

Early Childhood Solution Plan

For the Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ)

Early Childhood Goal 1:

Prenatally through age 3, children's age-appropriate development* toward kindergarten readiness will be monitored, and services and supports will be provided as needed.

**Developmental domains include cognition/language, social-emotional, gross and fine motor, and health.*

[1.1] Organization Commitment: Active Collaboration & NAZ Values

Organization-wide activities that will build the collaborative process and embed the core NAZ values across the effort, including NAZ families, staff, and partners.

Essential Active Ingredient		Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	NAZ Partner embeds NAZ values organization-wide as key drivers to build a culture of achievement Zone-wide, including by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posting NAZ Values in prominent public locations for staff, • Including Values in staff meetings and other organizational use, and • Contributing to the implementation of a developing operating plan designed to intentionally embed values across the collaboration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values will be available for posting, distributing, and publishing. • Operating plan concepts will be developed for input and contributions. • NAZ staff available for dialogue about embedding values. 	Ongoing
(2)	NAZ Partner participates in ongoing educational opportunities, with the intention of core 'NAZ Way' concepts reaching staff who work with NAZ families, related to the following key NAZ values: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking the belief gap, • Families as Leaders & Organizations as Partners to Families, • Using Data to Drive Progress (results-based accountability), and • Embedding cultural responsiveness within our work with families and scholars. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAZ develops and offers educational opportunities in a manner that works for partners (such as through existing Action Team meetings) 	Ongoing
(3)	NAZ Partner ensures that lead staff attend the following collaborative gatherings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAZ-wide collaborative meetings • Action Team meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAZ holds and publicizes meetings in a timely manner. 	<i>NAZ-wide meetings:</i> 2 times/year <i>Action Team meetings:</i> Minimum of 4 times/year
(4)	As specified in NAZ Collaborative Partner Memorandum of Understanding, agency hires staff who are interested in and committed to positive interactions with children and youth, and demonstrate a commitment to a culture of achievement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position posting language and hiring practices explicitly assess commitment to positive interactions and a culture of achievement. 	On hire

Essential Active Ingredient		Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(5)	Program services are provided within a context that is positive, respectful, engaging, and fosters a culture of achievement. <i>[add NAZ cultural relevance language]</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hiring practices specify and select for staff who demonstrate respect. Scheduling of program services provides opportunities for social interaction. Professional development for staff continuously emphasizes respectful, engaging, and positive services. 	Each program day
(6)	Program services are fully aligned with and reflect continuous participation in NAZ data collection, progress monitoring, coordination, review, and program improvement processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain regular data entry in NAZ Connect. Coordinate with NAZ program staff (Connectors and Academic Navigators). 	Each program day

[1.2] Informal Observations with Families

Partner staff will follow these EAls during in-person interactions with families of 0-3 year olds.

Essential Active Ingredient		Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	Partner staff have in-person contact with every family with a child under 36 months of age.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAZ articulates common engagement protocol and philosophy related to parent connection. Partner staff receive training in NAZ-developed parent engagement protocols. 	At least once per month
(2)	During in-person contacts, partner staff follow NAZ protocol for noticing and flagging developmental concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner staff receive training on NAZ protocol for noticing and flagging developmental concerns. NAZ Connect family achievement plans are up to date and accessible. 	At every visit
(3)	When developmental concerns are identified, partner staff will produce and document specific referrals and linkages for information gathering or services related to developmental concerns. Outcomes of referrals and services are tracked in NAZ Connect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner staff receive ongoing training in protocol for documenting and referring developmental concerns and NAZ Connect. Partner organization collaborates with EC Navigator. NAZ Connect is kept up to date. 	As needed

[1.3] Screening and Assessment

Partner organizations that offer screening and assessment services (developmental, health, etc.) for infants and toddlers (up to 36 months of age) will follow these essential active ingredients with all families they serve.

