

Quarterly Convening

June 14, 2022

Agenda

9:00-9:20	Opening, Awards, and Strategic Plan Update
9:20-10:00	Community Engagement at Norwalk ACTS
10:00-10:05	Break & Board Slate Vote
10:05-10:55	Community Engagement Workshop
10:55-11:00	Closing

2022 Sally Grose Award

- Presented by Rev. Lindsay Curtis to

Rev. Elizabeth Abel



Ubuntu Award - I am, because you are

Ubuntu exists when people unite for a common good; that if we join together we can overcome our differences and our problems. Whoever we are, wherever we live, whatever our culture, Ubuntu can help us coexist in harmony and peace.



2022 Ubuntu Award

- Presented by Anamilena Moreno to

Angel Dorleans



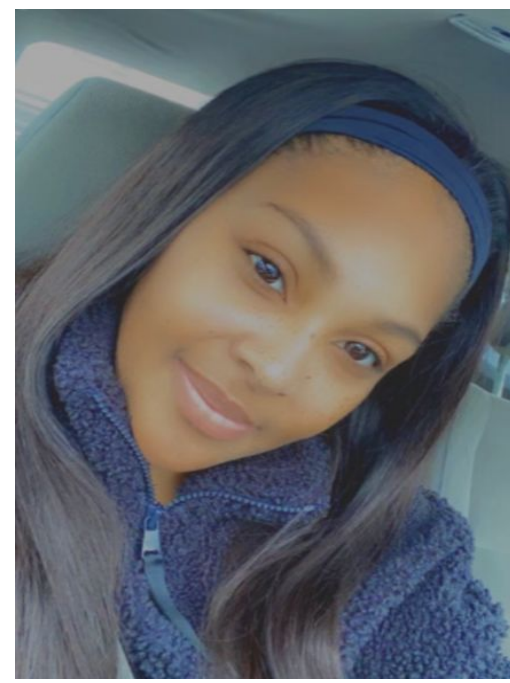
2022-23 Proposed Board of Director Slate



Julie Corbett



Adyna Gamboa



Diamond Sead



Ken Waller

****Only Norwalk ACTS members who signed the 2020 MOA are eligible to vote.***

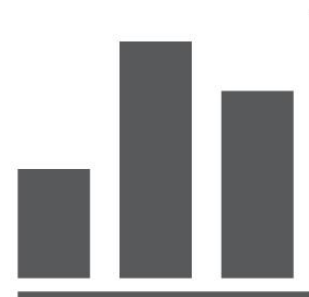
Thank you to Rich Wenning for his 3 year service on the Board!

Celebrating Norwalk ACTS' strengths over the decade

Connective Tissue for Organizations & Institutions



Instilling Data as a Cornerstone



DATA

Building a Collaborative Early Childhood system

impact of the birth-to-age-5 initiative



7,263 ASQs (and counting)
have been completed and entered into the database



3904 children (and counting)
have been screened



1497 children (and counting)
are being tracked over time through repeat ASQ screenings



increase of 67% to 74% of children*
who are developmentally ready to learn at kindergarten entry
*67% 2018-19 to 74% in 2020-21

To achieve our vision, our big bet over the next 3 years

Disciplined Initiative focus through the work of cornerstones and shifting ownership to community

- ▶ **Narrowing focus of Initiative goals and structure to improve outcomes**



- ▶ **Building capacity and alignment through cornerstones with community at the core**

