



GET GEORGIA  
READING  
COMMUNITY ACTION  
WORKBOOK



## LANGUAGE NUTRITION

All children receive abundant, language-rich adult-child interactions, which are as critical for brain development as healthy food is for physical growth.



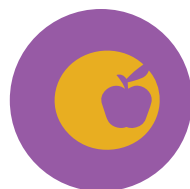
## ACCESS

All children and their families have access to, and supportive services for, healthy development and success in high-quality early childhood and elementary education.



## POSITIVE LEARNING CLIMATE

All educators, families, and policymakers understand and address the impact of education climate on social-emotional development, attendance, engagement, and ultimately student success.



## TEACHER PREPARATION & EFFECTIVENESS

All teachers of children ages 0-8 are equipped with evidence-informed skills, knowledge, and resources that effectively meet the literacy needs of each child in a developmentally appropriate manner.

# INTRODUCTION

## About the Get Georgia Reading Campaign

Two-thirds of Georgia's third graders do not read proficiently. That has significant and long-term consequences for all Georgians, because low achievement in reading affects our economy, our safety, and our health. The end of third grade marks the critical time when children shift from learning to read to reading to learn. Children unable to make this shift face serious barriers for future learning, because they can't grasp half of the printed fourth-grade curriculum and beyond, including math and science. Therefore, low achievement in reading is a systemic crisis that calls for innovative solutions to complex issues.

Unwilling to yield any longer, the governor and first lady came together with Georgia's leaders in 2013 to take on third-grade reading proficiency—not only as an education issue, but as an urgent priority for all who care about children's health and well-being.

Get Georgia Reading is a growing collaboration of over 100 private and public partners rallying people, organizations, and communities to apply a common agenda as a framework for action. The Campaign represents a new way of working together across Georgia, across sectors, across agencies and organizations, and across the early years and early grades, using data to inform decisions.

Together, they developed a clearly defined common agenda to create the conditions for every child in Georgia to become a proficient reader by the end of third grade. The common agenda consists of four research-based pillars that work together to provide a platform for success, as seen in the diagram to the left.

The purpose of this **Community Action Workbook** is to support communities as they move forward to engage more partners in firmly rooting the four pillars locally by adopting strategies and actions specific to their needs.

## Agenda 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Opening — Welcome & Purpose of the Event	10 minutes
Part 1 — Campaign Overview & Setting the Context	1 hour
Part 2 — Identifying Pillar Stakeholders	1 hour and 10 minutes
Lunch Break	45 minutes
Part 3 — Creating a Shared Vision	1 hour
Break	10 minutes
Part 4 — Developing Clear Action Plans	1 hour and 15 minutes
Closing — Commitment & Inspirational Story	10 minutes













# PART 1

**Exercise: Reviewing Local Data for Indicators**

The goal of this exercise is to understand the multiple variables impacting progress and specifically to examine the data from a local perspective.

Review the handout with local data for indicators. Write any observations or insights below.

 CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY	
 PRETERM BIRTH	
 MATERNAL EDUCATION	
 CHILDREN RECEIVING SUBSIDIES ENROLLED IN QUALITY RATED CHILD CARE	
 SCHOOL CLIMATE	
 K-3 OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS	
 ATTENDANCE	
 3RD-GRADE READING PROFICIENCY	

What story does our data tell?

**Discussion:**

*What stands out to you about these data points?*

*How might the conditions impact achievement for children in your county?*


**BRIEF COMMUNITY REPORT OUT**

*What were the common themes shared among the group?*


## PART 2

## Identifying Pillar Stakeholders (1 hour and 10 minutes)

## Lightning Talks: Framing the Four Pillars



**Talk With Me Baby**  
Baby Ella Video  
<https://goo.gl/ngme2P>



**Emily Rubin**  
Director, Educational Outreach Program,  
Marcus Autism Center  
<https://goo.gl/VpSWPx>



**Martha Ann Todd**  
Executive Director, Governor's Office  
of Student Achievement  
<https://goo.gl/3GRzky>

As you listen to the following talks that frame the four pillars, write down any key ideas or insights about the connection between a child's growth and development and literacy.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## Who in our community can help?

