

# **Learning Community Coordinating Council**

**August 4, 2022 – 6:00PM**

**1612 North 24<sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68110**

**Learning Community Vision: That all children within the Learning Community achieve academic success without regard to social or economic circumstance.**

The subjects to be discussed or considered, or upon which any formal action may be taken, are as follows: (Items do not have to be taken in the same order as listed.)

## **I. Opening the Meeting**

- i. Call to Order: The regular August meeting of the Learning Community Council is called to order on August 4, 2022, at 6 p.m.
- ii. **Council Mission Statement: Together with school districts and community organizations as partners, we demonstrate, share, and implement more effective practices to measurably improve educational outcomes for children and families in poverty.**
- iii. Public Notice and Compliance Nebraska Open Meetings Law
- iv. Council Roll Call:
- v. Pledge of Allegiance

## **II. Public Comment**

## **III. Chair Opening Statement:**

### **A. Reports**

- i. Chair
- ii. CEO
- iii. Treasurer
- iv. Legal Counsel
- v. Foundation

## **IV. Consent Agenda**

Unless removed from the consent agenda, items identified within the consent agenda will be acted on at one time.

- i. Minutes of the June 16, 2022, meeting of the Council

## V. Programming Update

- a. Centers Updates -
- b. Superintendents' Plan - BECI Presentation
- c. District Initiatives -

## VI. Subcommittee Reports

- 1. Elementary Learning and Diversity Subcommittee (ELD)
- 2. Budget, Finance and Audit Subcommittee

- i. **Action Item:** Up on recommendation of the Executive Committee, the council motion to approve the additional 1% allowable growth rate for the 2022-2023 Elementary Learning Center and Capital Projects budgets

- 3. Legislative Subcommittee

## VII. New Business

- 1. GOALS Contract Renewal Presentation

## VII. Upcoming Meeting – August 25, 2022 – Learning Community Center of North Omaha, 1612 North 24<sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha, NE 68110

## VIII. Adjourn

**\*Closed Session:** If, during the course of the meeting, discussion of any item on the agenda should be held in a closed meeting, the council will conduct a closed meeting in accordance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Law.

**\*\*Sequence of Agenda:** The sequence of agenda topics is subject to change at the discretion of the Council. Please arrive at the beginning of the meeting.

### UPCOMING LEARNING COMMUNITY EVENTS:

Advisory Committee	To Be Determined
LC Coordinating Council	August 25, 2022, 6:00 p.m. Learning Community Center of North Omaha, 1612 N. 24 <sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha, NE
Subcouncil #1	To Be Determined
Subcouncil #2	To Be Determined
Subcouncil #3	To Be Determined
Subcouncil #4	To Be Determined
Subcouncil #5	To Be Determined
Subcouncil #6	To Be Determined

## **HANDOUTS TO ACCOMPANY THIS AGENDA ARE AS FOLLOW**

- CEO Report
- LCCC Minutes dated June 16, 2022
- Center Updates
- BECI Presentation
- GOALS Presentation
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Strategic Plan Update



1612 North 24th Street  
Omaha, Nebraska 68110  
Phone: 402.964.2405

Chief Executive Officer  
Dr. Bradley Ekwerekwu

#### **COORDINATING COUNCIL OFFICERS**

Chair  
Allen Hager

Vice Chair  
Brian Thommes

Secretary  
Carol Hahn

Treasurer  
Mark Hoeger

#### **COUNCIL MEMBERS**

**Achievement Subcouncil 1**  
Clarice Jackson  
Brian Thommes

**Achievement Subcouncil 2**  
Carol Hahn  
Nathan Zingg

**Achievement Subcouncil 3**  
Mark Hoeger  
Melinda Kozel

**Achievement Subcouncil 4**  
Allen Hager  
Lisa Schoenberger

**Achievement Subcouncil 5**  
Erik Servellon  
Tonya Ward

**Achievement Subcouncil 6**  
Andrew Brock  
Tim Hall

#### **MISSION**

*Together with school districts  
and community organizations as  
partners, we demonstrate, share  
and implement more effective  
practices to measurably improve  
educational outcomes for  
children and families in poverty.*

#### **VISION**

*That all children within the  
Learning Community achieve  
academic success without  
regard to social or economic  
circumstance.*

[LearningCommunityDS.org](http://LearningCommunityDS.org)

## **AUGUST 4, 2022 LCCC MEETING**

### **CEO REPORT**

1. We are making good progress with the South Center satellite location acquisition. At the time that this report was written, a purchase agreement was drafted and approved by both LC and One World leadership. We are hopeful that all processes will run smoothly moving forward. Once the purchase agreement is executed, it is estimated that construction/rehab on the building will last anywhere from 8-16 months. Very exciting!
2. The Buffet Early Childhood Institute will be present at tonight's meeting to share remarks related to evaluation of the current Superintendent's Early Childhood Plan. Please ensure that you thoroughly review the contract (signed June 2021) and plan to engage in meaningful, constructive dialogue regarding current data/findings, as well as data that will emerge in future years. BECI will return to the October LCCC meeting to present formal data evaluation, but initial observations will inform future action items.
3. GOALS will present at tonight's meeting regarding a contract renewal for evaluation support. As you know, our legislation supports a partnership with GOALS, and we appreciate/value the work that is going on in the community to address chronic absenteeism. Please welcome Nicole Seymour/staff and engage in meaningful dialogue regarding these issues.
4. Dr. Martha Bruckner is unable to join tonight's LCCC meeting, but the MOEC contract (renewal) is included in your packet. Please review and submit any questions. Dr. Bruckner is scheduled to appear at the August 25<sup>th</sup> meeting when the contract is on the agenda for approval.
5. The LC staff continues to work with community partners to secure a physical location for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Center location for "mid-southwest" Omaha. We remain in the analysis phase of architecture and development cost structuring. Please look forward to a more formal report as details are solidified. An article appeared in the Omaha World Herald detailing an upcoming partnership between LCC and Bridges, a new non-profit organization aiming to serve families through a Family Resource Center model. This is very exciting, as well...More info to come!
6. The Learning Community Foundation remains poised to assist the LCC in fund, and friend-raising efforts. Currently, there are no pressing short-term or long-term initiatives to raise significant funds for, but we are in consistent dialogue regarding upcoming programming efforts.

# Learning Community Coordinating Council

June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022 – 6:00PM

1612 North 24<sup>th</sup>, Omaha, Nebraska

## Meeting Minutes

**Learning Community Vision: That all children within the Learning Community achieve academic success without regard to social or economic circumstance.**

The subjects to be discussed or considered, or upon which any formal action may be taken, are as follows: (Items do not have to be taken in the same order as listed.)

