



Birth-to-College

COLLABORATIVE TOOLKIT

How do program and school leaders support the early work of PLCs within a BTC approach?

Action Plan for Implementation for School and Program Leaders: Exploration and Adoption

HOW TO USE THE ACTION PLAN

An action plan accompanies each Birth-to-College (BTC) Implementation Guide for school and program leaders. This tool is intended to provide a place to document your school's process of exploring, installing, and implementing birth through 3rd grade alignment. Ideally, this tool is to be used in a group setting such as an alignment leadership team meeting. To use the action plan, first identify up to five (5) priorities out of the key decisions and strategies for implementation listed below for which you and your colleagues would like to focus. Once you have identified priorities, follow the instructions on page 4 for completing the action plan.

KEY DECISIONS AND STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- **Inform Yourself:** Inform yourself about alignment (i.e., what it is and what it could be) through readings, videos and examples of the current evidence base (i.e., places where alignment is working).
- **Explore Possibilities:** Begin to think about and discuss with colleagues the “why” of alignment by using some of the following guiding questions:
 - What does BTC alignment mean to us as an organization and as individual professionals?
 - Why would we want to dedicate some of our time and efforts to working on BTC alignment?
 - Why might alignment be important to our students, our families, our teachers, family-support staff, and other staff?
 - How will alignment make our school, program or organization stronger?
 - How will alignment enhance our ability to ensure better outcomes for our children and families?
 - How will the alignment process change our school's culture?

NOTES:

- **Identify Potential Benefits and Challenges:** Discuss the potential benefits of and challenges to BTC alignment. Circle which potential benefits or challenges apply to your school or program.
 - Potential benefits and opportunities might include:
 - Getting to know staff, processes and practices of organizations other than your own
 - Sharing your knowledge about your students and families with teachers and staff who have them before or after you do
 - Observing or hear how organizations or schools go about doing their work: standards, expectations, approaches to support learning and development, approaches to family engagement that come either before or after the age group you work wit
 - Exploring how alignment of processes and curricula would better support your children and families about what comes next (e.g., the transition process from pre-k to kindergarten)
 - Potential challenges might include:
 - Resisting to change in personal practices, expectations, accountability and day-to-day procedures
 - Buying-in from staff on the process of alignment when the work may be perceived as ambiguous and time-consuming
 - Ensuring that all concerns from staff, including direct service staff, are heard and engaged
 - Negotiating new organizational climates, approaches and philosophies of the respective partners while developing relational trust

- **Be Involved:** Think about your level of involvement in the exploration and adoption stage of BTC alignment. Consider being involved in your program’s internal discussions or meetings about alignment. When conceptualizing BTC alignment, it is important to consider the needs of the children and families in every step. Act as a liaison between the internal alignment team and families to ensure family voice and choice are central to alignment development.

- **Talk With Other Staff:** Have conversations with other staff in your building (e.g., teachers, paraprofessionals, therapists, social workers, school psychologists, family-support specialists and other related support staff) about their understanding of alignment. Note some commonly held beliefs about alignment among staff. Also note differences in their conceptualization of and feelings about alignment. Understanding how alignment can benefit the children and families you all serve will help establish common goals and common language across organizations.

NOTES:

- **Speak With Families:** Have conversations with families early on about the benefits of having a line of sight from birth through college for their child's education. When families have been familiarized with the concept of alignment and how it is a powerful catalyst for change in education, it is crucial to converse with parents and other relevant family members about what they would like to see in an aligned BTC continuum. Relevant topics include:
 - How they would like to see their children's learning and development advanced
 - The types of opportunities they would like for their children
 - How they experience the enrollment process and other transitions at your school/program and at other schools
 - What they would like in terms of opportunities for family engagement

NOTES:

ACTION PLAN

From the list of Key Decisions and Strategies for Implementation, identify no more than 5 priorities, for which you and your colleagues would like to focus using the template below. For each priority, write in activities related to the priority, what types of tasks are related to the activity, who will be involved in the activity, when the activity will be completed, what supports and resources are needed to complete the activity, and next steps. Print action plans to organize and document priorities and activities as needed.

PRIORITY #__:				
ACTIVITIES RELATED TO PRIORITY #__				
ACTIVITY #__				
Tasks (list creation of "products" or "what to do" to meet activity/outcome)	Who (list all staff involved and lead)	By When	Supports/Resources Needed	Next Steps