

Berea College Promise Neighborhood Memorandum of Understanding

This document represents a memorandum of understanding signed by the following partnering organizations (partners) committed to a collaborative effort with Berea College to plan and implement a Promise Neighborhood program in Clay, Jackson and Owsley Counties in rural Kentucky: Clay County School System, Jackson County School System, Owsley County School System, the Cumberland Valley Regional Health Department, Eastern Kentucky Child Care Coalition and Save the Children. Berea College is the lead applicant and shall serve as the fiscal agent for the Promise Neighborhood.

The Promise Neighborhood is defined as the three contiguous counties of Clay, Jackson and Owsley. All youth within the neighborhood shall be served and the three school systems within the Neighborhood are essential to the project.

Our theory of action for this project is that a well-coordinated collaboration of partners working with parents, implementing well-designed programs and closely monitoring services will positively impact the lives of children. We believe that by collectively engaging in this intense effort to promote academic achievement; foster physical, social and emotional well-being; encourage parental engagement and effective parenting; build healthy habits and environments; and nurture productive citizens, we will be able to create and sustain a Promise Neighborhood community in which all children can thrive physically, educationally, socially and emotionally in preparation for productive, enjoyable lives as adults.

We recognize creating transformative change in our Promise Neighborhood is an effort and in this effort there will be no room for excuses as good results will matter, not good intentions. We see this as a platform for exploring and learning more about the long-term effectiveness of specific academic, health and social service interventions and practices and the systemic and structural problems need to be addressed to create a true community of opportunity accessible to all children in a given area.

The partners and Berea College are in agreement that the project will be framed by specific indicators, as found in the Implementation Plan, in connection with the following outcomes:

- Children have access to high-quality early learning experiences;
- Children enter kindergarten ready to learn;
- Students are proficient in core academic subjects;
- Students successfully transition from middle grades to high school;
- Youth graduate from high school;
- High school graduates obtain a postsecondary degree, certification, or credential;
- Students are healthy;
- Students feel safe at school and in their community;

- Students live in stable communities;
- Family and community members support learning in Promise Neighborhood schools;
- Students have access to 21st Century learning tools;
- Students attend effective schools; and
- Children and youth experience and participate actively in the arts and humanities.

The partners and Berea College further agree to implement a continuum of solutions consisting of programs, policies, practices, services, systems and/or supports that are aligned with the desired outcomes and will result in improvements in the indicators we have established.

The partners and Berea College agree to leverage funding to support the continuum of solutions. Each partner will provide fiscal, in-kind and/or direct support to the Promise Neighborhood initiative. Said fiscal support is documented in the Partner Match forms filed with the Promise Neighborhood Implementation application to the U.S. Department of Education.

The partners and Berea College agree that a continuum of services shall be provided to all public schools within the Promise Neighborhood. The School Districts within the Promise Neighborhood are key partners and agree to plan for the implementation of ambitious, rigorous and comprehensive interventions to improve these schools that support each District's school intervention model as described in the Race to the Top notice.

The partners and Berea College agree to collaboratively develop a data-sharing plan such that evidence suggesting the effectiveness of any solution will be readily available for the purpose of assessment and evaluation. This data-sharing plan will be designed so it will be possible to track services and impact to individual children as well as sub-groups of children. The data-sharing plan will enable the Promise Neighborhood to gauge the effectiveness of services provided to, and educational outcomes of, individual children and their families as well as segmented groups of children and families.

The partners and Berea College agree to actively participate in and support the Promise Neighborhood Management Board. The Management Board, the governance board of the Promise Neighborhood, includes representation from the partners as well as from residents of the Neighborhood. Recognizing that the resident's voice is critical in planning an effective initiative, a minimum of sixty percent of the members of the Management Board will be residents of the Promise Neighborhood. All partners will designate a representative to the Management Board. The Management Board will meet monthly during the first quarter of implementation and every-other-month thereafter.

Upon receipt of funding, Berea College will work with the partners to refine the implementation plan and timeline as well as partner responsibilities. This commitment is effective for the project period, January 1, 2012 – December 31, 2016.

