

Project 2. Birth to 5 Early Learning Campus Viability

Funded by Barberton Community Foundation (contact: Josh Gordon)

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Purpose: Validate the effectiveness of a community-based early learning campus (birth to 5) on near- and long-term educational outcomes and, if possible, economic outcomes for the community.

Overview: Community of ~25,000 has ~21% child poverty is experiencing severe underperformance on the state of Ohio Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) where 22.8% of kindergarteners were evaluated as ready for kindergarten in 2023.

Desired outcomes include understanding:

- How did Barberton end up with this problem?
- What other communities are demographically similar to Barberton and *suffering* the same challenges?
- What other communities are demographically similar to Barberton and *successfully addressing* the same challenges?
- Is a birth to 5 early learning campus to serve the community's families a viable idea to address this challenge?
 - Early learning campus as defined by, but not restricted to, a full day preschool for all age-eligible students, playground that is developmentally appropriate for all students, 6a-8p daycare for working families, parent convening space/café to foster relationships for families, classroom facility for 2-3 cohorts of CDA certification classes per year + financial literacy classes for families
- Are there other examples in the US of a model like this?
 - Assuming so, what are the 3rd grade reading (or any language and literacy) outcomes? Are there high school performance outcomes that can be associated to this type of model? Are there post-secondary outcomes that can be associated to this type of model?
- What other similar models may exist that did not work? Why didn't they work?
- Are there examples of family-based early learning investments in a community that indicate or fully reveal the educational outcome value of investments in community-based birth to 5 learning models?
- Ideally there are 2-3 key data points that indicate the validity of this model as described, or a similar model with validating data.
 - Data must include educational outcome data and could also include economic / community impact data.

As a stretch goal, it would be wonderful if there were correlations between a model as described and the ability for a community to attract young professionals as homeowners. In question form, does a model like this improve home ownership in a community? Does it attract new homeowners with higher HHI and more stability than current residents who are renting homes?