Great Start System Evaluation
GSC Strategic Plan Review Results
Ingham County

Overview

Between September and December 2017, the PPA-iEval team examined the strategic plans of all 54 GSCs. This work was guided by a rubric that provided for a consistent review process. The rubric provided guidelines for assessing the structure, community needs, Action Agendas, metrics, financing, and fund development of the GSCs.

The data in this document reflect the evaluation team's understanding of the strategic plan alone; no other documents were part of the review. For example, if a GSC did not include data from its community assessment in the plan document, then it received a low rating on the extent to which the data provided support the needs mentioned in the plan.

GSC Workgroup Topics

Workgroup topics for this GSC included:

- School readiness

Mission and Vision Consistency with the OGS Charge

The GSCs were rated for the consistency of their mission and vision with the OGS charge to ensure that "the coordination and expansion of local early childhood infrastructure and programs allow every child in the community to achieve" the statewide outcomes.

On a scale from "no mission or vision stated in plan" to "totally consistent with the OGS charge," this strategic plan received a rating of:

Totally consistent with the OGS charge

Accomplishments Reported by the GSC

Before introducing their plans for the future, almost all GSCs presented some information about the past achievements and progress of the GSCs and GSPCs.

Categories of accomplishments reported by this GSC included:

- Early care and education
- Fund development
- Collaboration and partnerships
- Training and education
- Literacy support

- Early childhood services and supports, general
- Parent and family engagement/empowerment

Community Needs Identified by the GSC

To ensure that their Action Agendas responded to genuine community needs, each GSC was required to carry out a community needs assessment.

Categories of needs identified by this GSC included:

- Prenatal health
- Family supports/services
- School readiness
- School performance

The use of data to demonstrate the validity of community problems is of key importance for identifying activities that will lead to improved outcomes.

On a scale from "the data do not support any of the needs identified" to "the data support all needs identified," this strategic plan received a rating of:

The data support all needs identified

Use of ABLe Change Framework

The Great Start system uses the ABLe Change Framework to inform the work of the GSCs and GSPCs. One component of this framework is the classification of root causes according to the ABLe Change system characteristics.

This GSC classified its root causes according to the following system characteristics:

System Characteristics	Number of Root Causes
Components	3
Mindsets	8
Connections	3
Regulations	6
Resources	6
Power	1

Alignment of Action Agenda with Root Causes

For each strategic plan, the evaluators assessed the extent to which the Action Agenda goals and objectives aligned with the root causes identified in the community assessment.

On a scale from "not aligned" to "totally aligned," this strategic plan received a rating of:

Totally aligned

Connection of Action Agenda with Five Points and Statewide Outcomes

The Action Agendas are meant to focus on the activities that a GSC will carry out to address community needs and work toward the statewide outcomes, in the context of the Five Points of early childhood system development.

The Action Agenda for this GSC focused on four of the Five Points.

The evaluation team also assessed the extent to which the Action Agendas, overall, were logically connected to the four statewide outcomes. For Action Agendas that received lower ratings, the connections tended to involve leaps in logic or assumptions about what occurs between an action and the impact anticipated.

On a scale from "not at all connected" to "entirely connected," this strategic plan received a rating of:

Mostly connected

GSC Goals

GSCs were required to align the goals in their Action Agendas with the Five Points and the statewide outcomes.

This GSC aligned its goals with all Five Points.

For this GSC, the number of goals aligned with each statewide outcome was:

Statewide Outcome	Number of Goals
1: Children Born Healthy	1
2: On Track 0-3rd Grade	1
3: Ready to Succeed at School Entry	1
4: Read Proficiently by End of 3rd Grade	1

GSC Objectives

The GSCs identified a variety of objectives, which the evaluation team coded in broader categories for purposes of the strategic plan review.

Categories of objectives for this GSC included:

- Awareness/knowledge-building

- Access

GSC Strategies

The evaluation team also coded the Action Agenda strategies in broader categories.

Categories of strategies for this GSC included:

- Policy/practice change
- Partnerships
- Data collection/research
- Information-sharing

The evaluation team assessed the extent to which the strategies, overall, appeared logically connected with the goals of the Action Agenda. This was a challenge for many of the GSCs, as the strategies were often very narrowly focused compared to the goals.

On a scale from "not at all connected" to "entirely connected," this strategic plan received a rating of:

Mostly connected

GSC Activities

The evaluation team assessed the extent to which the Action Agenda activities logically connected to the strategies.

On a scale from "not at all connected" to "entirely connected," this strategic plan received a rating of:

Entirely connected

The evaluation team also looked at how well the activities in the Action Agenda built on the past accomplishments of the GSC.

On a scale from "none of the activities build on accomplishments" to "all activities build on accomplishments," this strategic plan received a rating of:

Some activities build off accomplishments

Progress Measures

The GSC progress measures are the immediate, short-term outputs of activities. The evaluation team assessed the extent to which the progress measures appeared realistic given the description of the corresponding activities.

On a scale from "not at all realistic" to "entirely realistic," the progress measures for this strategic plan received a rating of:

Entirely realistic

The evaluation team assessed the extent to which the Action Agendas included specific numerical or percentage targets for their progress measures.

On a scale from "not at all" to "entirely," this strategic plan received a rating of:

Not at all

Performance Measures

GSC performance measures are the longer-term outcomes of activities. For purposes of the strategic plans, the performance measures are usually associated with the completion of objectives in the Action Agendas. The evaluation team assessed whether the performance measures appeared measurable—i.e., how well they indicated what would be measured and how.

On a scale from "not at all measurable" to "entirely measurable," the performance measures for this strategic plan received a rating of:

Somewhat measurable

The evaluators also assessed the extent to which progress measures (outputs) and performance measures (outcomes) were clearly distinguished.

On a scale from "not at all distinguished" to "entirely distinguished," this strategic plan received a rating of:

Somewhat distinguished

GSC Funding

The evaluators looked at the approach to funding GSC activities reported in the plans.

The strategic plan for this GSC reported the following categories of funding sources:

- Public
- Private
- Nonprofit

This GSC's strategic plan did not discuss the use of braided funding to support its work.

The evaluation team also took note of whether a GSC planned to implement activities using secured, unsecured, or a mix of secured and unsecured funding.

This GSC's strategic plan's funding approach included:
Only secured funding