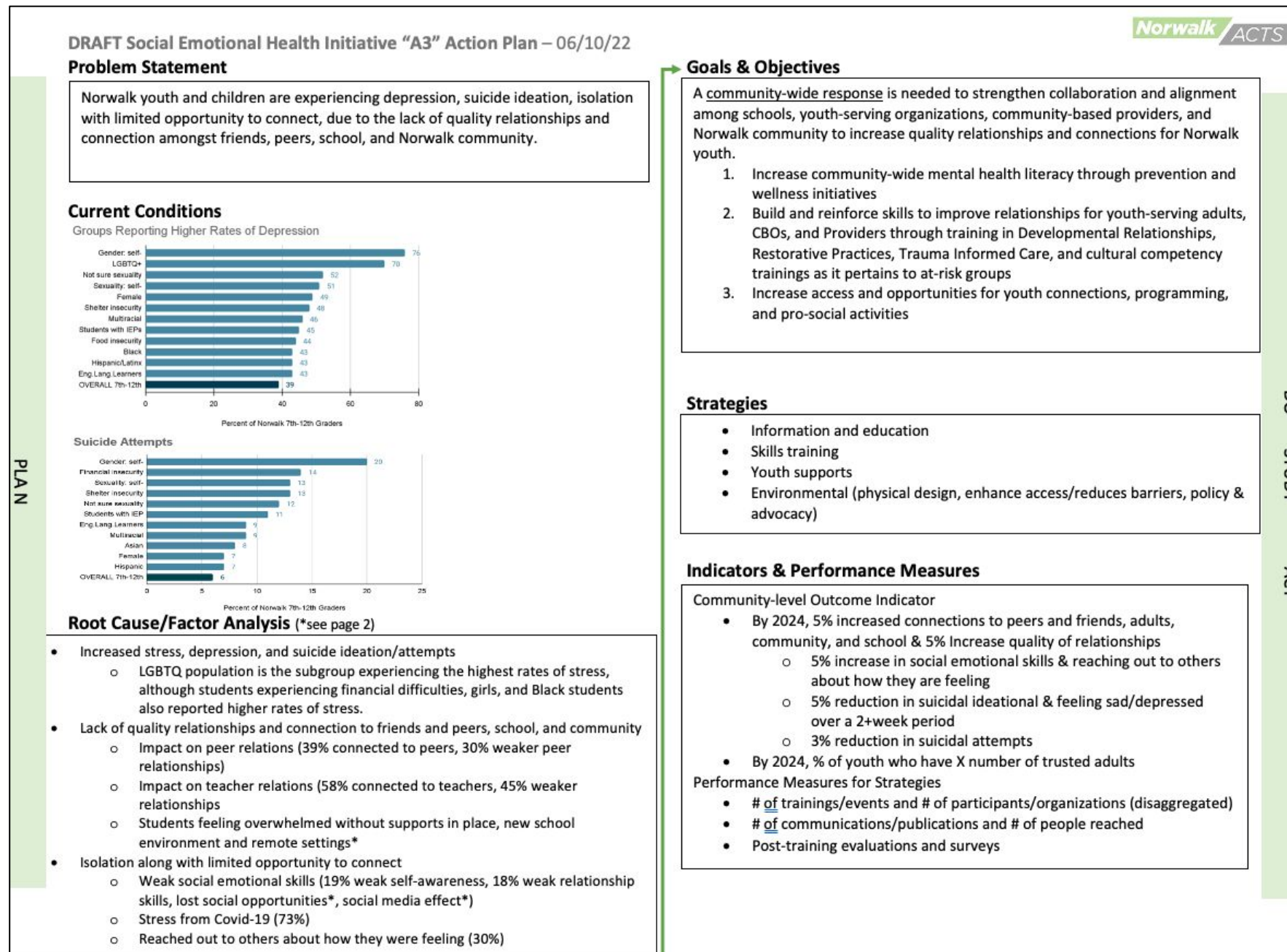


Shift Power

Community drives the work of the partnership through their decision making; the partnership shifts control and defers to community wisdom and leadership.

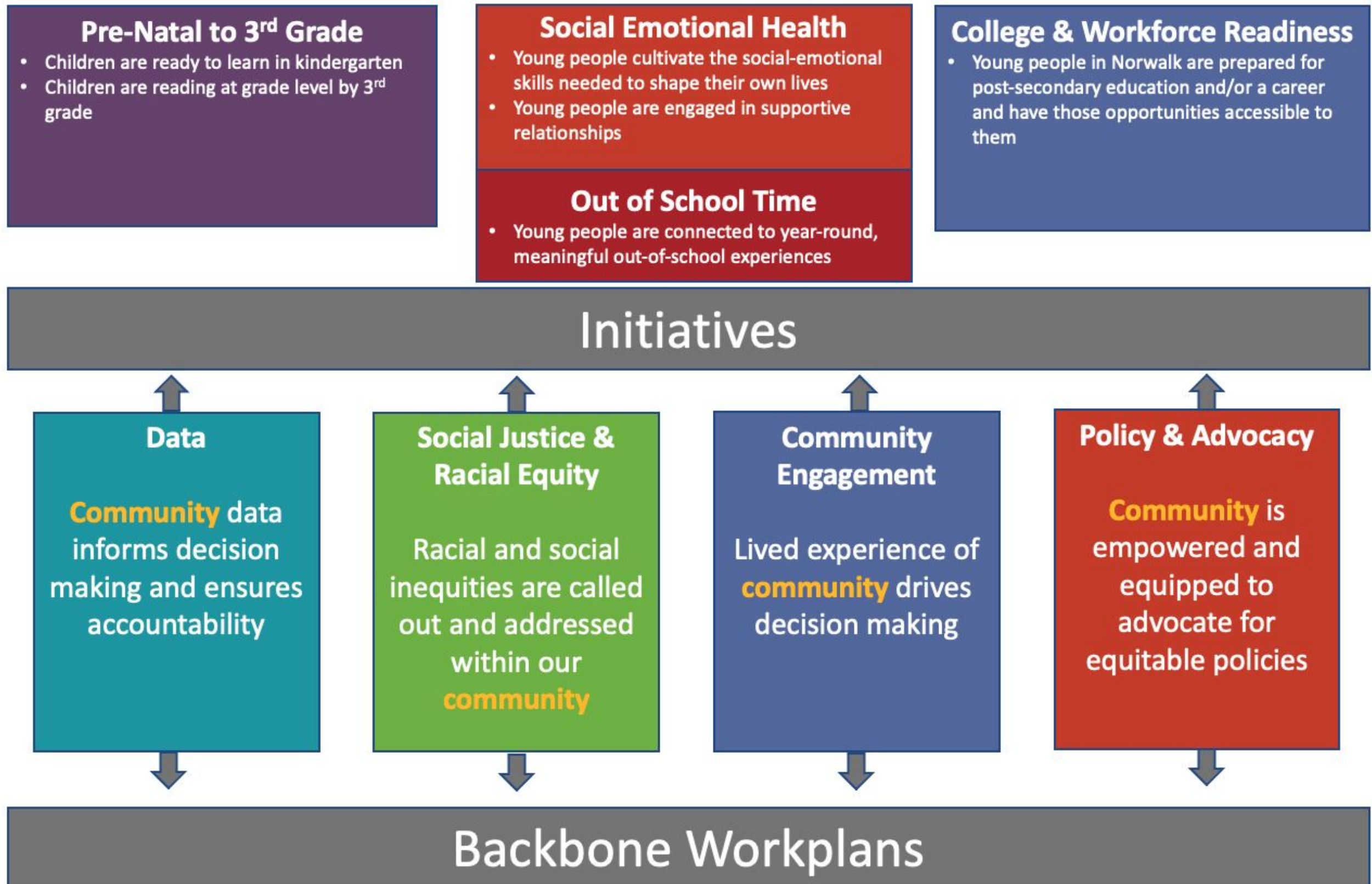
"Your decisions will drive the work. You have the power and resources to create change."