### I. Opening the Meeting

- i. Call to Order: The regular June meeting of the Learning Community Council is called to order on June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 6:02 p.m.
- ii. **Council Mission Statement: Together with school districts and community organizations as partners, we demonstrate, share, and implement more effective practices to measurably improve educational outcomes for children and families in poverty.**

### iii. Public Notice and Compliance Nebraska Open Meetings Law

A meeting of the Coordinating Council of the Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties was held June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Notice of the meeting, containing the date, time, place, and agenda, was given in advance thereof by publication in the Daily Record on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The proofs of publication have been received and will be made a permanent part of the record of the meeting. Notice of the agenda was given to all members of the Council on June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

### iv. Council Roll Call:

Voting Members Present: Brock, Hoeger, Hahn, Kozel, Schoenberger, Ward, Hager, Hall, Thommes, Zingg

Voting Members Excused: Servellon, Jackson

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Ekwerekwu, O'Hara, Videgla, Lewis

Also Present: BECI, Koley Jessen, Goals

### v. Pledge of Allegiance

## II. Public Comment- None

### A. Reports

- i. Chair- Chair welcome the public and council boards to the meeting. He shared how we have a lot on the agenda today and appreciate Dr. Meisels for all the work he has put in for the Learning Community and his entire career.
- ii. CEO-
  1. Thank you all for your support and recognition of Ms. Renee Franklin as she transitioned from the Learning Community. You received a notice of the updated job description for the Executive Director of the Early Learning Centers and I encourage you to share widely within your networks. The application for employment will be open through 11:59 PM CST on July 5, 2022. Please direct any questions to the CEO.
  2. The Superintendents' Workgroup Landscape Assessment Retreat days are going well. I was able to attend a session last month that convened many school district leaders around the Plan's mission, vision, and future strategic vision items. One individual commented, "This is the best that I've seen this material organized..." The LC continues to strategize with BECI to meet the needs of districts, and ultimately families.
  3. The Buffet Early Childhood Institute will be present at tonight's meeting to present findings related to the "Transition Year" of the current Superintendent's Early Childhood Plan. Please ensure that you thoroughly review the contract (signed June 2021) and plan to engage in meaningful, constructive dialogue regarding current data/findings, as well as data that will emerge in future years. BECI will return to the October LCCC meeting to present formal data evaluation, but initial observations will inform future action items. The LCCC should expect to hear plans for "Year 1" after hearing dialogue about the BECI Landscape Assessment, as well. We look forward to hosting Dr. Meisels and his team.
  4. The LC staff continues to work with community partners to locate physical locations for the LCCSO satellite location, as well as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Center location for "mid-southwest" Omaha. We are in the analysis phase of architecture and development cost structuring- Please look forward to a more formal report as details are solidified.
  5. The Learning Community Foundation held a meeting at the South Center to discuss existing programming, future vision items, and funding needs moving forward. Ms. Alice Lewis joined the meeting to provide specific details and help project future needs based upon a few scenarios.
  6. We will NOT meet in July and will resume regular LCCC meetings in August. We will have a number of presentations and updates at that meeting, so please check your inbox for pertinent information and plan to join us on August 25, 2022.
- iii. Treasurer- The team did a regular assessment of the current agenda and met with the official auditor. Councilman thanked Alice Lewis for making us look good.
- iv. Legal Counsel- No report.

- v. Foundation- Hahn shared they had a meeting and discussed the upcoming ideas and needs of the satellite location. She also shared that they are waiting on what programming will look like and will start working on generation funds for programs.

### III. Consent Agenda

Unless removed from the consent agenda, items identified within the consent agenda will be acted on at one time.

- i. Minutes of the May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022, meeting of the Council
- ii. Treasurer's Report – dated May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022
- iii. Budget To Actual Report- ending May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022

Motion to approve Council meeting minutes of May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022; Treasurer's report of May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022; Budget to Actual Report- ending May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022. Motion first by Schoenberger, second by Thommes.

**Yeas:** Brock, Hoeger, Hahn, Hall, Kozel, Schoenberger, Thommes, Chair Hager. **Nays:** Ward, **Motion carried.**

### IV. Programming Updates

- a) Centers Updates- Intensive Early Childhood Partnership (Jorja Brazda-Witters gave an update on programming to the council and thanked them for the opportunity and support.)

Councilman Zingg came in at 6:14 PM.

- b) Superintendent's Plan- BECI Presentation
- c) District Initiatives- No report

### V. Subcommittee Reports- No report

- 1. Elementary Learning and Diversity Subcommittee (ELD)
- 2. Budget, Finance and Audit Subcommittee- No report
- 3. Legislative Subcommittee- No report

### VI. New Business

- 1. Dr Meisels Resolution

Chair Hager asked the board to motion Dr. Meisels Resolution; motion first by Zingg, second by Hahn.

**Yeas:** Brock, Hoeger, Hahn, Hall, Kozel, Schoenberger, Thommes, Zingg, Chair Hager. **Nays:** Ward, **Motion carried.**

VII. Upcoming Meeting – August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022 – Learning Community Center of North Omaha, 1612 North 24<sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha, NE 68110

VIII. Adjourn at 7:37 PM.

**\*Closed Session:** If, during the course of the meeting, discussion of any item on the agenda should be held in a closed meeting, the council will conduct a closed meeting in accordance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Law.

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#### **UPCOMING LEARNING COMMUNITY EVENTS:**

Advisory Committee	To Be Determined
LC Coordinating Council	August 4 <sup>th</sup> , 2022, 6:00 p.m. Learning Community Center of North Omaha, 1612 N. 24 <sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha, NE
Subcouncil #1	To Be Determined
Subcouncil #2	To Be Determined
Subcouncil #3	To Be Determined
Subcouncil #4	To Be Determined
Subcouncil #5	To Be Determined
Subcouncil #6	To Be Determined

#### **HANDOUTS TO ACCOMPANY THIS AGENDA ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

- LCCC Minutes dated May 19, 2022
- May Treasurer's Report
- CEO Report
- Center Updates
- BECI Presentation
- Dr. Meisels Resolution



## LCC Council Meeting Center Update

August 4, 2022

### **North Center Update**

#### Courses

- In partnership with Metropolitan Community College (MCC), ESL and GED classes resumed at the North Omaha Center on July 11<sup>th</sup> with a total of 10 new students added to ESL and GED. ESL I and ESL II occur Mondays and Wednesdays for 3 hours each day and GED held Tuesdays and Thursdays for 3 hours each day.
- Prime Time Reading Pre-school started July 6<sup>th</sup> and will run Wednesday each week for the next 8 weeks concluding August 24<sup>th</sup>. The course focuses on promoting literacy and reading and learning through structured activities. The class begins each week with a family meal and a book walk while families are eating together. Once dinner concludes the families move to a designated area where our librarian reads a book to the families and provides props to encourage engagement. After the story reading, families walk to the activity stations where the children can choose a variety of learning activities such as creating animal masks, coloring, puzzles or magnetic tiles, and drawing. While the children engage with their chosen activities while a Parent University team members walks from station to station asking the children a series of questions that foster critical thinking. Each week the children take home the book that read during the family story time. By the end, each child should have eight books.
- Beauty is Skin Deep course for girls ages 8 to 16 years old, concluded Saturday July 23. Each week 10 to 15 young ladies came to the center for 4 hours to engage in exercises that foster self-esteem and social skills.