A description of each partner and their specific commitment to this project follows:

Berea College

Berea College is an independent, private college with a history and tradition of “providing educational opportunity primarily for students from Appalachia, black and white, who have great promise and limited economic resources.” Berea College is dedicated to creating service-oriented leaders from Appalachia and to providing service, primarily through education, to economically disadvantaged and underserved youth, teachers and schools in Appalachia.

Berea College’s theory of change for the project is one that is inclusive of all voices within the community and is centered on the recognition of the value of place and culture in community change, and that vests ownership of change within the community.

Berea College has many current activities within the Promise Neighborhood that are aligned with the continuum of solutions. These include:

- An Upward Bound (UB) Math and Science Program which helps students recognize and develop their potential to excel in mathematics and the sciences;
- An Educational Talent Search (ETS) Program which serves low-income and potential first generation college students with academic preparedness;
- A Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness in Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) which prepares high need high school students with college readiness;
- The Berea College Appalachian Fund which supports organizations working to improve the health, education and general welfare of people living in Appalachia;
- An Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) program which provides support and mentoring for at risk youth and their parents; and
- The Brushy Fork Institute which is an outreach program at Berea College that offers leadership training, organizational development workshops and technical assistance to communities working for a better tomorrow.

As the Lead Applicant of the Promise Neighborhood effort, Berea College will serve as the fiscal agent and ensure the coordination of all activities and resources. Berea College commits resources to the Promise Neighborhood as documented in our match form (included in Appendix D). Our financial contribution to the project averages \$235,575 per year, with an average of \$62,062 being private funding.

By signing below, I affirm Berea College’s commitment to the goals of the Promise Neighborhood Program:

Clay County Schools

The vision of Clay County Schools is “ALL students will learn because of what WE do.” Clay County Schools is a rural local education agency serving 3,396 students, 80% of whom qualify for free or reduced school lunches. The system’s theory of change is a strong belief that all stakeholders—students, teachers, staff, parents, businesses and community members—have something to offer in holding all student to high levels of learning.

Clay County Schools have many current activities aligned with the continuum of solutions proposed for the Promise Neighborhood. These include:

- Academic interventionists and college coaches working to support increased academic skills and college readiness among middle and high school students;
- A partnership with Save the Children has established a 21st Century Community Learning Center, offered Early Steps to School Success to very young children and their parents, provided in-school tutoring for nearly 1,000 students and implemented a Book Bag program for four- and five-year olds;
- Implementation of a literacy program, funded by a local foundation, in all primary grades at all elementary schools;
- Participation in a dental program, funded by a local foundation, providing dental wellness services to all elementary schools (one of which had a totally cavity free student body last year); and
- A pedometer program for 4th and 5th graders to encourage physical activity and address the childhood obesity problem.

As a partner of the Promise Neighborhood effort, Clay County Schools will provide access to student-level and school-level data, allow teachers to participate in professional development, open all schools for walk-through data collection activities, provide space for after-school programming, work with other partners to ensure service delivery reaches intended participants, provide space in schools for local staff and provide a representative to serve on the Promise Neighborhood Management Board.

Clay County School System commits resources to the Promise Neighborhood as documented in our match form (included in Appendix D). Our financial contribution to the project averages \$400,000 per year.

By signing below, I affirm Clay County School System’s commitment to the goals of the Promise Neighborhood Program:

Jackson County Schools

The vision/mission of Jackson County Schools is “We, the stakeholders of the Jackson County School District, accept the responsibility to create lifelong learners and successful citizens by providing an exemplary instructional environment characterized by high academic standards and expectations that accommodate the individualized learning needs of all students.” Jackson County Schools is a rural local education agency serving 2,127 students, 79% of whom qualify for free or reduced school lunches. The system’s theory of change is engaging all sectors of the community in having high expectations for students and in working to ensure students meet those expectations.