Narrowing focus of Initiative goals to improve outcomes



- ▶ One page action plan summary as an anchor
- ▶ Detailed annual action plan (separate) for Initiative leadership and membership

Building capacity and alignment through cornerstones with community at the core



What to look for

Over the summer

- ▶ Initiative leadership & backbone action planning and feedback

By September Convening

- ▶ Published strategic plan that includes our big bet, cornerstone priorities, and Initiative one-page action plans

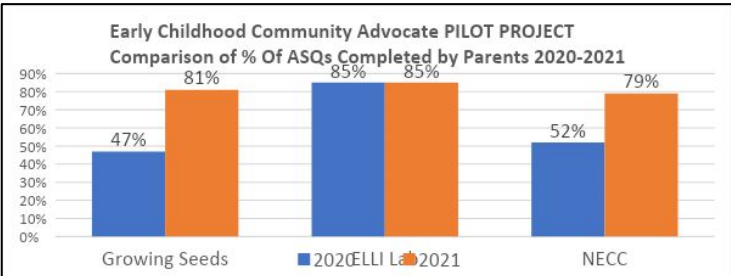
Community Engagement Definitions

COMMUNITY: The residents (children, young adults, adults and seniors) who live in Norwalk and the people and organizations who work to help make Norwalk a better place.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: The process by which community members are included and contribute to collective impact initiatives.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT VALUE: Lived experience of community must drive decision making

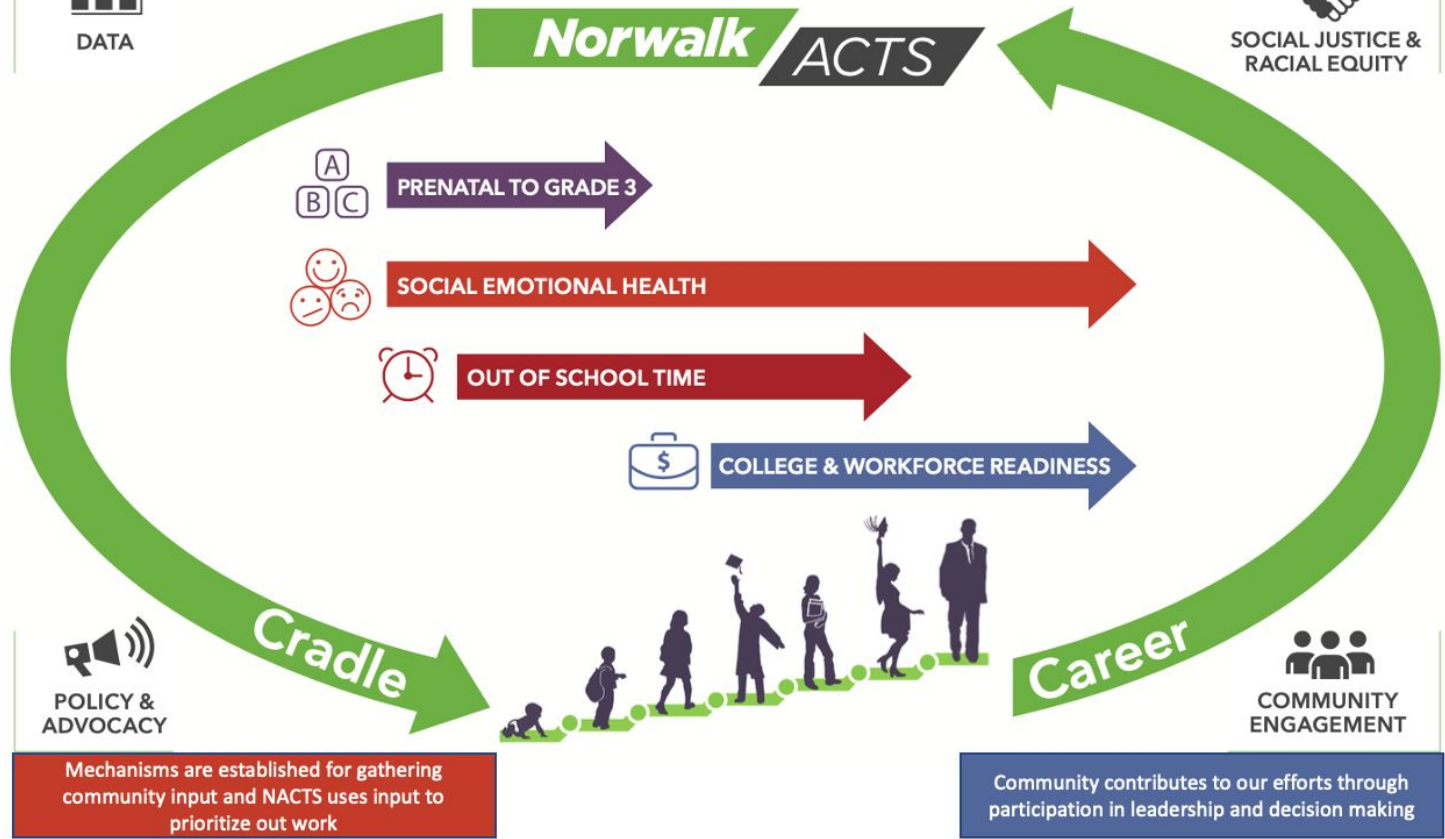
Principles of Community Engagement in the Norwalk ACTS ecosystem - 2021-22



Data for continuous improvement includes voices and experiences from the community



DATA



Mechanisms are established for gathering community input and NACTS uses input to prioritize out work

Community contributes to our efforts through participation in leadership and decision making



SOCIAL JUSTICE & RACIAL EQUITY

HOW DOES THE ROODNER COURT RESIDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL BENEFIT RESIDENTS?