Essential Active Ingredient		Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	Every NAZ child up to kindergarten entry receives periodic screening according to ASQ and ASQ-SE schedule.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASQ and ASQ-SE Partners that administer the ASQ and/or ASQ-SE must enter results into NAZ Connect. EC Navigator administers ASQ and ASQ-SE to all NAZ-enrolled children who are not already being assessed with these tools via a Partner program. 	Following ASQ age groups
(2)	Every NAZ child is screened at age 3 (or earlier if developmental concerns are identified).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner staff implement referral process to designated early childhood screening entities for each child at age 3 (or earlier if developmental concerns are identified). Partner staff enter screening results into NAZ Connect. 	Once at age 3 unless rescreening is indicated based on age 3 screening results
(3)	Partner staff review each screening result with parents, make referrals, and conduct follow through as specified in the NAZ referral protocol (might be referral to services, might be referral for diagnostic assessment).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner staff receive training on typical child development and NAZ Referral Protocol with necessary escalation and monitoring procedures. Partners communicate referral and follow-through processes to each family's Connector. 	At age 3 screening

[1.4] Targeted Home Visiting

Partner organizations that offer targeted home visiting services for families with infants and toddlers (up to 36 months of age) will follow these essential active ingredients with all families they serve.

Essential Active Ingredient		Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	Partner organizations maintain up-to-date information about home visiting resources and services in NAZ Connect.		Once initially; review and update minimum of every 6 months
(2)	Partner organizations work with eligible and identified families using a federally recognized standardized home visiting model (<i>Definition of "federally recognized" to be further specified by NAZ</i>).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner staff are trained to implement program with fidelity. Implementation fidelity of Partner staff checked at least annually. 	As specified in selected curriculum, but at least monthly
(3)	Partner staff utilize resources in NAZ Connect to support family success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner staff receive ongoing training on community supports and resources, how to refer. Partner staff maintain communication with NAZ staff to ensure families are receiving necessary supports. 	Ongoing

[1.5] Prenatal services

Partner organizations that offer prenatal services (including early identification and home visiting) will follow these essential active ingredients.

<i>Essential Active Ingredient</i>		<i>Necessary Conditions</i>	<i>Frequency (Dosage)</i>
(1)	NAZ Partners maintain up-to-date information about prenatal resources and services in NAZ Connect.		Once initially; review and update minimum of every 6 months
(2)	Pregnant women enrolled in NAZ receive early and continuous medical care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner availability for acceptance into care in first trimester. • Client understanding and acceptance of early prenatal care. • Availability of child care, transportation and medical coverage. 	Per medical guidelines
(3)	Partners ensure that all prenatal and perinatal women they serve are screened for depression by medical providers and/or home visitors and referred to services as needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners are aware of culturally sensitive resources. • Availability of child care, transportation and medical coverage. • Program is centered on preventing low birth weight babies and premature death. 	Initially and then as needed

[1.6] High Quality Childcare for Infants and Toddlers

Partner organizations that offer childcare for families with infants and toddlers (up to 36 months of age) will follow these essential active ingredients with all families they serve.

<i>Essential Active Ingredient</i>		<i>Necessary Conditions</i>	<i>Frequency (Dosage)</i>
(1)	Partner organizations maintain up-to-date information about infant and toddler childcare resources and services in NAZ Connect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAZ Partners keep their number of openings up to date in NAZ Connect. • Monthly reminders to update openings from NAZ Central. 	Once initially; review and update minimum of every 6 months
(2)	Partners maintain status as a 3- or 4-star rated in-home or center-based Parent Aware program.		Ongoing
(3)	Partners refer families to available resources to assist with financial support of quality childcare experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner staff trained on how to refer families to financial supports. • Partner staff maintain communication with NAZ staff to ensure families are receiving necessary supports. 	As needed

Early Childhood Goal 2:

NAZ-enrolled children ages 3 through 5 are making adequate progress toward developing literacy, numeracy and other skills that contribute to kindergarten readiness.

[2.1] Organization Commitment: Active Collaboration & NAZ Values

Organization-wide activities that will build the collaborative process and embed the core NAZ values across the effort, including NAZ families, staff, and partners.

