



# Early Literacy Matters

**Mindy Binderman**

GEEARS: Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students



# GEEARS: Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students



## Our Mission:

To support high-quality early learning and healthy development for Georgia's youngest children, from birth to five by championing policies, promoting innovative and evidence-based practices, and building public will.



# THE FIRST 2000 DAYS

The **FOUNDATION** for future learning, health, and behavior is built **birth to age 5**.





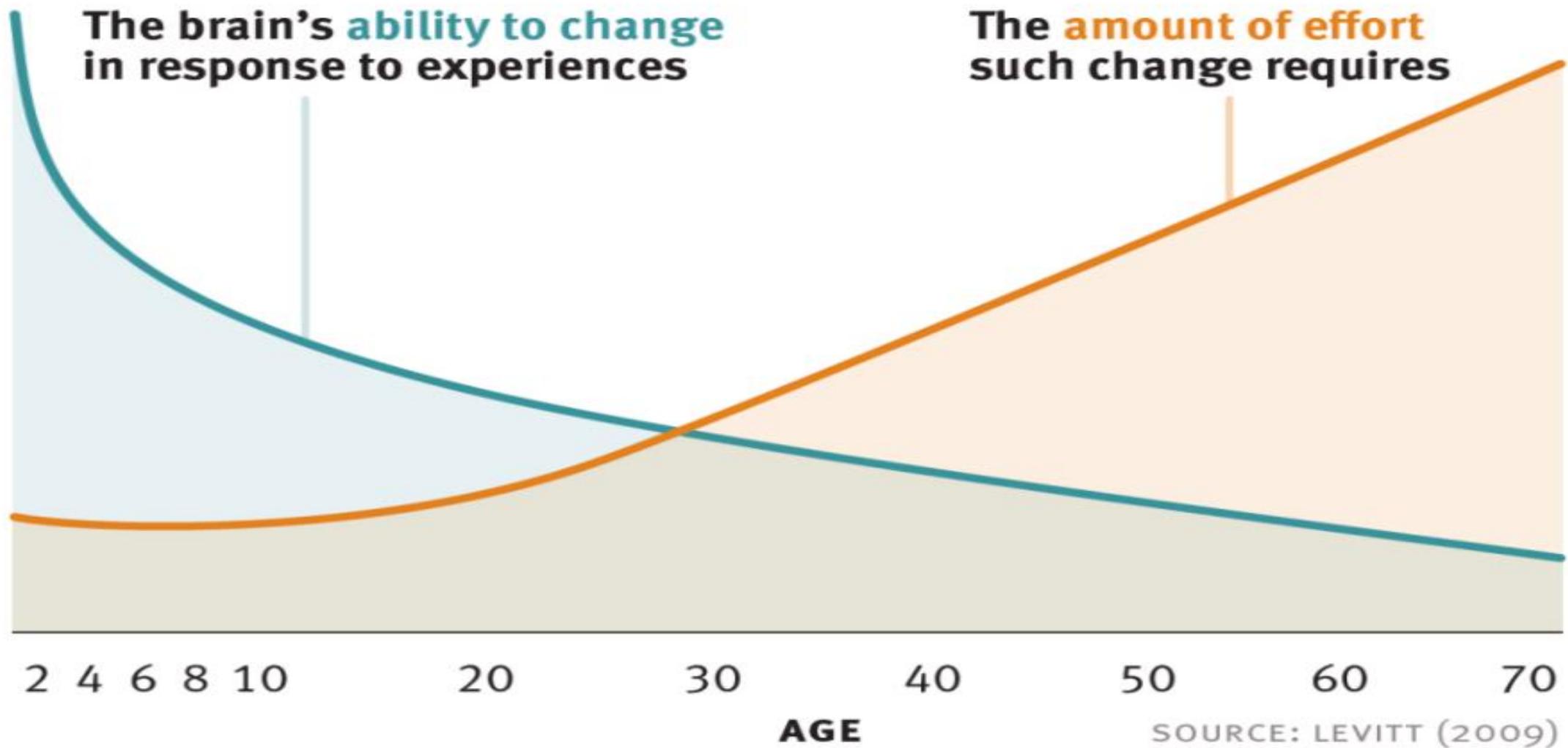
# EARLY BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

The brain is **not** fully developed at birth.

The basic architecture of the brain forms during a child's early years.

More than 1 million new neural connections are formed every second.





