

Wraparound Social and Community Services Programs

SNAPSHOT

Program:

Lincoln Community Learning Centers (CLCs)

District: Lincoln Public Schools**Location:** Lincoln, Neb.**Grades:** K-12**Enrollment:** 5,326 in Lincoln CLC schools, including 2,369 CLC regular attendees**Free/reduced-price lunch:** 42% of district; 67% of CLC attendees**ELL:** 7% of district; 10% of CLC attendees

Collaborating to serve student learning and the community

Lincoln Community Learning Centers

Lincoln Public Schools

Lincoln, Nebraska

Founded in 2001 by the local school board, the Lincoln Community Learning Center (CLC) initiative was inspired by the idea that education is a community-wide responsibility. The program brings together community partners to focus on student learning, youth development, and strengthening families and neighborhoods. CLCs provide support and services to students, families, and neighborhoods through collaborative partnerships that offer services at 25 local school sites in the Lincoln district.

CLCs provide low-cost, well supervised before- and afterschool activities and care. They also offer weekend and summer enrichment opportunities for children, youth, families, and neighborhood residents. Funding for the initiative comes from a 21st Century Community Learning Center (Cohort 6) U.S. Department of Education Grant, the Lincoln Public Schools Foundation, and matching resources from local funders and community-based organizations.

How the program works

Before- and afterschool enrichment programs at each center range from cultural learning and talent-building activities to academic work. Services may also include parent engagement and support programs, early childhood programs, recreation, summer activities, health services, housing assistance, counseling, career development, and lifelong learning opportunities.

Each of the 25 CLCs is unique in its offerings and responds to the particular needs of its community as well as the capacities of partnering agencies. The 10 lead agencies—Cedars Youth Services, Family Services, Lincoln Housing Authority, Lincoln Parks and Recreation, YMCA, Clyde Malone Center, Northeast Family Center, Williard Community, Boys & Girls Club, and Lincoln Public Schools—are assigned to various sites where they help to manage and deliver services. The number of sites managed is based on the organization's capacity. For example, Family Services manages five sites. The YMCA and Lincoln Parks and Recreation each manage four sites, and the Lincoln Housing Authority manages one site.

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The CLC initiative uses leadership groups to mobilize and support its activities at the school-based Community Learning Centers:

- ▶ The CLC Leadership Council guides the initiative's development and long-term financing. The Leadership Council's Executive Committee includes the chair, the mayor of Lincoln, the superintendent, and local funders.
- ▶ Each CLC site has a School Neighborhood Advisory Committee (SNAC), which is responsible for assisting in the planning, communication, oversight, and services of the site. Each SNAC reflects the culture and diversity of its school neighborhood. Each includes broad representation and active participation from parents, youth, neighborhood residents, educators, community-based organizations, and local service providers.
- ▶ Subgroups focus on specific issues such as evaluation, communications and public engagement, identification of best practices, professional development for the CLC workforce, and family engagement.
- ▶ The CLC Neighborhood Action Team works in partnership with the Mayor's Stronger Safer Neighborhoods Initiative to identify resources and strategies to support community development.

Evidence of effectiveness

The Continuous Improvement Process Data Snapshot for Lincoln CLC schools in 2010-2011 reports program ratings well above the threshold for quality in all six categories: administration; relationships; family partnerships; school and community collaboration; environment, safety, and wellness of students; and programming. Ratings are based on the Observations for Quality, Nebraska State Evaluation for 21st Century Programs, developed at the Monroe-Meyer Institute, University of Nebraska Medical Center. Based on

observation of each program site, the overall score for Lincoln CLCs was 4.30 on a scale of 1 to 5.

The 2010-2011 Data Snapshot also shows improved student behavior in all categories: turning in homework on time, attending class regularly, being attentive in class, getting along well with others, and more. Assessments are based on teacher observations over the course of the school year.

In 2010-2011 classroom teacher survey outcomes, 71 percent of students enrolled in Lincoln CLCs met or exceeded state writing standards; 74 percent met or exceeded state reading standards; and 84 percent met or exceeded the mathematics standards. This survey is completed in the spring of each year and is based on teacher perceptions of student progress and proficiency. The local evaluator is currently completing an analysis of CLC student performance and scores on state assessments in reading and writing.

Exemplary practices

Working with a diverse range of partners: A wide range of organizations have come together to support CLCs as places where families, school staff, and other partners work together. Programs are well-organized, clearly connected, and easy to access. Working with 10 different lead agencies allows a high level of before- and afterschool services. At Elliott Elementary School, for example, about 130 students receive before- and afterschool care each day, donated by the YMCA. "In-kind and direct support from these organizations is essential to the progress of the sites," says Lincoln CLC co-coordinator Lea Ann Johnson. Supervisors of each site meet bimonthly to share information and plan together.

Tailoring services to local community needs and concerns: Establishing a School Neighborhood Advisory Committee that represents the local community helps to ensure that the program is responsive to those it will serve.

Family-School-Community Partnerships 2.0

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Tying services with school improvement goals: Each CLC site comes up with its own annual plan, which is closely tied with school improvement goals. CLC activities support CLC initiative goals as well as school improvement plan goals.

Outlook

The initiative is supported by a blend of federal, state, and nonprofit funding. "We work collectively to braid these funds together," says co-coordinator Johnson. The goal is not to depend too much on a single funding source or sector.

Association perspective

In 2009, the Lincoln Education Association (LEA), with support from NEA, joined with the United Way, the Malone Institute, Lincoln Public Schools, and the Lincoln CLCs to form a partnership on family, schools, and community. Resulting community conversations led to a focus on student transitions between preschool, elementary school, middle school, and high school. Some of the conversations drew up to 300 parents.

There's great synergy between the Association and the CLCs, and LEA President Jenni Absalon is proud of the collaboration: "The Lincoln Community Learning Centers provide an invaluable resource serving families and schools in our community. They are great partners focusing on the needs of the whole child, so students are better equipped to reach their full learning potential."

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

NEA Contact: Roberta E. Hantgan
Manager, NEA Public Engagement Project
(202) 822-7721; rhantgan@nea.org

Local contacts

Jenni Absalon, president,
Lincoln Education Association
402-489-7500; jenni.absalon@nsea.org

LEA website: www.lincolneducationassociation.org/

Lea Ann Johnson, co-coordinator,
Lincoln Community Learning Centers
402-436-1964; Ljohns2@lps.org

Cathie Petsch, co-coordinator,
Lincoln Community Learning Centers
402-436-1965; cpetsch@lps.org

Related information

Report card: <http://reportcard.education.ne.gov>

Lincoln CLC website: www.lincolnclc.org

U.S. Education Department's 21st Century Community Learning Centers website: www2.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html



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