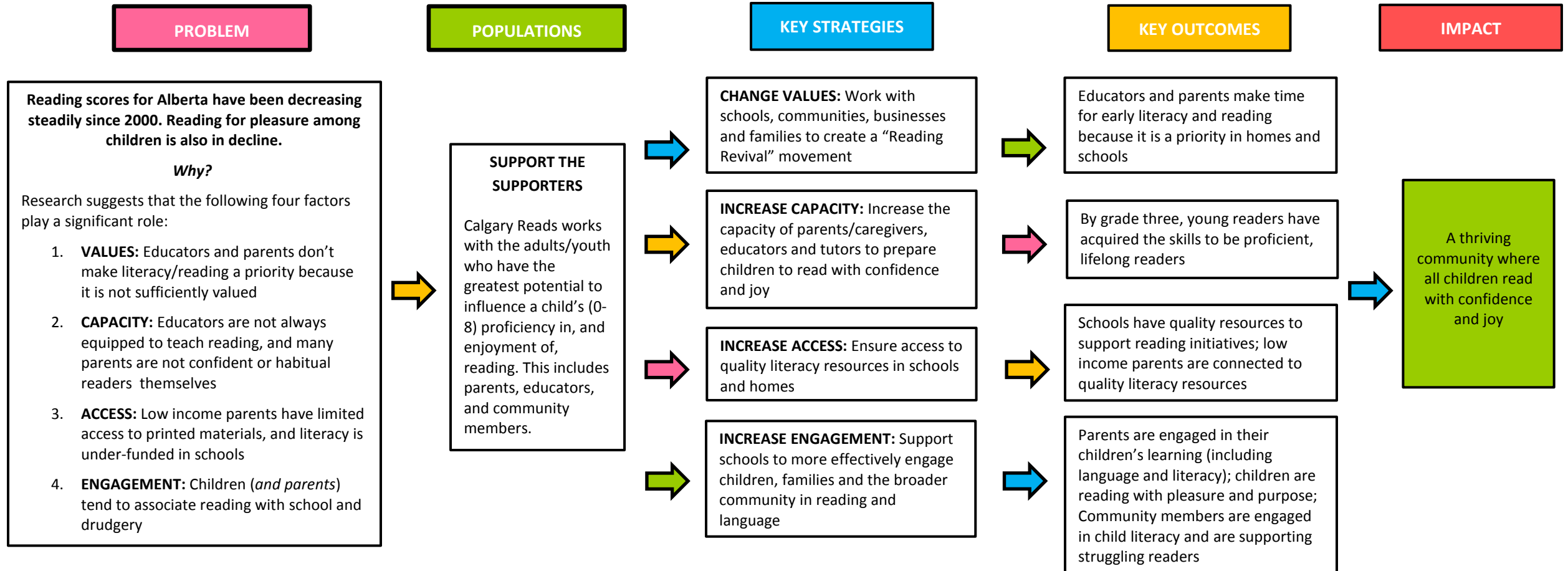


## THEORY OF CHANGE

Children learn to read with confidence and joy when they: 1) have access to quality resources; 2) are immersed in a culture of reading; and 3) are surrounded by engaged adults who have the will and skill to support their learning. By helping to create a literacy-rich environment, and by building the capacity of parents and educators to more effectively support literacy development, Calgary Reads and its community partners help to achieve a thriving community where all children read with confidence and joy.



**ASSUMPTIONS:** ♦ Technical proficiency is not enough – children need to be supported to find pleasure and purpose in reading ♦ This requires a larger cultural shift, as well as the combined efforts of educators, parents, and the broader community ♦ Calgary Reads will work with diverse partners to further develop the influence, resources, relationships, and expertise, to impact these areas

## 4.0 Developing an Evaluative Approach at Calgary Reads

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In addition to conducting a formal evaluation of its approach, Calgary Reads would like to increase its capacity as an organization for evaluative thinking across all strategies and initiatives. This requires equipping staff with a consistent set of questions that can be used to guide strategic development and learning. The evaluation questions that are included in this framework are high-level enough to provide a structure for informal learning and inquiry among staff and/or stakeholders. For every initiative that they are involved in, staff should be considering the four dimensions that Calgary Reads seeks to influence (values, capacity, access and engagement), and ask themselves the following questions:

- **VALUES - How does this initiative potentially help to shift values around reading?** What would I look for to determine whether values were indeed shifting? Am I seeing that evidence? Am I seeing any *disconfirmational* evidence (i.e., something that indicates that values are *not* shifting)? Is there anything that would help to increase further impact in this area?
- **CAPACITY - How does this initiative potentially help to build reading skills among children and/or the capacity for adults to support literacy development?** What would I expect to see if this were actually happening? Am I seeing that evidence? Am I seeing any disconfirmational evidence? Is there anything that would help to further increase impact in this area?
- **ACCESS – How does this initiative potentially help to increase children’s access to quality literacy resources?** What evidence would indicate that Calgary Reads has helped to increase access? Am I seeing that evidence? Am I seeing any *disconfirmational* evidence? Is there anything that would help to increase further impact in this area?
- **ENGAGEMENT – How does this initiative potentially help to increase engagement? (Either children’s engagement in reading, and/or parents engagement in their child’s learning, and/or the community’s engagement in literacy efforts).** What would indicate an increase in engagement? Am I seeing that evidence? Am I seeing any disconfirmational evidence? Is there anything that would help to increase further impact in this area?

Developing structures or processes to support informal learning and evaluation can also be very helpful. For example, staff meetings could be structured around one of the four dimensions, with staff bringing forward what they are learning about how to change values around reading or how to increase access to books, etc. Program plans can be structured around the four dimensions, so that staff articulate how the initiative will address one or more dimension. Professional development opportunities might also be aligned with the dimensions (e.g., staff could attend a workshop on increasing parent engagement, or be given resources on changing culture, etc.). The more that the dimensions are built into every aspect of organizational culture, the more likely it is that staff efforts and evaluation efforts will harmonize in a natural and mutually supportive way.