

## Strategic High-Level Five-Year Goals

FY2021-2026

The United Way of Greater Charlottesville is committed to work that breaks the cycle of generational poverty and improves outcomes in our community. As we look ahead to the future, we have identified five pillars of action that will facilitate our success. Our strategic high-level five-year goals are drafted to align with these five pillars of action, as directed by our 2020 strategic plan:

- Strengthen **impact areas** to improve operational excellence to better meet community needs;
- Establish United Way as a hub for community **data collection** around financial stability and school readiness;
- Change the United Way's organizational culture around **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion** internally and be an advocate for equity in our community;
- Strengthen **partnerships** that support our equity framework and Impact Areas; and
- Ensure sustainable **funding** for our work, supported by effective **communication** with clients, funders, and the community at-large.

What came to light during our strategic planning process is a more focused and intentional plan to carry out our mission of connecting the community and enabling individuals and families to achieve their potential while supporting a strong equitable planning district where every person thrives. **The Five-Year Goals are structured to support these organizational goals in our Impact Areas through the following programs:**

- School Readiness - Early Learner Scholarships, Early Education Task Force, Early Education Symposium, Smart Beginnings, Children's Data Consortium, Soho Center Book Program, and Impact Grants
- Financial Stability - Family Investment Program, Cville Tax Aid, Santa Fund for School Kids, Driving Lives Forward Auto Loan Program, Financial Resilience Task Force, and Impact Grants
- Connected Community – Day of Caring, Women United, Community Engagement Events,

Census Bureau data demonstrates that the poverty rate in the Thomas Jefferson Planning District has largely remained the same since 2013, despite strong regional economic growth and one of the lowest unemployment rates in the state. More than 20% of the families, or 12,035, fall within 200% of the federal poverty line, resulting in 30% of the children in the planning district eligible for free or reduced lunch at school.

Percent of Adults at or below 200% FPL  
2018 ACS 5-year Estimates

Poverty disproportionately impacts black and brown individuals:

- In 2017, 25,494 families lived in Albemarle County. 85.5% of those families identified as White, 8% as Black, and 4.7% as Latino. 1,657, or 6.5% of the families lived below the poverty line. Only 5.6% of those living below the poverty line were White; however, 14.8% were Black, and 20.5% were Latino.
- In Charlottesville, there 8,433 families in 2017. 72.3% identified as White, 21.3% as Black, and 5.0% as Latino. 582, or 6.9% of the families lived below the poverty line. Only 6.9% of those living below the poverty line were White, however 23.9% were Black and 10.9% were Latino.

These families struggle to meet basic needs, and without the right interventions and support, poverty passes on to the next generation. The issue of poverty goes beyond a lack of financial resources and impedes a family's ability to move forward, leading to myriad challenges such as unstable and unaffordable housing, unemployment, lack of quality childcare, lack of transportation, food insecurity, and incarceration. Due to the racism inherent in our systems of education, banking, housing, healthcare, and justice, people of color do not have an equitable opportunity for success. Local small business owners or entrepreneurs, especially minority-owned businesses, often do not have equitable access to capital.

U.S. school systems expect that children arrive at kindergarten ready to learn to read. By 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, they are expected to be able to read to learn. However, children living in or near poverty are more likely to arrive at kindergarten as much as 2 years behind their peers. By 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, they are unable to read to learn and the achievement gap becomes permanent. As with adults, Poverty also impacts black and brown children disproportionately than white, as well as economically-disadvantaged children more than non-economically-disadvantaged children:

- In SY15-16, 25.8% of City Black, 25% of Latino, and 23% of economically-disadvantaged kindergarteners required literacy interventions. Only 4.7% of White and 3% of non-economically-disadvantaged kindergarteners required the same.
- In SY17-18, 61.6% of City Black, 39% of Latino, and 54.6% of economically-disadvantaged third graders failed the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Reading SOL. Only 12.1% of White and 11% of non-economically-disadvantaged students failed.
- In SY17-18, 67.4% of City Black, 34.2% of Latino, and 55.2% of economically-disadvantaged third graders failed the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Math SOL. Only 11.3% of White and 11.6% of non-economically disadvantaged students failed.

However, school systems are not structured or adequately funded to support a child arriving at school with a two-year learning deficit. We need to increase the support system that allows economically-disadvantaged children under the age of five to compete successfully on kindergarten literacy benchmark testing through quality education interventions.

## **Goals and Approach**

The over-arching goal is to eliminate barriers for minority and economically-disadvantaged populations and enable them to achieve financial stability and thrive economically. This may be achieved through coordinated service delivery among peer agencies supported by task force coalitions focused on the long-term systems-level change. Through this, we may begin to eliminate a dependency on these services such that individuals can thrive economically and become financially stable.

## **Five-Year Strategic Goals**

***Committed to work that breaks the cycle of generational poverty and improves outcomes in our community***

**A. Financial Stability**

By 2027 reduce poverty in the planning district by 15% by lifting 1800 families above earning “survival income”<sup>1</sup> threshold.

Specifically, assist 133 Black head-of-household families to increase earnings above the “survival income” threshold.

- Strategies:
  - Increase access to assets for minority-owned business through small grant and loans programs.
  - Provide affordable auto loans and vehicles through the Driving Lives Forward program launched in spring 2020.
  - Design two-three-year financial plans that are driven by individual accountability to scale economically measured by an increase in credit score and income via scaling the Family Investment Program to have served 75 families by the end of 2026.
  - Focus on workforce development through subsidized childcare with quality local providers.
  - Develop data model that measures community need by income bands, education and job training access for increase in wage earning, credit score tracking and debt reduction.
  - Align grantmaking program with partners who meet community priorities established by the Financial Resiliency Task Force.
  - Include client voice in program development, oversight and evaluation.
  - Launch and coordinate the FRTF to provide backup support and coordination for systems-level financial resiliency work in the community.
  - Administer the Cville Tax Aid program to support access to the Earned Income Tax Credit and other credits, thereby increasing average annual income of participants.

**B. School Readiness**

By 2027 increase the number of economically disadvantaged kindergartners who pass literacy benchmarks by 10%. By 2027, 76.8% of economically disadvantaged kindergartners should be meeting Fall Kindergarten PALS benchmarks.

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<sup>1</sup> 2018 Orange Dot 3.0 minimum or “survival” income required to cover basic necessities to live in Charlottesville and Albemarle. This includes rent, food, utilities, clothing, basic medical, transportation, and the cost of childcare.

Specifically, increase the number of Black kindergartners in Charlottesville and Albemarle who meet literacy benchmarks by 10%. By 2027, 83.4% of Black kindergartners should be meeting Fall Kindergarten PALs benchmarks.

- Strategies:
  - Develop a coordinated preschool enrollment program in Charlottesville and Albemarle that provides parents access that best fits their personal needs
  - Develop data dashboards that can be shared with MOU partners, community agencies, and the funding community using the Children's Data Consortium to establish baseline disaggregated data that supports early learning interventions
  - Align grantmaking program with partners who meet community priorities established by the Early Education Task Force
  - Create incentive program for parents to use quality childcare providers through increased subsidy opportunities with the Early Learner Scholarship Program
  - Include parent voice in program development, oversight and evaluation
  - Increase # of 4's in high quality preschool, increase # of 3's in high quality pre-school
  - Backup support, coordination and leadership of EETF to support EETF goals of increasing access to quality in early childhood eco-system. Administer expanded mixed, preschool development, single point-of-entry, training opportunities, and family engagement