

You are receiving this email because of your interest in early child care work in Nebraska.

# NEBRASKA PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT



Quarterly Newsletter - May 2019

## What is the Preschool Development Grant (PDG)?

Nebraska was one of 46 states/territories to receive a notification of the Preschool Development Birth-Five Initial Grant Award from the Administration for Children and Families in December 2018. Its purpose is to encourage more efficient use of federal, local, and private resources to align and strengthen the delivery of existing early childhood services.

**Project Title:** [Elevating Nebraska's Early Care and Education](#)

**Grantee:** Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services - Nicole Vint, Child Care and Development Fund Administrator

**Vision:** Our vision is for families to have quality early childhood options to choose among, supported by strong community leadership and a well-aligned state system.

**Goal:** Nebraska's goal in the Preschool Development Grant – aligning state systems to equip local communities to deliver services, resulting in parents and families choosing options that support their child's healthy development – requires that the needs assessment address not only state level data and infrastructure but also local and regional data.



### Activities and Project Leads:

- Project Coordination - Nebraska Children
- Needs Assessment - Buffett Early Childhood Institute
  - Family Child Care Landscape Study - University of Nebraska Medical Center
- Strategic Plan - Buffett Early Childhood Institute
- Program Performance Evaluation Plan - Buffett Early Childhood Institute
- Maximizing Parental Choice:
  - Parent Information Playbook/Learning Begins at Birth- Nebraska Children & First Five Nebraska
  - Getting Ready - University of Nebraska-Lincoln
  - Ready Rosie - Nebraska Children
- Sharing Best Practices
  - All Our Kin - Nebraska Early Childhood Collaborative
  - Curriculum Alignment and High Quality Instructional Tools - Nebraska Department of Education
  - NAESP Early Childhood Principal Leadership - Nebraska Department of Education
  - NDE Administrators' Day Conference- Nebraska Department of Education
  - Coaching Infrastructure- Nebraska Department of Education & Nebraska Children
- Improving Quality

- o Community Assessment Tool- Nebraska Department of Education
- o Step Up to Quality Revisions- Nebraska Department of Education & Department of Health and Human Services
- Communications & Dissemination Plan- Nebraska Children & Buffett Early Childhood Institute

## Learn More About PDG

### PDG Update

*by the Buffett Early Childhood Institute*

The Buffett Early Childhood Institute at the University of Nebraska is working with partners to conduct a statewide needs assessment of the availability, access, and quality of existing early childhood services, particularly those that serve Nebraska's most vulnerable children. The needs assessment will engage families, early care and education providers, community stakeholders, and local experts to build a better understanding of strengths, challenges, and opportunities to promote healthy development for all Nebraska's young children.

#### Needs Assessment

The needs assessment has begun with a review of over 20 existing reports about early care and education in Nebraska. Published by several public and private partners, the reports analyzed many facets of Nebraska's ECCE system over recent years. The reports provide a rich perspective on regional and statewide issues in Nebraska's ECCE system and reveal several information gaps, which will be addressed through the PDG needs assessment and strategic plan.

As part of the needs assessment, the Buffett Institute has partnered with UNL's Bureau of Sociological Research to conduct the state's largest ever survey of families with young children, and a survey of all registered childcare and preschool providers in the state. Several state stakeholders and content experts provided feedback on these surveys to ensure that they collect information that will be relevant and actionable. 90,000 families across the state will receive the PDG family survey – Focus on Nebraska Families - in the mail by June 1. This survey will provide valuable information about the characteristics of Nebraska's young children, the types of care they receive, and their families' perceptions of the quality and availability of childcare, education, and health-related services. The provider leadership survey asks leaders (owners and directors) of early childhood programs to share information about the children they serve; the types of care they provide; program goals, challenges and quality indicators; as well as collaboration with community partners and participation in regional and statewide ECE initiatives. Watch for more information about these surveys on social media and please promote participation within your networks.



In the coming weeks, the Buffett Institute will also conduct an online survey of early childhood teachers and caregivers and begin conducting interviews with a variety of service providers and agency personnel. Focus groups with families and a statewide survey of key informants will follow later this summer.

The ultimate goal of the needs assessment is to guide the creation of Nebraska's strategic plan, which will be written by the Buffett Institute in collaboration with stakeholders across the state. Leaders from NDE, NDHHS, Nebraska Children, and the Buffett Institute have begun meeting to discuss the strategic planning process and ensure alignment with ongoing efforts.

## Strategic Plan

A Strategic Planning Advisory Team (SPAT) met in February to provide input on the needs assessment and will continue to be actively involved in interpreting findings from the needs assessment and outlining the strategic plan. The next SPAT meetings will be held on August 7 in Kearney and August 8 in Omaha. All who wish to contribute to the PDG strategic plan are encouraged to attend. Please save the dates and watch for more further details in upcoming PDG newsletters.

**Please forward this email to others who may be interested in learning more about Nebraska's Preschool Development Grant work.**

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## PDG Partners

Nebraska's PDG work is led by Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (NDHHS) under the authority of Governor Pete Ricketts, in partnership with the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE), Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, the University of Nebraska system, and many other partners.

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