This is an important notice. Please have it translated.
Esta es una noticia importante. Por favor hay que traducirlo.
C'est un avis important. Veuillez faire la traduction.

NORWALK HOUSING AUTHORITY MEMORANDUM

To: Roodner Court Residents
From: Anna Keegan, Director of Housing Operations
Date: June 15, 2021
Subject: Roodner Court Resident Advisory Council

A Resident Advisory Council is being formed at Roodner Court. An informational meeting will be held on July 15th at 6pm at Roodner Court. There will be a second meeting on August 16th at 6pm at which time nominations will be accepted. Elections will be held on September 20th. Please join us on July 15th for the introductory meeting. Call Allison with any questions at 203-354-1803. Thank you.

Leadership positions are representative of the community members most impacted by systems change

gives advice about decisions being made by the Norwalk Housing Authority in many WITHIN ROODNER COURT. TO HAVE INPUT INTO DECISIONS AFFECTING THE ENVIRONMENT OF LIVING RECREATION AND MODERNIZATION OF FACILITIES INCLUDING MAINTENANCE & SECURITY



UNDERSTANDING NORWALK'S LOCAL EDUCATION BUDGET & ESSER FUNDING

Norwalk ACTS YOUTH TOWN HALL Board of Education Candidate Forum

YOU ARE INVITED
Please join the students of the Center for Youth Leadership (CYL) at Brien McMahon High School for an online discussion with the candidates for the Board of Education. Students will be asking questions on various topics related to education, afterschool programming, and many more!

WEDNESDAY 10/27/21 7 - 8:30 PM
REGISTER AT
<https://bit.ly/NorwalkYTHOct27>



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
This discussion is made possible by Norwalk ACTS. It provides a safe space for youth to come together to share experiences, provide education, and explore equitable actions that can be taken within schools and the community.