Essential Active Ingredient		Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	<p>NAZ Partner embeds NAZ values organization-wide as key drivers to build a culture of achievement Zone-wide, including by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posting NAZ Values in prominent public locations for staff, • Including Values in staff meetings and other organizational use, and • Contributing to the implementation of a developing operating plan designed to intentionally embed values across the collaboration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values will be available for posting, distributing, and publishing. • Operating plan concepts will be developed for input and contributions. • NAZ staff available for dialogue about embedding values. 	Ongoing
(2)	<p>NAZ Partner participates in ongoing educational opportunities, with the intention of core 'NAZ Way ' concepts reaching staff who work with NAZ families, related to the following key NAZ values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking the belief gap, • Families as Leaders & Organizations as Partners to Families, • Using Data to Drive Progress (results-based accountability), and • Embedding cultural responsiveness within our work with families and scholars. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAZ develops and offers educational opportunities in a manner that works for partners (such as through existing Action Team meetings) 	Ongoing
(3)	<p>NAZ Partner ensures that lead staff attend the following collaborative gatherings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAZ-wide collaborative meetings • Action Team meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAZ holds and publicizes meetings in a timely manner. 	<p><i>NAZ-wide meetings:</i> 2 times/year</p> <p><i>Action Team meetings:</i> Minimum of 4 times/year</p>
(4)	<p>As specified in NAZ Collaborative Partner Memorandum of Understanding, agency hires staff who are interested in and committed to positive interactions with children and youth, and demonstrate a commitment to a culture of achievement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position posting language and hiring practices explicitly assess commitment to positive interactions and a culture of achievement. 	On hire

Essential Active Ingredient		Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(5)	Program services are provided within a context that is positive, respectful, engaging, and fosters a culture of achievement. [add NAZ cultural relevance language]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hiring practices specify and select for staff who demonstrate respect. Scheduling of program services provides opportunities for social interaction. Professional development for staff continuously emphasizes respectful, engaging, and positive services. 	Each program day
(6)	Program services are fully aligned with and reflect continuous participation in NAZ data collection, progress monitoring, coordination, review, and program improvement processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain regular data entry in NAZ Connect. Coordinate with NAZ program staff (Connectors and Academic Navigators). 	Each program day

[2.2] Informal Observations with Families

Partner staff will follow these EAls during in-person interactions with families of 3-5 year olds.

Essential Active Ingredient		Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	Partner staff have in-person contact with every family with a 3-5 year old child.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAZ articulates common engagement protocol and philosophy related to parent connection. Partner staff receive training in NAZ-developed parent engagement protocols. 	At least once per month
(2)	During in-person contacts, partner staff follow NAZ protocol for noticing and flagging developmental concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner staff receive training on NAZ protocol for noticing and flagging developmental concerns. NAZ Connect family achievement plans are up to date and accessible. 	At every visit
(3)	When developmental concerns are identified, partner staff will produce and document specific referrals and linkages for information gathering or services related to developmental concerns. Outcomes of referrals and services are tracked in NAZ Connect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner staff receive ongoing training in protocol for documenting and referring developmental concerns and NAZ Connect. Partner organization collaborates with EC Navigator. NAZ Connect is kept up to date. 	As needed

[2.3] 3 and 4 star-rated center and family child care programs (4 parts)

Partner organizations that offer childcare will follow these essential active ingredients with all families they serve.

Based on Parent Aware rating system (www.parentawareratings.org).

Part 1 – Participation

Essential Active Ingredient		Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	Partner programs keep their number of openings up to date in NAZ Connect and/or Think Small database.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly reminders to update openings from NAZ Central 	Continuously
(2)	All NAZ-enrolled preschool children attend a 3 or 4 star-rated program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uninterrupted continuous care 	At least 15 hours/week, at least 46 weeks/year commencing at third birthday
(3)	Partner program provides full range of early childhood and related services to child, as specified [<i>to be further specified by NAZ child care task force</i>]		Daily, 15 hours/week, 46 weeks/year

Part 2 – System Monitoring and Capacity Assurance

NAZ and system/capacity Partners work to ensure that there are an adequate number of high-quality early childhood programs and “slots” to allow for participation of all NAZ children

Essential Active Ingredient		Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	NAZ Education Director, EC Action Team and Think Small will collaborate in order to assess “carrying capacity” (i.e., total number of slots) of 3- and 4-star center and family programs (including MPS and Head Start) in and adjacent to the Zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine current and forecast number of NAZ-eligible preschool children and slots needed for full participation 	Annually
(2)	EC Action Team and Think Small implement plan to increase available slots by <u>increasing quality of existing programs</u> not yet rated at 3 or 4 stars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase available slots by [<i># to be specified by NAZ</i>] each year 	Annual
(3)	Think Small and NAZ (with possible assistance from First Children’s Finance) implement plan to increase available slots by <u>adding new programs</u> or expanding existing programs to produce sufficient capacity for forecast number of NAZ preschool children.		Annual
(4)	Think Small and NAZ Education Director identify available slots in 3- and 4-star center and family programs in and adjacent to the Zone; make information available in NAZ Connect.		Monthly

