Goal 1: Improve the outcomes of safety, permanency and well-being through the establishment of clear performance expectations for practice in CPS Assessments, In-Home services and Foster Care services (Safety 1, Safety 2, Permanency 1, Permanency 2, Well-Being 1, Well-Being 2, Well-Being 3, and Staff and Provider Training)

Strategies/Activities:

1. Strengthen and clarify North Carolina's child welfare policies and practices [based on support received from the Capacity Building Center] (Items 1-18, 20)

[Activities]	[Timeline]
a. Review, assess, and revise the current policies and practices including, but not limited to, frequency, consistency, quality and documentation of: • timely initiations of child protective services • risk assessments that inform safety plans and services • concerted efforts to: – assess the needs of children, parents and foster parents – identify necessary services to adequately address issues relevant to agency's involvement – identify necessary services to achieve case goals – secure and provide appropriate services (including educational, physical, dental and mental health services) • meaningful engagement of children, parents and foster parents in the development and ongoing implementation of case plans • concerted efforts to promote and support positive relationships between children and parents • meaningful engagement of children, parents and foster parents in the development of timely and appropriate permanency goals • concerted efforts to achieve permanency goals and promote placement stability • child, family, siblings and caseworker visits that reinforce the continuity and connections of family relationships • case decision making including case closures	Begin Date: Q1 Completion Date: Q2
b. Publish the revised manuals governing child welfare policies and practices	Begin Date: Q1 Completion Date: Q3
c. Assess and develop capacity for implementation of the revised policies and practices in the 10 OSRI counties	Begin Date: Q2 Completion Date: Q3
d. Implement the revised policies, practices and training in the 10 OSRI counties	Begin Date: Q3 Completion Date: Q4
e. Incorporate lessons learned from the 10 OSRI counties and develop a plan for the statewide implementation of the revised policies and practices	Begin Date: Q4 Completion Date: Q5
f. Develop and execute a statewide communication plan regarding the revised policies and practices	Begin Date: Q4 Completion Date: Q5
g. Execute the statewide implementation plan for the revised policies and practices	Begin Date: Q5 Completion Date: Q7

2. Enhance the training system to support the consistent application of the revised policies and practices [based on technical assistance received from the Capacity Building Center in consultation with National Child Welfare Workforce Institute] (Initial and Ongoing Training: Items 26 and 27)

[Activities]	[Timeline]
a. Identify the key competencies necessary for the revised policies and practices and compare to current curricula for initial and ongoing training to identify gaps	Begin Date: Q2 Completion Date: Q3
b. Revise the training curricula and delivery methodology based on the gaps assessment to include the competencies necessary to ensure staff have the basic skills necessary to do their work	Begin Date: Q2 Completion Date: Q4
c. Strengthen the transfer of learning model for all curricula and mandate the utilization of the transfer of learning tool for county staff to ensure the social work competencies identified in the revised policies and practices are implemented consistently after staff attend training	Begin Date: Q2 Completion Date: Q4
d. Develop a series of "in-service" trainings (examples include scripted PowerPoints, webinars, role play scenarios, videos, etc.) to be used by county supervisors and training divisions to reinforce consistent implementation of the revised policies and practices	Begin Date: Q2 Completion Date: Q5

3. Strengthen the capacity of county departments of social services to sustain the consistent application of the revised policies and practices through the development and implementation of a supervisor academy (Initial and Ongoing Training: Items 26 and 27)

[Activities]	[Timeline]
a. Identify the supervisor competencies necessary to support the consistent implementation of the revised policies and practices	Begin Date: Q2 Completion Date: Q4
b. Develop the supervisor academy based on identified competencies	Begin Date: Q2 Completion Date: Q4
c. Develop participant satisfaction surveys and pre-post tools to measure the supervisor's academy's impact on the supervisor competencies in the implementation of the revised policies and practices	Begin Date: Q2 Completion Date: Q3
d. Randomly select supervisors from the 10 OSRI counties to participate in the Supervisor Academy who have completed the prerequisite course "Introduction to Supervision" (n=80)	Begin Date: Q2 Completion Date: Q4
e. Implement the supervisor academy beginning with the first cohort of supervisors (n=20) from the 10 OSRI counties	Begin Date: Q4 Completion Date: Q7
f. Incorporate lessons learned from the first cohort and execute the revised supervisor academy for the remaining 60 supervisors from the 10 OSRI counties (3 additional cohorts of 20 participants per cohort)	Begin Date: Q6 Completion Date: Q8
g. Develop a plan for the statewide use of the supervisor academy using a regional approach	Begin Date: Q6 Completion Date: Q6
h. Develop and execute a statewide communication plan regarding the supervisor academy	Begin Date: Q6 Completion Date: Q6
i. Implement a statewide implementation plan regarding the supervisor academy	Begin Date: Q6 Completion Date: Q8
j. Use continuous quality improvement data from supervisor academy graduates to evaluate the supervisor academy	Begin Date: Q6 Completion Date: Q8

