Future Forward EIR Expansion Grant

The "Gradual Release Model": How to Build Sustainability from the First Conversation

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Future Forward EIR Expansion Grant

The EIR program is designed to generate and validate solutions to persistent educational challenges and support the expansion of effective solutions to serve substantially larger numbers of students.

Developing local capacity for managing program implementation is essential both to sustaining the program beyond EIR grant funding and continuing to expand the program beyond the 6,000 children and their families served through this grant.

Future Forward exists to serve our nation's youngest readers.

Our Mission is to help young children develop the skills they need to become confident, successful, joyful readers by providing individualized tutoring combined with expansive family engagement.

Our Vision is to be known as the leading provider to quickly and expertly help young children of all backgrounds, particularly children from low-income households, have the academic tools necessary to be successful, skilled learners.

Our Journey So Far:

2005-2017	2017-2021	2021-Today
Model developed in partnership with local public school, University, and after school provider. Initial DOE-funded studies found significant evidence of impact through multiple randomized control trials.	Replicated program model in multiple states, continued to demonstrate effectiveness. Served virtually during COVID restrictions, increasing student reading levels despite school closures and restrictions.	Began providing "fee for service" programming to school district partners broadening our impact across even more school systems. In December 2021, awarded an "Expansion" grant to grow impact and service to students and families in rural school districts.

Future Forward's two-part model address student learning needs.

One-on-One Tutoring

- ❖ Kindergarten – 3rd grade students
- ❖ During the school day
- ❖ Three 30-minute sessions weekly
- ❖ **Intensively-trained** paid, professional tutors building caring relationships with every child
- ❖ Structured lessons **individually customized** to each student's specific needs
- ❖ Each Future Forward location has:
- ❖ Qualified Instructional Coordinators
  - Qualified Family Engagement Coordinators
  - Dedicated staffing, space, and learning resources

Family Engagement

- ❖ Regular, **consistent outreach and engagement** including monthly phone calls, texts, email exchanges, and at least two home visits per school year
- ❖ **Family events** monthly to help increase skills to support academic success
- ❖ Individualized strategies supporting different elements of **students' daily experience** increase program impact
- ❖ **Trusting relationships** between schools and families
- ❖ **Collaboration** between families and schools by regularly bringing families to the school building

Future Forward has a significant track record of success.

Recent randomized control trials show:

- **Reading: 6 times** more likely to reach grade-level reading benchmarks
- **Attendance: 27% reduction** in chronic absenteeism
- **Evidence-Based:** Proven **significantly effective** and meets the "**strong evidence definitions**" laid out in ESSA
- **Validity: Highest possible rating** from Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences ("Statistically significant positive effects found")

And a five-year longitudinal follow-up study shows:

- **Lasting effects on reading: 6 months ahead** of business as usual peers
- **Special Education:** Students **less likely to be placed into special education**
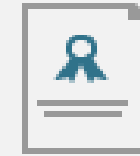
MEETS WWC STANDARDS WITHOUT RESERVATIONS

AT LEAST ONE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE FINDING

ESSA TIER 1 — AT LEAST ONE FINDING SHOWS STRONG EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

A Path to Innovation

EIR Expansion partner school requirements:

- **School day access** to participating students (at least **25 per semester**/ 50 per school year) for at least **90 minutes per week**

- Appropriate **access to relevant data** necessary for evaluation and program implementation

- **Dedicated Future Forward space with Wi-Fi i**n the school building (classroom or similar)

- **Designated school personnel** assigned to Future Forward as official "**advocate**"

- Contribution of not less than **25% of implementation costs per school per year**

- **Support obtaining caregiver consent** for student participation in the FF evaluation

- **Interest in attempting to manage** FF implementation at the end of the grant

Future Forward commitments to partner schools:

- **Provide implementation staff** including Instructional Coordinators, Family Engagement Coordinators, and tutors (if district desires FF to serve in this role)

- Provide initial and ongoing **training and oversight** for all FF staff

- Assist in **building capacity for full integration** in student intervention and learning plans

- Regularly visit and **provide individual implementation assistance** to ensure program effectiveness

- Maintain **online management platform** for optimal efficiency and use in real-time

- **Oversee operation** of the Future Forward program

- Provide **ongoing support and oversight of implementation** for the life of the agreement

- **Guarantee security** of all student information

EIR Sustainability and Expansion Strategy: Developing Local Capacity

❖ Local capacity is essential to achieving project goals related to sustainability and program expansion

❖ Historical barrier to local capacity was limited involvement of site-level staff in implementation of the program

❖ One of the goals of our EIR-funded Expansion grant is to strategically transfer implementation capacity to site-level staff to remove this barrier

❖ Future Forward is working to develop local capacity through an approach grounded in co-equal partnership with participating sites

Discussion Prompts

- What challenges have you observed or do you anticipate with program sustainability?

