minnesota
Institute of Child Development

John Mauriel

Associate Professor, Carlson School of Business

Cora McCorvey

Executive Director/CEO,
Minneapolis Public Housing Authority

Repa Mekha

Executive Director, Nexus Community Partners

David Nasby

Former Vice President, General Mills Foundation

Art Rolnick

Senior Fellow, Human Capital Research
Collaborative, University of Minnesota

Sondra Samuels*

CEO, Northside Achievement Zone

Chris Stewart

Board Member, Minneapolis School Board

Wesley Walker

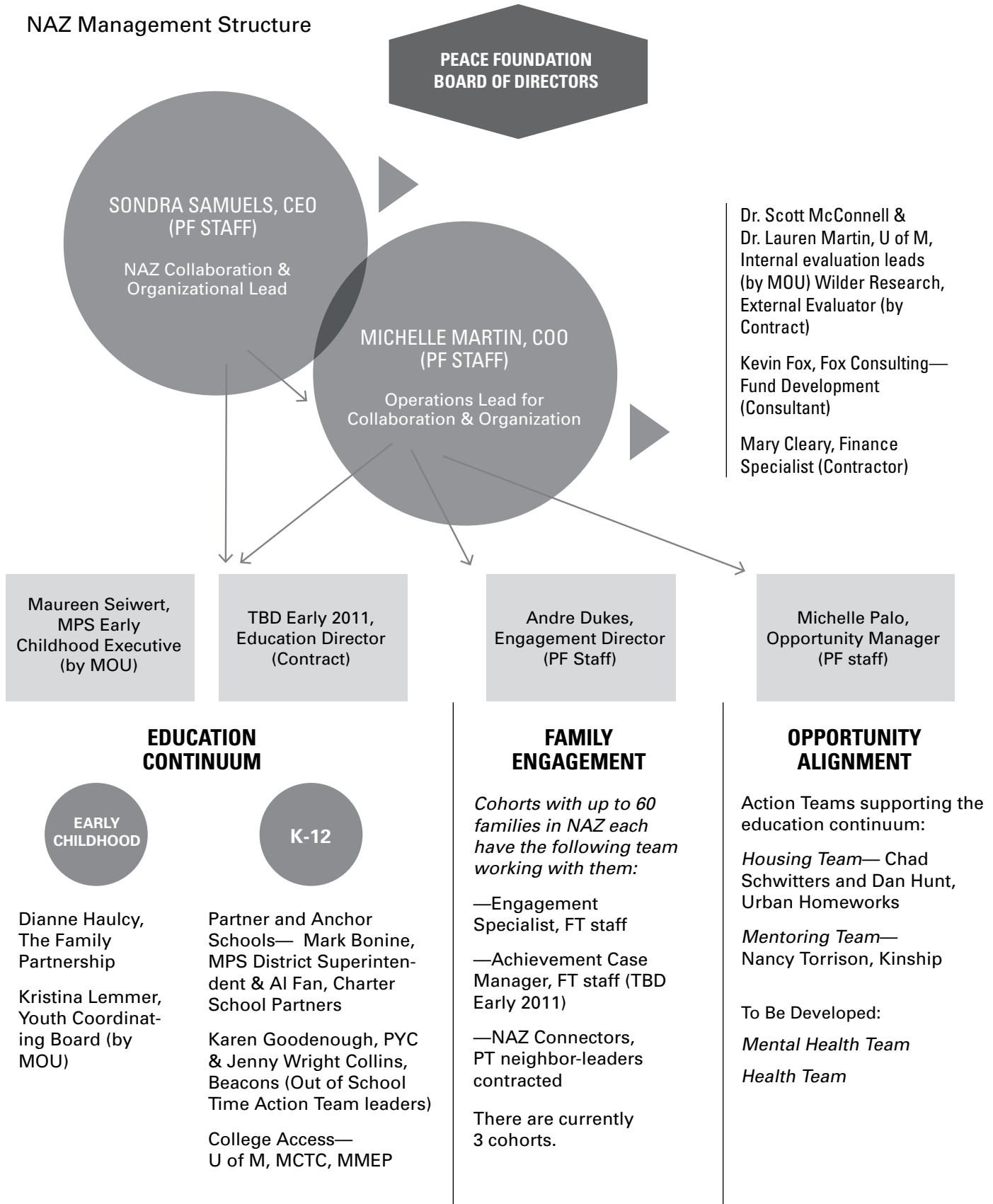
Executive Director, NorthWay Community Trust

