



# Results NAZ: Early Childhood Education

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# Key findings

## Current strategies

According to early childhood partners:

- Early childhood scholarships have increased families' access to child care, and the flexibility of the NAZ scholarship has allowed families to maintain their child care placements, but there are opportunities to streamline and simplify the scholarship application process for families.
- Families benefit from having Family Achievement Coaches co-located at early childhood programs. These benefits are dependent upon the extent to which roles and expectations for all involved are made clear and there is intentional partnering and communication between NAZ, the Coach, and the program.
- Most partners were already using the Teaching Strategies GOLD (TS GOLD™) to assess their scholars before NAZ shifted to the use of this assessment strategy; the assessment is generally viewed positively, although technical issues and lack of vendor support have limited its usability and led to some frustration.
- The Screen at 3 initiative is leading to more children getting screened, especially on the Northside. There are marketing and communication opportunities to encourage parents who are reluctant to have their children screened due to misperceptions about the screening and its aim.

## Early childhood screenings

- Nearly all new mothers completed a pre-natal assessment (92%), and all reported regularly visiting a health professional.
- NAZ parents screened 18 percent of scholars age 0-3 and 16 percent of scholars 0-5 for developmental concerns with The Ages & Stages Questionnaires® (ASQ) and The Ages & Stages Questionnaires: Social-Emotional® (ASQ:SE). All NAZ partner centers screen scholars with the ASQ and/or ASQ:SE.
- NAZ scholars were generally on track developmentally, with between 82 and 92 percent of scholars on track in each domain of the ASQ and the ASQ:SE.

## Goal setting, Family Academy, and Family Supports

- Similar to previous years, 82 percent of NAZ-enrolled scholars age 0-4 had at least one early learning or K-12 goal set by their family.

- Among all families with scholars age 0-5, 36 percent completed at least one Family Academy course, and 22 percent completed either College-Bound Babies (CBB) or Ready to Succeed (RTS), the two Family Academy courses best aligned with early childhood and transition to kindergarten skills. The completion rate of CBB or RTS is on par with previous years, while the Family Academy completion rate has increased over time.
- The proportion of families with early childhood scholars participating in at least one Family Support area increased from 35 percent during FY2016 to 45 percent in FY2017; this increase was driven by greater participation in the Career/Finance Strategy.

### High-quality care and education

- Many NAZ parents choose to enroll their early childhood scholars in NAZ anchor partner centers. Fifty-seven percent of scholars age 3-5 and 33 percent of scholars age 0-2 have attended a NAZ early childhood anchor partner.
- The two primary types of financial resources that support early childhood education are Hennepin County's Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) and early childhood scholarships, which include state scholarships (Pathway I and Pathway II) and NAZ Early Learning Scholarships.
- In total, 127 scholars (29%) age 0-5 who had not yet entered kindergarten received CCAP, an early childhood scholarship, or both during FY2017. Scholars receiving funds were more likely to attend a NAZ early childhood anchor program. These data could underrepresent the actual number receiving funding, as collecting data on CCAP receipt was not emphasized during the year.

### Kindergarten readiness

- NAZ scholars in Minneapolis Public Schools, Mastery School, and Ascension were assessed with the Formative Assessment System for Teachers™ (FAST™) earlyReading English assessment.
- Scholars who attended a NAZ early childhood anchor partner were more likely to be on track for kindergarten reading. About half (53%) of scholars who attended a NAZ early childhood anchor for one year or more were on track on the FAST™ earlyReading assessment, compared to only 23 percent of scholars in other programs. There was no significant difference in FAST™ earlyReading outcomes based on the scholar's length of enrollment in NAZ.

### Kindergarten transition

- During 2017-18, 31 percent of NAZ kindergarteners enrolled in a NAZ anchor school; however, there was a substantial amount of missing data (26%) for this population, so the actual figure could be higher.

# Introduction

This is the fourth report on NAZ's early childhood strategy, which targets scholars ages birth through 5 who have not yet entered kindergarten. The report summarizes NAZ's early childhood work during FY2017 – July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017 – and includes the following elements:

- Current strategies with partners
- Prenatal and early childhood screening
- Goal setting, Family Academy, and Family Supports
- High-quality child care and education
- Kindergarten readiness
- Kindergarten transition

# Current strategies with partners

In December 2017, Wilder conducted two focus groups with 14 individuals representing NAZ early childhood partners to gather information about the implementation and impact of key NAZ early childhood strategies – namely, early childhood scholarships, the co-location of Family Achievement Coaches at early childhood partner sites, the rollout and use of TS GOLD™ to developmentally assess scholars, and the Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) Screen at 3 work.

Overall, partners identified ways these strategies currently benefit families as well as ways they could be enhanced. The following summarizes partner feedback by strategy.

## Early childhood scholarships

Early childhood scholarships are potentially available to NAZ scholars in the form of state scholarships (Pathway I and Pathway II) and more recently, through NAZ's own Early Learning Scholarship. Overall, partners noted that the scholarships increased families' access to child care. Although any scholarship was viewed as beneficial to families who needed it, several partners noted the particular benefits of the NAZ scholarship, including its flexibility (compared to the state scholarships) and continuity of child care (i.e., children could remain in programs longer/continuously, as opposed to having to drop out when the state scholarship ended and potentially lose their spot in the center).

However, partners felt that the process of applying for the state-funded Pathway I and Pathway II scholarships could be overly complicated and burdensome for families. The Pathway scholarships require significant paperwork and documentation (not always easily obtained), which ultimately meant some families did not apply. Some partners also cited inconsistent processes and communication around the application process. For example, some have been told that they cannot assist families in completing the application; others shared that they have learned only through experience that leaving anything blank on the application will 'kick out' the application. Still others expressed frustration about the process in which funds are distributed across counties, a process that involves redistribution later in the year to counties with larger populations, resulting in competition across partners and a scramble for available scholarship dollars in the spring of each year. Several also conveyed their concern about the time-limited nature of the scholarships and not knowing if and where funding would come from down the road.

While partners noted that these challenges were not due to NAZ, some thought NAZ could potentially play a role (or larger role) in helping to address some of these systems issues.

## Co-location of Family Achievement Coach

A subset of the partners have a NAZ Family Achievement Coach co-located at their early childhood center. All of these partners were very supportive of the idea and intent of the strategy and felt that collaboration between the NAZ Coach and partner staff was a benefit to families. Having another person like the NAZ Coach, beyond the program staff, to also advocate for the parent or provide support during a crisis or challenging time was perceived as a strength. At least one partner described how having a Coach onsite resulted in the family getting connected to an early childhood scholarship more quickly.

