



nebraska early childhood
COLLABORATIVE

2017 Annual Report

nebraskaeearly.org

Mission Statement

The Nebraska Early Childhood Collaborative (NECC) is committed to increasing access to sustainable, high-quality early learning opportunities for children in Nebraska and their families. Our work to achieve our mission includes providing business services to child care providers, promoting best practices through training and technical assistance, and serving as a backbone organization for community collaborations that benefit families with young children.

About the Collaborative

NECC is a consortium of leading early childhood organizations that operate within a lean but robust shared services organizational structure that facilitates knowledge sharing and cost reduction. Our early childhood organizational partners include Educare Omaha, Educare Lincoln, and the Omaha Early Learning Centers.

In addition to being part of our shared services structure, the Omaha Early Learning Centers (OELC) is also our Early Head Start-Child Care partner. The OELC at Skinner and Gateway Elementary are community-based child care programs that operate infant and toddler classrooms on or adjacent to elementary school campuses as the first phase of a birth-to-five continuum. Early Head Start services are delivered through a partnership between the Collaborative, our child care partners, and community-based social service providers. NECC-supported sites boast single-age classrooms, comprehensive family engagement programs, highly-qualified staff, and on-site healthcare professionals.

NECC extends its reach into the broader child care community through the Nebraska Early Childhood Exchange, a resource website built specifically for Nebraska's child care providers to promote best practices, offer cost-savings, and supply them with countless administrative and classroom resources. To learn more about the Exchange, visit nebraskaexchange.org.

Message from the CEO



This year marked an important milestone for us at NECC as we completed our third year as an Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grantee. Through our partnership with the Omaha Early Learning Centers, we have made great strides toward our goal of providing access to high-quality early learning opportunities to all of Nebraska's babies.

NECC is also increasing the quality of early learning opportunities in Nebraska in other important ways, including implementing a comprehensive orientation and onboarding program, providing enhanced family engagement activities and parent education opportunities, and launching a substitute teacher pool to support the centers we serve. As I reflect on the two years I have spent leading the way at the Collaborative, I see great progress. But even more exciting than the progress we have made, is the potential the Collaborative holds to impact many more child care providers across Nebraska.

In addition to continuing to work to strengthen and grow our Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership, NECC looks forward to extending our business services and professional development opportunities to new providers in 2018. At NECC, we are excited about the future and being part of doing great things for Nebraska's babies.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shannon Cotsoradis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Shannon Cotsoradis
CEO, Nebraska Early Childhood Collaborative



Population Served

Through the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership, NECC supports Omaha's highest-risk children including the two zip codes with the highest numbers of young children in poverty in the state of Nebraska. The Collaborative brings Early Head Start services to these children by enhancing its partners' program quality and efficiency.

Gateway		Skinner	
72	EHS Children	88	EHS Children
13%	African-American/Black	85%	African-American/Black
77%	Hispanic/ Latino	8%	Hispanic/Latino
5%	Multiple/Other	7%	Multiple/Other
37%	Female	47%	Female
63%	Male	53%	Male
100%	Free & Reduced Lunch	100%	Free & Reduced Lunch
11%	Verified for Special Education	12%	Verified for Special Education



Child Health Services

A dedication to preventative health services and promotion of well-being are cornerstones of NECC's commitment to comprehensive services. Ongoing support and services provide each child and family with high-quality learning environments that continue to promote health, safety, well-being, and success in school.

The Collaborative employs two full-time Health Coordinators and a full-time Mental Health Specialist who conduct regular screenings and oversee the implementation of individualized health plans to address children's health care needs.

Child Health Services

Families Served	155
Children with Health Insurance	98.9%
Children With A Medical Home At the End of Enrollment	99.4%
Children Received Medical Services	51.6%
Children with A Dental Home	94.9%
Infants and Toddlers Received Preventative Dental Services	76.9%
Sought Mental Health Services Outside of OELC	0%
Percent of Children with IFSP or IEP	10.7%

School Readiness

The Collaborative works with our child care partners to establish school readiness goals across the five essential domains. The approach used to measure student outcomes is aligned with Teaching Strategies GOLD. The following goals were established for those domains:

APPROACHES TO LEARNING:

- Child manages actions and behavior with support of familiar adult
- Child develops the ability to show persistence in actions and behavior
- Child demonstrates emerging initiative in interactions, experiences, and explorations

93.5% of children met or exceeded these goals.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Child learns to use adults as a resource to meet needs
- Child shows interest in, interacts with, and develops personal relationships with other children
- Child recognizes and interprets emotions of others with the support of familiar adults
- Child manages emotions with the support of familiar adults
- Child shows confidence in own abilities through relationships with others

92.4% of children met or exceeded these goals.