## Exercise: Stakeholder Mapping

The goal of this exercise is to identify important local stakeholders who can join in the effort to get all children in your community reading proficiently by third grade.

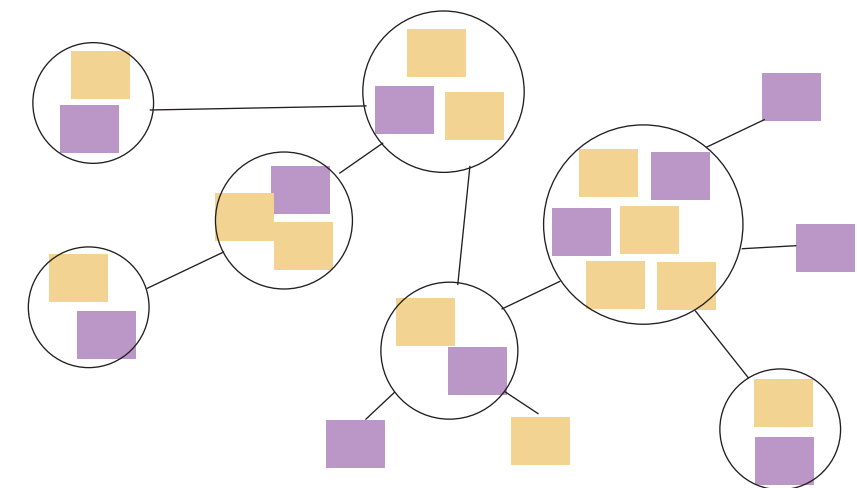
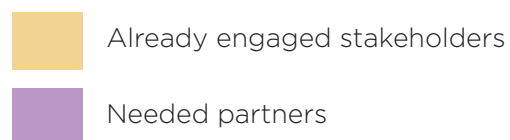
Looking at the indicators from your local data, identify key stakeholders who must be part of creating the desired outcomes and map their relationships to one another. Start by writing as many stakeholders down as possible on Post-It Notes, then organize them into clusters on a flip chart and draw connection lines. (There are two colors for notes: gold for already engaged stakeholders and purple for needed partners.)

**Think about:**

*Who is already engaged in this work? (List roles.)*

*Who needs to be at the table? (List all stakeholders.)*

Write down all stakeholders that come to mind such as libraries, YMCAs, housing authorities, Collaboratives, and parents. Share and cluster common stakeholders, using lines to connect them.



**Discussion:**

*Did you identify partners you might not have thought about before today?*

*What was new and different?*

**LUNCH BREAK** (45 minutes)

## PART 3

## Creating a Shared Vision (1 hour)

## Lightning Talks: Deep Dive into the Four Pillars



**Peggy Walker**  
Judge, Juvenile Court,  
Douglas County  
<https://goo.gl/p6HHJD>



**Fran Gary**  
CEO, Amerigroup Georgia  
<https://goo.gl/efZlhi>



**Garry McGiboney**  
Deputy State Superintendent for Policy,  
Georgia Department of Education  
<https://goo.gl/YoVoJl>

As you listen to the following leaders further illuminate the four pillars, write down any key actions and insights.

[illegible]

How will we measure success?

### Exercise: Creating a Shared Vision

The goal of this exercise is to help identify markers indicating progress, starting from birth, along the path to reading proficiently by the end of third grade.

Looking at the timeline of the ages of children along the path from birth through age 8, individually brainstorm and write down markers indicating progress along the pathway to reading proficiently by the end of third grade; use only one marker per Post-It.

