



## Moving towards a holistic community measure of kindergarten readiness

This brief highlights the value in developing a holistic measure from available local provider systems data and using K-12 academic data to develop a framework for a community-level measure of overall child well-being.

In our pilot phase, the IDEAS Consortium calculated a baseline “resilience index.” We used the Early Development Instrument (EDI), a holistic measure of children’s development in kindergarten, to create neighborhood-level views of children’s development in relation to community factors (see more in [Information Brief IB-03](#)). Researcher advisors from Data Informed Futures stress the importance of the five broad domains of child development measured by EDI. Although it is a proven predictor of third-grade outcomes, they note that many districts do not implement this comprehensive assessment, and to date the limited efforts to explore alternative measures represent a “lost opportunity” for the field. A five-year research grant funded by The Children’s Trust allows the Consortium to develop an alternate measure of progress: one that could more easily draw on existing data without requiring primary data collection using the EDI.

**From school to community measures.** How might local data be used to produce holistic population-level measures that inform and guide community decision-making? We propose to geocode K-12 academic results for use at the census tract level as the first step in developing a more holistic population measurement system that draws on existing data. The ongoing development of new measures will be informed by our Miami-Dade learning community.

Academic assessments—traditionally used by classroom, school, and district-level personnel to inform educational planning—are potential candidates for a population-based measure. By geocoding and aggregating K-12 records to where children live, this powerful data can be re-framed by Census tract and neighborhood in ways that allow engagement of communities, service providers, and policy makers focused on local neighborhood conditions, early childhood programs, and school readiness for children entering the K-12 system. Initial research findings are addressed in a companion brief (see more in [Research Brief IDEAS-05](#)).



As we explore new measures of child well-being in Miami-Dade County, UCLA-based advisors from the Center for Healthier Children, Families and Communities will contribute national expertise on holistic population measures for school readiness and healthy child development.

## Policy Recommendations: Making data actionable in a place-based context

### Key roles in an effective learning community

A local measure for school readiness can align early childhood provider systems, local communities, and researchers around shared evidence—and a common agenda to improve child outcomes. In our IDEAS-to-Action logic model, reflected in the graphic, each group plays a valuable role. Three areas of alignment, to be further detailed in future briefs, will inform this work:

- **Practice:** Through our governance committee, provider systems collaborate to contribute data, approve uses, and vet findings.
- **Research:** Through our university backbone, an inter-disciplinary academic team integrates and analyzes data to share and refine findings.
- **Policy:** Through our lead community organizations, local views inform and contextualize findings in three distinct catchment areas to help drive policy changes.