John Williams

Owner, Dr. John Williams Family Dentist

** Ex-officio Member*

NAZ Management Structure



Dr. Scott McConnell & Dr. Lauren Martin, U of M, Internal evaluation leads (by MOU) Wilder Research, External Evaluator (by Contract)

Kevin Fox, Fox Consulting— Fund Development (Consultant)

Mary Cleary, Finance Specialist (Contractor)



THEORY OF CHANGE

HOW WILL THE THREE NAZ STRATEGIES WORK TOGETHER TO CREATE EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES IN NORTH MINNEAPOLIS?

NAZ partners believe that to improve achievement outcomes for all children and youth in the Zone, we must develop a comprehensive, multi-level change strategy that addresses the community context on the Northside overall, while implementing a “high touch” process across schools and organizational partners with the families and individuals that are enrolled in NAZ. While NAZ is working broadly to increase the likelihood of improved education and service providing systems that impact most of the kids and families in the Zone, the core work involves engaging families effectively and enrolling them into NAZ Connect, our online shared case management system for whole family and student achievement planning. This process will drive services and support from Partner Schools and organizations using an achievement plan based on the children’s educational outcomes.

During the pilot phase, educational outcomes will improve for the 200 pilot families. Here’s how:

- Each NAZ family and child will have a “high touch” support team through the Family Engagement strategy. Goals will be set by the family through NAZ Connect to support family stability and student success. Baseline and progress data on each student from the schools will be tracked in NAZ Connect to drive the goal setting process.
- Based on the achievement plans in NAZ Connect, and supported by the Engagement Team, specific improvement strategies will be implemented through the Education Pipeline. Strategies include Early Childhood supports to increase kindergarten readiness; Out of School Time support to extend and improve evening, weekend, and summer learning opportunities that are connected to the child’s achievement plan; mentors for eligible children; and school-wide and classroom-level interventions for students at NAZ Anchor and Partner Schools. As NAZ students’ needs are identified and goals are set, the Engagement Team will track down solutions through the partners in NAZ Connect and support families to be involved in students’ achievement.
- Based on family plans and goals in NAZ Connect, Opportunity Alignment will help connect families to opportunities and resources with over 50 organizations that serve the Northside. Opportunities include support for housing, physical and social/emotional health, employment and advocacy. This wrap-around support will ensure that NAZ children will arrive at school ready to learn, and NAZ parents will be able to effectively support and drive school success for their children.

As effective pathways between families, schools and organizations are established through the pilot phase, NAZ will implement a gradual scale-up process to increase the number of Zone families participating with NAZ. The long term goal is to directly reach a majority of the Zone’s population of families with children.