4. Strengthen and implement a technical assistance model for NC DSS to provide support to county staff regarding the consistent application of the revised policies, practices and training [based on technical assistance received from the Capacity Building Center] which will clarify the roles and responsibilities of both state and county staff (Safety 1, Safety 2, Permanency 1, Permanency 2, Well-Being 1, Well-Being 2, Well-Being 3)

[Activities]	[Timeline]
a. Assess the current technical assistance model to support the consistent implementation of the revised policies and practices	Begin Date: Q1 Completion Date: Q2
b. Revise the technical assistance model to counties based on the assessment	Begin Date: Q2 Completion Date: Q3
c. Document the revised North Carolina technical assistance to counties model	Begin Date: Q3 Completion Date: Q3
d. Implement the revised technical assistance model beginning in the 10 OSRI counties to identify additional gaps and/or areas that need to be strengthened	Begin Date: Q4 Completion Date: Q5
e. Incorporate lessons learned from the 10 OSRI counties and execute the implementation plan for the technical assistance model using a regional approach to support the consistent use of the revised policies and practices	Begin Date: Q5 Completion Date: Q8
f. Develop and execute a statewide communication plan regarding the technical assistance model	Begin Date: Q6 Completion Date: Q7
g. Expand and utilize the TA Gateway to support the consistent application of the technical assistance model	Begin Date: Q3 Completion Date: Q8

5. Develop and implement a state level child welfare family leadership model which will provide family "voice" to inform state plans [CBCAP, CFSP/APSR, CAPTA], policies and practices [based on support received from FRIENDS: Family Resource Information, Education and Network Development Services - the National Center for Community Based Child Abuse Prevention, and the Capacity Building Center for States] (Permanency 2)

[Activities]	[Timeline]
a. Review available family leadership strategies and adopt/adapt components as needed	Begin Date: Q1 Completion Date: Q2
b. Conduct a readiness assessment for the state to implement a family leadership model	Begin Date: Q2 Completion Date: Q3
c. Formalize the support mechanisms for family leadership engagement and create a North Carolina Child Welfare Family Advisory Council	Begin Date: Q3 Completion Date: Q4
d. Engage the NC Child Welfare Family Advisory Council on the Community Child Protection Team Advisory Board, policy development workgroups, and other opportunities to support practice changes that promote family engagement	Begin Date: Q4 Completion Date: Q8

Goal 2: Improve the outcomes of safety, permanency and well-being through the utilization of a statewide quality assurance system which will identify the strengths and needs of the service delivery system (Quality Assurance)

Strategies/Activities:

1. Operationalize the state level quality assurance system so that areas of child welfare practice needing improvement are consistently identified and addressed

[Activities]	[Timeline]
a. Develop and execute a statewide communication plan regarding the quality assurance system based on the use of the OSRI	Begin Date: Q1 Completion Date: Q2
b. Develop and record a webinar to orient all county departments of social service staff to the North Carolina process for use of the OSRI	Begin Date: Q3 Completion Date: Q3
c. State staff will provide Quality Assurance oversight to the staff in the 10 OSRI counties who will review 113 cases (50 In-Home and 63 Foster Care each year) using the OSRI as outlined in the "North Carolina Measurement Plan"	Begin Date: Q1 Completion Date: Q12
d. State staff will review a random sample of 100 cases from the remaining 90 counties (44 In-Home and 56 Foster Care each year) using the OSRI as outlined in the "North Carolina Measurement Plan"	Begin Date: Q1 Completion Date: Q12

2. Develop the protocol and processes by which quality assurance results will be analyzed and program improvement will be implemented and evaluated statewide

[Activities]	[Timeline]
a. Explore other county-administered states technical assistance/support models to inform development	Begin Date: Q1 Completion Date: Q2
b. Clarify how counties' support needs will be determined and how the state will assist counties with item-specific analysis of the case review findings and addressing any identified needs	Begin Date: Q3 Completion Date: Q5
c. Incorporate lessons learned from strengthening the technical assistance model (Goal 1.4) to develop business processes across NC DSS' child welfare teams	Begin Date: Q5 Completion Date: Q8
d. Develop and execute a statewide communication plan to disseminate technical assistance/support activities, protocols and processes	Begin Date: Q5 Completion Date: Q8

