



Lincoln Community Learning Centers

Initiative Overview

Lincoln's Community Learning Centers represent a major structural shift based on our community and society's needs. CLCs are about the process of people and programs working together to create a culture of learning that serves our entire community. Currently CLCs in Lincoln are funded through support from the Lincoln Public Schools Foundation, 21st Century Community Learning Center (Cohort 6) U.S. Department of Education Grant and matching resources from local funders and community based organizations. The CLC initiative targets 15 schools to develop and implement safe, drug free, supervised and cost effective before and after school, weekend, and summer enrichment opportunities for children, youth, families and neighborhood residents.

Vision

Children, youth, families and neighborhood residents will have improved learning outcomes, increased enrichment opportunities and accessible support services because of strong school/community partnerships that are connected in meaningful ways.

Goals

The Lincoln CLC initiative has three primary goals:

- Improved student learning and youth development
- Strengthen and support families
- Strengthen and engage neighborhoods

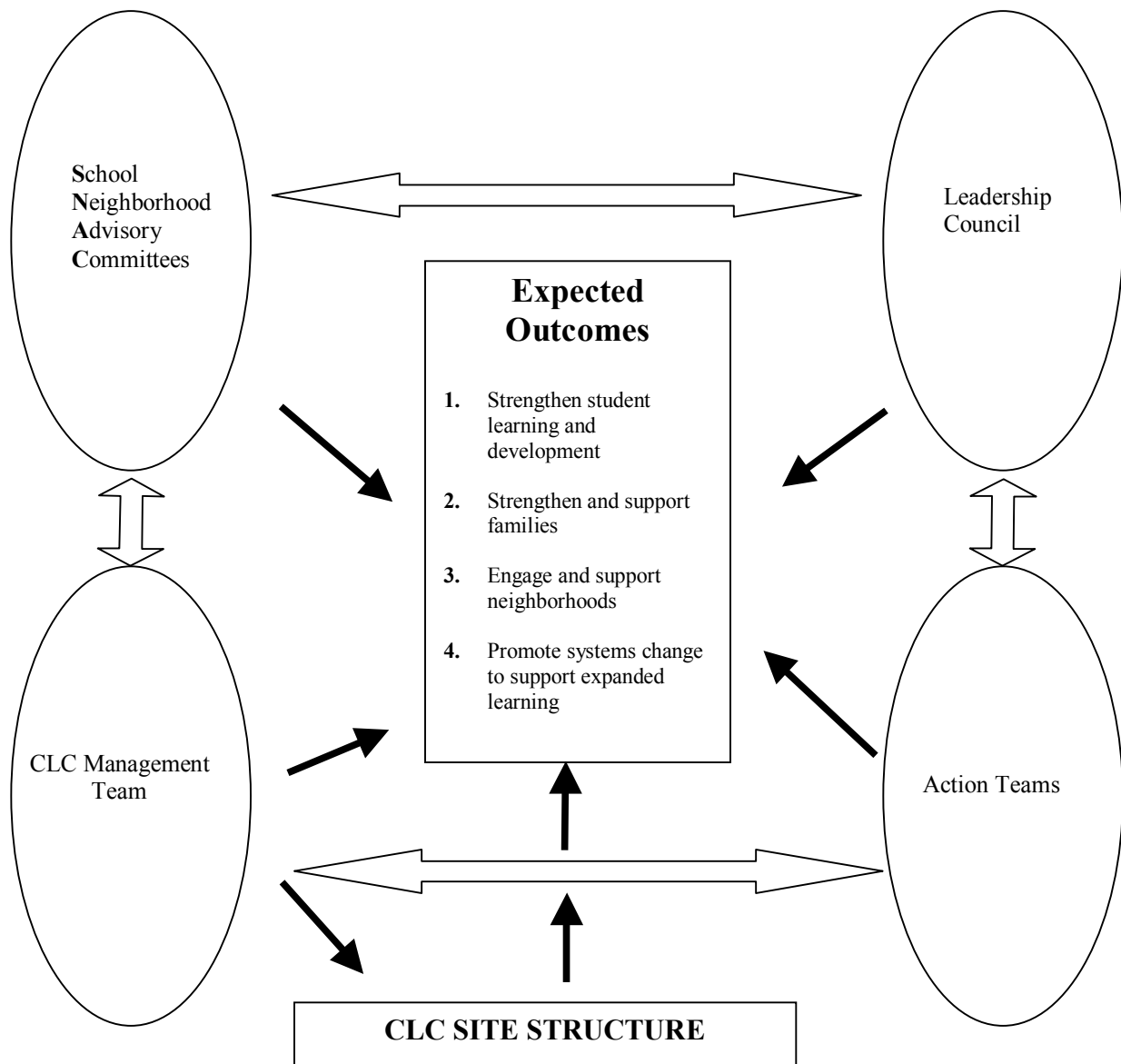
Objectives

The leadership staff of the CLC initiative works with community partners to achieve the following key objectives

- To increase academic achievement of students in math and reading.
- To provide students access to positive, enriching activities during out-of-school hours, helping them to avoid substance abuse and violence while building personal, social and leadership skills.
- To serve as a resource for parents and other community members to improve literacy skills, parenting skills, family well being and to develop computer technology skills.
- To provide academic, social, and family support to students transitioning from elementary to middle school, from middle school to high school and beyond.
- To increase capacity of schools, staff, parents, students and community partners to plan, implement and sustain neighborhood based community learning center activities.