Levels of Community Engagement



Community Advocate Experiences

MEET *our Community Advocates*



CAMILA
VALLEJO



CHRISTOPHER
MAHANNA



DOREEN
ANDERSON



DIANA
REVOLUS



SONIA
MORALES



JAYDEN
WHITMORE



MICHAEL
BRONCATI



ANGEL
DORLEANS



LAURA
GARCIA



FRANCIS
NUNEZ



MARIA
GUZMAN



ERIKA
HERNANDEZ

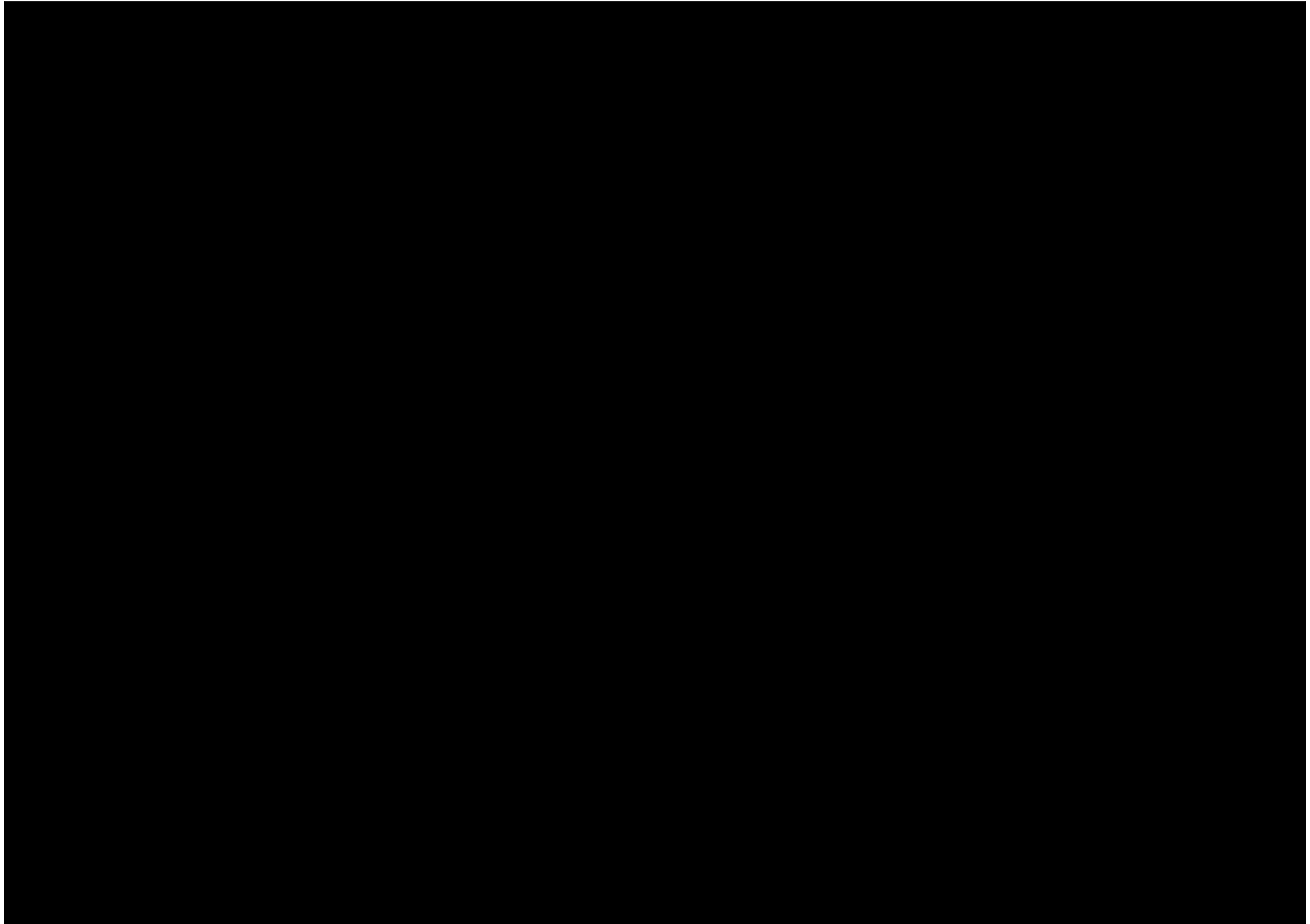
Angel Dorleans



Jayden Whitmore



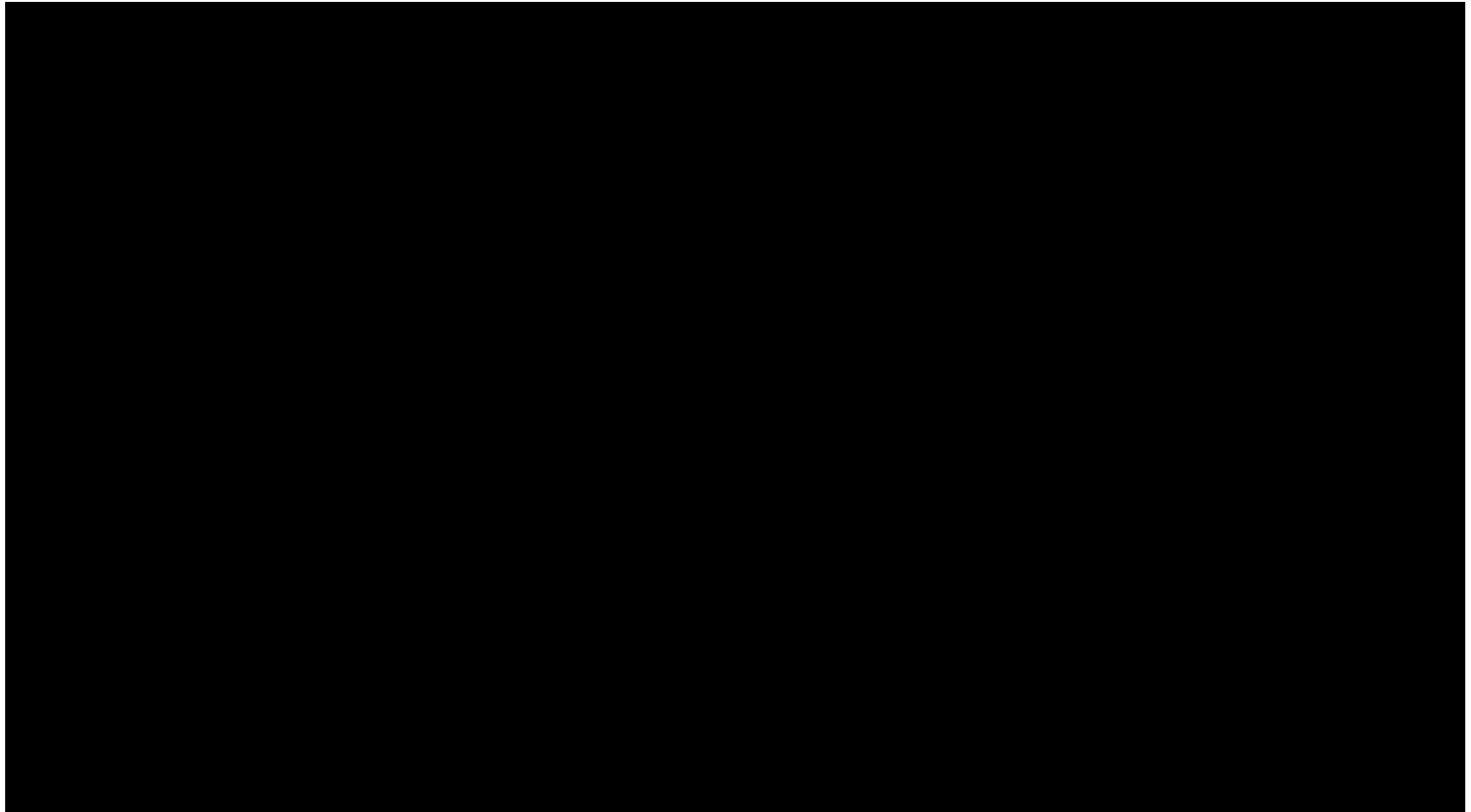
Francis Nunez



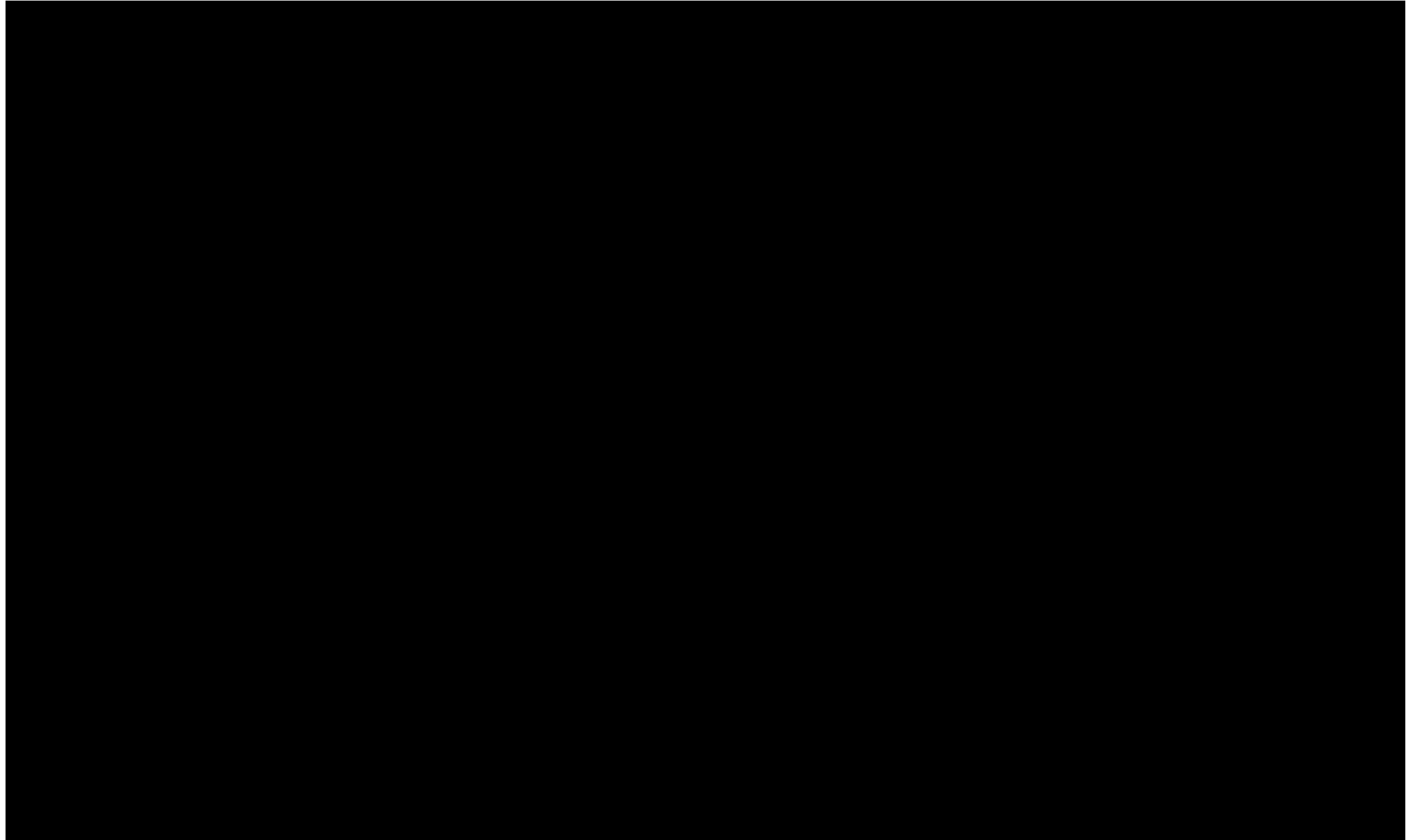
Maria Guzman



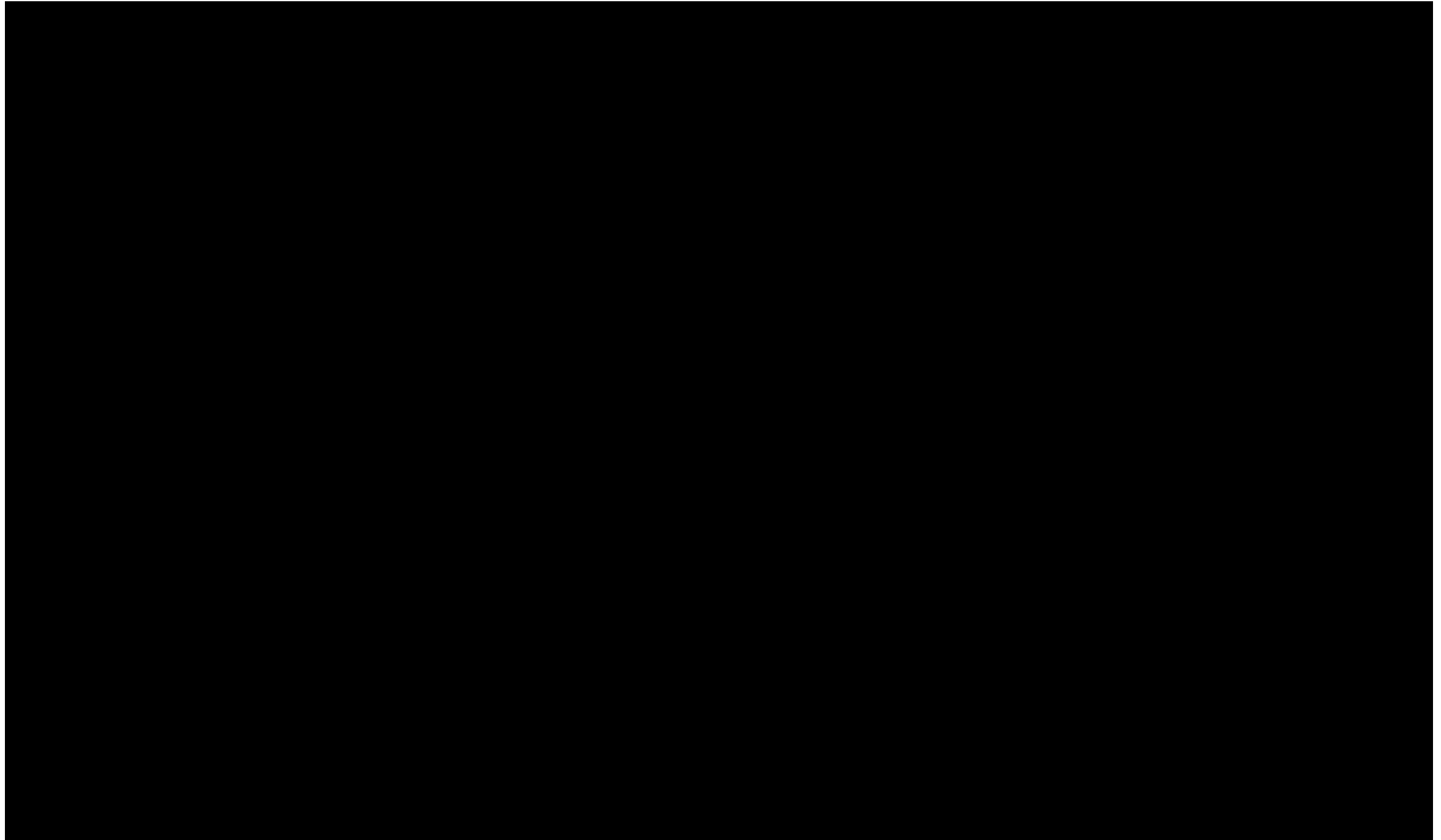
Sonia Morales



Laura Garcia



Chris Mahanna



Early Thinking for Community Engagement '22-23 Priorities

Intentional Alignment of Initiative/Workgroup Goals with Community Engagement Actions

- Continue Early Childhood Community Advocate program with Norwalk Early Childhood Education Providers and potentially expand work by introducing Sparkler and engaging parents with children from Birth to 3 years of age
- Shift part of Community Advocate program by hiring targeted Community Engagement Specialists
- Youth Summit in Norwalk

Community Engagement Supports

THANK YOU to the Community Engagement Advisory Group and the many community members who guided the development of the program, provided referrals to engage adults and youth and assisted with community resource training.

CE Advisory Group

- ▶ **Rev. Elizabeth Abel**
- ▶ **Diana Carpio**
- ▶ **Barbara Meyer-Mitchell**
- ▶ **Mary Oster**
- ▶ **Sarah Rendon Garcia**
- ▶ **Iliana Zuniga**

5 Minute Break - Board Vote QR Code

<https://bit.ly/NABoardVote>