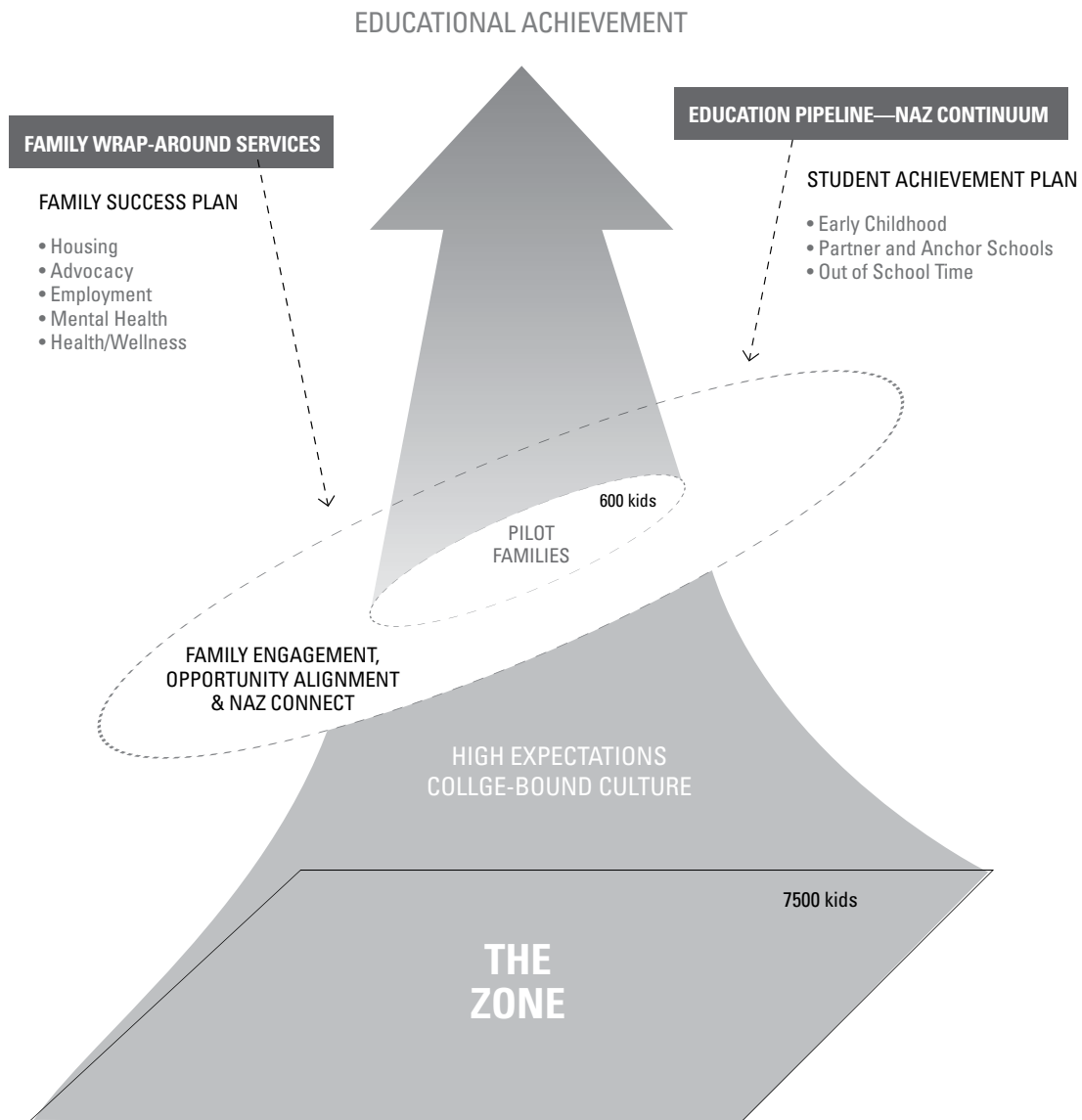
As Partner and Anchor Schools engage in focused improvement in partnership with NAZ, and school-wide academic progress is made, the NAZ Engagement Team will begin to direct

NAZ families to the schools showing the most academic promise.

The direct-impact work with NAZ families will be undergirded by broader context work with Partner Schools and organizations.