#### Programming updates:

- Educational Navigators (EN) collected approximately thirty-five parent surveys. Parents shared their experiences while collaborating with their assigned navigator, frequency and locations of home visits, and courses. The results from the surveys will be shared.

#### Program Recruitment efforts

Parent University (PU) is actively recruiting families to the program.

- On August 1, a Parent University presentation to teachers and other school staff (from six partner schools) will be held at the TAC building.
- Staff will attend open house event for Educare Omaha on August 15, 2022
- All Parent University will set up a table to recruit families at school open houses during the week of August 15.

## Staffing Updates

### Hires-

- A Program Coordinator hired In July will join the PU team and the date to start is August 1<sup>st</sup>.  
Three educational navigators hired started work with the PU team in the month of July.
- 3 PT child learning specialists (evening) hired and joined the team early July.

### Resignations-

- Two new child learning specialists – June 21st
- One EN - July 27th
- Program Manager- July 1<sup>st</sup>

### Open positions -

- Food Coordinator
- (2) PT Child Learning Specialist
- (2) EN
- PT intake specialist
- Family Engagement Lead

### COVID:

North Center continues to utilize and practice COVID protocols such as screenings and mask wearing inside the building. We continue to encourage staff, parents, and children to stay home and not come to the Center when they are sick.

## **LEARNING COMMUNITY CENTER OF SOUTH OMAHA**

Updates 7/26/22

### **Good news**

- Two parent participants graduated from GED.
- Two UNO social worker practicum students working full time this summer
- UNO conducted a third Urban Thinkscapes parent/child event to help them plan for future urban play-based landscapes in the area.
- The Salvation Army providing free lunch at the center for children every weekday during the summer.
- Navigators took a group participants without transportation on a “bus tour” to teach them to use the bus system.
- A vaccine event was held at the center, sponsored by the Douglas County Health Department.
- LCCSO staff participated in door-to-door recruitment for a few days in late July.
- LCCSO hosted an enrollment event.
- The South center currently has one open position: part-time Educational Navigator.

### **Summer Programming in July**

- Classes at center align with OPS’ Next Level Learning (summer school).
- Parents and their children from newborn to age 9 allowed to attend classes 4 half-days a week during the summer
  - 3 adult and 4 early childhood classrooms utilized on 4 days a week, either Monday to Thursday morning, or Monday to Thursday afternoon.
- Fridays are reserved for:
  - computer classes
  - staff trainings
  - Fall enrollment days
  - special events
- All classes in person, except for one GED class
- Home visits continue through the summer months

#### Summer Partnerships

- The Big Garden
- Salvation Army’s Kids Crusin’ Kitchen

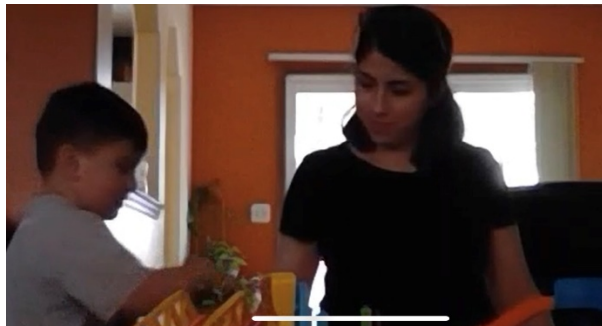
### **Evaluation Update**

- UNMC tested children in the child learning classrooms using MEFS (Minnesota Executive Functioning Scale) in July.
- CASAS (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems) continues throughout the year to measure English-language acquisition
  - Metro measures CASAS for GED progress and shares with UNMC

### **Staff trainings in past month**

- Circle of Security – Classroom (Project Harmony)
- Circle of Security - Parenting for Teachers and Navigators (LCCSO staff)
- Cultivating Healthy Intentional Mindful Educators (CHIME-Nebraska Extension)
- Nature-based Learning - Community of Practice (Nebraska Extension)
- Parent-Child Interaction training for Navigators (contractor from ESU 3)
- Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) Training for Child Learning Manager)
- Seven staff completed Early Learning Guideline training
- Growing Great Kids for one Navigator

### **Mission Moment**



Anthony is a two-year-old boy who participates in the program with his mom Esmeralda. While Esmeralda is in her ESL class, Anthony spends that time in the child learning room. Esmeralda shared with her educational navigator that she has seen a change in Anthony's behavior since he began the program; Esmeralda said that when Anthony started the program, he had a hard time socializing with other children. She was concerned about his communication as he barely said any words, even at home, and mostly communicated by pointing at things and making sounds. He did not like to play with other children and would not talk with anyone at the LCCSO. Esmeralda said she has noticed that bringing Anthony to the center has helped him improve his speech development. Now, Anthony plays with other children and has conversations at home; he even says hi and goodbye when he leaves center. Esmeralda thinks that what has helped Anthony in his speech development is the time he spends with other children in the program and the activities the child learning team does with Anthony to support his learning. Esmeralda is grateful to be part of LCCSO.

(Story by Educational Navigator Patricia Tenorio)



Buffett  
Early Childhood  
Institute  
*at the University of Nebraska*

# Action Planning

## 2022-23 School Year

### Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan

August 4, 2022

Start early. Start well.