Part 3 – Funding Solutions

Creating funding solutions that facilitate “continuous enrollment for preschool children in 3- and 4-star programs” – make enrollment and continuous participation more likely and easier for NAZ families

Essential Active Ingredient		Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	NAZ Staff, EC Action Team, RTT-ELC, and Think Small collaborate to identify available public and private sources of tuition and related resources to support continuous enrollment of preschool children in 3- and 4-star rated programs.		Update annually, or as needed
(2)	NAZ Staff, NAZ EC Action Team, and Think Small collaborate to update flow-chart/job aide process within NAZ Connect to facilitate resource allocation appropriate for any single child/family.		Initial, with annual update
(3)	NAZ Staff develop initial plan for funding early childhood participation for each eligible child, and monitor or revise plan.		Quarterly, or as needed
(4)	EC Staff monitor implementation of funding plan(s) across participating families and revises allocations and/or job aide to accommodate changes in policy/use.		Quarterly, or as needed
(5)	On referral, NAZ Education Director (or designee) produces revised or tailored plan to meet the need of individual child or family when the job aide is not adequate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">When NAZ Connector and parent cannot identify necessary resources to support continuous enrollment, and child’s ongoing participation is likely to be affected.	As needed

Part 4 – Enrollment

Selection and initial enrollment (leading to start in participation) for children immediately after 3rd birthday

Essential Active Ingredient		Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	NAZ Staff and parents of enrolled children review available centers with current openings and select one for enrollment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Updated list of available centers (see Part 2, #4)	Prior to enrolled child’s third birthday
(2)	NAZ Staff facilitates enrollment process and initial attendance at selected center.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Connector will begin work with family when child is 30 months old or earlier depending on family or child needs.	Prior to enrolled child’s third birthday
(3)	NAZ Staff works with family to develop Academic Achievement Plan.		At enrollment, Modified as needed

[2.4] Parent and child preparation for the transition to Kindergarten

Partner organizations that offer parent and child preparation for the transition to Kindergarten will follow these essential active ingredients with all families they serve.

Essential Active Ingredient		Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	NAZ Staff identify kindergarten programs in Anchor Schools and other appropriate locations and gathers information about program, enrollment requirements, and test scores/outcomes for enrolled children		Annually (early Fall, prior to transition plan implementation)
(2)	NAZ Staff share list of enrollment options with families (either one-on-one or at a NAZ-specific “kindergarten round-up fair”)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAZ-Specific Transition Plan • Communication with MPS Transition Team 	Annually (Fall before K enrollment)
(3)	NAZ Staff and parents of enrolled children review available kindergarten options and select one for enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAZ-Specific Transition Plan • Communication with MPS Transition Team 	Prior to MPS School Choice Fair (January prior to K)
(4)	NAZ Staff helps facilitate family attendance at MPS School Choice Fair to secure enrollment to selected kindergarten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation • Child care for non-enrolling siblings 	January prior to K

[2.5] Developmentally rich home- and community-based experiences

Skill building experiences in the domains of early literacy, early numeracy and executive functioning outside of formal classroom experiences described in 2.3, Part 1

Essential Active Ingredient		Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	NAZ Staff and parents of enrolled 3 and 4 year-old children review and select from available home- and community- based enrichment activities in specified domains (early literacy, early numeracy and executive functioning).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual listing of home- and community-based options developed by Early Childhood Action Team. • Enough slots in relevant Partner programs. • Empirically-supported program services (<i>definition of “empirically-supported” to be specified by NAZ</i>). 	When child is at least 30 months old initially and as needed thereafter (or before)

[2.6] Uninterrupted childcare

Essential Active Ingredient		Necessary Conditions	Frequency (Dosage)
(1)	NAZ Staff monitor and support families in initiating and maintaining MFIP enrollment (as eligible) in a timely and efficient manner, such that any child care assistance is secured and maintained throughout a child’s preschool years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAZ Connector or Navigator maintain relationship with MFIP employment service providers to be aware of process changes, secure timely assistance when needed. 	As needed