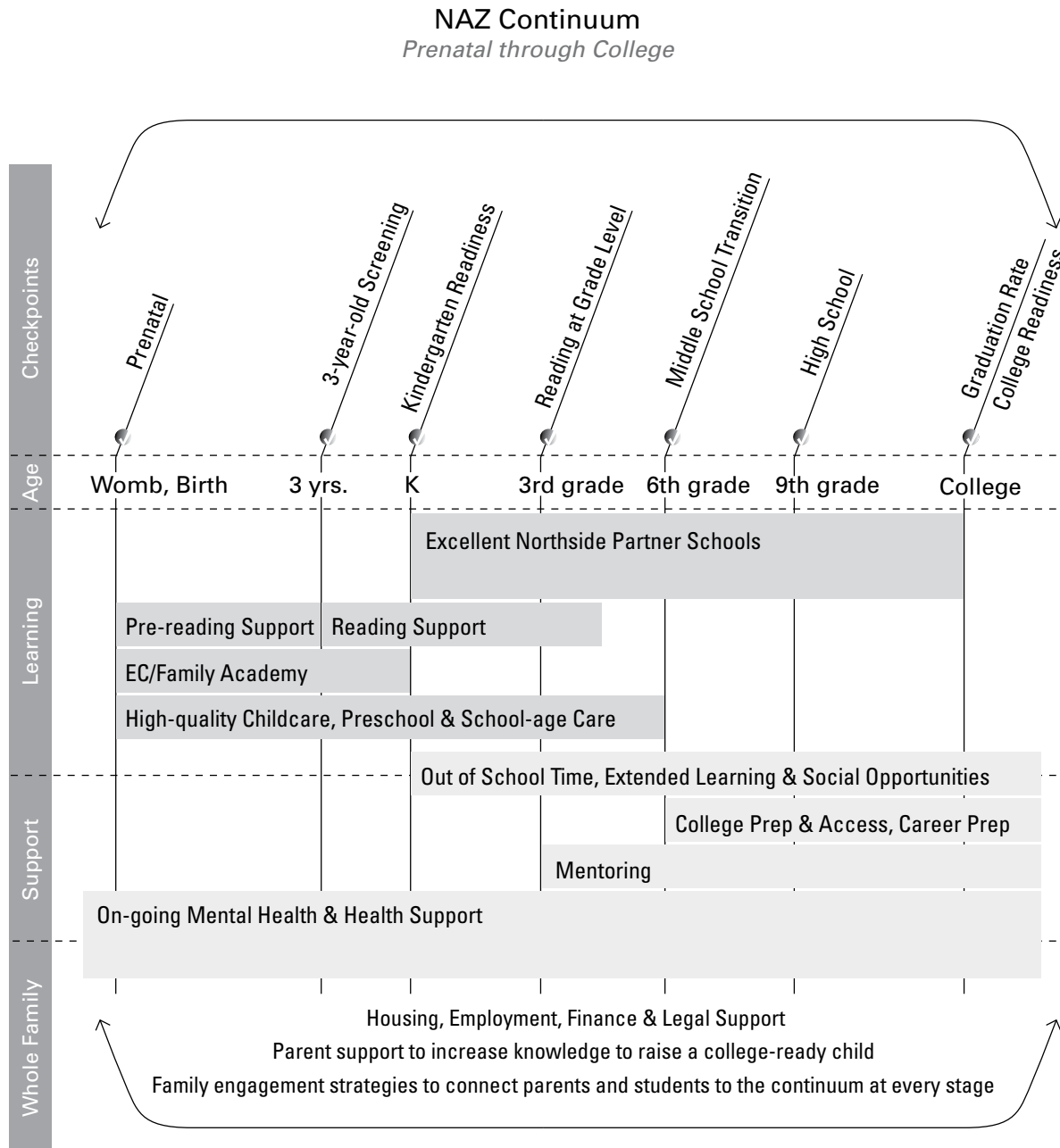
Marketing strategies will be implemented Zone-wide to support a college-going culture and engage a “tipping point” of families, organizations and schools working together with high expectations and effective strategies to support children’s success.

NAZ Theory of Change



In order to have a roadmap for how to support NAZ families and students toward improved academic achievement, a continuum of effective solutions and checkpoints has been identified. Through the continuum, local schools, mentoring programs, family support organizations, health services, and even holistic areas like art and

worship, will have a defined role to work in coordination with families around their achievement plan. **Where one program ends, another is there to pick up the process of supporting Northside children from prenatal to college.**



EVALUATION AND ON-GOING LEARNING

NAZ has designed a comprehensive and robust evaluation strategy to understand and measure our impact in a variety of domains, all leading to measurement of our impact on educational achievement. Evaluation and measurement is infused into all aspects of our work as a source of continuous quality improvement and a mechanism to direct future work. We are truly a “learning collaborative” with all partners and stakeholders driven by data and realistic progress toward our end outcomes.

The primary purpose of evaluation is to document our progress toward NAZ’s overall goal and, when necessary, to provide information that redirects or fine-tunes our efforts. Secondly, we aim to discover strategies that work in the Zone that might also work in other communities.

The NAZ Evaluation Team has two key functions. A process evaluation, what we refer to as our “internal evaluation,” will describe NAZ’s internal work in order to describe the ways our activities and plans work according to design and have the desired outcomes. This will be combined with a robust outcome evaluation, or “external evaluation.” This second function will describe the success of NAZ efforts through an independent assessment of results, indicators and outcomes.