SOURCE: LEVITT (2009)

Center on the Developing Child  HARVARD UNIVERSITY

[www.developingchild.harvard.edu](http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu)

It is easier and less costly to form strong brain circuits during the early years than it is to intervene or “fix” them later.



# COMPREHENSIVE ROI



## BETTER HEALTH

- Lower blood pressure
- Healthier weight
- Less drug use
- Less likely to develop a chronic disease such as diabetes



## MORE EDUCATION

- 44% more likely to graduate high school
- Overall higher educational attainment



## HIGHER INCOME

- Higher earnings
- Less likely to rely on government assistance



# Highlights from *Opportunities Lost* (2018)

*Short- and long-term disruptions lead to significant impact on employees, employers, and the state's economy as a whole*

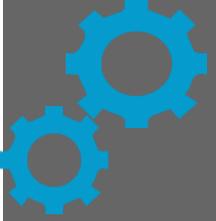
Child care challenges lead to at least  
**\$1.75 BILLION IN LOSSES**  
in economic activity annually and  
an additional **\$105 MILLION**  
in lost tax revenue.



*Nearly **1 in 5** reported missing more than a full week (6+ days) of work in the past 6 months.*

**OVER A QUARTER**

*of Georgia parents of children under 5 reported a significant disruption to their or a family member's employment (quitting, not taking, or greatly changing a job) in the past year.*



# Highlights from Parent Focus Groups (2019): *Nature of Child Care Disruptions*



- Lack of **affordable** child care
- Limited **availability** or **consistency** of child care, particularly **high-quality** options for young children
- **Inflexible** work schedules and the **absence** of **family-friendly work policies**
- **Sickness** or injury suffered by child; lack of **back-up** child care options

# Highlights from COVID-era Parent Survey (Summer 2021)



- **8 in 10** parents agreed that “finding quality and affordable child care was a challenge before the coronavirus pandemic, and the pandemic has only made these challenges more difficult.”
- **9 in 10** agreed that “the coronavirus pandemic has demonstrated that many families need more assistance with child care.”
- **1 in 3 (34%)** indicated they or another family member had to quit a job, not take a job, or greatly change a job in the past year because of problems with child care, up from **26% in 2018**.

→ **Single parents (41%)** and those in households making **<\$50K annually (39%)** were more likely to experience disruptions.

**Why does 3<sup>rd</sup> grade  
reading matter?**



# THIRD GRADE READING MATTERS



End of third grade outcomes predict:

- academic achievement
- career success





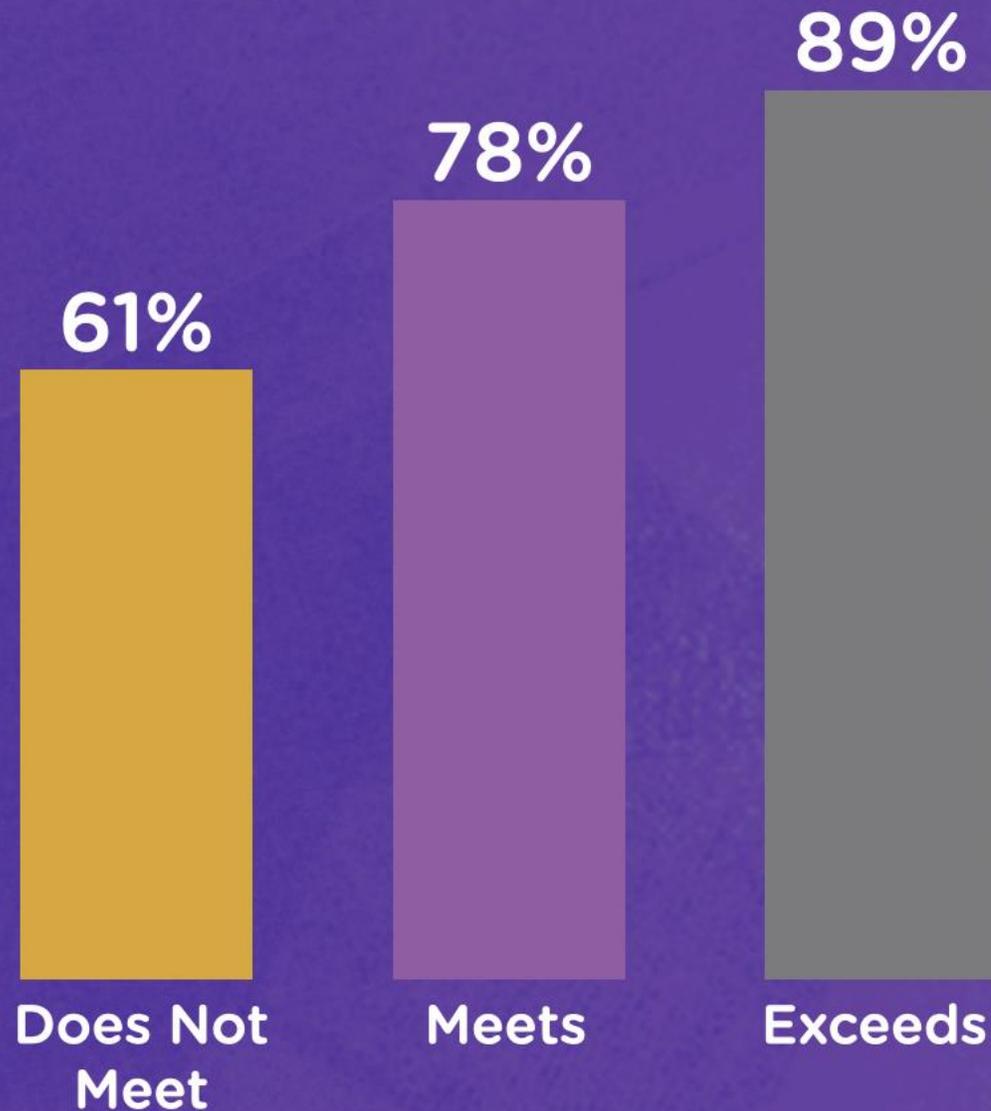
STUDENTS WHO DON'T  
READ PROFICIENTLY BY THE  
END OF THIRD GRADE ARE

**4X MORE  
LIKELY TO  
DROP OUT**

OF HIGH SCHOOL  
COMPARED TO  
PROFICIENT READERS.