- What could have been done differently with past challenges decrease those challenges to sustainability?

- What strategies or tactics have you observed to be most effective at increasing the likelihood of program sustainability?

- What promising sustainability strategies are your organization currently involved in?

Future Forward "Gradual Release Model"
Co-equal partnership to develop local capacity

Project Goal	Project Objectives	Timeline
1: Develop local (school and district) capacity for implementation and gradually release responsibilities based on assessment of readiness	• Establish MOUs which include mutual commitment to capacity building • Identify key site-based staff roles and responsibilities for implementation • Implement Gradual Release Model (GRM) in participating LEAs and schools.	Spring 2022 - ongoing

Future Forward has intentionally partnered with sites that agree to the fundamental requirements of Future Forward *as well as* a commitment to ongoing collaboration with Future Forward staff over the 5-year period to develop internal capacity to achieve transformative and sustainable impact.

Co-Equal Partnership Began Day 1 of Grant

- MOUs include site-level participation requirements
  - Site "liaison" to support capacity building
  - Participation in Gradual Release Model (GRM) process
  - Commitment to explore increasing responsibilities
- We **do not require** any commitment to the program after the life of the grant
  - Do require a willingness to discuss partnership and sustainability, both during the life of the grant and for any potential time after EIR funding is complete
- Site reception of requirements during recruitment
  - Overall, well received and appreciated by sites; however
  - A few sites did not want to commit to additional responsibilities

Use of Gradual Release Model (GRM) to develop capacity

- The GRM provides sites with a roadmap for developing capacity *and* a process for collaborating with Future Forward to progress towards the destination.

- Future Forward provides targeted capacity-building support through a Gradual Release Model (GRM) which focuses on developing the school level conditions for the program to be most effective, and utilizes the following tools:

    - **GRM Rubric:** The GRM Rubric serves as a roadmap for Future Forward and school staff to understand basic and increasingly strong levels of implementation.

    - **GRM Annual Assessment:** Facilitates a schools' self-assessment of the current level, highlights strengths, allows for planning improvement, and provides for identification of additional supports.

GRM Rubric: Features and iterative development

❖ Importance of balancing Fidelity and Fit
  ▪ EIR Lessons Learned: *"**Walking the Tightrope** Part I: Fidelity and Fit When Scaling" (Clawson, 2019)*

❖ GRM rubric includes "Fidelity" component which identifies non-negotiables for program implementation. Sites unable to move "up" on rubric without meeting fidelity requirements

❖ GRM rubric encourages "Fit" as site-level staff are encouraged to adapt innovative practices that foster the school conditions for FF to be most effective.

GRM in Practice: Alignment and Culture

One of the central components of the GRM at the school level is developing the school-level conditions (Alignment and Culture) for the program to have a transformative and sustainable impact:

❖**Alignment:** Extent to which Future Forward is a prioritized program which is integrated into the school's overall strategy for achieving outcomes for children, and receives the resources needed to be successful