Not all partners, however, felt that co-location always led to these benefits and that the success of this strategy was dependent upon clearly defining the role and expectations on all sides. The Coach role was perceived to be more successful or beneficial when there was intentional partnering between NAZ staff and partner staff around the Coach role from the very beginning. This included having meetings to discuss the role, involving partner staff in interviewing for the Coach position, and then once the Coach was on board, discussing expectations with the Coach right away, having the Coach participate in partner staff meetings, and making sure the Coach offices near or with the program staff. One partner also described making efforts to ensure the Coach felt welcome and part of the team from the very beginning as important to long-term success.

In contrast, the Coach role was perceived to be less successful in cases when there was role confusion, unclear expectations, and a lack of information and resources. Even in programs where the Coach role was working well and perceived to be very beneficial to families, all partners felt that having more information about NAZ services and programming would be helpful to their work. Several partners cited examples in which families would mention getting a particular service or benefit through NAZ (e.g., a housing voucher), but they would not know any details about that service/benefit, the requirements associated with it, or the implications for the family. Partner staff felt more information would help them better serve the families. Additionally, partners stated that having written documentation about the Coach role and expectations of that position and partner staff would ensure that all stakeholders were on the same page from the beginning and lead to a more successful partnership.

## Assessing scholar progress through the TS GOLD™

Many of NAZ's partners are utilizing TS GOLD™ to assess scholars' progress in key areas of development. Among the partners who are using TS GOLD™ who participated in the focus group, all of them stated that they were already using the assessment prior to this shift by NAZ. Those who were using the assessment generally liked it, citing benefits such as getting a snapshot of the child from birth through third grade in one place, and the

fact that it suggested specific activities to teachers to promote development. However, several noted that they had experienced technical glitches when it was recently upgraded, and this prevented them from using the online version. This, and the perceived lack of technical assistance from the vendor around these issues, was clearly a source of frustration for partners.

Only one of the partners present was going to begin using TS GOLD™ because of NAZ’s shift to this assessment strategy, but they had not yet received any training. At least one other partner was not currently using TS GOLD™ and was interested in doing so but did not have the authority to make that decision; as some partners stated, their own partners and funders all require or prefer a variety of assessment tools but they cannot use a different tool to satisfy every partner.

### Screen at 3 efforts

Minneapolis Public Schools’ (MPS) Screen at 3 work is an effort to have all children at age 3 participate in a comprehensive screening designed to identify developmental concerns early. It measures a variety of early learning skills, including language, colors, fine motor, and gross motor skills. NAZ partners generally spoke positively about the school district’s screening work and felt that it was leading to more children getting screened. Having people/advocates that encourage families to get screened – as NAZ staff do – was seen as important to this work. During 2017, MPS partnered with NAZ to conduct screenings at each early childhood co-located site. Because of these kinds of efforts, more screening was happening on the Northside compared to anywhere else in the city.

Some of the partners said they had good turnout at screening events and high participation rates by families. Yet others said that some parents, particularly in some cultural communities, are reluctant to have their children screened, particularly at that younger age. Partners said some parents wanted to wait until their children were older and would “do better,” while other parents were concerned about the child being “labeled” or “diagnosed.” In general, several partners felt this pointed to marketing and communication opportunities to address and correct these perceptions. Some also felt that offering screening at times when parents were more available, such as evenings or weekends, might also increase screening rates.

# Early childhood screenings

The following section summarizes the results of NAZ screening and assessment efforts with scholars age 0-5, as well as the early childhood goals achieved by scholars.

## Prenatal and early childhood screening

NAZ encourages appropriate screenings for all pregnant mothers and early childhood scholars, with the goal of achieving healthy births and identifying developmental concerns early. NAZ Connect records indicate that 13 NAZ mothers were pregnant during FY2017. Of these, 11 women (92%) had completed the NAZ prenatal assessment, and all 13 said they visit a health professional regularly.

The Minnesota Department of Education recommends screening between the ages of 3 and 4 so that children can get support before starting kindergarten. Screenings fall into two categories: parent-report developmental screenings or observational developmental screenings. Parent-report screenings are designed to be either completed by the parent or through a parent questionnaire. At NAZ, the ASQ and ASQ:SE are parent-report completed via questionnaire. Observational screenings are conducted by trained screeners and may vary by program across NAZ partners.

## Benefits of Early Childhood Screening

According to the Minnesota Department of Health, “Early Childhood Health and Developmental Screening ... helps parents and communities improve the educational readiness and health of all young children through the early detection of children's health, development, and/or other factors that may interfere with a child's learning and growth. Developmental screening allows early identification of children at risk for cognitive, motor, communication, or social-emotional delays. These are delays that may interfere with expected growth, learning, and development and may warrant further diagnosis, assessment, and evaluation.”

## Parent-report developmental screenings

### *ASQ and ASQ:SE screenings*

The Ages & Stages Questionnaires® (ASQ) are parent-completed questionnaires used to screen for potential developmental concerns. The ASQ assesses five areas of development—communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and personal-social. The Ages & Stages Questionnaires: Social-Emotional® (ASQ:SE) screens for issues related to social-emotional development. The instruments can be used with children age 0-5.

NAZ gave families ASQ and ASQ:SE questionnaires to complete with their scholars; families returned questionnaires by mail. This report only reflects screenings returned to NAZ, not data gathered by centers or MPS Screen at 3. According to NAZ staff, all

scholars at early childhood centers have been screened with the ASQ:SE, but those data are not reflected here.

During spring 2017, NAZ supported parents to assess:

- 18 percent of scholars age 0-3 with both the ASQ<sup>1</sup> and the ASQ:SE (49 out of 275)<sup>2</sup>
- 16 percent of scholars age 0-5 with both the ASQ and the ASQ:SE (77 out of 486)

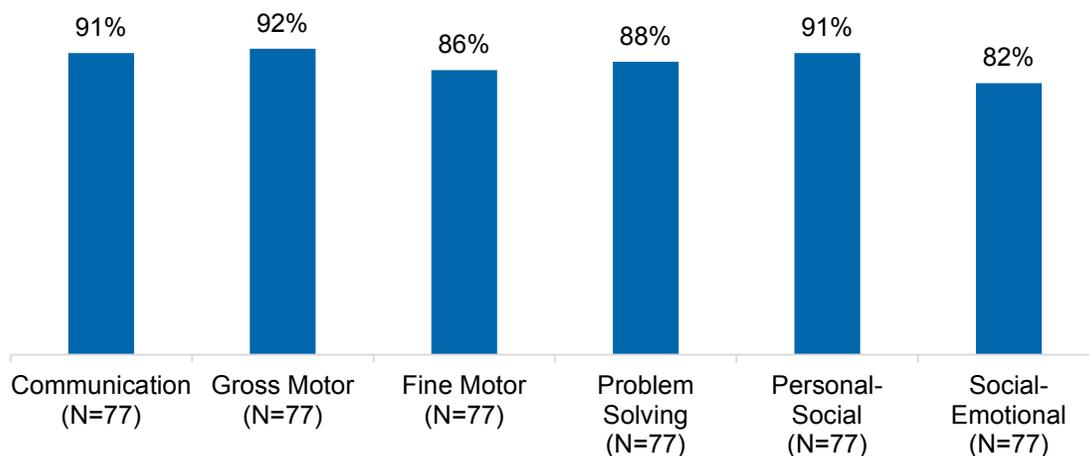
### ASQ and ASQ:SE results

In general, scholars age 0-5 were on track within each individual domain of the ASQ. During spring 2017:

- At least 82 percent of scholars were on track in each ASQ and ASQ:SE domain (Figure 1).
- Scholars were most likely to be on track in the areas of gross motor (92%), communication (91%), and personal-social (91%) skills.
- Scholars were least likely to be on track in the area of social-emotional skills (82%), which represented the area of greatest need, although the majority of scholars were still on track.

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#### 1. ASQ and ASQ:SE performance, percent of scholars ages 0-5 on track, spring 2017



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<sup>1</sup> The ASQ includes five domains; for this measure, we consider an assessment to be complete if 3 out of 5 domains were completed.

<sup>2</sup> Reflects scholars' ages at the beginning of the spring 2017 testing period, January 1, 2017.

## Observational developmental screenings

Observational developmental screenings have been promoted by Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) under the name Screen at 3. Screen at 3 is a comprehensive screening designed to identify developmental concerns early. It measures a variety of early learning skills, including language, colors, fine motor, and gross motor skills. NAZ staff and partners encourage families to have children screened as close as possible to their third birthday. NAZ partners with MPS to gather scholars' Screen at 3 data. At the time of publishing (January 2018), NAZ was uploading the data into NAZ Connect. These data will be analyzed at a later date.

# Goal setting, Family Academy, and Family Supports

NAZ directly supports families by connecting them with NAZ Family Achievement Coaches and Specialists. NAZ Family Achievement Coaches work with families to set goals and ensure families are connected to the appropriate supports, such as those that comprise NAZ's Family Supports pipeline: the Housing Strategy, Career/Finance Strategy, and Behavioral Health Strategy. In addition to these supports, NAZ provides Family Academy, a series of classes that empower parents to help their scholars succeed. Although not directly related to academic outcomes for youth, Family Academy and Family Supports are intended to stabilize families and ultimately improve academic outcomes. The following section presents information about the extent to which families of scholars age 0-5 set goals, participated in Family Academy, and received various Family Supports. In total, 382 families parented 573 scholars age 0-5.

## Goal setting for early childhood scholars

Goal plans are a key form of communication between families, Family Achievement Coaches, Specialists, and partner organizations. The Early Childhood and K-12 Academic Success Goal Plans include goals related to literacy and numeracy skill-building, early childhood education enrollment, seeking regular well-child visits and developmental screenings, and supporting other key elements of success for young scholars.

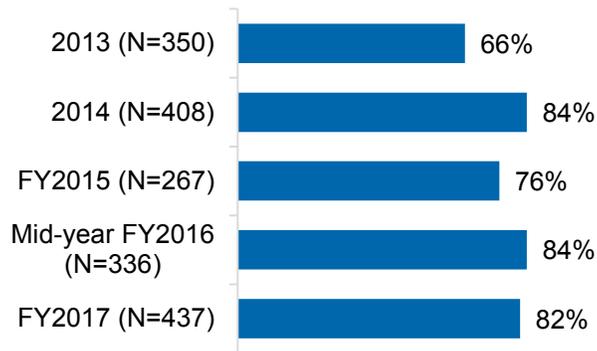
As of July 1, 2017, 82 percent of NAZ-enrolled scholars age 0-4<sup>3</sup> had at least one early learning or K-12 goal set by their family (Figure 2). Within that 82 percent, 37 percent of scholars had both early childhood and K-12 goals set by their families, 28 percent only had K-12 goals, and 18 percent only had early childhood goals.

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<sup>3</sup> Goal setting data is based on scholars age 0-4 rather than 0-5 to be consistent with past reports.

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## 2. Percent of scholars age 0-4 whose families set at least one academic goal



Note: NAZ changed its reporting from the calendar year to fiscal year (July 1 to June 30) reporting beginning on July 1, 2014. There is a six-month overlap between calendar year 2014 and fiscal year 2015 (July 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014). Prior to FY2017, these data points reflected Early Childhood Goal Plan goal setting on the scholar record; for FY2017, the data reflect any Early Childhood or K-12 goal set by the family.

### Completion of Family Academy courses

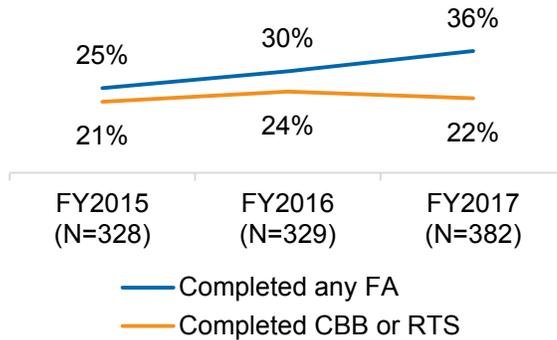
NAZ offers a series of parent empowerment courses called Family Academy. Parents of scholars age birth to 3 are encouraged to participate in College-Bound Babies (CBB), which focuses on positive discipline skills and the development of language, literacy, and numeracy. Ready to Succeed (RTS) supports parents of 4- and 5-year-olds to prepare to transition into kindergarten. The courses emphasize early learning skills and help parents develop the knowledge needed to engage teachers and the school system. More information about Family Academy is available in the Appendix.

Of all 382 NAZ-enrolled families with scholars age 0-5 during FY2017:

- 84 families (22%) have completed College-Bound Babies (CBB) or Ready to Succeed (RTS)
- 136 families (36%) have completed at least one Family Academy course

Figure 3 shows the rate of Family Academy completion among this group by the end of FY2015, FY2016, and FY2017. The proportion of families with early childhood scholars completing CBB or RTS has remained relatively steady, between 21 and 24 percent, while the proportion completing any Family Academy course has increased from 25 to 36 percent.