Goal 3: Improve the permanency outcomes for children through collaboration with the judicial system (Permanency 1, Case Review System)

Strategies/Activities:

1. Develop with NC AOC and other judicial system partners a plan to engage local court and DSS to address issues of: notice to resource parents, timely establishment of case goals, concurrent planning, permanency and timely TPR actions (Items 4, 5, 6, 20, 23 and 24)

[Activities]	[Timeline]
a. Utilize OSRI findings from OMS reports, CFSR data indicators and CIP measures to develop a "permanency performance profile"	Begin Date: Q2 Completion Date: Q3
b. Publish state, judicial district level (n=41) and county (n=100) "permanency performance profiles" for key court personnel, county staff, GAL Community, and other key stakeholders to encourage increased collaboration around improving data quality and permanency outcomes	Begin Date: Q3 Completion Date: Q8
c. State DSS and NC AOC staff will facilitate regularly occurring local meetings to review the "permanency performance profile" and develop specific strategies to improve performance	Begin Date: Q3 Completion Date: Q8
d. Include the permanency performance profiles and any strategies developed for improvement in the semi-annual progress report for the Program Improvement Plan	Begin Date: Q2 Completion Date: Q8

2. NC DSS, Indigent Defense Services, Guardian ad Litem and the Court Improvement Program will provide targeted engagement to county department of social services and court personnel in judicial districts and counties across the state to support children achieving permanency and stability in their living situations (Items 4, 5, 6, 20, 23 and 24)

[Activities]	[Timeline]
a. Develop plan with NC AOC and other judicial system partners to provide technical assistance to improve permanency outcomes to counties and judicial districts not meeting performance standards	Begin Date: Q1 Completion Date: Q4
b. Provide consultation and support to county departments of social services and judicial districts where data indicates children are not achieving permanency as outlined in the "permanency performance profile"	Begin Date: Q3 Completion Date: Q8
c. Utilize opportunities for collaboration and customized training for social services staff and court personnel in judicial districts where data from the "permanency performance profile" indicates children are not achieving permanency	Begin Date: Q5 Completion Date: Q7
d. Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the consultation and training provided as measured by improvements in the "permanency performance profile" for at least 20 counties/8 judicial districts	Begin Date: Q6 Completion Date: Q8

3. Implement a Guardianship Assistance Program for all counties in North Carolina, pending approval by the rules process, to support permanency and stability in children's living situations (Items 4, 5 and 6)

[Activities]	[Timeline]
a. Propose administrative rules to govern the use of Guardianship Assistance Program funds	Begin Date: Q1 Completion Date: Q2
b. Publish policy for implementation of the Guardianship Assistance Program	Begin Date: Q2 Completion Date: Q2
c. Develop and provide training to county and court personnel on the application of the Guardianship Assistance Program	Begin Date: Q3 Completion Date: Q8
d. Implement the Guardian Assistance Program statewide	Begin Date: Q3 Completion Date: Q6
e. Review performance data on the Guardian Assistance Program to ensure that it is operating in accordance with rules and policies	Begin Date: Q4 Completion Date: Q8

Goal 4: Strengthen cross-system service provision to improve safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for children and families (Service Array, Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention, Agency Responsiveness to the Community)

Strategies/Activities

1. Establish agreements between county departments of social services (DSSs) and Local Managing Entities/Managed Care Organizations (LME/MCOs) to collaborate on and hold each other accountable for accessible, quality, and timely behavioral health services for child welfare-involved children as well as families involved with Child Welfare who are referred to the LME/MCOs for services (Items 29 and 30)

