2018, Q3 Progress Report: Helping Children Thrive Through Community-led Outcome Metrics
A collaborative data pilot designed to improve outcomes for Head Start students and communities

Project Summary
The National Head Start Association (NHSA) and BrightHive (together, the Pilot Team) joined forces to develop and deploy a new data and outcomes measurement infrastructure. Four pilot sites (NHSA programs from across the country) identified data infrastructure challenges and helped us scope solutions. We are now committed to building the tools necessary to meet those needs, testing them at each site, and deploying the tools for use and feedback across all pilot sites. This much-needed infrastructure will support learning and action to improve outcomes for children participating in Head Start programs and the communities in which they reside.

Project Updates
After receiving funding from Gary Community Investments (GCI) to start the work, the Pilot Team quickly identified and confirmed four pilot sites that represent a diversity of geography, populations served, and data measurement capacity. Through their participation in our July 20th kickoff and subsequent deep-dives with the Pilot Team, these pilot sites have cooperatively developed four essential needs for improved data infrastructure and supportive capacity building.

Parent Engagement (led by Centro De La Familia De Utah)
This pilot seeks to develop a comprehensive set of parent engagement metrics, flesh out any new data collection and analysis requirements necessary to compute them on a regular basis, and validate them by comparing with student outcomes. Over time, Head Start sites can evaluate which interventions, programs, and practices have greater impact, and promote them.

Frontline Staff Effectiveness & Accountability (led by Family Resource Agency, TN & GA)
This pilot seeks to develop a “heads-up display” for frontline Head Start staff members that concisely conveys crucial information at the start of each day, and provides a mechanism for facilitating connections between different staff members serving students with specific needs.

Staff Turnover (led by AVANCE-Houston, TX)
This pilot seeks to develop a dashboard for turnover assessment, including the results of a predictive model that assigns a departure probability score to employees and potential employees based on historical data.

K-12 Outcomes (led by Santa Clara County Office of Education, CA)
This pilot seeks to take advantage of a unique opportunity in a district where an integrated data warehouse is being deployed with cooperation from both school districts and Head Start. The pilot will provide the district with tools to scale and sustain their data integration efforts, and will develop a legal and technical framework for their learnings to be leveraged by other communities.
Next Steps

The Pilot Team was awarded an initial $100,000 grant for phase one of the Helping Children Thrive pilot. We now seek additional funding from multiple funders to reach the full amount. This support will enable us to build the data infrastructure described above. We seek $360,000 to conduct the next phase of the pilot, which includes development, deployment, and testing. We also seek sponsorships of additional sites to implement and test the existing use cases or explore new use cases that will benefit the NHSA network.

Development

The primary outputs of this phase will be new, interoperable data infrastructure tools and technologies that can be used by all NHSA sites, along with associated technical assistance, capacity building, and change management support. This includes:

- Rich, standardized, and outcomes-oriented parent engagement metrics
- A teacher alerts display to improve frontline staff effectiveness and accountability
- A dashboard and predictive model for staff turnover assessment
- Identifying and meeting needs of students matriculating from Head Start to a K-12 system

Deployment, Replication, and Change Management

During this phase, the development team will test and implement the full suite of solutions built at each of the individual pilot sites across all pilot sites. In addition to in-depth technical support for each pilot site, continued leadership of technical working group meetings, and testing and debugging, this may also include:

- 40 hours of site-specific training with management and technical staff (10 hours at each of the four sites)
- The development of shared training modules for non-pilot sites
- Detailed technical documentation for each component of the toolkit

The result of this work, and especially this final phase, will be a rich technical, legal, and incentive infrastructure by which early childhood providers are able to:

- Benchmark their performance with other locations using common measures
- Identify their strengths and needs as well as colleagues to learn from
- Analyze differences in effectiveness of programs across the country
- Identify positive outliers linked to replicable program practices
- Disseminate information about best practices through training and technical assistance for adoption by and adaptation to the needs of each community

As a crucial output of this phase, we will scale this data infrastructure to a new set of Head Start communities. Good tools need to be shared, not siloed. We will extend the impact of the GCI and subsequent investments by sharing these tools in a scalable, cost-effective manner that increases the number of communities that are able to share, learn from, and benchmark with each other via:

- A public convening of pilot participants to share learnings with the broader NHSA network and drive adoption by additional sites
- A suite of technical and administrative onboarding documents that allow new communities to quickly implement the data infrastructure toolkit, test it, and receive technical support when needed

In addition to the current funding partner, the Pilot Team has engaged with other organizations with early childhood experience and expertise that are interested in supporting or participating in one or more of the proposed pilot sites. These organizations include Social Finance, Third Sector Capital Partners, and American Institutes for Research.

The Pilot Team welcomes the opportunity to discuss the Helping Children Thrive project plan, pilot sites, and funding needs. We also welcome your thoughts on expansion opportunities at new pilot sites. If you have questions or want to set up a meeting, email BrightHive’s Project Manager, Shelby Everitt (shelby@brighthive.io) and NHSA’s Executive Director, Yasmina Vinci (yvinci@nhsa.org).

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