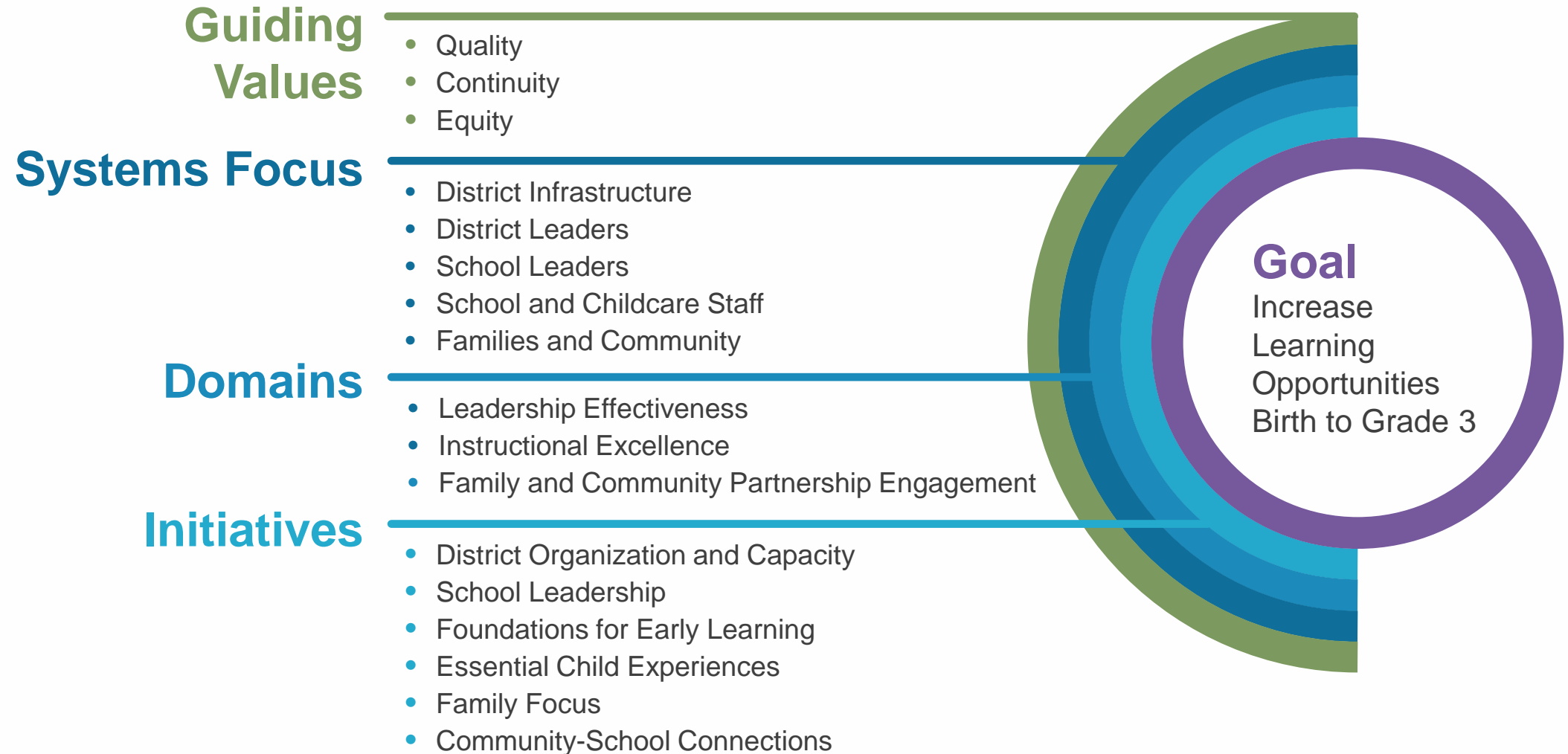


# Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan

## Six Big Ideas

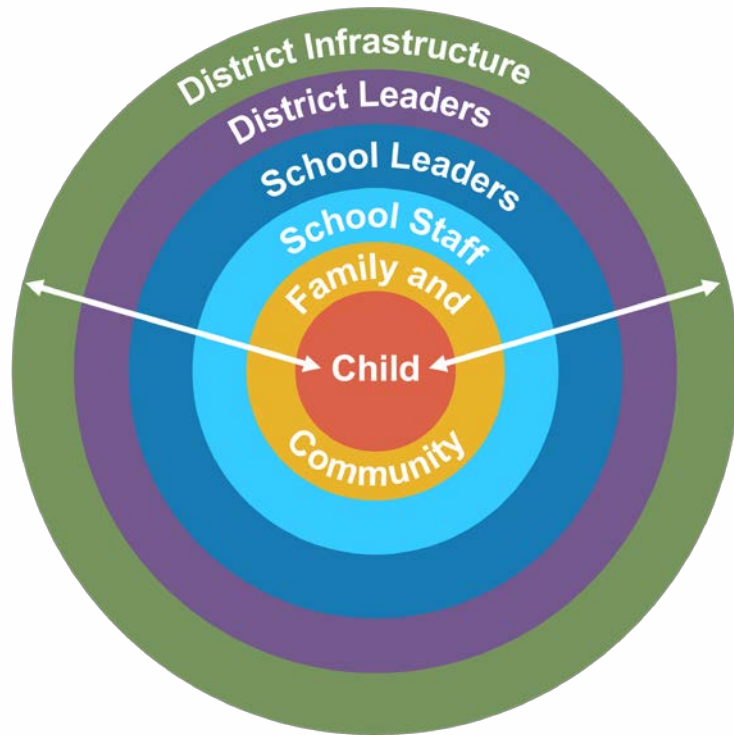
1. Birth Through Grade 3
2. School as Hub
3. Developmental Change
4. Parent and Family Support
5. Professional Growth and Support
6. Persistence

# Birth through Grade 3 Approach



# Buffett Early Childhood Institute Partnership for Capacity Building

## Systems Focus



## Initiatives

Leadership  
Effectiveness

District Organization  
and Capacity

School  
Leadership

Instructional  
Excellence

Foundations for  
Early Learning

Essential Child  
Experiences

Family and  
Community  
Partnership  
Engagement

Family Focus

Community-School  
Connections



# Buffett Early Childhood Institute Partnership for Capacity Building

**We** partner with school districts to

- Strengthen school systems for quality, continuity, and equity in birth through Grade 3
- Build capacity of early childhood programs

# Buffett Early Childhood Institute Partnership for Capacity Building

**We**

- Collaborate
- Build connections
- Build relationships
- Consult
- Facilitate professional learning
- Coach
- Collect and analyze data
- Monitor and assess progress
- Propose recommendations for continuous improvement

## 2022-2023 Efforts

- Targeted partnership efforts focused on goals set by the school districts
- Strengthened early childhood systems and support for early childhood programs
- Targeted communications with district leaders, school leaders, school staff, community childcare, community service providers, and families
- Toolkits and resources for district and school use



Buffett  
Early Childhood  
Institute

*at the University of Nebraska*

Start early. Start well.

The Buffett Early Childhood Institute at the University of Nebraska does not discriminate based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and/or political affiliation in its programs, activities, or employment.

## Action Plan Template

**DOMAIN 1:** Leadership Effectiveness **TIMELINE:** 2022–23 School Year

1	What is the district's SMART goal for development in this domain?				
2	How is this goal aligned with the district organization/capacity priorities identified through the landscape assessment?				
3	Which birth through Grade 3 framework descriptor(s) are connected to this goal? (See framework for details.)				
4	What will result when the goal is met?				
5	What data and/or evidence do you recommend collecting to demonstrate the evidence that (1) the SMART goal has been met and (2) children have benefited?	(1)  (2)			
6	What systems of support will be place within your district to meet this goal for the child?	District Infrastructure	District Leaders	School Leaders	School Staff
7	What collaborative efforts with the Buffett Early Childhood Institute team do you propose as support to meet this goal?				
8	Would it be beneficial to your district to continue engaging with the National P-3 Center? If so, what do you recommend?				

## Action Plan Template

**DOMAIN 2:** Instructional Excellence **TIMELINE:** 2022–23 School Year

1	What is the district's SMART goal for development in this domain?				
2	How is this goal aligned with the district organization/capacity priorities identified through the landscape assessment?				
3	Which birth through Grade 3 framework descriptor(s) are connected to this goal? (See framework for details.)				
4	What will result when the goal is met?				
5	What data and/or evidence do you recommend collecting to demonstrate the evidence that (1) the SMART goal has been met and (2) children have benefited?	(1)  (2)			
6	What systems of support will be place within your district to meet this goal for the child?	District Infrastructure	District Leaders	School Leaders	School Staff
7	What collaborative efforts with the Buffett Early Childhood Institute team do you propose as support to meet this goal?				
8	Would it be beneficial to your district to continue engaging with the National P-3 Center? If so, what do you recommend?				