**3. Family Academy completion, NAZ families with scholars age 0-5, FY2015-FY2017**

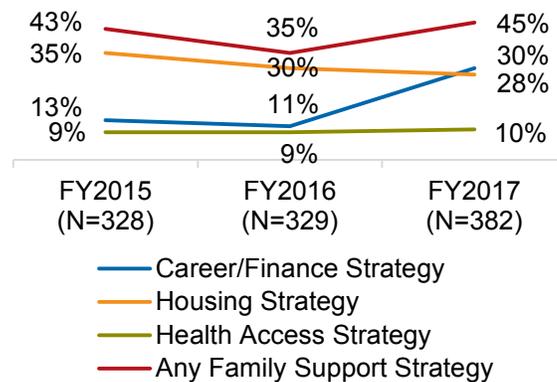


Note: Families with multiple scholars can complete Family Academy courses multiple times; for example, a family that has completed CBB can enroll in CBB again if they have a second child who enters that age range. However, NAZ Connect only tracks the most recent completion, so completions during earlier years may be undercounted.

**Family Supports**

During FY2017, 173 families with scholars age 0-5 (45%) worked with at least one member of the Family Supports pipeline, an increase from FY2016 (35%). Figure 4 shows the proportion of early childhood families working in each pipeline and in any Family Support strategy over the past three fiscal years. The greatest change has been within the Career/Finance Strategy, which substantially increased its work with early childhood families between FY2016 and FY2017.

**4. Participation in Family Supports among families with scholars age 0-5, FY2015-FY2017**



Note: These data reflect which staff were engaged with families based on their roster participation, not visits with families. As such, these data do not necessarily reflect all work done with families in this age group.

Most early childhood families engaged in a Family Support strategy were working with either a Career/Finance Specialist, Housing Specialist, or both. Of all 382 early childhood families:

- 13 percent (50 families) were working with a Career/Finance Specialist only
- 12 percent (45 families) were working with both a Career/Finance Specialist and Housing Specialist
- 10 percent (38 families) were working with a Housing Specialist only
- 4 percent (16 families) were working with all three support areas
  
- 3 percent (13 families) were working with a Health Access Specialist only
- 2 percent (8 families) were working with a Health Access Specialist and Housing Specialist
- 1 percent (3 families) were working with a Health Access Specialist and Career/Finance Specialist

### **Health Access Specialists**

The Health Access Specialist role differs from the other Specialist roles, as Health Access Specialists often work with Coaches instead of directly with families. Though a Health Access Specialist may join meetings with families and their Coaches, the Health Access Specialist may not be added to the family's roster, and therefore may not appear in these records. Health Access Specialists also work closely with Family Academy classes, so families who have completed Foundations have benefitted from this role.

# High-quality child care and education

NAZ works with families to gain access to high-quality early child care and education. Whenever possible, Family Achievement Coaches help families identify and gain access to early childhood funding to be able to afford high-quality care. The following section summarizes scholars' enrollment in high-quality early childhood programming and the various types of child care financial supports available to families.

## High-quality care and education

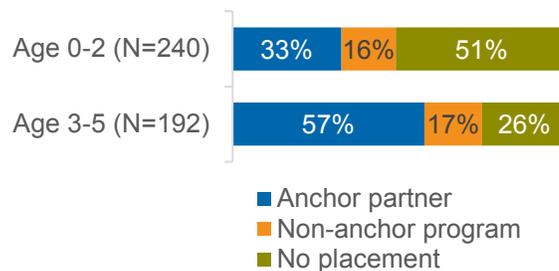
NAZ partners with numerous North Minneapolis early childhood partners to help scholars gain access to high-quality early learning opportunities. NAZ staff use the Parent Aware rating system to measure early childhood program quality. Parent Aware rates early childhood programs on a scale of one to four stars – NAZ considers “high-quality” centers to be those that receive a 3- or 4-Star rating from Parent Aware, though all of NAZ’s early childhood anchor partners have received a 4-Star Rating from Parent Aware. NAZ’s anchor partner centers are:

- LaCreche Early Childhood Centers, Inc.
- Minneapolis Public Schools Early Childhood Education
- New Horizon Academy
- Northside Child Development Center
- The Family Partnership
- YWCA Early Childhood Center

By the end of FY2017, 57 percent of NAZ scholars age 3-5 and 33 percent of NAZ scholars age 0-2 had been enrolled in a NAZ anchor early childhood program at some point (Figure 5). Nearly three-quarters of scholars age 3-5 had been engaged in *any* early childhood program, compared to about half of scholars age 0-2. Equal proportions of each age group (16-17%) had been enrolled in a non-anchor program only.

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### 5. Enrollment in early childhood programs by age group, FY2017



Note: Early childhood enrollment data downloaded from NAZ Connect on 12/1/2017. Includes scholars ever enrolled in an early childhood program as of 12/1/2017.

## Financial supports

Two primary types of financial support for child care are available to qualifying families of NAZ scholars: early childhood scholarships (which include state-funded and NAZ-funded scholarships) and Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) funding. During FY2017, there were a total of 432 scholars ages 0-5 not enrolled in kindergarten. Of those, 29 percent received funding through an early childhood scholarship, CCAP, or both.

## Scholarships

NAZ Family Achievement Coaches and early childhood partners help NAZ families access scholarships for scholars to attend high-quality early child care. During FY2017, scholars most frequently accessed the Minnesota Department of Education's Pathway I and II Scholarships. For more information on these scholarships, refer to the Appendix.

In March 2017, NAZ began offering its own early childhood scholarships, dubbed NAZ Early Learning Scholarships. In 2017-18, these NAZ scholarships have become a larger part of NAZ's early childhood scholarship work. Figure 6 shows scholarships awarded last year (2016-17), and the number of scholarships awarded so far in 2017-18.

### Rasheda | New NAZ Early Childhood Scholarship Recipient

"We were paying over \$300 a week for daycare. It was accessible, but a lot. Then, my husband got laid off and it was like -- ok does my son stay home and lose his spot at the daycare? Or does he go and we just figure it out? Then Lucretia called as said, 'You're up for the scholarship!' And I was like, 'Oh my god! Thank you, Jesus!' To have to juggle your kids' education (and he's learning a lot) with paying bills, you just shouldn't have to choose. And you want quality care.

We have four kids, there's a lot of financial things that come up. This scholarship means having choices, not having to tell one kid no and the other kid yes.

We pay for medical through our job. For me, I want to get an operation. My son is allergic to tree nuts and also fish and he doesn't have an epi-pen right now; to have an epi-pen is like \$400. So the questions become: does he have to die because he's allergic to fish or do we not pay our mortgage because he needs an epi-pen? Just knowing that we can save a year's worth of daycare is immense. It's life or death and it shouldn't be. You shouldn't have to choose.

I was like a light came on and a band was playing! It was so wonderful, it really was. It couldn't have come at a better time -- this scholarship came the weight was lifted."