EVALUATION TEAM

The NAZ Evaluation Team is organized to ensure capacity and role responsibilities needed to design, implement, and make use of evaluation results as effectively as possible. To accomplish all goals with integrity and efficiency, NAZ has created two teams that work in close coordination, but with distinct responsibilities and authority. For internal evaluation, NAZ has established a collaborative relation with leadership of the Center for Early Education and Development (CEED) at the University of Minnesota. CEED evaluators are involved at all levels: the NAZ leadership team, internal evaluation and work with external evaluators, and a novel approach to quality improvement called the NAZ Tested Seal of Approval. The internal evaluation team consists of Scott McConnell Ph.D. and Lauren Martin Ph.D. McConnell is a professor of educational psychology, a leading prevention scientist, and expert in early childhood development. Martin is an Anthropologist with expertise in community-based participatory action research focused on issues related to community well-being.

To conduct independent assessment of the initiative’s effects, NAZ has recruited Wilder Research as our external evaluators. Wilder is a nationally recognized leader in research and evaluation related to schools, community

development and collaboration. The Wilder team includes Greg Owen, Ph.D., and Ellen Shelton, MA. Wilder Research has over 100 years of diverse evaluation experience and possesses the wide range of expertise needed to effectively measure and document the holistic and broad work of NAZ. With a staff of over 650 people, including researchers, data collectors, and data base support, Wilder has the capacity to meet the needs of NAZ evaluation.

Professionals affiliated with CEED and Wilder Research have been working together to design complementary internal and external evaluation plans. This coordination will lead to evaluation activities that are rigorous and right-sized, and integrated in ways that are designed to produce the most useful information.



INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

Ultimately, we will measure our success by how well the children in the Zone do according to these three key outcomes:

- Children living in the Zone entering kindergarten are at or above standards as defined by Early Childhood indicators of success.
- Students in the Zone demonstrate proficiency at or above grade level in reading and math as measured by multiple assessment tools including standardized tests.
- Students in the Zone graduate from high school and are prepared for college as measured by performance on a nationally norm referenced college entrance exam.

NAZ has also developed staged markers, indicators and “checkpoints” along the continuum to measure our progress toward these banner outcomes (as depicted on the NAZ Continuum diagram in this document).

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

If NAZ is to be truly a data-driven learning collaborative, the NAZ evaluation must provide actionable information for decision-making within NAZ— including measuring individuals’ progress on short, intermediate and long-term outcomes.

The evaluation framework is closely aligned with, but separate from, NAZ’s intervention design and implementation processes. In each area of substantive effort, NAZ has identified and appointed Action Teams responsible for design and leadership in their respective areas of expertise. These Action Teams focus on particular ages and/or service delivery settings (e.g., Early Childhood, Education, Out of School Time, and Mentoring) as well as cross-cutting functions (e.g., Management, Mental Health, and Housing). The practice, policy, and consumer experts on these respective teams are responsible for initially using their expertise to review available evidence-based practices and best-practice recommendations, considering local contextual variables that may affect these identified practices, and making operational plans for implementing a set of practices at scale within the Zone to contribute to both indicators of success and achievement of the overall goal. The internal evaluation team will then vet these recommendations with a combination of outside peer reviewers and internal review, providing feedback to both the individual Action Teams and NAZ Leadership regarding the likely promise of the full plan.

Once a practice, program or initiative is selected to achieve a desired effect, then we ask three questions:

1. Is this practice being implemented as intended (i.e. fidelity)?
2. Are we doing it with enough people (i.e. scale)?
3. Is this practice effective at doing what we hoped to achieve (i.e. efficacy)?

Data associated with each of these questions will be collected and reported back to action teams, NAZ leadership, and the community on a regular basis and used to prompt, when needed, revisions in nature or scope of NAZ efforts.

Finally, the external team measures the outcomes that we hoped to achieve by implementing each practice and the impact of the totality of practices NAZ implements. This team, in consultation with NAZ leadership and internal evaluators, will identify well-accepted measures of the overall goal and the intermediate checkpoint indicators of success to document the overall effects of NAZ’s effort.

To guide our work we have four general evaluation principles:

1. Child- and family-focused in the Zone— outcomes are focused on how children and families are faring, not how agencies are functioning;
2. Identify and lift up excellence— we support existing agencies, entities and initiatives to achieve the results we collectively desire;
3. Initiative relevant— our information/data must support the operation of NAZ first and foremost; and
4. Participatory and context relevant— evaluation methods and data collection are something we do with people, not to them.