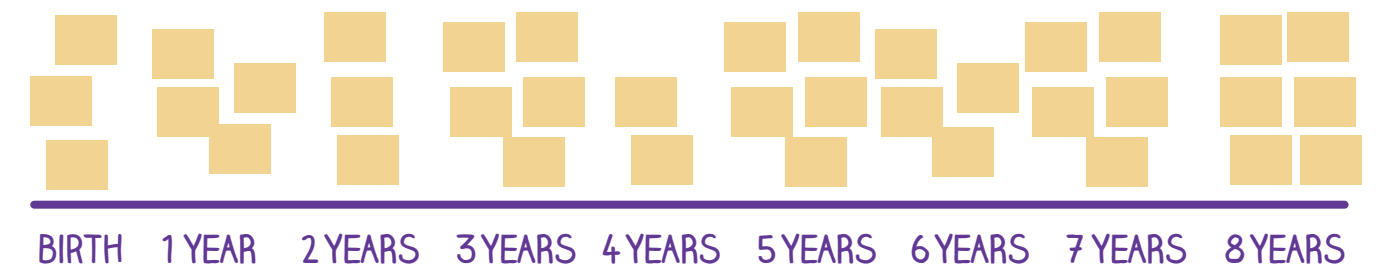
Consider markers at the child, family, community, and systems levels. For example:

**Child:** healthy births as indicated by low rate of preterm births

**Family:** access to resources and support to ensure healthy physical and social-emotional development

**Neighborhood/Community:** availability of high-quality affordable child care for working parents  
**Systems:** education, health, and social policies

Go around the table and review one by one, plotting markers on a timeline from birth through age 8.



Indicate which pillars can ensure a child reaches each marker by tagging the Post-It Notes with pillar stickers, keeping in mind that more than one could apply to each. Take a photo of your markers and tweet using the **#GetGAReading** hashtag.



Language  
Nutrition



Access



## Positive Learning Climate



## Teacher Preparation & Effectiveness

**BREAK** (10 minutes)

In preparation for the next exercise, select the pillar you are most interested in. We will divide into four groups to focus on these pillars after the break.

## PART 4

## Developing Clear Action Plans (1 hour and 15 minutes)

## Lightning Talks: Inspiration within the Four Pillars



**Beth Capuson**  
Coordinator, Seminole County  
Family Connection  
<https://goo.gl/QheffE>

**Local Speaker**  
Representative from community  
implementing the common agenda

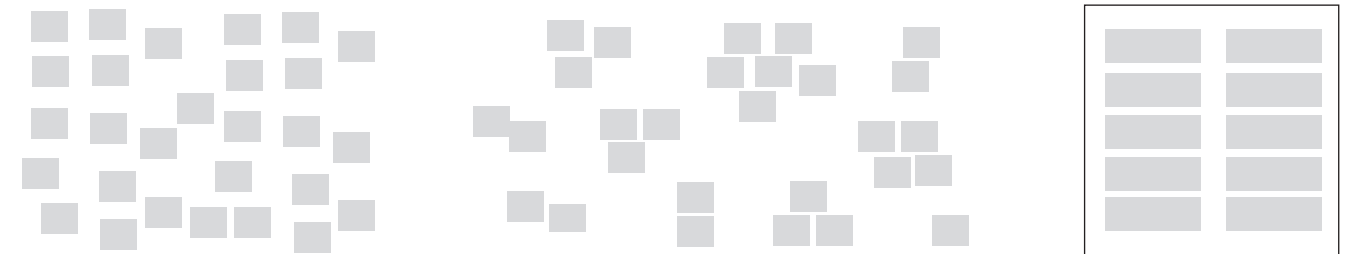
As you listen to the following leaders share their community's story, write down any key actions and outcomes you find most important. We'll use these in the next exercise.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.

What key actions should we take to support each pillar?

### Exercise: Developing Clear Actions

The goal of this exercise is to brainstorm actions by pillar, then cluster and sort them to focus on the top 10.



**Step 1)** Brainstorm actions for stakeholders at the local level. Using one action per Post-It, write down what you and other stakeholders can do to support and strengthen this pillar in your community.

Take into account:

- the markers indicating progress along the timeline from birth through age 8,
- your personal and professional experience,
- reflections on what you heard during today's talks and videos,
- ideas you've seen work well in other communities as well as new ideas, and
- the resources you and other stakeholders can bring to the table in support of this pillar.

**Step 2)** Cluster common actions, then come to a consensus on the top 10 with the most energy and engagement behind them. Some may be immediately actionable, while others may require energy to develop them.

**Step 3)** Write your top 10 actions on the flip chart. Your table host will bring these to the display area so that all pillar actions are gathered for voting.