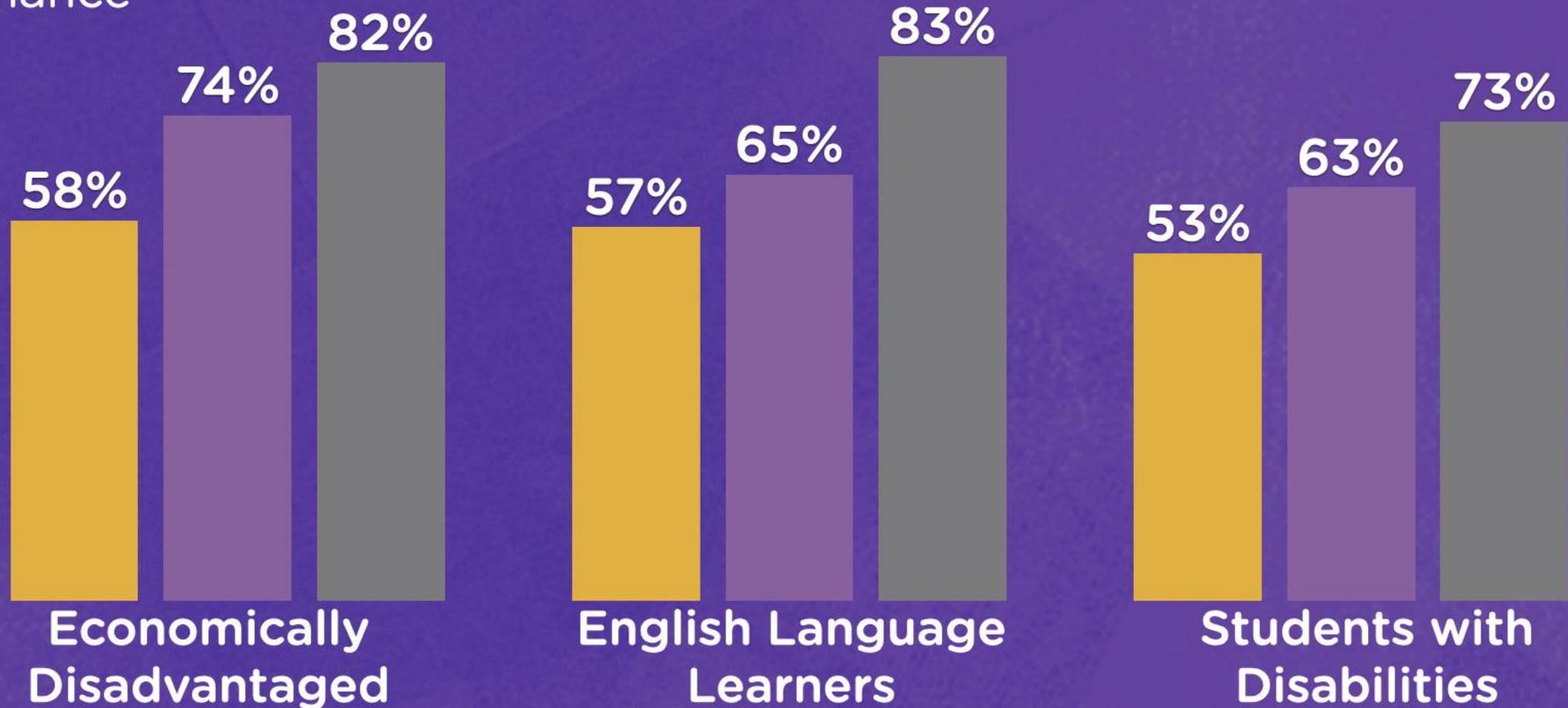
# High School Graduation

By 3rd Grade Reading Performance



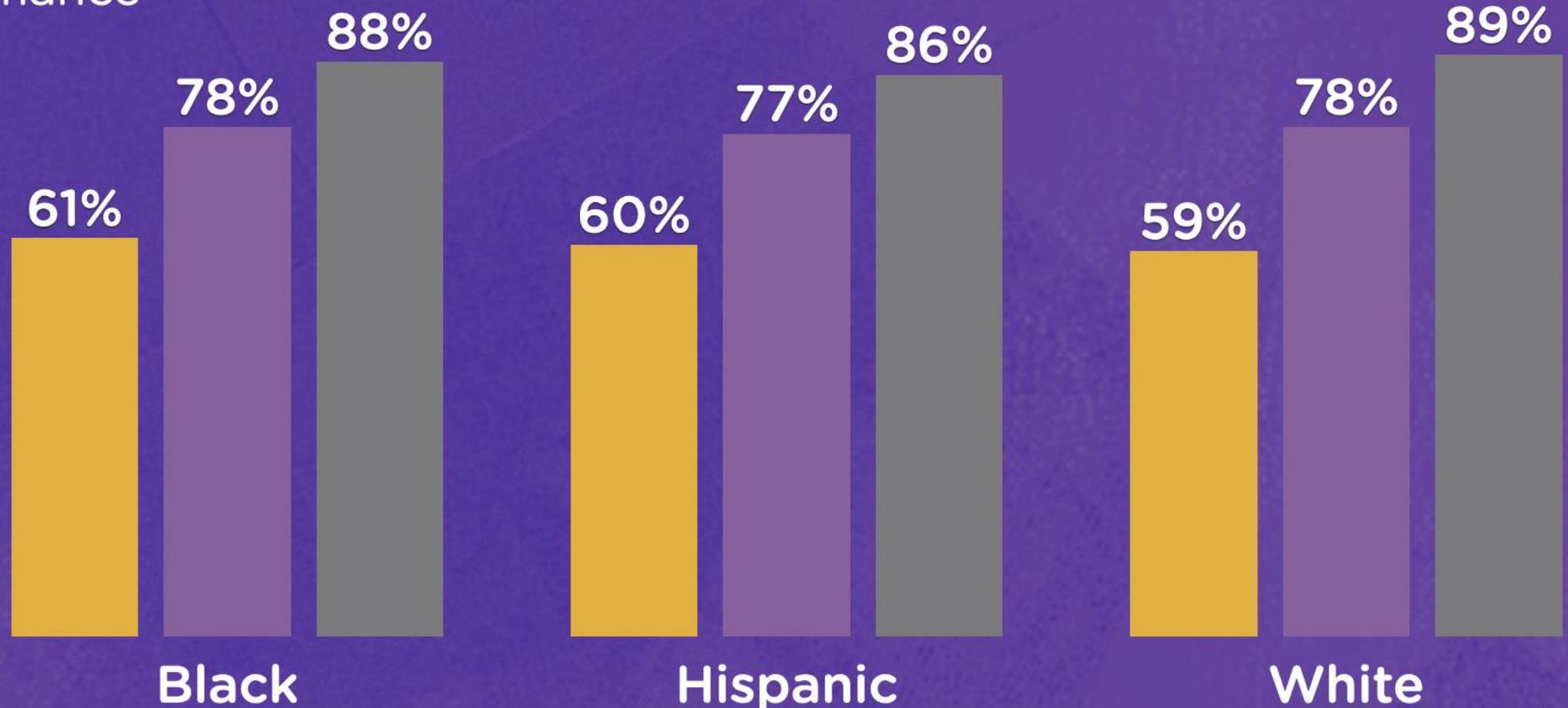
# High School Graduation

By 3rd Grade Reading Performance



# High School Graduation

By 3rd Grade Reading Performance



REWRITING  
OUR STORY  
TO IMPROVE  
CHILDHOOD  
LITERACY



GET GEORGIA  
READING



GEORGIA family connection



GEORGIA PARTNERSHIP FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION



GET GEORGIA READING CAMPAIGN FOR GRADE-LEVEL READING CABINET



Georgia Grantmakers ALLIANCE



in partnership with the Southeastern Council of Foundations



THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION





A NEW WAY OF  
**THINKING**

**What factors affect a child's path to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading proficiency?**

**Factors that affect a child's path to third grade reading proficiency.**

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Factors that affect a child's path to third grade reading proficiency.

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MATERNAL  
EDUCATION



ADULT  
LITERACY

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Factors that affect a child's path to third grade reading proficiency.

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MATERNAL EDUCATION



ADULT LITERACY

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PRETERM & LOW BIRTHWEIGHT BIRTH



HEALTHY PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

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Factors that affect a child's path to third grade reading proficiency.



MATERNAL EDUCATION