**Only Norwalk ACTS members who signed the 2020 MOA are eligible to vote.*

CONSISTENT & PERSISTENT

MORE EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR
AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



KIRK A. WESLEY

- Husband, Father, and Entrepreneur
- Organizing Consultant, Congregations Organized for a New CT (CONNECT)
- Political Strategist, The Field LLC
- Co-Founder, Building Leaders across Communities (BLaC) Strategies
- The White Ally Coach™

DEFINING AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- **CONSISTENT** and **PERSISTENT** engagement with an entire community for the purpose of establishing a foundation of **PARTNERSHIP, TRUST** and **EMPOWERMENT**.

DEFINING AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- **PARTNERSHIP:**
 - **Working in tandem** with community members and stakeholders to accomplish **joint objectives** of community revitalization
- **TRUST:**
 - **Building genuine relationships** through **shared** goals and common interests.
- **EMPOWERMENT:**
 - **Creating opportunities** for community members to obtain ownership, power and authority over their own collective destiny by working with neighbors as decision makers to improve their community

UNDERSTANDING AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- In this work, **LIVED EXPERIENCE MUST DRIVE DECISION MAKING.**
- Quantitative data alone can never capture the humanity behind the number
- We must always find ways to tie the Qualitative data, acquired through genuine relationship building across diverse communities, to shape the narrative around what the metrics show.