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## 6. Early childhood scholarships awarded

Scholarship	2016-17 awards	2017-18 awards as of January 1, 2018
Pathway I Scholarship	80	33
NAZ Early Learning Scholarship	NA	40

Note: Early childhood scholarship data were provided by NAZ and reflect all scholarships awarded during calendar year 2017. Scholarship counts are unduplicated; scholars could receive more than one scholarship. Scholarship data unavailable for Pathway II Scholarships; some NAZ Early Learning Scholarships started in 2016-17, but all have been tracked as 2017-18 funds. Please refer to the Appendix for further information.

### *Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)*

NAZ Family Achievement Coaches also partner with families to access Hennepin County Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) funding. Children ages 0-12 are eligible for CCAP.

As of July 1, 2017, NAZ Connect records indicated that 75 scholars age 0-5, not enrolled in kindergarten, were receiving CCAP funds, and 89 had received CCAP funding at some point (Figure 7). In comparison, fewer school-age scholars were receiving funding. Note that these figures may under-represent the number of scholars supported by this resource, as NAZ has not emphasized the collection of CCAP data. Data collection processes for this item will be reviewed in the coming year.

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## 7. Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) application status, July 2017

	Early childhood scholars, ages 0-5 (N=432)	School-age scholars, ages 6-12 (N=1049)
Ever received	89	38
Currently receiving	75	37
Application in process	19	3
Waiting list	4	16

Note: Reflects scholars age 0-5 who were not yet enrolled in school and those age 6-12 and 5-year-olds enrolled in school. These data include the CCAP status recorded on the scholar's record, not parent records. "Ever received" indicates that the scholar received CCAP at any point during his or her lifetime. 2016-17 data include 3 scholars who were missing dates of birth, and as such are not included in the data broken down by age.

## *Funding recipients and partner program enrollment*

During FY2017, 127 early childhood scholars not yet enrolled in kindergarten received funding from either CCAP, an early childhood scholarship, or both (Figure 8).

### **8. Early childhood funding receipt by source, FY2017**

<b>FY2017 funding source</b>	<b>Early childhood scholars, ages 0-5 (N=432)</b>	<b>School-age scholars, ages 6-12 (N=1049)</b>
<u>Any</u> funding - either CCAP or early childhood scholarship	29% (127)	4% (37)
<u>Both</u> CCAP and early childhood scholarship	6% (24)	NA
Only CCAP	12% (51)	4% (37)
Only early childhood scholarship	12% (52)	NA
No documented funding source	71% (305)	96% (1,012)

Note: Early childhood scholarship data downloaded from NAZ Connect on 12/1/2017. Data reflects scholars age 0-5 who were not yet enrolled in school. Only reflects CCAP status recorded on scholar record, not parent records. Includes scholars receiving CCAP on July 1, 2017 and any 2016-17 scholarship.

The majority of scholars receiving CCAP or an early childhood scholarship during FY2017 were enrolled in a partner early childhood program or anchor school (Figure 9). For early childhood scholars, 75 percent of scholars receiving either CCAP or an early childhood scholarship were enrolled in a NAZ partner early childhood program. About half of elementary-age scholars benefitting from CCAP were attending a partner anchor school.

### **9. Percent of funding recipients who attended NAZ partner programs during 2016-17**

<b>FY2017 funding source</b>	<b>Age 0-5 attending partner EC program</b>	<b>Age 6-12 attending partner anchor school</b>
<u>Any</u> funding - either CCAP or early childhood scholarship	75% (95/127)	51% (19/37)
<u>Both</u> CCAP and early childhood scholarship	83% (20/24)	N/A
Only CCAP	65% (33/51)	51% (19/37)
Only early childhood scholarship	81% (42/52)	N/A
No documented funding source	30% (93/305)	41% (416/1,012)

Note: Early childhood scholarship data downloaded from NAZ Connect on 12/1/2017. Age 0-5 category reflects those who were not yet enrolled in school. Only reflects CCAP status recorded on the scholar's record, not parent records. Data reflect CCAP recipients as of July 1, 2017 and scholarship receipt at any point during FY2017. Based on FY2017 early childhood center and anchor school enrollment in NAZ Connect.

# Kindergarten readiness

## Background

NAZ uses assessments administered by Minneapolis Public Schools to measure its scholars' progress in early literacy. Kindergarten scholars' progress in reading skills was assessed with the FAST™ during September 2017. Minneapolis Public Schools staff assessed scholars at Hall and Nellie Stone, and Wilder Research staff assessed scholars at Mastery and Ascension. Due to timing, KIPP was unable to assess its students this year, but will be invited to participate in the future.

FAST™ scores are categorized into three categories: “high risk,” “some risk,” and “low risk.” If a scholar scores in the “high risk” category, their score falls in the bottom 15 percent of all students assessed throughout the country. Though these scores can be used to measure where scholars perform relative to other students they cannot predict whether students will be proficient on standards-based assessments like the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA).

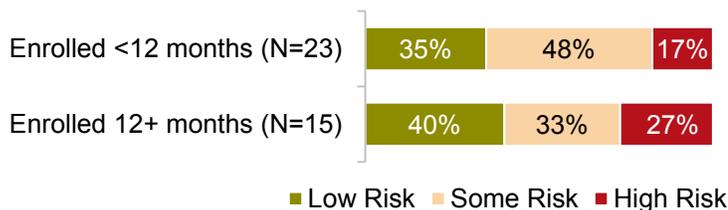
## Results

Just over one-third (37%) of NAZ scholars scored in the “Low Risk” category on the Fall 2017 FAST™ earlyReading English assessment, while 42 percent scored in the “Some Risk” range. One in five NAZ scholars (21%) scored in the “High Risk” category.

With respect to length of enrollment, there were minimal differences in performance between scholars enrolled longer-term (12+ months) and those enrolled less than 12 months (Figure 10).

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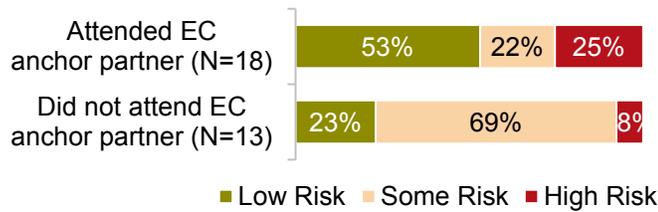
### 10. Kindergarten readiness (earlyFAST™ reading) by length of NAZ enrollment, Fall 2017 (2017-18)



Note: Data reflect all NAZ scholars in kindergarten during fall 2017 who were assessed at MPS, Mastery, or Ascension.

NAZ scholars assessed at MPS, Ascension, and Mastery who attended an early childhood anchor partner performed better than those who did not attend a partner program (Figure 11). Scholars who attended a partner early childhood program were more than twice as likely as their NAZ-enrolled peers in non-partner programs to score in the low-risk range.