ADULT LITERACY



PRETERM & LOW BIRTHWEIGHT BIRTH



HEALTHY PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT



QUALITY CHILD CARE



CLASSROOM CLIMATE



LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT



**Factors that affect a child's path to third grade reading proficiency.**



SCHOOL CLIMATE



MATERNAL EDUCATION



ADULT LITERACY



SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT



PRETERM & LOW BIRTHWEIGHT BIRTH



HEALTHY PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT



QUALITY CHILD CARE



ATTENDANCE



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CLASSROOM CLIMATE



LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT



PRESCHOOL & GRADE SCHOOL SUSPENSION

**Factors that affect a child's path to third grade reading proficiency.**



SCHOOL CLIMATE



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QUALITY CHILD CARE



ATTENDANCE



CLASSROOM CLIMATE



LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT



PRESCHOOL & GRADE SCHOOL SUSPENSION

# FOUR PILLARS



All children experience abundant, positive, language-rich social interactions with caregivers, educators, and peers.



All children and their families have access\* to, and support for, healthy development, emotional well-being, and educational achievement.



All educators, families, and policymakers understand and address the impact of learning climate on social and emotional engagement and student success.

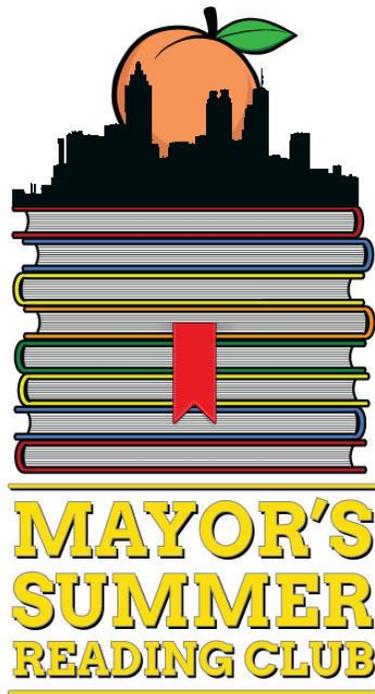


All caregivers and educators are equipped with evidence-informed skills to effectively engage all children through developmentally responsive practice.