## Action Plan Template

**DOMAIN 3:** Family and Community Partnership Engagement **TIMELINE:** 2022–23 School Year

1	What is the district's SMART goal for development in this domain?				
2	How is this goal aligned with the district organization/capacity priorities identified through the landscape assessment?				
3	Which birth through Grade 3 framework descriptor(s) are connected to this goal? (See framework for details.)				
4	What will result when the goal is met?				
5	What data and/or evidence do you recommend collecting to demonstrate the evidence that (1) the SMART goal has been met and (2) children have benefited?	(1)  (2)			
6	What systems of support will be place within your district to meet this goal for the child?	District Infrastructure	District Leaders	School Leaders	School Staff
7	What collaborative efforts with the Buffett Early Childhood Institute team do you propose as support to meet this goal?				
8	Would it be beneficial to your district to continue engaging with the National P-3 Center? If so, what do you recommend?				

## Action Plan Template

### The Birth Through Grade 3 Approach: Focus on the Six Big Ideas

1.	<b>Birth through Grade 3:</b> How will this action plan impact children beginning at birth and sustain through the end of third grade so children are more likely to achieve lasting success in school and beyond?	
2.	<b>School as Hub:</b> How will this action plan guide schools to connect families to resources within and beyond school walls, helping families navigate and access early education services and community resources?	
3.	<b>Developmental Change:</b> How will this action plan guide schools to focus on children's biological, neurological, psychological, and social pathways of development continually beginning at birth and continuing through Grade 3?	
4.	<b>Parent and Family Support:</b> How will this action plan guide schools to support and tap into parents and families as allies in enhancing their children's strengths and abilities?	
5.	<b>Professional Growth and Support:</b> How will this action plan enhance the skills of teachers, caregivers, and school leaders, equipping them with research-based knowledge about children's development and early learning?	
6.	<b>Persistence:</b> How will this action plan guide persistent, consistent, and well-designed effort from birth through Grade 3?	



Dr. Bradley Ekwerekwu  
Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties  
Request for Financial Support for GOALS data collection, program evaluation, and technology  
July 14, 2022

Dear Dr. Ekwerekwu,

Please accept this letter as the formal request for financial support from the Learning Community to the GOALS Center for the 2022-2024 school years.

The GOALS Center would be unable to function in the capacity it does without the generous support of the Learning Community. The funds provided through this grant have continued to support critical agency infrastructure and staff that provide agency oversight, strategic development, and program evaluation. In addition, the funding supports the ability for GOALS to obtain assistance in meeting the organizations technological needs that would otherwise remain unmet.

Whereas the Learning Community has provided the GOALS Center funding to support data collection and staffing efforts to track, understand, and ultimately ameliorate chronic absenteeism, please allow me to detail some of the center's recent achievements:

- The GOALS Center continues to experience an increased request for services in COVID-19 era and the academic community's return to traditional learning. With the ongoing social-cultural, economic, and psychological (i.e., trauma-related) effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, school districts remain concerned about the number of unaccounted for students who have not shown up for in-person learning. Due to this concern, GOALS partnered with four schools to offer "Covid-19 Outreach" services at no-charge. These services proved so valuable in reaching out and contacting unaccounted for students, that it changed the way the GOALS Center viewed programming and conducted outreach services. Specifically, GOALS used this experience to create a new "Engagement Outreach Program" where GOALS team members access, then assist, students and families with resource identification, accessibility and assistance with e-Learning systems, and financial stability. This new program offering exits as a short-term intervention, (up to 90 days) with the goal of engaging students in school again. In terms of data collection and the assessment of program effectiveness, the GOALS Center is considering the adoption of a family stress survey (the Weiss and Lunskey 2012 "Brief Family Distress Scale") to measure the decrease of student and family stress/strain as the result of GOALS advocacy and engagement. Further, the GOALS Center is also considering utilizing a network analysis tool to analyze the expansion of community resources (and the negation of social isolation) made available to the family through GOALS advocacy/engagement. Continued funding would allow us to embed these assessments and data collection strategies into program outreach services.
- Requests for admission into the GOALS Center Traditional Programing and Engagement Outreach program also remains significant – and our recent data collection and program assessment suggest excellent quality service. Consider, for example our 2021 *Student and Caregiver Survey* and *Stakeholder Survey*. This survey review indicated that families were highly satisfied with GOALS advocacy and service. According to the student and caregiver survey, 100% of participants said they would encourage other students struggling with attendance to participate in GOAL programming. 97% of participants surveys rated the GOALS program as good or excellent – and as one family caregiver stated, "Our GOALS advocate made us feel like she was there to help and guide my student along the path of having good attendance. She was there for us when we felt like everyone else in the school system was not wanted my student to success...She made

my daughter feel comfortable and like she was on her side and wanted to help.” Additionally, during this period GOALS reported that 90% of families served were diverted from formal system involvement and over 50% of all students improved attendance (and less than 1% of students were re-referred from the previous year). In terms of data collection, the components of this Traditional Program include: 6-12 months of family centered wrap-around case management services for youth and families provided by trained Family Advocates (FAs). Further, in terms of data collection and household assessments, FAs utilize two evidence-based assessments tools: The North Carolina Family assessment Scales (NCFAS-G) and the Ohio Scales Assessment. Student and family service plans are updated on a monthly data and program supervisors review for quality assurance as well as to ensure timeliness of met outcomes and staff impact (Random file case reviews are also conducted by the GOALS Program Supervisor to evaluate for efficacy and quality of all documentation). Finally, all service delivery and student-family interventions are guided by clearly established internal protocols and formalized written guidebooks.

- A third most recent achievement includes the expansion of community partnerships and community collaborations. Specifically, the GOALS Center partnered with three established community orgs (Concord Mediation Center, Charles Drew, and the Urban League) to form the Elevate Program. The Elevate Program is a pilot program designed specifically to serve BIPOC youth of color and combines the strength of multiple and unique community service agencies. Concord Mediation offers evidence-based mediation and facilitation services for students and families looking to restore peace and improve student and family wellbeing by addressing conflict. Charles Drew is available to serve any mental or physical health needs. Finally, Goals and the Urban League act as mentors to guardians and youth and help them navigate school and community. Data collection and assessment of the Elevate Program include all of the aforementioned items noted for the Traditional Program. However, given that this program involves multiple agencies serving student and family constituencies, a “community partner” survey (and likely a series of focus groups) with the cited agencies/partners will also need to be conducted to access the perspectives and attitudes related to the working relationship (as well as assessing program “gaps” and strengths). Continued funding from the Learning Center would help us facilitate such assessments and program evaluation.
- Finally, a Native American outreach program at The GOALS Center is also under design. Here, Family Advocates will help Native students and families find effective ways to overcome academic, economic, health and other social barriers and will work with them to find opportunities for community participation, healing, and educational success. This program will serve Native American students and their families regardless of tribal affiliation. While chronic absenteeism affects all students, research shows the issue disproportionately impacts students of color. Among Native students statewide, data indicate that Native youth are at highest risk of being chronically absent. Further, when comparing the racial and ethnic composition of Nebraska youth of the same age, American Indian and Alaska Native students are overrepresented in truancy programs and therefore deserve targeted and specific intervention programming. To provide support for this program and for the agency as a whole, additional Program Supervisors and Family Advocates will be needed to accomplish the targeted responsibilities in the areas of community outreach, service deliverability, and the collection and analysis of data to monitor for program impact.