Exercise continues on next page




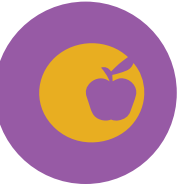
Developing Clear Action Plans (continued)

Step 4) Break and Voting (10 minutes)

You will receive five voting dots. Review all actions for each pillar and vote for five of them based on the following criteria (must meet at least one):

- The action is achievable within a defined timeframe (90 days, one year, two years, etc.).
- There is a clear ask of a stakeholder (not a vague ask of multiple stakeholders).
- The action describes specific steps to take (for example, not simply parent engagement).
- The action uses resources wisely and creatively, leveraging existing partnerships.
- The action helps reach the hardest-to-reach children.
- The action has a measurable impact.

Step 5) Pillar groups come back together to review and discuss the voting results for the top activities. Each group will identify the top five actions for its pillar and write them on a poster; the same action may be listed under more than one pillar.

			
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5 <input type="text"/>	5 <input type="text"/>	5 <input type="text"/>	5 <input type="text"/>

Take a photo of your pillar team holding the final top-five poster and tweet using the #GetGAReading hashtag.

COMMITMENT


Which actions will you take?

Pledge Commitment

Become a champion for the Get Georgia Reading Campaign by filling out a pledge card with the actions you are committing to take immediately following the summit.

Actions I commit to take and the difference they will make:

Closing Inspirational Story



**Hayward Cordy**  
Executive Director, Oconee Regional  
Education Service Agency  
<https://goo.gl/uiG6wv>



# SPEAKER & PARTNER BIOS



**BETH CAPUSON** ▶  
Coordinator, Seminole County Family  
Connection Collaborative

Beth Capuson has been with Seminole County Family Connection Collaborative, a member of the grade-level reading cohort, since 2008. Seminole County has dramatically raised their children's reading scores by identifying struggling students at an early age and giving them the individual attention they need to improve.



**HAYWOOD CORDY** ▶  
Executive Director, Oconee Regional  
Education Service Agency

Dr. Cordy has several years' experience in education, having served as a superintendent of schools and an elementary, middle, and high school principal; directed programs for children with serious emotional behavioral disorders; and provided educational opportunities to first-generational college students. He also mentors and assists with supervising students enrolled in the Oconee RESA Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy.



**SANDRA DEAL** ▶  
First Lady of Georgia

The daughter of educators, First Lady Sandra Deal has dedicated her life to encouraging childhood education. As a Georgia public school teacher, she taught for more than 15 years and retired as a sixth-grade middle school teacher in Hall County. She has furthered those efforts in her role as Georgia's First Lady, and promoting literacy has been one of her top priorities.



**CAITLIN DOOLEY** ▶  
Deputy Superintendent for  
Curriculum and Instruction, Georgia  
Department of Education

Dr. Dooley has several years of experience in education, having worked as an elementary classroom teacher, teacher educator, educational researcher, and professor at Georgia State University. Dr. Dooley has authored over 50 publications and led projects to investigate children's literacy learning, literacy instruction, digital literacies, teacher learning, and education policy.



**BRENDA FITZGERALD** ▶  
Commissioner, Georgia  
Department of Public Health

Dr. Fitzgerald oversees state public health programs and directs the state's 18 public health districts and 159 county health departments. Engaged in the Get Georgia Reading Campaign since its inception, she became the first Commissioner of Public Health to identify grade-level reading as a public health crisis. Dr. Fitzgerald, a board-certified obstetrician-gynecologist and a Fellow in Anti-Aging Medicine, has practiced medicine for three decades.



**FRAN GARY** ▶  
President, Amerigroup Georgia

Fran Gary is responsible for all aspects of Amerigroup health plan operations in Georgia, ensuring that members receive access to high-quality care and strengthening relationships in the community, with the state and among providers.



**LUCKY JAIN** ▶  
Neonatologist, Children's  
Healthcare of Atlanta

Dr. Jain is a specialist in respiratory disorders of newborns, focusing particularly on late preterm infants and those born by voluntary Cesarean section. Already a caring physician and pediatrician, after having a heart attack himself several years ago, Dr. Jain has become an even stronger advocate of compassionate patient/family care.