# MAYOR'S SUMMER READING CLUB

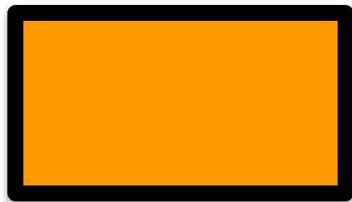
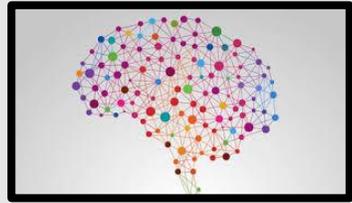


[mayorsreadingclub.org](http://mayorsreadingclub.org)

- Began in 2012 as a birth to 8 program
- Celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2022
- In 2018, we narrowed the focus to birth to five instead of birth to eight.
- Distribute approximately 15-20,000 books each year
- Kick off event has been at the Children's Museum of Atlanta, Atlanta Fulton Public Library main branch and now at High Museum campus.
- Most summers we average 150-200 events via 40-65 partners



# The P-3 Leaders Fellowship



**“P-3 Seam”**



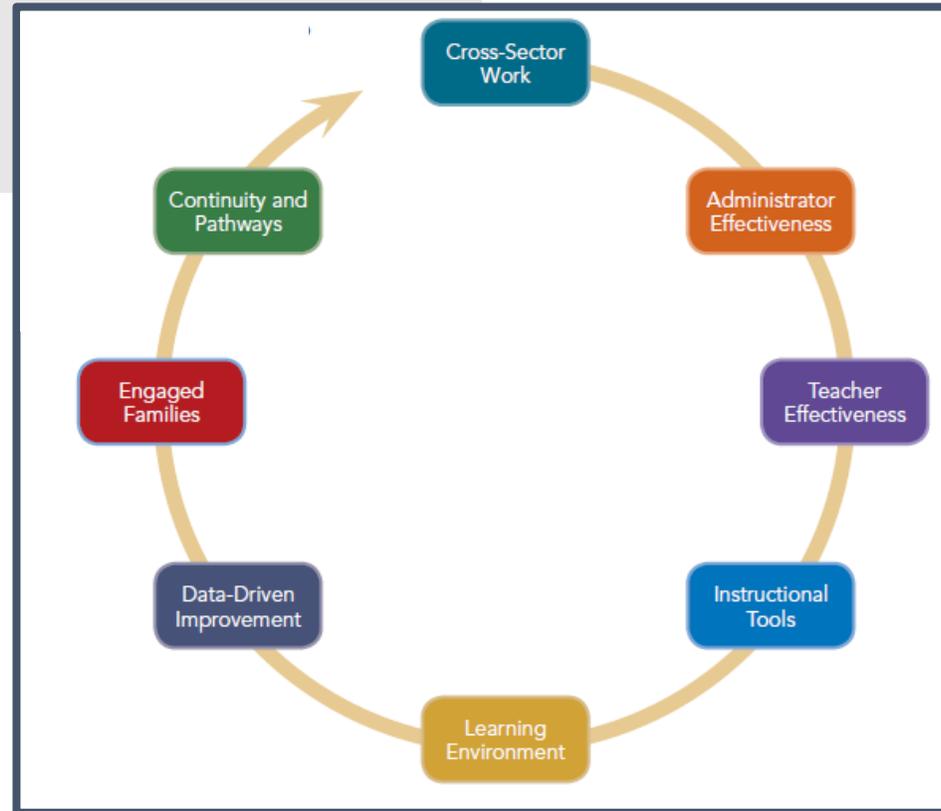
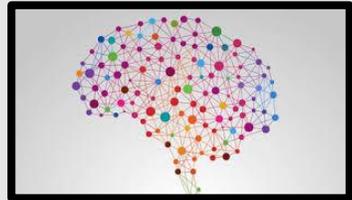
**“Preschool” (anything birth to 4yo)  
Does not mean “non-educational”**