In each of the aforementioned programs, Family Advocates at GOALS collaborate with families by providing evidence-based assessments, and service plans that identify areas of strength and needs within the families. With a team approach, GOALS can help identify school barriers, and deliver interventions and services to students and families. Further, the development and implementation of the above listed accomplishments affords GOALS the ability to



Greater Omaha Attendance and Learning Services

[www.goals-center.org](http://www.goals-center.org)

continue to strategically supplement and sustain our impact to families struggling with barriers that contribute to decreased student attendance. That very work is a valuable component of the Community Achievement Plan and furthers the collaboration and collective impact across Douglas and Sarpy Counties. No other provider is accessible to students, families, or schools to work in the community and the support from the Learning Community will demonstrate the continued necessity of coordinated efforts to improve student outcomes.

I am requesting a contribution not to exceed \$150,000 per year (2022-2023 and 2023-2024) to fund staff positions directly related to continuous quality improvement and assessment of program effectiveness. These positions clearly assess, guide, and improve our work. Additional funding would be dedicated to website/technology development. Estimated annual costs are as follows:

- ❖ 100% full-time Operations Manager: \$64,800
- ❖ 45% full-time Program Manager salary \$27,835
- ❖ 100% full-time Intake Specialist salary \$38,188
- ❖ 10% full-time Executive Director \$11,895
- ❖ Technology costs \$7,282

The above estimates are based on current staff salaries and the GOALS board approved budget for fiscal year July 2022-June 2023.

I appreciate the council's consideration of our funding request. GOALS would not be able to serve students and families in their homes and communities without this important relationship. This support demonstrates the long-standing partnership between GOALS and the Learning Community as essential collaborators under the Community Achievement Plan.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Nicole Seymour'.

Nicole Seymour  
Executive Director  
Greater Omaha Attendance & Learning Services



Greater Omaha Attendance and Learning Services

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Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties

AUGUST 2022

# 10 Questions: GOALS

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Greater Omaha Attendance and Learning Services

## **(1). WHAT IS THE GOALS CENTER – AND WHAT DOES THE GOALS CENTER DO?**

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The mission of GOALS is to address absenteeism and at-risk behavior through direct advocacy, student and family engagement, and the development of community partnerships and coordinated efforts to improve student attendance and learning.

GOALS partners with caregivers, school personnel, formal system organizations, fellow non-profit providers, and a family's "community" to overcome any barrier that would keep a child from attending school and leveraging an inclusive and equitable educational experience.

## **(2). HOW HAS THE SUPPORT OF THE LEARNING COMMUNITY AIDED THE GOALS CENTER MISSION?**

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The generous support of the Learning Community enables our agency to develop, and expand, strategic staff infrastructure. Funding allows our agency to hire and promote individual into key oversight, development, and program evaluation positions.

In addition, the funding supports the ability for GOALS to obtain assistance in meeting the organizations technological needs that would otherwise remain unmet.

**(3). CAN YOU PROVIDE SOME SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF HOW SUPPORT FROM THE LEARNING COMMUNITY HAS BENEFITED YOUR WORK AND MISSION ?**

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Funding enables GOALS employees to:

**(a)** receive training in the delivery of several family assessment scales (which aid our staff in the recognition of a family's strengths and needs and then helps guide resource delivery).

These assessments explore, for example, parental capabilities, quality and context of family interactions, youth well-being, quality of social & community life).



Let us pause here and listen to a GOALS Family Advocate.

Let us take a few minutes to hear what our work entails and explore some of the lesser known or more invisible realities of “attendance-work” – as well as some successes.

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### **(3). CAN YOU PROVIDE SOME SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF HOW SUPPORT FROM THE LEARNING COMMUNITY HAS BENEFITED YOUR WORK AND MISSION ?**

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**(b)** Funding also enhances the GOALS Center's ability to provide and measure quality assurance. Resources allow for the hiring of the right people who have the knowledge and critical and creative insight to ensure that the highest standards of service delivery are met.

Quality assurance plans and practices have been formalized (and we will be working on crafting this into a Quality Assurance Handbook/Manual).

## **(4). IN TERMS OF CURRENT AND FUTURE TECHNOLOGY, WHAT DOES GOALS NEED?**

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We are exploring:

- (\*) additional data collection and interpretation software,
- (\*) additional family assessment scales
- (\*) additional positions for website & social media outreach and supervision.

**(5). IN ADDITION TO TRAINING IN FAMILY ASSESSMENT MEASURES, WHAT ADDITIONAL TRAININGS DO GOALS STAFF MEMBERS RECEIVE (AND WHAT TRAINING ARE NEEDED?)**

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In addition to trainings in child safety & wellbeing, GOALS members receive training in: Using Chronic Absence data to improve learning conditions, trauma-informed care, R/ED (Racial and Ethnic Disparities), DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) training, and ongoing cultural competency work.

However, given the complexities and challenges of current pandemic and social, cultural, and economic realities, staff members should continue to receive trauma-sensitive and social and emotional learning resources.

GOALS Family Advocates often describe the multiple “hats they wear” and roles they play during their service to the community.

Let us hear from another Family Advocate.

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## **(6). CAN YOU SAY A BIT MORE ABOUT YOUR ANTI-RACISM AND RACIAL EQUALITY PRACTICES?**

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We acknowledge that racism and racial inequity pervade all aspects of society – and racism is well-documented to be both institutionalized and personalized. Given this reality, an anti-racism and racial equity framework is vital to the success of GOALS moving forward. As such, GOALS will continue to engage in RED (Racial and Ethnic Disparities) work and training. For example, over the past several years, GOALS has worked with the Douglas County RED (Racial and Ethnic Disparities) Coordinator to ensure that the culture and work of GOALS is funneled through the RED lens.

## **(6). CAN YOU SAY A BIT MORE ABOUT YOUR ANTI-RACISM AND RACIAL EQUALITY PRACTICES?**

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GOALS will continue to work with local leaders and experts on seeking constant education, feedback, and opportunity to ensure our work is inclusive and transparent, with a focus on equitable outcomes for marginalized students, families, and communities.

Lastly, GOALS will continue to engage in training initiatives that promote inclusivity and equity across all programs and in all aspects of our community engagement work (e.g., programs, processes, and (perhaps) curriculum).

## **(7). WHAT DO STUDENTS AND FAMILIES SAY ABOUT YOUR PROGRAM?**

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Our 2021 *Student and Caregiver Survey and Stakeholder Survey* indicated that families were highly satisfied with GOALS advocacy and service. According to the survey, **100% of participants** said they would encourage other students struggling with attendance to participate in GOAL programming. **97% of participants surveys rated the GOALS program as good or excellent.**

One family caregiver stated, “Our GOALS advocate made us feel like she was there to help and guide my student along the path of having good attendance. She was there for us when we felt like everyone else in the school system was not wanted my student to success...She made my daughter feel comfortable and like she was on her side and wanted to help.”