**11. Kindergarten readiness (earlyFAST™ reading) by prior attendance at an early childhood anchor partner, Fall 2017 (SY2017-18)**



Note: Data reflect all NAZ scholars in kindergarten during fall 2017 who were assessed at MPS, Mastery, or Ascension.

We also examined kindergarten readiness by receipt of early childhood scholarships and parents’ completion of Family Academy. Unfortunately, academic data were only available for fewer than 10 scholars who received each of these services, and so we are unable to make a meaningful comparison of performance between these scholars and their peers.

# Kindergarten transition

NAZ and its partners collaborate to ensure scholars have a successful transition into kindergarten. NAZ supports this in multiple ways. First, Family Achievement Coaches encourage families to attend existing Transition to Kindergarten events hosted by partners. In previous years, NAZ hosted its own transition events, but staff believe referrals better leverage the strengths of NAZ's partners. Second, NAZ has deepened its work on transition activities through its Family Academy program. Finally, beginning in fall 2017, the Family Academy course Ready to Succeed (RTS) now focuses on the kindergarten transition.

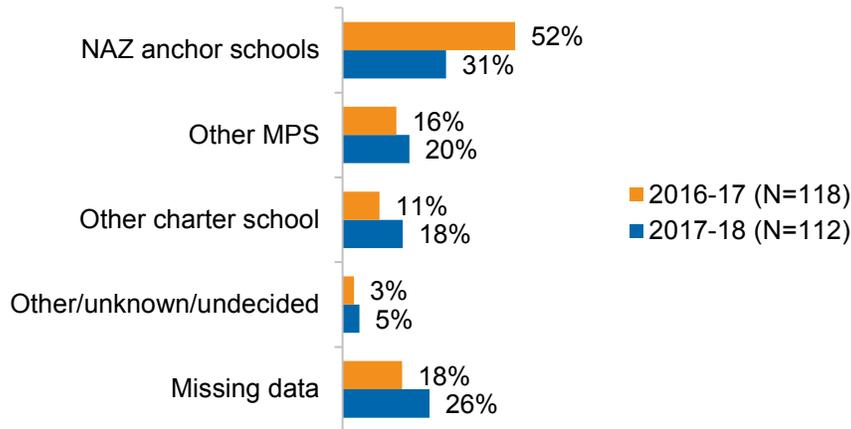
In addition to these kindergarten transition activities, NAZ encourages families with scholars transitioning into kindergarten to enroll in one of its partner schools: Nellie Stone Johnson, Elizabeth Hall International School, Ascension Catholic School, KIPP North Star Academy, or Mastery School. This section focuses primarily on the schools attended by kindergarten scholars.

## Kindergarten enrollment, 2017-18

In total, there were 112 scholars who began kindergarten in 2017-18. Of those, 70 scholars (63%) had attended a NAZ early childhood anchor partner program, and 35 scholars (31%) attended a NAZ anchor school for kindergarten.

Figure 12 shows where NAZ's 2016-17 and 2017-18 kindergarten cohorts enrolled in school. Compared to the previous year, a smaller proportion of the 2017-18 kindergarten cohort enrolled in a NAZ anchor school (31% vs. 52%), with greater proportions enrolled in a different charter school (18% vs. 11%) and who have missing data (26% vs. 18%).

## 12. School enrollment among kindergarten-age scholars, 2016-17 and 2017-18



Note: Data downloaded from NAZ Connect on 12/1/2017. Reflects the scholar's recent school enrollment for the 2017-18 school year.

With respect to specific schools, 14 percent of kindergarten-age scholars enrolled during the period attended Nellie Stone Johnson. Less than 1 in 10 kindergarten scholars (4-7%) attended Elizabeth Hall, KIPP Northstar, or Ascension, respectively (Figure 13). Of all the anchor elementary schools, Mastery had the lowest attendance during 2017-18, with only two scholars enrolling. However, it should be noted that data were missing for one-quarter (26%) of all kindergarten-age scholars, so these proportions may undercount actual enrollment figures.

## 13. Specific school enrollment among kindergarten-age scholars, 2017-18

School	Kindergarten cohort who attended the school	
	Percentage (N=112)	Number of scholars (N=112)
Nellie Stone Johnson*	14%	16
Ascension Catholic School*	7%	8
KIPP Northstar Academy*	4%	5
Elizabeth Hall International*	4%	4
Mastery School (HNS)*	2%	2
Lucy Craft Laney	7%	8
Prodeo Academy	7%	8
Other MPS	13%	14
Other charter	11%	12
Other	2%	2
Undecided	4%	4
Missing	26%	29

Note: Data downloaded from NAZ Connect on 12/1/2017. Reflects the scholar's recent school enrollment for the 2017-18 school year.

\* NAZ anchor schools

# Appendix

## General information

This report includes data for scholars enrolled in NAZ between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017. All ages are calculated as of the start of the period, July 1, 2016, unless otherwise specified. For example, ages for scholars assessed with the ASQ/ASQ:SE spring 2017 are calculated as of the start of the assessment period, January 1, 2017, to best align with their age at the time of screening.

The majority of the data were downloaded from NAZ Connect on July 1, 2017 unless otherwise noted below the corresponding figure. Sometimes, particularly for subject areas where there may be a lag in data entry, we pull more recent data to supplement existing data. For example, if Coaches make a significant attempt to collect school enrollment data in August, data downloaded July 1 will not be as complete as data downloaded September 1. As such, we would opt for data collected as recently as the reporting timeline allows.

### *Pregnancy*

To be considered pregnant during FY2017, a woman must have had a due date between 7/1/2016 and 6/30/2017.

### *Early Childhood and K-12 Academic Success Goal Plans*

The Early Childhood Goal Plan consists of 14 primary goals that Family Coaches set with families of scholars age 0-5 who have not yet entered kindergarten. The K-12 Academic Success Goal Plan includes goals. Each of the primary goals includes goal steps, which are generally smaller components of the overall goal.

## Early childhood screenings

The Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) Early Childhood Screening includes the ASQ:SE as part of its overall screening process, and NAZ partner early childhood centers regularly assess scholars with both the ASQ and ASQ:SE.

Because the questionnaires are intended to be used as screening tools, it is not appropriate to show change in ASQ/ASQ:SE scores over time. Rather, because the purpose of the ASQ is to identify possible developmental concerns in young children, the threshold for “at risk” is set relatively low. Therefore, changes in risk level would not have the same meaning as those in academic assessments like the Indicators of Individual Growth and Development for Infants and Toddlers (IGDIs) or Measures of Academic Progress (MAP scores).