[Activities]	[Timeline]
a. County DSSs and LME/MCOs will develop written agreements—one between each LME/MCO and the DSSs in their catchment area—which: • Establish standards for how and when DSSs should make referrals of children and adults involved with the Child Welfare system. • Include standards detailed in the LME/MCO contracts with the State Division of Medical Assistance (DMA) for timeliness of assessment and initiation of services, timeliness of utilization management decisions, and individualized service planning. • Establish protocols for how DSSs and LME/MCOs will work together to ensure access to needed services when children are placed outside the LME/MCO catchment area. • Specify how service gaps for children and families involved with Child Welfare will be jointly identified. • Include collaborative or integrated service strategies agreed to by the DSSs and the LME/MCOs. • Establish procedures for tracking the above standards and progress on agreed upon collaborative or integrated service strategies.	Begin Date: Q1 Completion Date: Q6
b. NC DHHS will report quarterly on: • Performance related to standards in the DSS-LME/MCO agreements within each LME/MCO catchment area • Measures of permanency and placement stability outcomes for the DSSs within each LME/MCO catchment area	Begin Date: Q6 Completion Date: Q8
c. NC DHHS staff from DSS, DMH/DD/SAS and DMA will provide consultation to county DSSs and LME/MCOs on a quarterly basis if the agreed upon performance standards to improve outcomes are not being achieved	Begin Date: Q5 Completion Date: Q8
d. NC DHHS will develop and execute a statewide communication plan regarding the successes, challenges, and innovative strategies to improve services for children and families as identified by LME/MCO and local DSS teams for continued statewide improvement	Begin Date: Q7 Completion Date: Q8

2. Strengthen and reframe the statewide foster and adoptive parent diligent recruitment plan to support the recruitment of families who meet the needs of the children they serve and who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children served by the Foster Care program (Item 35)

[Activities]	[Timeline]
a. Utilize the support from the National Resource Center for Diligent Recruitment to develop a more strategic state-level diligent recruitment plan that can be utilized at both the state and local level	Begin Date: Q1 Completion Date: Q2
b. Identify or develop tools that will support ongoing data analysis related to diligent recruitment planning, implementation, and monitoring (at state and county levels and for private agency partners)	Begin Date: Q3 Completion Date: Q3
c. Develop and execute a communication plan regarding the improved diligent recruitment plan to all county departments of social services and private child placing agencies	Begin Date: Q3 Completion Date: Q3
d. State staff will implement key strategies in the improved diligent recruitment plan and provide technical assistance to counties to recruit families who reflect the diversity of children served by the foster care program and who can meet their physical, mental and behavioral needs	Begin Date: Q3 Completion Date: Q8
e. Provide training on, review and monitor county departments of social services' annual Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA) plans to ensure they reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed in their county	Begin Date: Q5 Completion Date: Q8

3. Strengthen the external stakeholders understanding of, and input into the development of, the North Carolina Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) and Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) goals, objectives and annual updates and establishing ongoing feedback mechanisms (Item 31 and 32)

[Activities]	[Timeline]
a. Develop a recorded presentation for external stakeholders regarding the CFSP/APSR and PIP to strengthen their understanding of the goals and objectives and opportunities for ongoing engagement	Begin Date: Q1 Completion Date: Q4
b. Consult with foster, adoptive, and kinship parents regarding the CFSP/APSR and PIP utilizing the "Resource Parent Portal" to identify and address any major concerns and engage them in the implementation of the provisions outlined in the CFSP	Begin Date: Q1 Completion Date: Q6
c. Consult with external stakeholders regarding the CFSP/APSR and PIP in cross systems meetings (such as Court Improvement Program's Interagency collaborative, SAYSO Saturday, EBCI meeting, Child Welfare Parent Advisory Council, CCPT Advisory Council, Benchmarks FAR, FFTA, etc.) to identify and address any major concerns and engage them in the implementation of the provisions outlined in the CFSP	Begin Date: Q1 Completion Date: Q8
d. Engage internal and external stakeholders in quarterly "Listening Sessions" (n=6) to inform the development of the CFSP/APSR, ensure feedback loops are established, and to identify issues and concerns related to serving children and families involved in child welfare	Begin Date: Q3 Completion Date: Q8
e. Coordinate with Medicaid, Work First and other federal service programs as needed to address concerns from the Listening Session in the CFSP/APSR	Begin Date: Q3 Completion Date: Q8

Goal 5: Enhance the statewide data quality, collection and dissemination of information regarding services provided (Statewide Information System)

Strategies/Activities

1. Strengthen the statewide information system through the development of a child welfare module within NC FAST (North Carolina Families Accessing Services through Technology) to improve data quality, consistency, and access to timely statewide data (Item 19)

[Activities]	[Timeline]
a. Conduct an analysis of the current business child welfare service functions against the existing Cúram Software to identify gaps	Begin Date: Q1 Completion Date: Q1
b. Ensure any revisions to the policies and practices regarding CPS Assessment, In-Home and Foster Care are included in the NC FAST business functions	Begin Date: Q1 Completion Date: Q4
c. Conduct sufficient testing to ensure practice is supported by the software	Begin Date: Q1 Completion Date: Q6