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT

- Child attends to, understands, and responds to communication and language from others
- Child communicates needs and wants non-verbally and by using language
- Child understands an increasing number of words used in communication with others
- Child handles books and relates them to their stories or information

93.7% of children met or exceeded these goals.

COGNITION

- Child uses understanding of causal relationship to act on social and physical environments.
- Child learns to use a variety of strategies in solving problems
- Child uses spatial awareness to understand objects and their movement in space
- Child uses matching and sorting of objects or people to understand similar and different characteristics
- Child observes and imitates sounds, words, gestures, actions, and behaviors

94.9% of children met or exceeded these goals.

PERCEPTUAL, MOTOR, AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

- Child demonstrates effective and efficient use of large muscles to explore the environment
- Child uses sensory information and body awareness to understand how their body relates to the environment
- Child uses hands for exploration, play, and daily routines

96.1% of children met or exceeded these goals.

Family Engagement

Kindergarten teachers report that fewer than half of children from low-income homes are, “ready to succeed in school.” Effective parent engagement programs can help close the gap in school readiness associated with family income. NECC implements strategies at the Omaha Early Learning Centers that promote positive parenting practices, enhance parent-child relationships, and promote home learning activities to improve child outcomes.

- Family Engagement Specialists offer families the opportunity to participate in Positive Solutions for Families, PIWI (Parents Interacting with Infants), and Circle of Security classes throughout the year.
- Newsletters are distributed on a monthly basis which contain activities families can do at home with their children to develop school readiness goals.
- Monthly Happy Hours are held in the classroom or program-wide and include a taste of food from the same kitchen the children are served from.
- Friday Morning Cafes offer a different education opportunity to families each week to include community resources, health and nutrition, child development and child guidance techniques.
- Monthly Read and Play opportunities provide families with a book with an activity to share with their children and develop a home library.
- Two Family Engagement Specialists are Certified Car Seat Technicians and provided all families with new car seats over the past year.
- A family resource room was developed at the Omaha Early Learning Center at Skinner to provide families with a variety of services, programs, and activities.



Professional Development

In accordance with our goal of promoting best practices through training and technical assistance, NECC has implemented a variety of new strategies, including a two-week orientation and onboarding program for new employees. The curriculum meets all Nebraska licensing requirements and includes many of the Head Start 90-day requirements. All new employees receive the mandatory Safe With You training as well as ample time to get accustomed to the routines and new teams during the 36-hour shadowing portion of onboarding.

In the last year, NECC has supported eight Associate Teachers through the process of obtaining their CDA Credential, by offering training in the eight subject areas of CDA, and by the end of July 2017, had 12 T.E.A.C.H. scholars on staff.

Finances

EARLY HEAD START

January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2017

REVENUES

	Budget	Actual
Early Head Start – Operating	\$2,705,185	\$2,705,185
Early Head Start – T&TA	275,078	228,395
Non-Federal Share	745,066	733,395
TOTAL REVENUES	3,725,329	3,666,975

EXPENSES

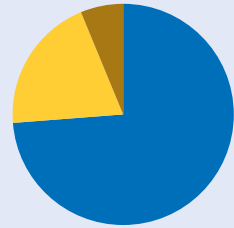
	Budget	Actual
Personnel & Fringe Benefits	1,110,176	1,104,003
Travel/Training	100,898	65,389
Supplies	93,549	71,596
Contractual	1,661,015	1,661,015
Other	759,691	764,971
TOTAL EXPENSES	3,725,329	3,666,975



Federal Monitoring Review

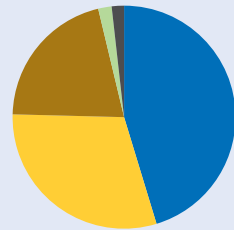
In compliance with its Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grant, NECC participated in its second Federal Monitoring Review. Satisfactory progress was achieved on all performance outcomes and no areas for concern were identified during the review. The program performance review is used to determine how NECC and its partners are working together to plan and provide high-quality services in accordance with EHS standards and covers the following areas: Implementation of Services, Fiscal Management, Ensuring the Health and Safety of Children, Providing Quality Learning Environments, Engaging Families and Communities, and Program Management and Quality Improvement.

Actual Revenues



- Early Head Start – Operating
- Non-Federal Share
- Early Head Start – T&TA

Actual Expenditures



- Contractual
- Personnel & Fringe Benefits
- Other
- Supplies
- Travel/Training





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