Both evaluation teams also share a number of core principles and assumptions with the rest of NAZ: commitment to transparent operation, accountability for the design and implementation of work, rigor in all aspects of efforts, and supporting efforts that are directly relevant to improving outcomes.

NAZ OPERATING BUDGET

The NAZ operating budget includes all key areas to facilitate the collaborative process, run the family engagement process, and implement communications, finance, and fundraising strategies.

**TOTAL 2011 PROJECTED OPERATING BUDGET—
\$1.4 MILLION**

**Family Engagement Implementation—
\$608,000 (43%)**

Key investments: Engagement Director, 3 cohorts of high-touch support from Engagement Specialists, Achievement Case Managers, and NAZ Connectors for 50+ families in each cohort to set and move on achievement plans. Implementation of NAZ Connect and further development of Achievement Case Management system.

**Education Pipeline Implementation & Strategic Development—
\$174,000 (12%)**

Key investments: School-based leadership for strategic development of Partner School (9) involvement in NAZ and Anchor School (2-3) infrastructure development, including financial support to identified Anchor Schools to support capacity to implement NAZ within schools.

**Opportunity Alignment Implementation & Strategic Development—
\$227,000 (16%)**

Key investments: Management-level staff to build effective pathways to involvement from key opportunity partners, develop and implement NAZ Connect, and train and support engagement staff and NAZ Connectors on system. Financial support to action area leadership at lead partner organizations to support their capacity to effectively align opportunities in their area to NAZ families.

**Fundraising—
\$230,000 (16%)**

Key investments: To support high-growth operating budget, develop five year business and fund development plan and secure funding for NAZ-specific strategic work of collaborative partners to augment their existing work in the Zone (see below).

**Administrative—
\$191,000 (13%)**

NAZ will develop fundraising strategies to secure the resources necessary to build partner capacity to execute approved and prioritized work plans and provide oversight of all funding requests in order to maximize return on investment for the NAZ collaborative overall.

PARTNER CAPACITY FUNDING PROCESS WILL INVOLVE:

- Developing a framework with key Northside funders to ensure that NAZ-related funding does not supplant traditional support to high-quality organizations serving the Northside.
- Developing shared strategies with action area partners to raise funds needed to implement promising strategies through NAZ partner organizations. Funding will be sought to meet key areas of work as articulated in the NAZ Tracker workplan (focusing on the pilot families initially and for scaling up long-term).
- Developing a protocol to determine whether capacity funding opportunities should be executed through NAZ or partner organizations.

The majority of investments for NAZ in addition to strategic partners' existing capacity will be determined by 2nd quarter of 2011 after final stages of scale-up planning are complete. Fund-raising goals already estimated for partners, to meet the estimated NAZ Continuum checkpoints for 200 pilot families. These are indicated below.

Early Childhood Goal for 2011— Current target: \$600,000

To meet checkpoints for prenatal and infant stages through visiting nurses, early childhood screenings with action plans based on findings for families and partners to utilize, and implementing NAZ Family Academy with all families with kids under five. Additional investments will be targeted for high-quality childcare scholarships and other on-site early learning opportunities.

Mentoring Goal for 2011— Current Target: \$175,000 Raised: \$90,000

To match every NAZ family with eligible children to mentors through our partner mentor organizations (estimated 100 new mentors matched).

School-Based Investment— Current Target: \$155,000

To implement instructional core leadership development work with eight Partner School principals and to build NAZ infrastructure in three NAZ Anchor Schools. Will include school-based costs for enrolling and supporting 100 NAZ families from Anchor Schools into NAZ Connect in addition to the NAZ Engagement Team costs.

Out of School Time— Full Goal: TBD

To secure high-impact, research-based strategies through out of school time partners to provide key support to NAZ families' achievement plans during afternoon, evening, and weekend hours. Emphasis will be made on connecting out of school time learning support with the school day through Partner and Anchor Schools.

Wrap-Around Support— Full Goal: TBD

Includes funding to secure housing support to highly mobile families above what existing partners can offer, and for families to access mental health, health, and employment resources and opportunities through NAZ Connect.