❖**Culture:** Extent to which Future Forward is a visibly prioritized program in the school with deep buy-in from school staff and caregivers
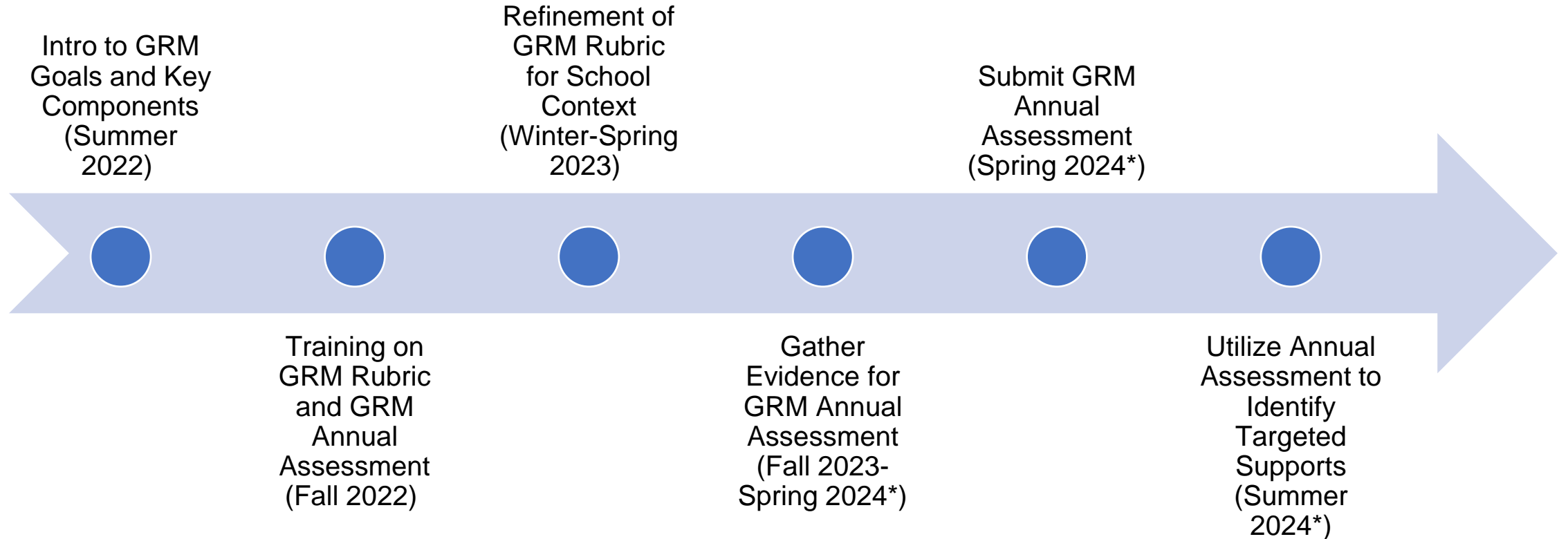
Rubric Example (Engagement & Buy in of Caregivers)

Engagement and Buy-In of Caregivers	Collaborate with national team to ensure caregivers understand FF and attend family events, including: *-Understanding of what FF is, how it improves student outcomes and expectations of students* *-Responsiveness to Family Engagement Monthly Contacts* *- Attendance at FF family events*	Independently (with minimal support from FF National Team) ensure caregiver buy in and engagement, as evidenced by: *- Caregivers self-report positive sentiment towards FF program and staff.* *-Caregivers self-report benefits to education provided during family events* *-Caregivers share examples of student work samples from home*	Independently develop innovative strategies for increasing engagement and buy in of caregivers, evidenced by: - *Proactive Identification of obstacles to caregiver engagement and buy in and development, testing, refinement, and implementation of solutions.* - *For example: Gather feedback from caregivers on any obstacles to engagement and buy in and develop contextually appropriate strategies which address these obstacles.*
	Potential Evidence Sources: Attendance Logs, Short Survey (Tiny Pulse) to caregivers, communiques from caregivers, images of caregivers involved in FF events, images of kid's work from home.		

Timeline for Roll Out of GRM

Intro to GRM Goals and Key Components (Summer 2022)

Training on GRM Rubric and GRM Annual Assessment (Fall 2022)

Refinement of GRM Rubric for School Context (Winter-Spring 2023)

Gather Evidence for GRM Annual Assessment (Fall 2023-Spring 2024*)

Submit GRM Annual Assessment (Spring 2024*)

Utilize Annual Assessment to Identify Targeted Supports (Summer 2024*)

* Annual GRM Assessment process occurs SY 2023-24, 2024-25, an 2025-26

Role of Site Liaison in School-Level GRM

❖Site liaison is required at each implementation site

❖School-level staff position which is responsible for logistics required to facilitate Future Forward implementation

❖Facilitates partnership between school and FF staff to implement GRM, and is responsible for:

- Ensuring GRM rubric is realistic within the school's context

- Conducting annual GRM Assessment

- Highlighting areas of strength and identifying areas requiring additional support from Future Forward team.

❖Site liaison spends approximately 10 hours annually on GRM

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Learn More About Future Forward's GRM

- GRM White Paper

- GRM 2-Page Overview for School Staff

- See a video previewing our program at
https://tinyurl.com/FutureForwardOverview

Any Questions or additional Comments?