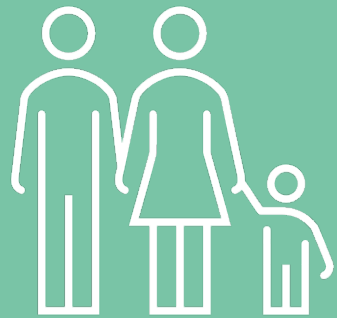


Norfolk Area Childcare Co-op Origin Story

Leah A. Barrett, President
Northeast Community College
Norfolk Area Childcare Co-op, Vice Chair, Exec Committee
21 July 2023



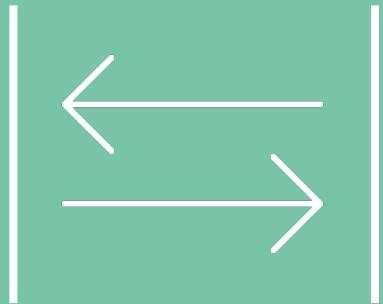
Norfolk Believes in the Importance of Early Childhood Education

- Growing Together: Economic Development Initiative
- Task Force developed in 2021
- Closing of a large provider in Jan 2022, accelerated the discussion
- Community Partners



Capacity Gap

- Norfolk, NE: approx. 25,000 residents
- Hub Community
- Over 600 children in Madison County, birth to kindergarten, don't have access to high quality early childhood care and learning.

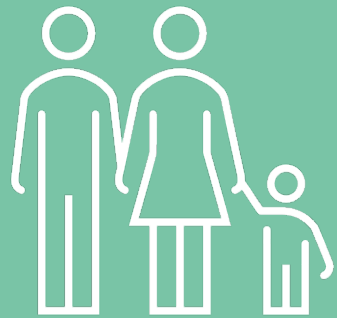


Why is there a childcare capacity gap?

- Current providers are unable to charge high enough rates to cover costs.
- Childcare workers are leaving the workforce due to low wages and lack of benefits.

What we want to accomplish

- Help close the community capacity gap.
- Provide **high quality** care option.
- Address childcare staffing issues by increasing wages and benefits.
- Fund the gap between costs to provide quality childcare and what the market is paying.
- Provide a business-driven solution.
- Create a model that can be replicated throughout Norfolk and Nebraska.



Employer-Led Opportunity

...making the case



Making the Case for Employer-Led Initiative

- It brings people back into the workforce, making it easier for us to hire the best people.
- It gives us a more stable labor supply, reduced absenteeism and turnover, and higher productivity.
- It make us more attractive to current and future employees.
- It helps our community solve a difficult problem.
- It increases the attractiveness of our community for new businesses.



The Nebraska Data

- Nebraskans are leaving the workforce over an inability to access childcare.
 - 31% of Nebraska parents with children ages 0-5 left the workforce over inability to find childcare.
 - Using census data estimates:
 - Madison County = 550 potential employees
 - Add in Pierce and Stanton Counties = 750 potential employees
 - 40 % of parents noted that lack of quality childcare caused them to miss work, be tardy, or be distracted at work in the last twelve months.

A Possible Model: The Co-op

- Cooperative 501 c3 made up of local businesses to oversee multiple child centers.
 - Co-op run by single administrator with host site directors.
 - Employers commit to fund operating gap in exchange for guaranteed slots for their employees.
 - Estimated break even = \$240 per child per week
 - Business members
 - Select how many slots they want
 - How much they subsidize those costs for their employees



Return on Investment

- Unique, attractive recruitment and retention benefit.
- Contribute to solving a community issue.
- Provide childcare benefit to employees without out the risks of self-operation.
- Increase the labor pool.
- Access to childcare stabilizes the labor market, reduces absenteeism and turnover, and increases productivity.

Why are we
involved?



Northeast
community college

Where are we now?

- Created a Steering Committee
 - Employer Reps: The Decision Makers (8)
 - Community quality childcare providers (2)
- Engaged consultants
 - Charlotte Narjes, Nebraska Cooperative Development Center Director, University Nebraska Extension Office
 - Kim Coontz, California Center for Cooperative Development
- Formed Subcommittees
- Hiring a Project Manager

**More
Information**

QUESTIONS

- Leah Barrett diane@northeast.edu
(contact Diane to set an appointment)
- Tammy Day tammy@daycos.edu