**“P-3 System” or “P-3 Continuum”**

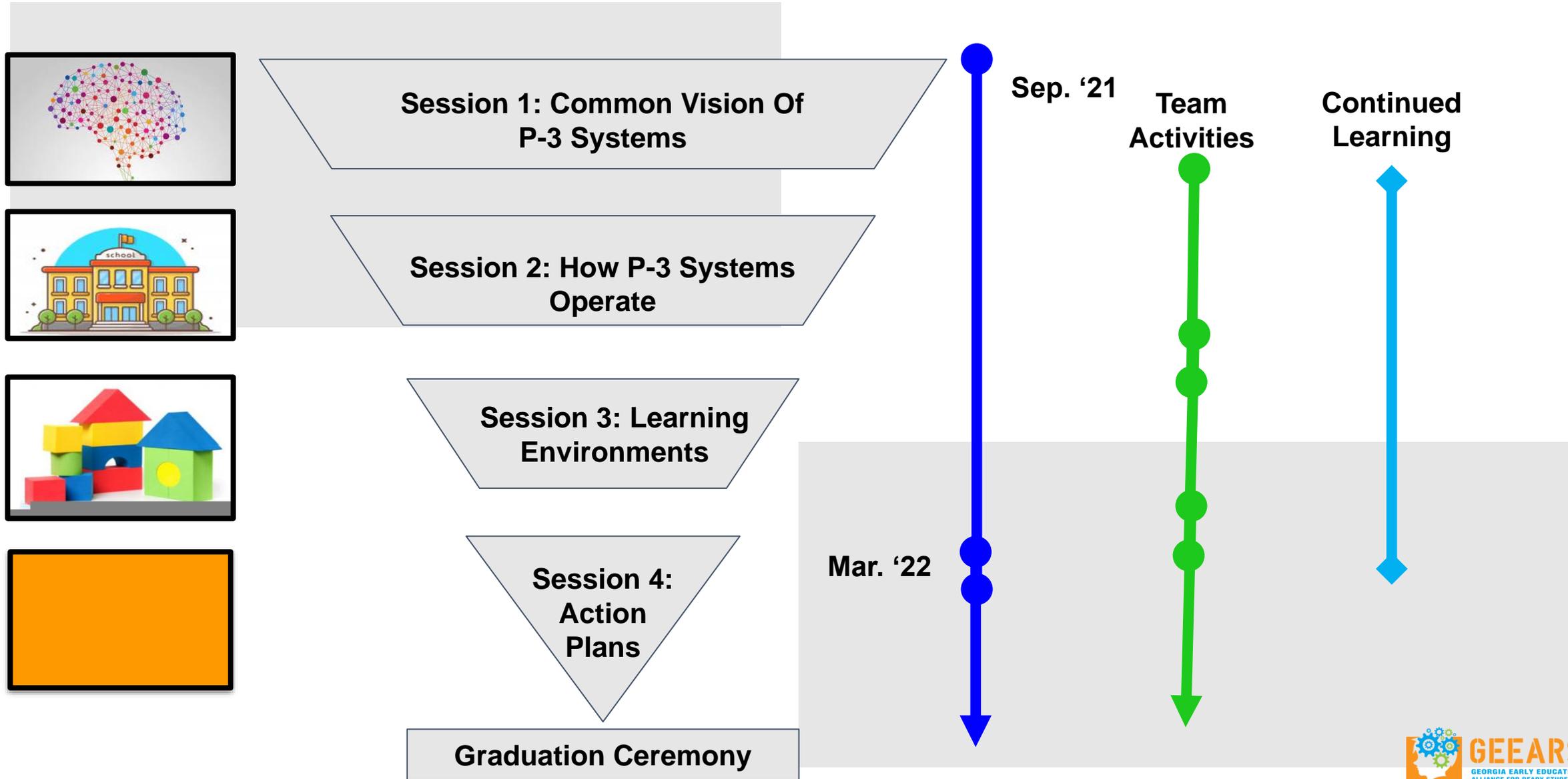


# The P-3 Leaders Fellowship





# The P-3 Leaders Fellowship: Structure





**STROLLING**  <sup>TM</sup>  
**THUNDER**  
Georgia

**GEEARS: Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students**, in partnership with **ZERO TO THREE**, is excited to bring **families and young children from around Georgia to the State Capitol to meet their elected officials during Strolling Thunder.**

Share your stories about the joys and challenges of raising young children in Georgia with elected officials **to elevate the needs of Georgia's youngest learners as a statewide priority** —for stronger families, vibrant communities, and a prosperous state.

**This opportunity is for Georgia families with young children.** Your infants, toddlers, and/or preschoolers are invited to attend this event with you.



**2023 DATE COMING SOON! Make sure you are subscribed to GEEARS' mailing list to receive the announcement and registration information.**

Getting more kids to read takes  
more than good schools,  
more than great teachers, and  
more than loving parents,

**IT TAKES ALL OF US  
WORKING TOGETHER.**

# What Would be Possible if . . .

We adopted shared, whole child, birth-through-age-eight measures that put children on a pathway to success?

We aligned policies and practices that were rooted in how children develop?

We coordinated strategies to support children's optimal development beginning at birth?



# FOLLOW ALONG ONLINE

 @GEEARS

 @GEEARS

 @GAEarlyEd

 GEEARS: Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students

[www.geears.org](http://www.geears.org)