Once again, let us hear from a Family Advocate.

Please listen to their experience of service and student/family advocacy.

## **(8) WHAT ARE SOME FUTURE INITIATIVES**

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To answer this question, let us first look at current initiatives/programs:

**(A) Outreach Engagement** which offers students and their families approximately 90 days of family driven case management. GOALS members work to immediately connect the student and their household to community resources as based on in-home visitations and needs assessments.

**(B) Traditional Family Advocacy** provides approximately 6-12 months of family centered case management and extensive family partnering with other community organizations. Here, GOALS continues to provide support and education to families while connecting them to services such as behavioral health, food banks, employment services, and transportation.

**(C) The Elevate Program** is a pilot program designed specifically to serve BIPOC youth and combines the strength of four community agencies. This model uses restorative practices by involving the Concord Mediation Center. Charles Drew is available to serve mental or physical health needs. Finally, GOALS and the Urban League serve as mentors to help youth navigate school and community.

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**Let us learn more about  
Elevate**

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# FUTURE PROGRAMMING

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**(D) a Native American outreach program**—designed specifically for members of the American Indian community—is also under design. Here, team members help Native youth and families find effective ways to overcome academic, economic, health and other social barriers and will work with them to find opportunities for community participation, healing, and educational success. The program will serve Native American students and their families regardless of tribal affiliation.

While chronic absenteeism affects all students, research shows the issue disproportionately impacts students of color. Among Native students statewide, data indicate that Native youth are at highest risk of being chronically absent.

## **(9) WHO ARE SOME OF YOUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS?**

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In addition to the 11 public school districts in Douglas and Sarpy Counties, GOALS works with:

The Elevate Partnership, Metropolitan Omaha Educational Consortium, Douglas Community Response, Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative and Racial & Ethnic Disparities Committee, UNO Juvenile Justice Institute, Nebraska Department of Education, Project Harmony and 1184 teams.

Note: this is not an exhaustive list.

## **(10) WHY IS SCHOOL ATTENDANCE SO CRITICAL?**

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School attendance problems are significant indicators of child and adolescent health and development. Research reveals that truancy is associated with poor health outcomes. Youth with limited attendance and low educational attainment are more likely to feel that they lack social support and that they have limited control over their lives. Problematically, this perception of lack of control and social support is associated with difficulty adhering to healthy behaviors, increased depression, and biological realities such as increased inflammation and reduced immune system function

Further, as the criminological literature details, absenteeism has been shown to be a risk factor for drug use, youth delinquency, adult criminality, suicide attempts and employment problems.



GOALS works to prevent these ill effects of absenteeism by providing an intensive case management system for students when their home and school have exceeded their resources. GOALS collaborates with students and their families by providing evidence-based assessments and service plans that identify household areas of strength and needs.

Via a wraparound approach, GOALS services are individualized and unique based on the needs of the student and family being served. Therefore, various need factors across individual, family, education, and peer settings are addressed. Most notably, GOALS aims to decrease truancy, the achievement gap, youth violence, and prevent students from entering the school-to-prison pipeline.



# Questions?

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THANK YOU



## FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS



**1192** Approximately how many students and their family members were impacted by GOALS this fiscal year

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



Lift Up Sarpy, Omaha 360, School based attendance Coalition (SBAC), School Based Mental Health Coalition, JDAI Collaborative, 1184 MDT for Missing & Runaway Youth Treatment Team Meeting, 1184 MDT for Ed Neglect Team Meeting, Raise Me to Read, Child & Youth Committee, P2P, Unite Us, and many more!

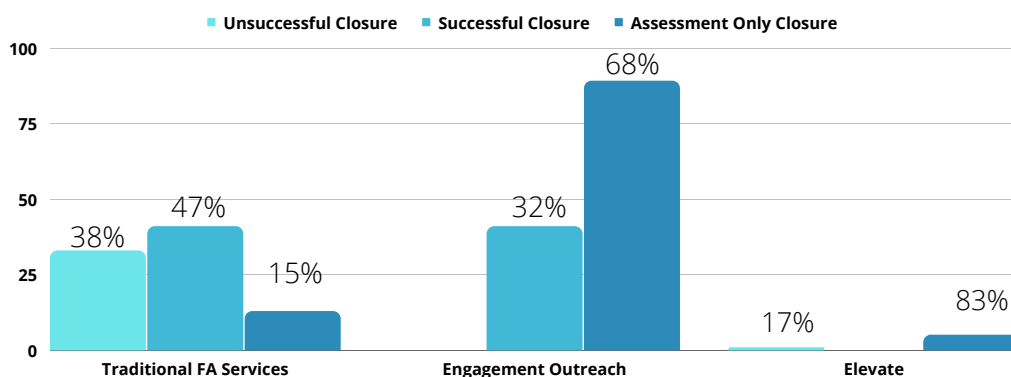
## TRENDS FROM 2021-22

- On average, students have missed 38% of school at referral\*

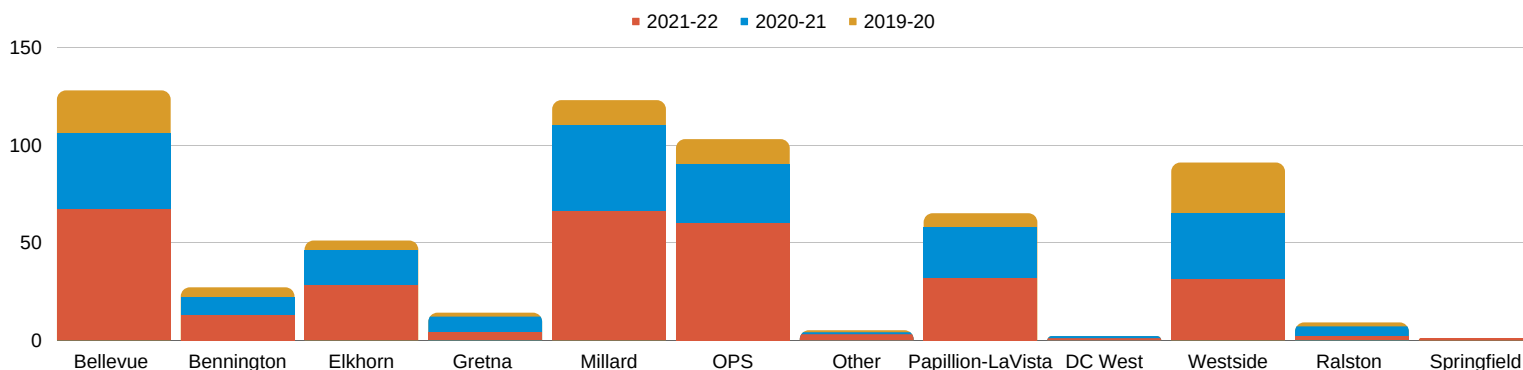
\*10% is considered chronically absent

- 55% increase in referrals compared to last year
- 70% of families are at or below the poverty line
- 57% of students have increased attendance

## CLOSURES BY PROGRAM



## FAMILIES BY DISTRICT



## NOTES FROM STUDENTS AND CAREGIVER SURVEY

what did you like best about the GOALS Center?