**AMI KLIN** ▶  
Director, Marcus Autism Center

Dr. Klin's primary research focuses on the social mind and the social brain. These studies include novel techniques such as the eye-tracking laboratories co-directed with Dr. Warren Jones, which allow researchers to see the world through the eyes of individuals with autism.



**GARRY MCGIBONEY** ▶  
Deputy State Superintendent  
for External Affairs and Policy,  
Georgia Department of Education

Dr. McGiboney has been a champion for children for many years, having served in several local, district, and state-level education positions as well as numerous boards and committees dedicated to improving outcomes for children.



**REPRESENTATIVE RANDY NIX** ▶  
Education Committee, Georgia  
House of Representatives

Representative Nix serves as the Chairman of the Legislative & Congressional Reapportionment Committee, Secretary of the Banks and Banking Committee, and a member of the Natural Resources and Environment, Education, Economic Development and Tourism, and Appropriations committees.



**EMILY RUBIN** ▶  
Director, Educational Outreach  
Program, Marcus Autism Center

Emily Rubin is a speech-language pathologist specializing in the neuroscience and social competence of individuals with autism, Asperger's Syndrome, and related social learning disabilities. Her work currently focuses on supporting community-based educational systems to build internal capacity for serving children and adolescents with autism and related developmental disorders.



**RALPH SMITH** ▶  
Senior Vice President, Annie E. Casey  
Foundation; Managing Director,  
Campaign for Grade-Level Reading

Bringing together "unusual allies" and "unlikely champions" has been a hallmark of Ralph Smith's work. As managing director of the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading since 2010, Smith is forging consensus around ensuring that children reach the critical developmental milestone of reading on grade level by the end of third grade.



**MARTHA ANN TODD** ▶  
Executive Director, Governor's  
Office of Student Achievement

Martha Ann Todd has over 30 years of experience in education, serving children from grades K-12. Her teaching experiences range from instructing a kindergarten class to teaching high school algebra as well as everything in between. Todd has also served in a wide range of leadership roles throughout her career at the school, district, and state levels.



**PEGGY WALKER** ▶  
Judge, Juvenile Court of  
Douglas County

Judge Walker has served as the full-time Juvenile Court Judge of Douglas County since 1998. Under her leadership, the court received a federal partnership grant that funded a Family Drug Treatment Program serving parents with substance abuse problems who had children from birth to age 5. The Douglas County Juvenile Court received federal funding to join the ZERO TO THREE Safe Babies Court Teams Project in 2010.



**ARIANNE WELDON** ▶  
Director, Get Georgia  
Reading Campaign

Arianne Weldon uses her background in public health to encourage Campaign partners to apply an epidemiological approach to promoting reading proficiency for young children. By using data to identify patterns of risk and protective factors related to language and literacy development, Weldon has helped change the conversation about what is needed and what is possible in creating a new future for Georgia's young children.



Check out all lightning  
talks on the Get  
Georgia Reading  
YouTube channel:  
<https://goo.gl/jw8Lst>





# 2015 COMMUNITY ACTION SUMMIT

## Inspiration & Continuation

In September of 2015, nearly 200 Georgia state and local leaders gathered for a two-day summit to deepen their understanding of the research and best practices to get children reading proficiently by the end of third grade. Participants heard from experts across the state and listened to stories about the challenges and opportunities to Get Georgia Reading. These lightning talks illuminated the four-pillar framework and helped identify key partners, important stakeholders, and clear actions that were necessary in implementing them.

Now these lightning talks and design-thinking exercises are available for every community in Georgia to use as a tool for energizing their own partners and stakeholders to align around key actions that will help all kids be on a path to reading proficiently by the end of third grade.



# SPONSORS

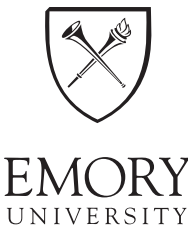
## PLATINUM



## GOLD



## SILVER



Georgia Division of Family and Children Services





BY 2020,  
ALL CHILDREN  
IN GEORGIA  
WILL BE ON A PATH TO  
READING  
PROFICIENTLY  
BY THE END OF  
3RD GRADE.



GET GEORGIA  
READING

CAMPAIGN FOR GRADE-LEVEL READING

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