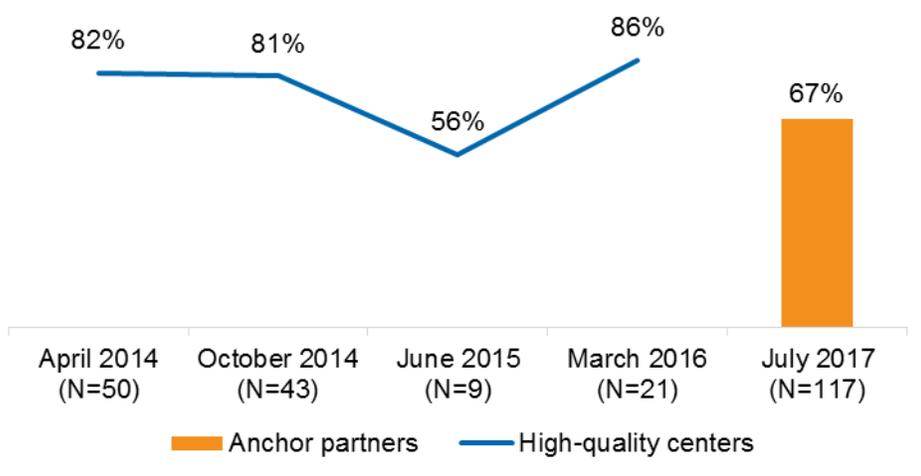
## High quality child care and education

Previously, NAZ’s goal for scholar participation varied by age group. NAZ wanted scholars age 0-2 *who were in child care* to be in a high-quality program, whereas it wanted *all* scholars age 3-5 to be in a high-quality program. Now, NAZ’s goal is that *all* scholars age 0-5 have access to and gain enrollment in high-quality programs. To maintain the trend line from previous years, we conducted the same analyses that had been done in the past, using these two groups and their separate denominators. However, because NAZ now strives for access to high-quality centers for all of its scholars, these graphs have been moved to the Appendix.

In FY2017, NAZ changed its measure of success for early childhood enrollment. Previously, it strove to enroll scholars in high-quality centers – those with a 3- or 4-Star Parent Aware rating. During FY2017, NAZ began to focus its enrollment on its partner centers. All of NAZ’s anchor partners are high-quality programs that have received a 4-Star Rating from Parent Aware.

Figure A1 illustrates enrollment in high-quality programs among scholars ages 0-2 between April 2014 and July 2017. For the most part, infant and toddler enrollment in these programs remained around 80 percent, with a momentary dip in June 2015. However, this should be interpreted with caution due to the small number of scholars (N=9) in care at the time. As of July 2017, 67 percent of scholars age 0-2 in child care were enrolled in a NAZ anchor partner center.

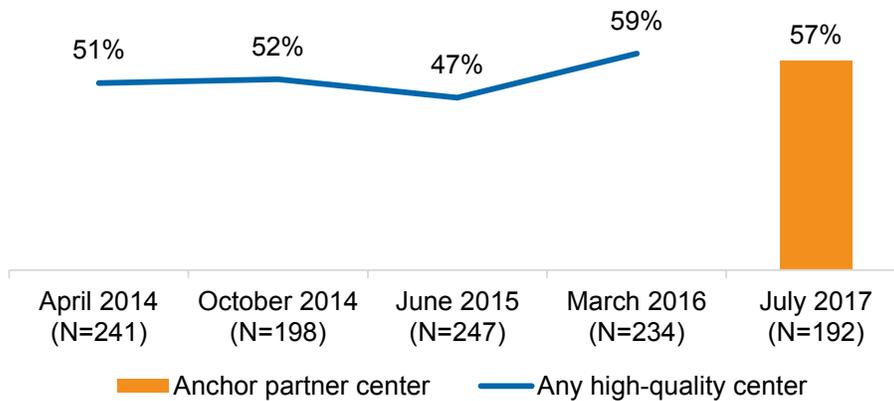
### A1. Enrollment in high-quality or anchor early childhood programs, scholars age 0-2, April 2014 – July 2017



Note: Due to the small number of scholars attending centers during June 2015, results should be interpreted with caution. In past years, NAZ tracked the proportion of scholars in high-quality centers; beginning in FY2017, NAZ emphasizes enrollment in anchor partner centers. Proportion reflects the percentage of scholars enrolled in a high-quality center or anchor partner out of the total number enrolled in any child care arrangement age 0-2.

Figure A2 illustrates the proportion of scholars enrolled in high-quality early childhood centers between April 2014 and July 2017. The percentage of scholars ages 3-5 attending high-quality early childhood programs or anchor centers remained relatively steady over the last several years, hovering between 47 and 59 percent. In July 2017, 57 percent of scholars age 3-5 had been enrolled in an anchor partner center.

**A2. Enrollment in high-quality or anchor early childhood programs, scholars age 3-5, April 2014 – July 2017**



Note: In past years, NAZ tracked the proportion of scholars in high-quality centers; beginning in FY2017, NAZ emphasizes enrollment in anchor partner centers. Proportion reflects the percentage of scholars enrolled in a high-quality center or anchor partner out of the total number of scholars age 3-5.

Figures A3 and A4 show the counts associated with Figures A1 and A2.

**A3. Percentage of 0-2 year olds enrolled in high-quality or anchor partner early childhood programs**

Age	Number in high-quality or anchor partner early childhood programs (% of all scholars 0-2 in early childhood programs)				
	14-Apr	14-Oct	15-Jun	16-Mar	17-Jul*
0	2 (2/3)	1 (1/1)	-	1 (1/2)	21 (23%)
1	19 (90%)	6 (67%)	1 (1/1)	6 (6/6)	25 (37%)
2	20 (77%)	28 (85%)	4 (4/8)	11 (85%)	32 (41%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>41 (82%)</b>	<b>35 (81%)</b>	<b>5 (5/9)</b>	<b>18 (86%)</b>	<b>78 (33%)</b>

Note: Data for April 2014 and October 2014 were compiled by the University of Minnesota’s CEED.

\* Indicates that the figure reflects the percent of scholars attending NAZ anchor programs, not any high-quality early childhood center.

#### A4. Percentage of 3-5 year olds enrolled in high-quality or anchor partner early childhood programs

Age	Number in 3-4 star programs (% of all scholars 3-5 in NAZ)				
	14- Apr	14- Oct	15-Jun	16- Mar	17- Jul*
3	31 (36%)	31 (37%)	30 (32%)	45 (47%)	48 (53%)
4	47 (53%)	62 (61%)	29 (39%)	61 (64%)	49 (65%)
5	46 (68%)	10 (71%)	58 (73%)	31 (61%)	13 (48%)
Total	<b>124 (51%)</b>	<b>103 (52%)</b>	<b>117 (47%)</b>	<b>137 (59%)</b>	<b>110 (57%)</b>

Note: Data for April 2014 and October 2014 were compiled by the University of Minnesota's CEED.