Leadership Structure

The CLC initiative is grounded in the belief that relationships and collaborations are the cornerstones that create positive systems change. CLC partners also believe that life-long learning is a shared responsibility of our community's residents. The schools cannot do it alone. Lincoln's CLC initiative is an innovative approach designed to link the community, neighborhoods, schools, and people of all ages, backgrounds and walks of life to achieve our stated goals and outcomes. What makes the CLC initiative different is the core value that education is a community-wide responsibility and the emphasis on building capacity within neighborhoods, community based organizations, and other systems to produce sustained improvements and results. The CLC initiative utilizes five leadership groups to mobilize and support the day-to-day activities at the neighborhood based community learning centers.



Leadership Council

This group of diverse community stakeholders has the primary role and responsibility of guiding the development and long term financing of Lincoln's Community Learning Center initiative. The members of the Leadership Council are committed to developing Lincoln's capacity to implement shared partnerships and to mobilize resources which ensure Community Learning Centers are a fundamental part of the fabric of our community.

School Neighborhood Advisory Committee (SNAC)

SNACs include broad representation and active participation from parents, youth, neighborhood residents, educators, community based organizations and service providers. Each CLC site or pair of sites has a SNAC, which is responsible to assist in the planning, communication and oversight for their neighborhood based CLC and its service activity. SNACs must reflect the uniqueness and diversity of each school and its surrounding neighborhood.

Action Teams

Community Learning Center Action Teams are formed around specific issues related to the CLC initiative. The use of Action Teams promotes cross discipline work as team members from diverse backgrounds and organizations work together to develop common understanding and shared practices that promote collaborative efforts around the CLC initiative. Currently the CLC Action Teams include:

- **Evaluation Action Team**
The evaluation action team is responsible to assist with the design of the evaluation process for the Community Learning Center initiative. The team has four primary roles 1) providing of input into the evaluation plan, 2) providing of input into any revisions to the plan over the years, 3) receiving the results and findings of the evaluation and 4) interpreting the data, drawing conclusions and making recommendations for program changes or improvements as a result of the data. The evaluation plan has been designed using a participatory process which includes a number of stakeholders to the CLC initiative.
- **Leadership Development Action Team**
The leadership development action team is working to design a variety of opportunities which will help engage and promote future leaders within the School Neighborhood Advisory Committees. Strong leadership at the neighborhood level is the cornerstone of the initiative. Members of this team recognize and support the understanding that leaders emerge in a variety of ways. Finding ways to nurture and support our grass-roots leaders is at the heart of this teams work.
- **Promising/Best Practices Action Team**
The promising/best practices team is responsible to determine what practices or underlying principles drive the CLC development and implementation. It is believed that by identifying "promising practices" CLCs are more likely to have a greater positive impact on participants, more cohesiveness among service providers, better decision making in alignment with goals, and richer programs and services with more purposeful connections.

CLC Management Team

The CLC management team is comprised of partners from Lincoln Public Schools, the City, the University of Nebraska, and the Nebraska Children and Family Foundation. This team is responsible to engage a broad base of community stakeholders which will promote success of the initiative at a variety of levels. The management team develops partnerships and leverages community resources to ensure each CLC site has the necessary resources and support to achieve their site goals. Through shared leadership this team models and is committed to strong connections between schools and community, collaborative partnerships, respect for diversity and neighborhood strengths, results, and long-term sustainability.

Site Structure

The Lincoln CLC initiative is currently serving 15 schools. This includes 12 elementary schools and 3 middle schools. We have paired the sites together based on geographic location. Each pair of sites has a site supervisor who is hired by the designated Lead Agency. The site supervisor is essential to the successful implementation of CLC activities. The site supervisor oversees and manages the delivery of an array of programs and activities provided by local agency partners. The site supervisor ensures that all services are meeting the annual plans as outlined by the SNAC for their respective sites. The site supervisor works very closely with after-school providers and school personnel to ensure that all programs are fully integrated and connected to the day curriculum.

Five Lead Agencies (Cedars Youth Services, Family Service, Lincoln Parks and Recreation, Lincoln Public Schools – Title I, and the YMCA) have been identified to assist with promoting and implementing a successful CLC to their assigned sites. The Lead Agency employs the site supervisor in partnership with the schools. Each lead agency brings a diverse set of skills and capacities which are aligned with the overall vision and goals of the CLC initiative. The Lead Agencies have demonstrated on-going success in delivering a variety of program activities through the use of effective partnership.