- **LIVED EXPERIENCE MUST DRIVE DECISION MAKING**

UNDERSTANDING AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- it's not just about **LISTENING** to people, it's about **HEARING** people and **VALUING** what you hear. Hearing people out and valuing what they have to say is how you cultivate “**COMMUNITY BUY IN**”
- “**COMMUNITY BUY IN**” is when the community endorses or supports an initiative and views themselves as a **STAKEHOLDER** in the process.
- **THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF THE COMMUNITY MUST DRIVE DECISION MAKING**

UNDERSTANDING AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Other forms of community engagement that are not
AUTHENTIC:

- **Symbolic Engagement**
 - Engagement which is designed to serve a purpose **other than** building relations, establishing trust, and empowering residents
- **Perfunctory Engagement**
 - A modest form of engagement which engages a small fragment of the community residents to serve as **representatives** of the entire community

AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PRODUCES:

- Strong Social Cohesion
- Collective Efficacy
- Builds Community Capacity
- Strengthening of Institutional Legitimacy & Trust

**AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IS MUTUALLY
BENEFICIAL**

DEFINING AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (AGAIN)

- **CONSISTENT** and **PERSISTENT** engagement with an entire community for the purpose of establishing a foundation of **PARTNERSHIP, TRUST** and **EMPOWERMENT**.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SPECTRUM