\* Indicates that the figure reflects the percent of scholars attending NAZ anchor programs, not any high-quality early childhood center.

### Financial supports

In the future, NAZ would like to use scholarship and CCAP data to identify which scholars lost a child care placement because they were not able to access funding, and the combination of resources that work best to support families.

#### *Pathway I and II Scholarships*

As per the Minnesota Department of Education, “Pathway I Scholarships are awarded directly to families who meet eligibility requirements,” while Pathway II Scholarships are paid directly to centers who have earned a Four-Star rating through Parent Aware.<sup>4</sup> In general, only children age 3-5 are eligible for the funding, although if they have younger siblings, their younger siblings also qualify for funding.

Because Pathway II funding is awarded directly to centers, NAZ families may not know they are receiving Pathway II funds. As such, NAZ Connect does not contain complete data on the total number of NAZ Pathway II recipients during FY2017, and they have been omitted from Figure 6. However, if NAZ Connect indicates that a family was receiving a Pathway II scholarship – this is only true for a handful of families – the scholar benefitting from the award was included as an early childhood scholarship recipient throughout the rest of the report.

<sup>4</sup> More information about the Pathway program is available at <http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/fam/elsprog/elschol/>.

## *Notes on Figure 6*

Scholarship data include all scholarships awarded through the end of calendar year 2017 – which represents data from 6 months into the 2017-18 award year – to all scholars enrolled during calendar year 2017. The timeframe and population reflected in this chart differ from the rest of the report, but were included because they more accurately reflect NAZ’s work in this area.

Figure 6 includes any scholarships with a status indicating they were awarded and utilized: awarded – placed, closed, closed – 12 months expired, closed – max funding reached, entering kindergarten. Records also must have had a start date less than or equal to 12/31/2017 and been missing an end date or have had an end date greater than/equal to 1/1/2017.

Scholarship award years are based on the award year identified in NAZ Connect (e.g., NAZ Early Learning Scholarship FY 2017-2018), not the date of the award. Some NAZ Early Learning Scholarships were awarded late in the 2016-17 school year, but were tracked as 2017-18 awards. In our data, they are reflected as 2017-18 awards.

## **Kindergarten readiness**

In the past, the Beginning Kindergarten Assessment (BKA) was used to assess kindergarten readiness, which was developed by Minneapolis Public Schools and aligned with the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA). However, Minneapolis Public Schools discontinued the use of this instrument and shifted to using the Formative Assessment System for Teachers™ (FAST™) earlyReading English assessment. In addition to the use of the FAST™ assessment in kindergarten, going forward, TS GOLD™ will be used to track early childhood scholars’ developmental progress. These results will be presented in future reports.

The FAST™ earlyReading English assessment is a computer-based, untimed test that typically lasts around 5-10 minutes per student, and is typically administered to children in Pre-K, kindergarten, and first grade. Though earlyReading includes 12 sub-tests, FASTBridge “recommends a composite of four specific sub-tests to be given per benchmark period” when used as a screening tool.<sup>5</sup> These four sub-tests are combined to form a composite score, which is reflected in the NAZ student data below.<sup>6</sup>

Kindergarten scholars’ progress in reading skills was assessed with the FAST™ during September 2017. Minneapolis Public Schools staff assessed scholars at Hall and Nellie Stone Johnson, and Wilder Research staff assessed scholars at Mastery and Ascension.

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<sup>5</sup> When using the FAST for progress monitoring, students should be assessed multiple times with a single subtest to track progress on the scholar’s score and risk level.

<sup>6</sup> More detail available online at: <http://www.fastbridge.org/assessments/reading/cbmreading/>

Despite efforts to assess scholars at KIPP, we were unable to coordinate assessments there during the necessary timeframe, partially due to transitions in leadership. However, KIPP will be included in future efforts to assess kindergarten scholars.

Typically, NAZ only reports on academic outcomes for scholars who have been working with NAZ for one year or more. However, the number of scholars with data in any single grade – in this case, kindergarten – is small (N=38), and would be even smaller if the group were reduced to only scholars enrolled 12 months or longer (N=15). Because findings based on such a small number of scholars would not be reliable, we included all kindergarten scholars, regardless of length of enrollment in NAZ, in the following analysis, and examined differences by length of enrollment and early childhood program participation.

### Kindergarten enrollment, 2016-17 and 2017-18

To best match outcomes for early childhood scholars served during FY2017, this report focuses on the number of scholars enrolled in kindergarten during the 2017-18 school year; data from 2017-18 also best align with the fall 2017 FAST results. For comparison, we also show enrollment for who were in kindergarten during FY2017, or the 2016-17 school year. Figure A5 compares more detailed kindergarten enrollment data for these two years.

Of note, school enrollment data were downloaded from NAZ Connect on December 1, 2017 and reflect the most recent school enrollment data available in NAZ Connect for the given school year.

#### A5. Specific school enrollment among kindergarten-age scholars, 2016-17 and 2017-18

School	Kindergarten cohort who attended the school	
	2016-17 (N=118)	2017-18 (N=112)
Nellie Stone Johnson *	21%	14%
Elizabeth Hall International *	10%	4%
KIPP Northstar Academy *	10%	4%
Ascension Elementary School *	8%	7%
Mastery School *	3%	2%
Other MPS	16%	20%
Other charter school	11%	18%
Other/undecided	3%	5%
Missing data	18%	26%

\* NAZ anchor schools

## Family Academy courses

Family Academy provides parenting empowerment classes that give parents the skills they need to see their children as scholars and put them on a path to college, beginning at birth. The current Family Academy course offerings are:

- **Foundations** builds parents' empowerment, self-awareness, self-regulation and motivation, empathy, and relationship-management skills. Families must complete this course before moving on to others in the series; it is appropriate for parents with children of any age. In its current form, Foundations classes meet weekly for 9 weeks.
- **College-Bound Babies (CBB)** is for parents of children age birth to 3. It emphasizes the idea that parents are children's first teachers, and specifically focuses on building parents' positive discipline skills and their ability to contribute to their children's development of language, literacy, and numeracy. CBB classes meet weekly for 13 weeks.
- **Ready to Succeed (RTS)** supports parents of 4- and 5-year-olds in preparing their children for kindergarten, particularly in the development of language, literacy, numeracy, and executive function skills. It helps parents develop the knowledge and skills needed to be active participants in their child's school education, including engaging with teachers and the school system. RTS classes meet weekly for 7 weeks.
- **College-Bound Scholars - Elementary (CBS-1)** is for parents of elementary school-age scholars, which helps parents support their children's school success. CBS-1 classes meet weekly for 9 weeks.