Jackson County Schools have many current activities aligned with the continuum of solutions proposed for the Promise Neighborhood. These include:

- A college coach at the high school is working to support increased college readiness;
- A joint effort between the agriculture department, the high school food services staff and the youth service center, provides an opportunity for students to produce, process and market food products, such as jam and salsa;
- Participation in a Promise Neighborhood parent engagement pilot has a group of parents and high school students working on school improvement issues for the next two years;
- Participation in professional development pilots to integrate the arts with elementary literacy instruction and to teach middle school content to low literacy students; and
- A partnership with the public library provides computers and internet access for student support and college exploration activities.

As a partner of the Promise Neighborhood effort, Jackson County Schools will provide access to student-level and school-level data, allow teachers to participate in professional development, open all schools for walk-through data collection activities, provide space for after-school programming, work with other partners to ensure service delivery reaches intended participants, provide space in schools for local staff and provide a representative to serve on the Promise Neighborhood Management Board.

Jackson County School System commits resources as documented in our match form (included in Appendix D). Our financial contribution to the project averages \$215,460 per year.

By signing below, I affirm Jackson County School System’s commitment to the goals of the Promise Neighborhood Program:

Owsley County Schools

The vision of Owsley County Schools is “Owsley County Schools, in partnership with the families, students and community, shall ensure the opportunity for a high-quality education for each student in a safe, nurturing environment. The system’s theory of change is to work toward this mission by achieving the following goals:

1. Improve student academic performance on all assessments for all students;
2. Improve staff and student attendance;
3. Ensure a safe, orderly, and clean learning environment;
4. Collaborate with parents and community members and increase community involvement;
5. Improve personal and professional growth of all staff members;
6. Maintain a high level of expectations for student and staff performance; and
7. Positively promote Owsley County Schools through all forms of media.

Owsley County Schools have many current activities aligned with the continuum of solutions proposed for the Promise Neighborhood. These include:

- College coaches at the high school are working to support college readiness;
- A partnership with Save the Children provides a 21st Century Community Learning Center, Early Steps to School Success, in-school tutoring and a Book Bag program;
- A Farm to School grant to bring more locally-grown fresh fruits and vegetables to the school cafeterias;
- Participation in professional development pilots to integrate the arts with elementary literacy instruction and to teach middle school content to low literacy students; and
- A health program that has placed three school nurses in the system.

As a partner of the Promise Neighborhood effort, Owsley County Schools will provide access to student-level and school-level data, allow teachers to participate in professional development, open all schools for walk-through data collection activities, provide space for after-school programming, work with other partners to ensure service delivery reaches intended participants, provide space in schools for local staff and provide a representative to serve on the Promise Neighborhood Management Board.

Owsley County School System commits resources as documented in our match form (included in Appendix D). Our financial contribution to the project averages \$100,000 per year.

By signing below, I affirm Owsley County School System’s commitment to the goals of the Promise Neighborhood Program:

Cumberland Valley Regional Health Department

The Cumberland Valley Regional Health Department's vision is to promote the overall health of the people in our community by controlling communicable diseases, encouraging healthy lifestyles and reducing hazards in the environment. More than 300 employees are serving 120,000 residents of Bell, Clay, Harlan, Jackson and Rockcastle Counties. Their theory of change is to provide clinic, home health, environmental, and school health services, along with specialized individual and population-based health programs to create healthier communities in all areas of its region.

The Department has many current activities aligned with the continuum of solutions proposed for the Promise Neighborhood. These include:

- A recent ACHIEVE grant to promote physical activity (walking) in Clay County for the next three years;
- Staff who can work with schools and teachers on improving the health and wellness of students;
- Programs, such as smoking cessation, to encourage healthier lifestyles among families and community members;
- Health assessment activities, including monitoring health status information to identify physical, mental, and environmental health problems, gaps in services and to evaluate program effectiveness;
- Policies to assure physical, mental and environmental health and well-being designed to meet needs which are based on research; and
- Serving as an advocate on behalf of the public's health.

As a partner of the Promise Neighborhood effort, the Cumberland Valley Regional Health Department will provide access to county-level on health issues, provide staff to participate in health related activities of the Promise Neighborhood continuum of solutions, provide space for community-based programming, work with other partners to ensure service delivery reaches intended participants and provide a representative to serve on the Promise Neighborhood Management Board.

