



**Written testimony to Senate Health Committee
November 13, 2019
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Chairman Burke and Members of the Committee;

I have been a pediatrician and hold the rank of Professor of Pediatrics at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center for over 30 years. I have served on the board of Ohio Children's Hospital Association as well as the National Children's Hospital Association. I am a member of the Institute of Medicine. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit written testimony about this critical issue for kids.

The fact is that we do know what we need to do to prevent the development of mental health problems in children. The research is very clear, and the impact of Mental Health Prevention programs has been well documented. We know that such prevention programs must combine universal and targeted interventions and need to be embedded across multiple sectors. Finally, we know that we will need to deliver these prevention interventions at very high levels of fidelity to get the impact we want to see.

To do this we will use a method called a Learning Network Model and Quality Improvement (QI) methods. We have experience with this approach to get proven results. For the past 10 years we at the Ohio Children's Hospitals have been testing and using this approach to improve whole systems. We began working together in 2009 and the Ohio Children's Hospitals Solutions for Patient Safety (OCHSPS) network was launched. The initial focus was on surgical site infections (SSI) and adverse drug events (ADE). From 2009 to 2012, they reduced SSIs in designated cardiac, neurosurgery and orthopedic procedures by 60 percent and adverse drug events by 50 percent. In 2012, the hospitals broadened their scope of work and began focusing on eliminating serious safety events (SSE) and have reduced occurrences by 80 percent (as of March 2019). In 2012, 25 hospitals

from across the nation joined the initial Ohio group in the first phase of the National network, known as Solutions for Patient Safety (SPS). SPS is now 135+ hospitals strong – all working together to eliminate harm in children’s hospitals across 38 states, DC and Canada resulting in 13,952 children spared harm and \$249.4 million saved.

We believe we owe this success to 6 factors- *A network framework* that aligns all participants around a common set of goals and uses a proven Collaborative QI approach, promoting *Team collaboration* through standardized processes, protocols and policies. *Starting small, using and testing approaches*, observing results and learning from the experience of others in a systematic way, *a common repository* to share resources created by participants, *Standardized technology* approaches resulting in data useful for learning, and finally, *Building improvement capability and capacity* in each institution.

Cincinnati Children’s has been working with Cincinnati Public Schools for the last several years and has shared how these same methods can work in an education environment. Cincinnati Public Schools under the leadership of Laura Mitchell has bought into the QI process and results are beginning to show as the attached sheet indicates. We intend to use and adapt this proven and very successful model to Launch the *Ohio Comprehensive Mental Health Prevention Network*. We will do this by leveraging the capacity of the 8 Ohio Children’s Hospitals to serve as hubs in each community, working with their community partners and across multiple sectors to deliver results.

Using these proven methods we will enable and empower parents to provide safe, nurturing, and responsive caregiving; equip children with skills that facilitate emotional and behavioral self-regulation; support parents in maintaining their own mental health so that they can be fully available to meet their children’s needs; enable and empower teachers to use strategies that promote behavioral health and lead to academic achievement; and assist in building and sustaining strong and supportive social networks of parents and caregivers in communities to ensure that all children are healthy and successful. Finally, again as you can see from the attached, our early pilots and embedding Mental Health prevention approaches in Cincinnati Public Schools are showing promising results.

We are grateful for the opportunity to Impact the mental health of kids, using this proven approach enabling Ohio's kids to grow up to be healthy and capable adults contributing to Ohio future.

Thank you.



Cincinnati Children's Partnership to Improve 3rd Grade Reading in Cincinnati Public Schools

Cincinnati Children's is committed to all 66,000 children living in our community as evidenced by the child health goals in our 2020 strategic plan. Nationally, Cincinnati Children's leads the health care field in using quality improvement (QI) methods to drive excellence. For the past four years, we have supported the Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS) goal of literacy success through the application of QI methods. To accomplish this, we developed their skills in QI and provided coaching through the school year for teachers, principals, reading specialists and district leaders. Specifically, the QI methods require users to answer three questions:

- What is the problem we are trying to solve?
- How will we know a change is an improvement?
- Based on our theory, what changes can we test to reach our goals.

The table describes the spread of QI across the years.

Improvement years	Number of Children 3rd grade	Number of Classroom Teachers
Year 1 (2015-2016)	44	3
Year 2 (2016-2017)	210	10
Year 3 (2017-2018)	247	19
Year 4 (2018-2019)	301	40

The QI Method

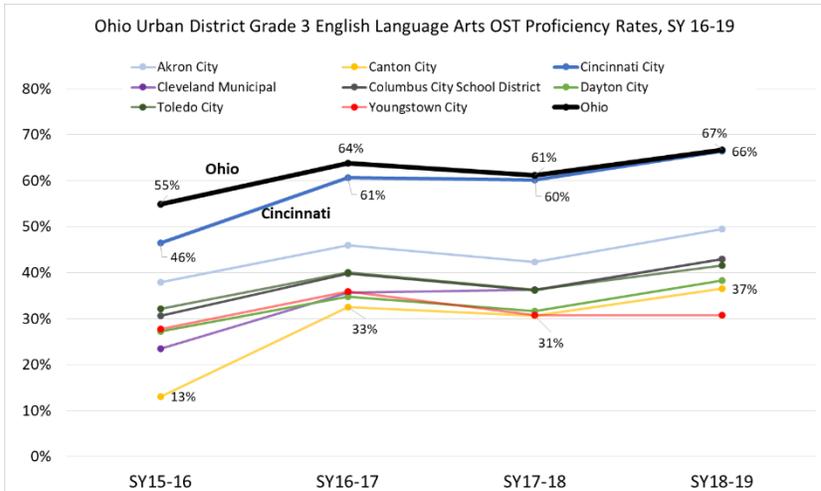
QI methods have been used for many years in agriculture and manufacturing industries. Cincinnati Children's has adapted them to ensure the highest quality outcomes and experiences for patients and families. We spread many of these methods to CPS.

- Cincinnati Children's designed project-based QI experiences for district leaders, principals, reading specialists, social workers and teachers.
- Cincinnati Children's analyzed data and looked at potential root causes for baseline and current results. We also developed a data infrastructure through outcome and process measures by which we regularly review progress.
- Cincinnati Children's also developed systems for rapid testing and learning through learning huddles, coaching and sharing with peers. This allowed what was learned to be quickly disseminated through and across buildings.

CPS Improvement:

Reading proficiency rates

The percent of CPS students scoring proficient or above has increased 20 percentage points, from 46.4% passing to 66.4% passing since 2015. Strikingly, this year's proficiency rate for CPS students equals the State of Ohio average for the first time. This is notable since the State of Ohio percentage includes students from diverse sociodemographic backgrounds. Finally, Cincinnati Public School's third grade proficiency rate is higher than all other large urban districts in the State of Ohio.



Gap closure

In addition to improved 3rd grade reading proficiency rates, the white-black achievement gap has narrowed more in schools using QI methods than in comparison schools. Spring test results demonstrate a reduction of the white-black proficiency gap in QI schools narrowed by 22 percentage points (from 39 point difference in SY15-16 to 17 point in SY18-19). Importantly, both groups scored better last year than four years ago. In comparison, schools not using quality improvement methods lowered the gap by 3 percentage points. CPS overall lowered the gap 9 percentage points.