	not engaging	informing	consulting	involving	collaborating	shifting power
What intention looks like within a cradle-to-career partnership	Youth and families do not have access to decision-making processes; partnership has not committed to specific actions, strategies or tactics for engagement	Youth and families receive relevant information in ways that are most accessible for all members of the group, but do not have influence in what is shared or how	Youth and families are asked to provide input and perspectives, which are considered by the partnership	Youth and family needs and perspectives are clearly integrated into partnership processes and inform planning/implementation of strategies; the partnership shares how their input influences decision making	Youth and families have clearly defined leadership roles and share decision making with other members of the partnership	Youth and families drive the work of the partnership through their decision making; the partnership relinquishes control and defers to youth and family wisdom and leadership
What execution looks like within a cradle-to-career partnership <i>(note each column builds on the previous stage; items are repeated or iterated on as partnerships progress)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed door meetings Absence of reporting out to community through publications or any accountability measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newsletters in languages relevant to youth and families Open houses/information sessions Fact sheets Public reports Up-to-date website Social media posts Billboards and/or videos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information collection via surveys, listening sessions, town halls, focus groups and one-on-one meetings Activities are scheduled at times that work for youth and families and they receive fair compensation for their time/expertise Consideration of representational demographics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advisory councils Brown Space and accessible environments Decisions are rooted in community perspectives and lived experience Following up on how perspective and lived experience were incorporated into processes, planning and implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Memorandums of understanding with community-based organizations Co-development and implementation of solutions Collaborative design and facilitation of meetings Skill building related to reflective listening, perspective-taking, and cultural competency for non-youth/family partners/organizational staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth- and family-driven planning and governance Youth and families make decisions related to shifts in policies, practices, resources and power structures Youth and families define the agenda of the partnership and the direction of the work
Who is making the decisions and how are time and resources being spent? <i>(approximate estimates)</i>	100% decision making by partnership's board and senior leadership	70-90% decision making by partnership's board and senior leadership 10-30% promotions and publicity	60-80% decision making by partnership's board and senior leadership 20-40% consultation of community and community-driven partners	50-60% decision making by partnership's board and senior leadership 40-50% involvement of community and community-driven partners	50-70% decision making by community and community-driven partners 30-50% decision making by partnership's board and senior leadership	80-90% decision making by community and community-driven partners 10-20% decision making by partnership's board and senior leadership

THANK YOU!

Our 2nd Annual Partnership Survey

Norwalk ACTS

ANNUAL PARTNERSHIP SURVEY



WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK
WE INVITE YOU TO LET US KNOW HOW WE
ARE DOING WITHIN THE CORNERSTONES
OF OUR COLLECTIVE IMPACT WORK.



OR VISIT
<https://bit.ly/NACTSSurvey>

- 5-10 minutes
- All answers will be anonymous.
- All multiple choice questions with three optional open-ended questions

The results of the survey will be developed into a partnership progress report that we will present to our membership on an annual basis to hold ourselves accountable.

Closing

Sign up on our website for our newsletter!

September news & updates

September 9th, 2021

Upcoming Events
See what's happening this [month](#).

News You Can Use
[The Hour: Census Data: Norwalk Has the 7th Highest Population Increase in CT](#)





[CT Post: "In Their Own Words," Dallo Education Funds Storytelling Platform for CT Teachers](#)

[Chalk Talk: For Norwalk Schools, Resolving Equity Gaps Starts with a Mindset Shift](#)

Member Spotlight
ALL OUR KIN

All Our Kin is a nationally recognized nonprofit organization that trains, supports, and sustains family child care educators—transforming opportunities by ensuring that children and families have the foundation they need to succeed in school and in life.

[Become a Norwalk ACTS member today!](#)

FOLLOW US FOR OUR LATEST NEWS


Norwalk ACTS

CEO Corner
Jennifer D. Barahona, LCSW

Over the past week, social media feeds were filled with faces of children and teachers returning to school. Given the uncertainty of the past eighteen months, it feels comforting to have a routine. However, now more than ever, we need to continue to come together as a community to support one another, exercise patience and understanding, and give ourselves and others grace.

We send our very best wishes to all students, teachers, staff, and families as together we continue to learn to navigate this new reality. Getting back into a routine is also an opportunity to recommit to our own self-care plans so that we are in a position to serve to the best of our abilities.

We look forward to welcoming you to the first convening of the new school year on [September 14th](#). We will be unveiling our new vision and mission statements and updating members on the plans for the coming year. In addition, we will receive an update from our race equity core team and hear from the Norwalk Public Schools about the strategic operating plan for the district.

DON'T MISS OUT!

Are you a member? Please sign our digital Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).

Norwalk ACTS

**Norwalk ACTS
MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT**

The mission of Norwalk ACTS is to enrich and improve the lives and futures of all of Norwalk's children and youth, from cradle to career. In doing so, it is our vision that Norwalk will be the healthiest city in America for a child to grow up in - academically, socially/emotionally, and physically. Social justice and racial equity are core values of Norwalk ACTS. We are committed to continuing to disaggregate data to report on racial and economic disparities so that together we can deploy tools and resources to support adoption of equitable practices. This includes evaluating our internal operations and systems and building our own capacity to make measurable progress towards being a truly diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization. The Norwalk ACTS Membership, having adopted the principles of **Collective Impact** and the **StriveTogether Theory of Action** for building cradle to career civic infrastructure, is helping our community build an integrated system to address the academic, social emotional, and health/wellness needs of Norwalk's children.

Principles of Collective Impact

- Common Agenda
- Shared Measurement
- Mutually Reinforcing Activities
- Continuous Communication
- Backbone Support

StriveTogether Pillars

- Shared Community Vision
- Evidence Based Decision Making
- Collaborative Action
- Investment and Sustainability

Additionally, we incorporate these additional **eight practices** of Collective Impact:

1. Design and implement initiatives with a priority placed on equity
2. Include community members in the collaborative
3. Recruit and co-create with cross-sector partners
4. Use data to continuously learn, adapt, and improve
5. Cultivate leaders with unique system leadership skills
6. Focus on program and system strategies
7. Build a culture that fosters relationships, trust, and respect across participants
8. Customize for local context

Our Collective Impact process, strategies, and initiatives are aimed at the achievement or increase in the %s of the following community level outcomes:

- Norwalk children enter kindergarten ready to learn.
- Norwalk students meet the goal level in 3rd grade reading.
- Norwalk students have the necessary skills to successfully transition from 5th to 8th grade.
- Norwalk students have the necessary skills to successfully transition from 8th to 9th grade.
- Norwalk students graduate from high school in 4 years ready for college, post-secondary training, or full-time employment.
- Norwalk graduates are career-ready with a college degree or professional certificate.