- Setting goals and figuring out how to help - resources - keeping everyone informed
- Student was their #1 priority and a lot of communication with the family
- It instilled confidence in my son and was empowering. It helped him realize how awesome he really is again!
- Helped me out, and really focused on my problems and ways to fix them
- I like my goals person the best and the way she went about showing me it's important for going to school.

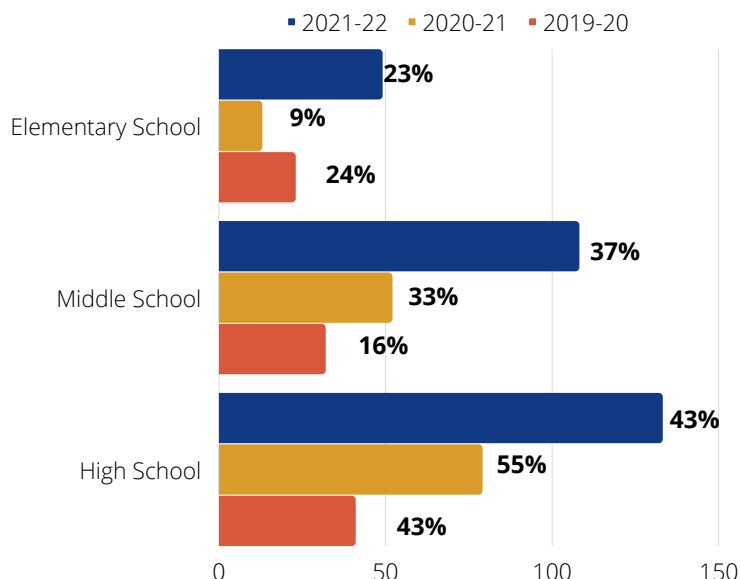
## GEOGRAPHICAL FAMILY DATA

zip code #of families

68111	18
68007	14
68046	17
68137	17
68022	17
68005	27
68123	29

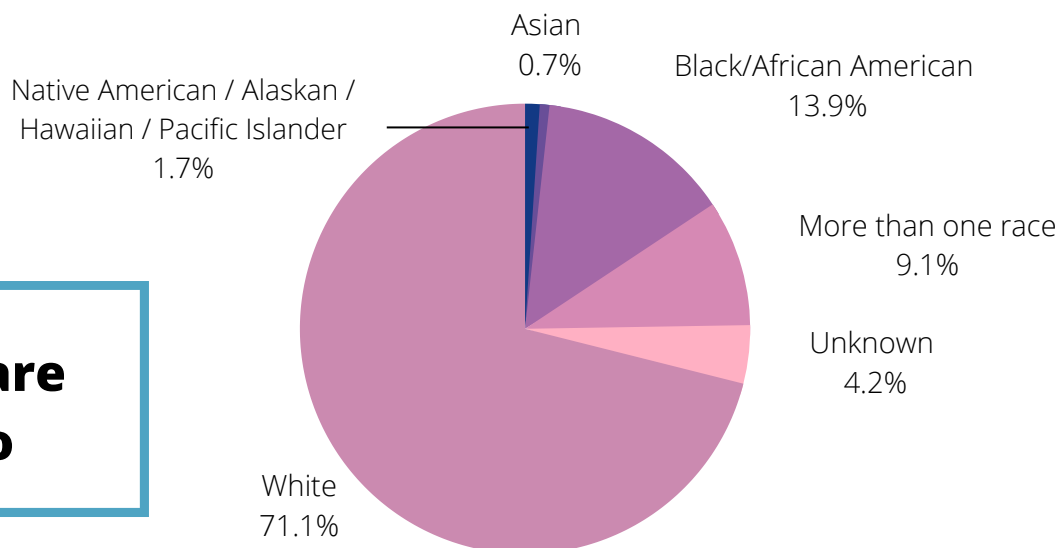
**38  
unique  
zip  
codes**

## GRADE LEVELS (FYTD)



## STUDENTS BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

**24% of students are  
Hispanic/Latino**



## 2022-23 EXPANSION AND GROWTH

- Adding more staff to increase capacity
- New programming
  - Traditional Family Advocate Program
  - Engagement Outreach Program
  - Elevate
  - Native American Family Advocate Program
- Increasing partnerships with Omaha Public Schools
- Developed Key Performance Indicators and Program Outcomes
- Diversified funding

1612 North 24th Street  
Omaha, Nebraska 68110  
Phone: 402.964.2405

Chief Executive Officer  
Dr. Bradley Ekwerekwu

#### **COORDINATING COUNCIL OFFICERS**

Chair  
Allen Hager

Vice Chair  
Brian Thommes

Secretary  
Carol Hahn

Treasurer  
Mark Hoeger

#### **COUNCIL MEMBERS**

**Achievement Subcouncil 1**  
Clarice Jackson  
Brian Thommes

**Achievement Subcouncil 2**  
Carol Hahn  
Nathan Zingg

**Achievement Subcouncil 3**  
Mark Hoeger  
Melinda Kozel

**Achievement Subcouncil 4**  
Allen Hager  
Lisa Schoenberger

**Achievement Subcouncil 5**  
Erik Servellon  
Tonya Ward

**Achievement Subcouncil 6**  
Andrew Brock  
Tim Hall

#### **MISSION**

*Together with school districts  
and community organizations as  
partners, we demonstrate, share  
and implement more effective  
practices to measurably improve  
educational outcomes for  
children and families in poverty.*

#### **VISION**

*That all children within the  
Learning Community achieve  
academic success without  
regard to social or economic  
circumstance.*

[LearningCommunityDS.org](http://LearningCommunityDS.org)



## LEARNING COMMUNITY CENTER STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

### **STRATEGIC DIRECTION #1: CREATE RELATIONSHIPS**

1. A LCCC and Staff survey has been distributed to measure value perception, properly equipped perception, and communication perception.
2. Program evaluation is on-going, and results from these measurements will be presented by MMI at a later LCCC meeting.

### **STRATEGIC DIRECTION #2: CREATE PROGRAMMING**

\*Results from all data will be presented by MMI at a later LCCC meeting.

1. Our 2-Gen programming continues to thrive in our North and South centers. Participant numbers are being monitored and analyzed consistently.
2. Childcare provider training remains consistent through the South Center partnership/grant opportunity.
3. Program equity has not begun yet. We are still meeting to discuss accurate and appropriate rubrics for measurement, and more information will be available at a future Strategic Plan update.
4. Targeted communications efforts have amplified tremendously. Our work with Emspace + Lovgren has created significant momentum. A formal report will be shared with the LCCC in an upcoming meeting regarding specific engagement efforts.

### **STRATEGIC DIRECTION #3: CREATE OPPORTUNITIES**

1. The Learning Community Foundation remains poised to raise funds for specific programming items. Dialogue is open and anticipatory of future needs.
2. No new projects/initiatives are in process at this time.
3. Outreach efforts remain a priority, and our marketing strategy reflects this effort. Currently, there are no threatening legislative efforts to impact the LCDS.