

School as Hub for Early Learning Overview

Learning Together From Birth Through Grade 3

Children begin learning long before they enter a classroom. From birth, their development is shaped through relationships and experiences at home, in early childhood programs, in their communities, and eventually in school.

As children's worlds expand, so does the circle of people contributing to their learning and development. Across families, communities, early childhood programs, schools, and broader education systems, people bring important relationships, perspectives, expertise, and resources to children's lives.

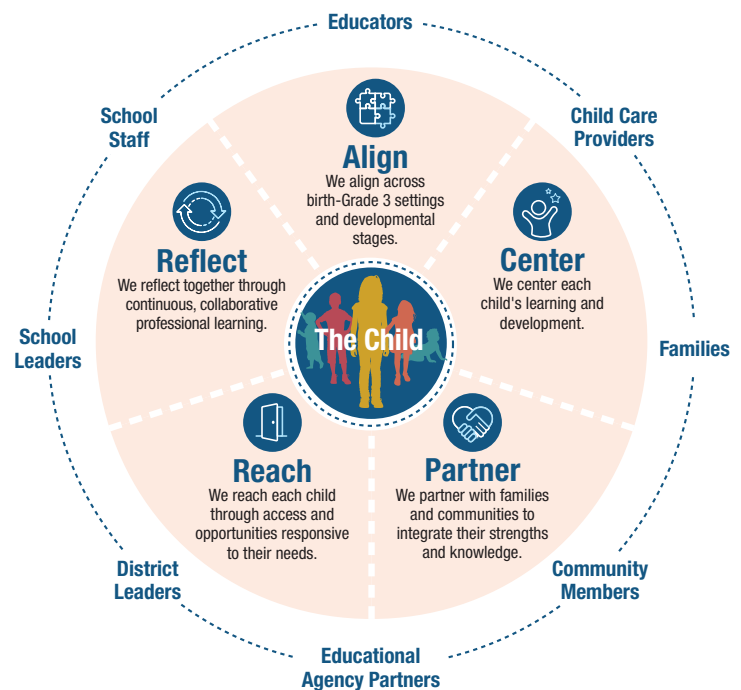
School as Hub for Early Learning helps people work together across roles and settings to shape the policies, practices, and priorities that support children's learning and development from birth through Grade 3.

Schools are well positioned to create greater coherence in how children's learning is supported across settings and over time. As enduring community institutions, they build lasting relationships with children and families and intersect naturally with early childhood programs and community organizations. Many are engaged with children and families well before kindergarten through early intervention, preschool, and family and community partnerships.

A Common Direction

Five commitments—**Align, Center, Partner, Reach, Reflect**—provide a common direction across roles and settings. Grounded in research and more than a decade of learning alongside school districts, they help people make decisions, connect their efforts, and continually strengthen support for children's learning.

Five Shared Commitments



Focused Action

The commitments take shape across three interconnected areas: Leadership Effectiveness, Instructional Excellence, and Family and Community Partnership. Together, these areas help schools and their partners identify opportunities for focused action in support of children's learning and development.

What Changes When We Work Together

When people across roles and settings act on these shared commitments, they can improve the experiences of children, families, and educators while strengthening the systems that support early learning.

Children experience

- Learning that connects across settings and builds from birth through Grade 3
- Instruction and relationships responsive to their development, experiences, and prior learning
- Integrated support for learning, development, and well-being

Families experience

- Genuine partnership in their children's learning and development
- Strong relationships with schools, other families, and community resources
- Support through transitions and connections to resources and services

Educators experience

- Stronger professional connections and collaboration across birth–Grade 3
- Ongoing opportunities for professional learning, reflection, and leadership
- Greater confidence and support in using developmentally informed practices

Systems demonstrate

- Coordinated supports and sustained partnerships across birth–Grade 3
- Policies, practices, priorities, and resources aligned around children's learning and development
- Continuous improvement informed by data, experience, and feedback

“We are all truly on the same page. We want to improve outcomes for children and families, engage more meaningfully with families and communities, and provide vital support.”

– District Leader

Ready to Learn More?

Reach out to:

- Discuss your district's needs and goals
- Arrange a visit to a School as Hub for Early Learning site to see the approach in action.

Contact Amy Schmidtke, director of educational practice, at buffettinstitute@nebraska.edu



Buffett Early Childhood Institute
at the University of Nebraska