The Cumberland Valley Regional Health Department commits resources to the Promise Neighborhood as documented in our match form (included in Appendix D). Our financial contribution to the project averages \$60,000 per year.

By signing below, I affirm the Cumberland Valley Regional Health Department's commitment to the goals of the Promise Neighborhood Program:

Eastern Kentucky Child Care Coalition

The Eastern Kentucky Child Care Coalition (EKCCC) mission is to increase the quality of accessible, affordable and developmentally appropriate child care in Southeastern Kentucky. EKCCC believes that only through developing an adequate child care infrastructure in our communities can those same communities grow economically and socially. Their theory of change is one dedicated to the creation of high-quality child care that is essential to the development of our communities, human resources and the hopes of our children for a better future.

Their work includes organizing and outreach in local areas, providing technical assistance and training for grassroots groups as well as child care providers, linking resources between organizations, and providing child care referrals to parents in our communities.

EKCCC is currently doing several activities aligned with the continuum of solutions proposed for the Promise Neighborhood. These include:

- Training for child care programs in the Promise Neighborhood, including assistance with gaining a STARS rating;
- Training on opening a formal in-home child care center; and
- Work with existing child care programs on improving nutrition and physical fitness among pre-school children.

As a partner of the Promise Neighborhood effort, EKCCC will provide space for community-based programming, existing curriculum supporting the early learning goals of the Promise Neighborhood, work with other partners to ensure service delivery reaches intended participants and provide a representative to serve on the Promise Neighborhood Management Board.

EKCCC commits resources to the Promise Neighborhood as documented in our match form (included in Appendix D). Our financial contribution to the project averages \$5,000 per year.

By signing below, I affirm EKCCC's commitment to the goals of the Promise Neighborhood Program:

Save the Children

Save the Children is the leading independent organization creating lasting change in the lives of children in need in the United States and around the world. Recognized for our commitment to accountability, innovation and collaboration, our work takes us into the heart of communities, where we help children and families help themselves. We work with other organizations, governments, non-profits and a variety of local partners while maintaining our own independence without political agenda or religious orientation.

The organizational strategy is grounded in a shared vision of a world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation, Save the Children's new mission is to inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives. This new global vision, mission, values and strategy are very much a part of Save the Children's longstanding principles and are consistent with our strategic priorities.

Each and every staff member and volunteer of Save the Children shares the values that, either individually or through teamwork, drive our breakthroughs for children.

Save the Children's theory of change is centered on the following:

- **Accountability:** We take personal responsibility for using our resources efficiently, achieving measurable results and being accountable to supporters, partners, and most of all, children;
- **Ambition:** We demand the best of ourselves and our colleagues, set high goals and firmly commit to improving the quality of everything we do for children.
- **Collaboration:** We respect and value each other, thrive on our diversity and work with partners to leverage our global strength in making a difference for children.
- **Creativity:** We are open to new ideas, embrace change and take disciplined risks to develop sustainable solutions for and with children.
- **Integrity:** We aspire to live to the highest standards of personal honesty and behavior; we never compromise our reputation and always act in the best interests of children.

Save the Children has several current activities aligned with the continuum of solutions proposed for the Promise Neighborhood. These include:

- Early Steps to School Success;
- Book Bags Program;
- Literacy tutoring for elementary students; and
- Partnerships with schools to create 21st Century Community Learning Centers.

As a partner of the Promise Neighborhood effort, Save the Children will expand their Early Steps and Book Bag programs to reach more low-income preschoolers, provide in-school literacy tutoring, manage after-school programming at elementary schools in the Neighborhood and manage summer school programs in each county.

Save the Children commits resources to the Promise Neighborhood as documented in our match form (included in Appendix D). Our financial contribution to the project averages \$1,000,000 per year. Of these funds, \$300,000 are from private sector funds.

By signing below, I affirm Save the Children's commitment to the goals of the Promise Neighborhood Program: