

# EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES



**THE UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
Report to the Education Interim  
Committee

## Partnerships for Student Success Report

February 2021

**Robert Palmer**

Student Support Division  
Education Specialist  
ESEA Federal Programs and Related State Initiatives  
[robert.palmer@schools.utah.gov](mailto:robert.palmer@schools.utah.gov)

**Kamille Sheikh**

Student Support Division  
Education Specialist  
ESEA Federal Programs and Related State Initiatives  
[kamille.sheikh@schools.utah.gov](mailto:kamille.sheikh@schools.utah.gov)

**Rebecca Donaldson**

Student Support Division  
ESEA Programs and Related State Initiatives  
Coordinator  
[rebecca.donaldson@schools.utah.gov](mailto:rebecca.donaldson@schools.utah.gov)

## STATUTORY REQUIREMENT

### U.C.A. Section 53F-5-405

requires the State Board of Education to contract with an independent evaluator to annually evaluate a partnership that receives a grant under this program. Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, the Board is required to annually submit the evaluation to the Education Interim Committee. The independent evaluation shall assess implementation of the partnership including: (i) the sharing of data among partnership members; (ii) the extent to which members of a partnership meet regularly and communicate authentically; and (iii) the impact of a partnership on student outcomes.

# Partnerships for Student Success Report

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The 2019-2020 school year was the third year of full implementation for the cohort one grantees of the Partnerships for Student Success Program (those selected in 2016-2017). The program is designed to improve educational outcomes for students who are economically disadvantaged by funding grantees to establish and strengthen community partnerships among school districts, businesses, government, and non-profit agencies. The State Board of Education awarded four grants during the 2016-2017 school year. Grantees included the United Way of Northern Utah, United Way of Salt Lake City (received two grants), and Weber School District. Two additional grantees were added in the 2017-2018 school year: Canyons School District and a second grant for the United Way of Northern Utah. The independent evaluation for the third year of the program is attached.



# Partnerships for Student Success (PFSS) Grant Program Evaluation Final Report 2020-21

Prepared by the Utah Education Policy Center for  
The Utah State Board of Education



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## Bridging Research, Policy, & Practice

The Utah Education Policy Center (UEPC) is a research-based center at the University of Utah founded in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy in 1990 and administered through the College of Education since 2007. As an integral part of the College's commitment to improving educational access and opportunities, the purpose of the UEPC is to improve the quality of educational policies, practices, and leadership in public schools and higher education by informing and influencing educational policy and practice in Utah and the surrounding region through research, evaluation, and technical assistance.

The UEPC provides advanced and balanced research and evaluation to facilitate sound and informed decisions about educational policy and practice. We are committed to helping our clients understand whether educational policies, programs, and practices are being implemented as intended, whether they are effective and impactful, and how they might be improved.

Please visit our website for more information about the UEPC.

<http://uepc.utah.edu>

Andrea K. Rorrer, Ph.D., Director  
Phone: 801-581-4207  
[andrea.rorrer@utah.edu](mailto:andrea.rorrer@utah.edu)

Cori Groth, Ph.D., Associate Director  
Phone: 801-581-4207  
[cori.groth@utah.edu](mailto:cori.groth@utah.edu)

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## Introduction

Utah Senate Bill 67 (2016) created the Partnerships for Student Success (PFSS) Grant Program.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this grant is to improve educational outcomes for low-income students by funding grantees to establish and strengthen community partnerships among school districts, businesses, government, and non-profit agencies. The 2016 legislation appropriated \$2,000,000 in grant funds to be administered by the Utah State Board of Education (USBE). Grants were anticipated to last for five years, and prospective grantees could apply for up to \$500,000 per year. During the 2016-2017 academic year the USBE awarded four grants to United Way of Northern Utah, United Way of Salt Lake City (received two grants), and Weber School District. An additional \$1,000,000 was added to the budget during the 2017 legislative session, resulting in two additional grants during the 2017-2018 year awarded to Canyons School District and a second grant to United Way of Northern Utah.

This competitive grant is unique in that it does not provide funding for grantees to provide direct services for students and their families. Instead, it allocates funds to create infrastructure, with support from external technical assistance providers, to build and leverage community partnerships and promote cross-organization support for students within specific high school feeder patterns. Grantees who applied for funding specified local needs to be addressed, goals for student outcomes, feeder patterns for schools, and proposed community partnerships. Sharing and using data is a central aspect of the grant and, to strengthen the network of student support, grantees are expected to facilitate data sharing across partnering agencies. Grantees are also expected to align partnership plans with the goals of Utah’s Intergenerational Poverty Initiative. Such goals include aligning systems of support for early childhood development to ensure that children are ready for kindergarten and to align systems of support for children affected by poverty to succeed in school and beyond. Specifically, the PFSS Grant targets nine student outcomes highlighted below.

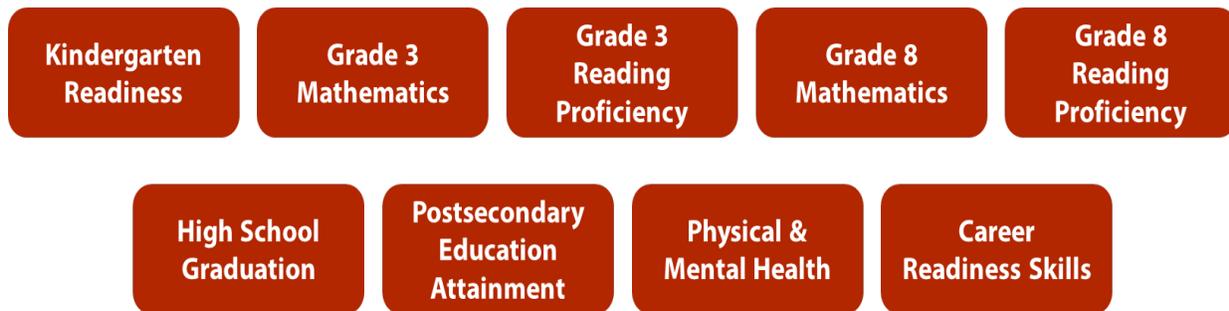


Table 1 below provides a summary of the six grantees by cohort, along with the high schools and elementary schools within each of the individual feeder patterns. Error! Reference source not found.

<sup>1</sup> See SB67 legislation at <https://le.utah.gov/~2016/bills/static/SB0067.html>.

**Table 1. Partnerships for Student Success Grantees and School Feeder Patterns**

Cohorts	Grantees	High Schools	Feeder Schools		
Cohort	United Way of Salt Lake	Kearns High	Gourley Elementary		
			Oquirrh Hills Elementary		
			South Kearns Elementary		
			West Kearns Elementary		
			Kearns Junior High		
	United Way of Salt Lake	Cottonwood High	James E. Moss Elementary		
			Lincoln Elementary		
			Roosevelt Elementary		
			Woodrow Wilson Elementary		
			Granite Park Junior High		
	United Way Northern Utah	Ogden High	Thomas O. Smith Elementary		
			Mount Ogden Junior High		
			Freedom Elementary		
			Lakeview Elementary		
			Midland Elementary		
Weber School District	Roy High	Municipal Elementary			
		North Park Elementary			
		Roy Junior High			
		Roy Elementary			
		Sand Ridge Junior High			
		Valley View Elementary			
		West Haven Elementary			
		Copperview Elementary			
		East Midvale Elementary			
		Midvale Middle			
Cohort	Canyons School District	Hillcrest High	Midvale Elementary		
			Sandy Elementary		
			Diamond Ridge High		
			Gramercy Elementary		
			United Way Northern Utah	Ben Lomond High	Mound Fort Junior High

The PFSS grant was developed based on the principles of Collective Impact (e.g., for one of the first descriptions of this model see Kania and Kramer, 2011). Collective Impact refers to a way in which partners within a community collaborate to solve complex systems problems. Proponents of collective impact argue that these partnerships are more effective than individual organizations trying to address a problem alone. Based on their early review of promising evidence from collective impact projects across the country, Kania and Kramer (2011) suggested that the success of collective impact is contingent upon the presence of five conditions. First, all participants/partners must agree on the problem to be addressed,

as well as a **common agenda** or vision for solving the problem. Next, is the use of **shared measurement systems** that promote accountability among partners as well as a clear alignment of shared efforts and resources. **Mutually reinforcing activities** are also essential, as each partner is responsible for a specific set of actions that support and is coordinated with the actions of other partners. Additionally, the partners must have **continuous communication**, involving a common vocabulary around the shared problem, regular meetings among the partners, and the development of trust over time. Finally, collective impact requires a **backbone organization** that is responsible to plan, manage, and support the initiative through facilitation, communications, data collection and reporting, and handling of administrative details needed for the initiative to function smoothly (Kania and Kramer, 2011).

There are several organizations across the country that function as models of collective impact. The StriveTogether Network (2019) based out of Cincinnati, Ohio, has gained national attention and prompted a movement focused on helping communities build partnerships that share data, align resources and shape policy. The StriveTogether Network supports communities in collecting and using local data to improve practices for students and families, and currently reaches 13.7 million students and operates in 29 states and Washington, D.C. The StriveTogether Theory of Action rests on four principles, including engaging the community, focusing on eliminating locally defined disparities, developing a culture of continuous improvement, and leveraging existing assets (Grossman, Lombard, & Fisher, 2013).

The Wallace Foundation has also studied collective impacts nationally. For example, Henig et al, (2016) discuss collective impact as a model of collaboration and offers reasons for “cautious optimism” about the changing context for collaboration. Based on their study of 182 collaborations around the country, Henig and colleagues concluded that collective impact “...may evolve into a generic descriptor for the current era of cross-sector collaboration, but it is also, at least for the time being, a fairly specific prescriptive model. Thus, it will be important to continue to track how the model is adopted, adapted, and disseminated” (Hengig et al., 2016, p. 37). The authors also recommend caution when studying their research on these collaborative efforts, emphasizing possible “drawbacks of overlap and excessive concentration of collaboration. Too much of a good thing may dilute all efforts and result in unproductive competition and lack of coordination” (Hengig et al., 2016, p. 37).

Stanford Social Innovation is another leader in studying and advancing the collective impact model. For example, Stachowiak & Gase (2018) published a reflection on an earlier study by ORS Impact and the Spark Policy Institute that focused on the effects of collective impact on school systems, human services organizations, nonprofits, and target populations or environments in 25 initiatives throughout the United States and Canada. An important conclusion from their research emphasized that the “implementation of an equity approach doesn’t happen by accident, and a strong equity focus can lead to more equitable outcomes.” (Stachowiak & Gase, 2018, p. 3). They explicitly define equity as “fairness achieved through systematically assessing disparities in opportunities and outcomes caused by structures and systems, as well as addressing these disparities through meaningful inclusion and representation of affected communities, targeted actions, and changes in institutional structures, and systems to remove barriers and increase pathways to success (Stachowiak & Gase, 2018, p. 4).” Similar to Henig et al (2016), Stachowiak & Gase balance the value of collective impact with a word of caution as they advise, “With regard to the approach itself, there is more to unpack around the conditions—for example, the value of different types of backbones, the ways in which data can support learning, and when it is critical to involve different sectors. There is also more room to explore the principles of practice, especially equity (Stachowiak & Gase, 2018, p. 6).”

The growing research around collective impact offers much to consider as we explore the progress of the PFSS grant at this point in the grant cycle. Considerations of effective partnerships, shared measurement systems, consistent communication, and the role of grantee backbone organizations are worth noting as we study the fall partnership survey data and the grantee focus group data. Finally, an intentional lens on

equity throughout this report will uncover unique opportunities for additional growth during the remaining years of the grant cycle.

## Evaluation Overview

On behalf of the USBE, the Utah Education Policy Center (UEPC) is concluding a three-year annual evaluation of the PFSS Grant Program. The first two annual evaluation reports (2017-18 and 2018-19) focused on the engagement of community partners in collaborative grant activities, the steps partners took to collaboratively promote student success, and the nine school-level student outcomes identified in the original PFSS legislation. The original evaluation framework attempted to explore a comprehensive understanding of how these partnerships were developed, how they were aligned and coordinated during the grant cycle, and how they were able to accomplish more than they would by working in isolation.

The third and final year of the PFSS grant evaluation was initially scheduled for the 2019-20 academic year. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the soft closure of schools in March 2020, evaluation activities were postponed until the Fall of 2020 and are thus reported as part of the 2020-21 academic year. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the USBE requested that the final evaluation report only include data from partnerships surveys and grant administrator focus group discussions. Thus, student outcome data are not included in this final report.

Within this third and final report, the UEPC examined 1) fall partnership survey data and 2) focus group data from the November grant administrator meeting. These data sources are explained below.

### Partnership Survey

In October of 2020, the UEPC administered the annual fall partnership survey<sup>2</sup> to gather information about the formation of partnerships and their grant activities. The survey was sent to individuals and organizations identified by grantees as working with them toward accomplishing student outcomes. The UPEC sent the survey to 222 partners and received 122 responses, some of which were partially completed. This response rate for the fall partner surveys was similar to the response rate in Year 2 (55%).

**Table 2. Partnership Survey Response Rates**

Grantees	Number of Partnership Survey Contacts Provided by Grantees	Number of Survey Respondents	Response Rates
United Way of Northern Utah	79	40	51%
United Way of Salt Lake City	23	11	48%
Weber School District	26	19	73%
Canyons School District	71	32	45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>51%</b>

Source: Fall 2020 Partnership Survey

<sup>2</sup> Primary sources for the formative survey development include the Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory (Mattessich, Murray-Close, & Monsey, 2001) and the Strive Together Theory of Action for Collective Impact (Grossman, Lombard, & Fisher, 2014).

The partnership surveys included multiple choice questions, for which we used descriptive statistics to analyze responses (frequencies and percentages). Some of the survey questions allowed respondents to select “all that apply”, which resulted in multiple ways to examine responses to survey questions and sets of questions. For example, in some cases, we filtered data based on certain respondent groups and calculated cross tabulations of their responses across questions. Notes are included with tables and figures to provide additional information about the denominators used to calculate percentages.

## **Grantee Focus Group**

In November 2020, the UEPC, in collaboration with staff from the USBE, met with administrators from each grantee organization. The purpose of this focus group was to identify and discuss key accomplishments and lessons learned from the first three years of grant implementation. Focus group questions were co-developed by the UEPC and USBE and designed to explore retrospective experiences as well as plans for future grant implementation. Focus group data were reviewed and grouped based on recurring themes related to successes, challenges, impacts of organizational practices, and opportunities for future evaluation activities. Unique sub-themes were also identified and included in the focus group section of this report.

The remainder of this report presents findings in two sections—the results from the partnership survey and the results from the focus group. The report concludes with implications and considerations for continuous improvement.

# Partnership Survey Results

## Description of Partnerships

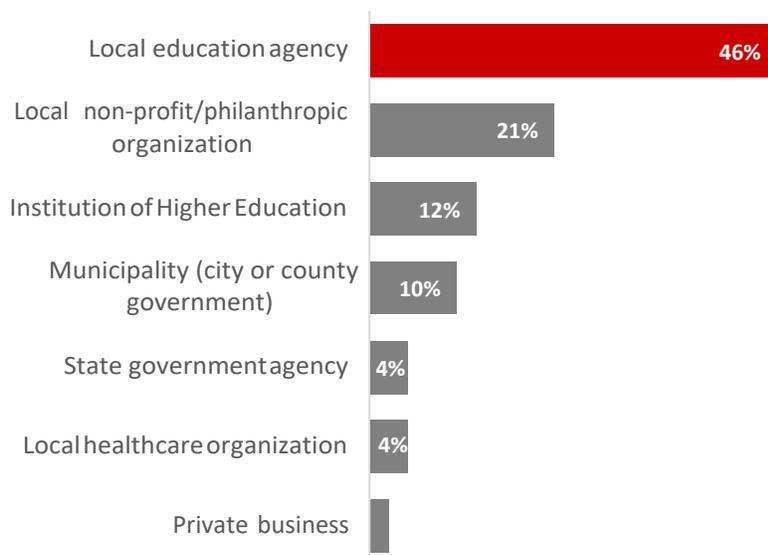
Administered between October and November 2020, the partnership survey was sent to 222 partners from across all grantees, with 122 partners responding. (See Table 2 for additional details.) Grantees identified their community partners through their individual logic models and through contact lists that they provided to UEPC for the fall partnership survey. While 53% of partner organizations were represented in survey responses, there were 15 more partner organizations identified within the logic models than grantees made available in partnership survey contact lists (**Error! Reference source not found.**). It is unclear if grantees over-identified partners in logic models or under-identified them in contact lists.

**Table 3. Number of Partners for Each Grantee**

Grantees	Number of Partner Organizations in Logic Models*	Number of Partner Organizations in Contact List**	Number of Partner Organizations in Partnership Survey Responses
United Way of Northern Utah	21	16	17
United Way of Salt Lake City	27	23	11
Weber School District	27	29	16
Canyons School District	23	45	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>64</b>

\*Logic Model data are from 2017-18 while contact/survey data are from 2018-19. (See Appendix A for Logic Models.) Any discrepancies between years may reflect continued efforts to build partnerships. \*\*Some organizations had multiple contacts; this column includes only the number of unique organizations named in the contact list.

**Figure 1. Types of Organizations in Partnerships**



Of the partners that participated, nearly half (46%) identified as belonging to a local education agency (LEA) (school district or charter), while nearly a quarter (21%) identified as being from a local non-profit or philanthropic organization and approximately 14% identified as being a part of a government agency (state, county, or city) (see Figure 1).

Source: Fall 2020 Partnership Survey

**Figure 2. Identified Roles of Participating Partners**



Most of the partnership survey respondents represented leadership roles within their organizations. For example, 25% identified as management or administration, 25% as executive leadership, 14% as principals or assistant principals, and 9% as program or project directors. Thirteen percent identified themselves as social workers, family liaisons, or counselors, 11% identified as fulfilling other roles, and 2% as teachers or paraprofessionals (see Figure 2).

Source: Fall 2020 Partnership Survey

Table 4 shows the number of survey respondents who reported that they partnered with other organizations to address the nine outcomes. This survey item set used a *select all that apply* format. Physical and mental health and high school graduation had the highest number of partners (59 and 51 respectively) working together. Third grade math and 8th grade reading had the fewest number of partners (26 and 27 respectively) working together. Notably, eight partners indicated that they were working to address all nine outcomes.

**Table 4. Respondents who Partnered with Other Organizations to Address Outcomes**

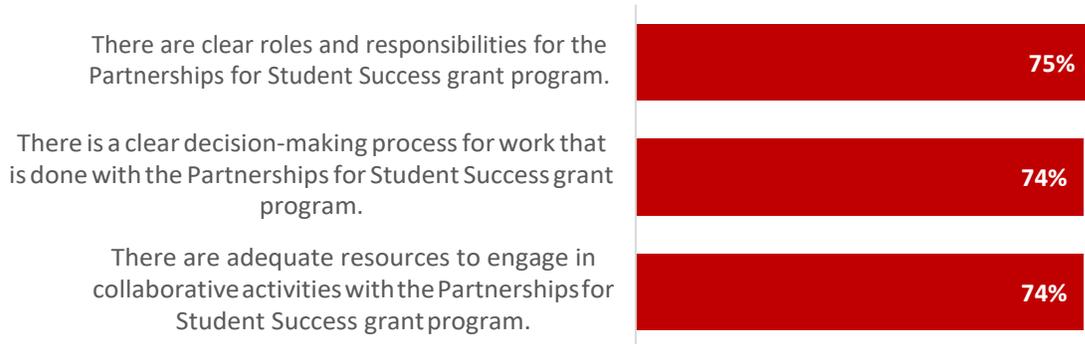
Outcome	Number	Percent
Kindergarten readiness	30	54%
3rd Grade Math	26	50%
3rd Grade Reading	31	56%
8th Grade Math	29	54%
8th Grade Reading	27	51%
High school graduation	51	75%
College attainment	36	61%
Career readiness	45	71%
Physical and mental health	59	81%

Source: Fall 2020 Partnership Survey (N=122)

Having clear strategies and shared goals is critical to achieving success within the grant partnerships. Figure 3 shows that most respondents agreed that there was clarity within partnerships as well as adequate access to resources. Three-quarters of respondents felt roles and responsibilities within grantee

partnerships were clearly outlined, while 74% of respondents indicated that decision-making processes were clearly defined and adequate resources were available for collaborative efforts aimed at achieving outcome goals. While these percentages are relatively high, this also means that 25% of respondents indicated that they were unclear about the roles and responsibilities of their partners.

**Figure 3. Partners' Agreement with Clarity and Resource Availability within Partnerships**

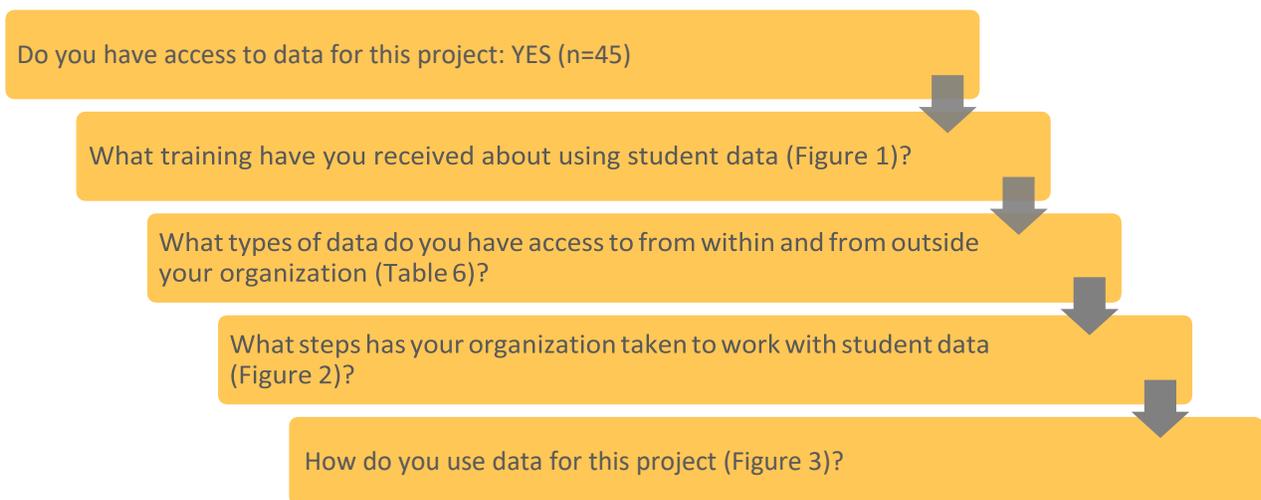


Source: Fall 2020 Partnership Survey

## Data Access and Use

Accessing and using student data is central to the PFSS grant. Fifty-nine percent of partners reported that they had access to data for the grant. Of the individuals who reported that they did not have access, 29% reported that they did not need access to data, 10% reported that they needed access but had not yet signed a data sharing agreement, 10% reported that they had signed a data sharing agreement but have not yet been given access to data, and 52% reported that they were unsure and had not yet determined their data needs for this project. The partnership survey asked partners who reported that they had access to data for additional details about data they accessed and how they used it.

**Figure 4. Partner Reports of Data Use and Access**



Among the partners who reported that they had access to data, most agreed or strongly agreed that they were prepared and supported in using data effectively.

- ✓ 88% agreed or strongly agreed that they were adequately supported in the effective use of data.
- ✓ 85% agreed or strongly agreed that they were adequately prepared to use data.
- ✓ 81% agreed or strongly agreed that they have access to someone who can answer questions regarding data use.

Working with student data requires knowledge and expertise. Both technical skills and a thorough understanding of related privacy issues are standard prerequisites for utilizing student data. Figure 5 below shows that most partners reported having attended a training concerning data privacy, including about two-thirds of partners who had attended a training about the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA).

**Figure 5. Percent of Partners who Attended Trainings**



Source: Fall 2020 Partnership Survey

Note: This figure includes only partners who indicated in a previous question that they had access to data.

Accessing and using data is central to the implementation and success of the PFSS grant. Within organizations, aggregate student data followed by individual student data were the most commonly available data sources, while trans-organizational access to data was most common for community data and aggregate student data. It should be noted that while nearly all (98%) of participants indicated having access to data within their organization, only a little more than half (58%) indicated having access to data from other organizations. Table 5 shows additional details regarding the types of data that partners reported accessing from within and from outside their organizations.

**Table 5. Type of Data to which Partners had Access**

	From Within my Organization	From Outside my Organization
Aggregate student data	80%	62%
Individual student data	70%	42%
Program data (financial or institutional)	68%	35%
Community data	59%	65%
Family data	45%	23%
Project governance data (grant administration)	43%	19%
<b>Percent who had access to at least one type of data</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>58%</b>

Source: Fall 2020 Partnership Survey

Note: This item set asked respondents to select all that apply. This table includes only partners who indicated in a previous question that they had access to data. We used the total number of respondents to this item set (n=45) as the denominator to calculate percentages for each cell in this table; 44 partners reported that they had access to at least one type of data within their organization and 26 partners reported that they had access to at least one type of data from outside their organization.

With nearly 60% of participants reporting having access to data from outside of their organization, it is important to understand established procedures surrounding data sharing between partners. More than half of participants (59% and 58% respectively) indicated that they used secure data sharing systems and reviewed student data with partners. However, just over half (53%) indicated they had data sharing agreements in place with partner organizations (see Figure 6). Interestingly, more respondents indicated that they shared aggregate student data (66%) as opposed to receiving it (53%), and the pattern held with individual student data, where more respondents indicated sharing (37%) than receiving (31%). See Figure 7 for additional details.

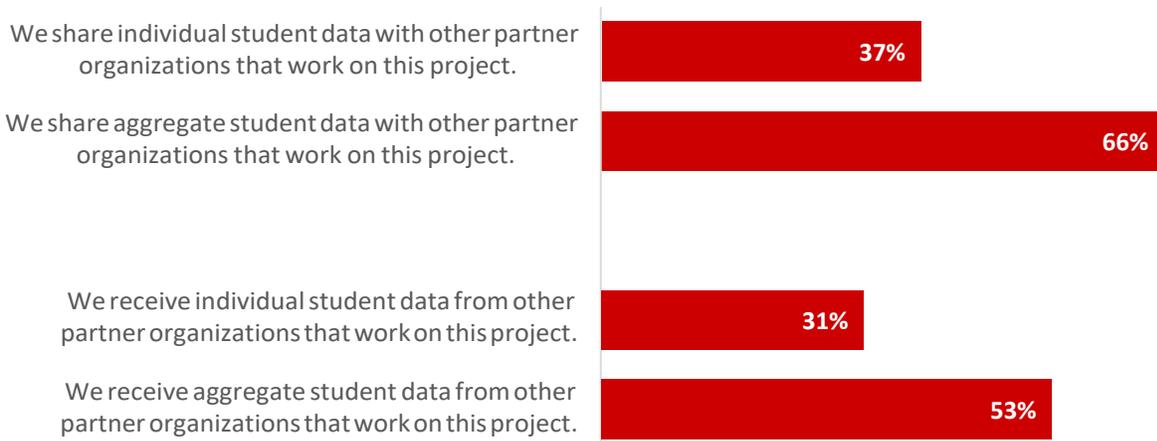
**Figure 6. Steps Organizations Took to Work with Student Data**



Source: Fall 2020 Partnership Survey

Note: This item set asked respondents to select all that apply. This figure includes only partners who indicated in a previous question that they had access to data (n=76), but not all of those partners responded to this item set. We used the number of respondents (59) as the denominator to calculate percentages for this figure.

**Figure 7. As a partner in the Partnerships for Student Success Grant program, which of the following steps has your organization taken to work with student data?\***

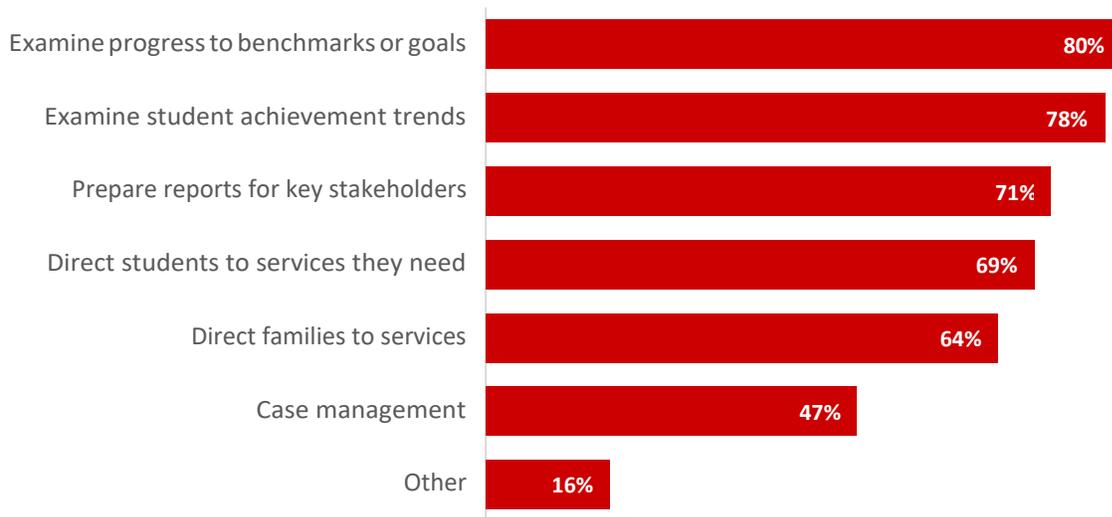


Source: Fall 2020 Partnership Survey

\* The survey asked about sharing individual student data but did not specify whether or not the student data included personally identifiable information.

When asked about how partners utilized data, most agreed that their efforts revolved around examining progress toward benchmarks or goals (80%) and student achievement trends (78%). Approximately two-thirds of respondents also indicated that they used data to connect students and families to services they needed. Figure 8 provides additional details on data use.

**Figure 8. Purposes for which Partners Used Data**



Source: Fall 2020 Partnership Survey

Note: This item set asked respondents to select all that apply. This table includes only partners who indicated in a previous question that they had access to data. We used the number of respondents (45) as the denominator to calculate percentages for this figure.

In addition to the data collected through the fall 2020 partner surveys, data for this evaluation also include discussions among the grantee administrators during the November 2020 focus group. These focus group data, along with possible implications for the remaining years of the grant cycle, are explained below.

## Partnerships for Student Success Grantee Focus Group

In the fall of 2020, administrators from the four PFSS grantee organizations participated in a focus group facilitated by UEPC (Canyons School District, United Way of Salt Lake, United Way Northern Utah, Weber School District). The purpose of the focus group was to identify key accomplishments and lessons learned from the first three years of program implementation. The focus group included two community organization grant administrators, one school district grant administrator, and one principal who serves as the main contact for the grant within the community. Focus group participants shared their unique perspectives on successes and challenges experienced over the past few years, as well as opportunities for growth through future program services and grant evaluation activities. Below is a summary of findings from the grantee focus group, organized by four broad themes: successes, challenges, opportunities and emerging progress.

### Successes through Intentional Partnerships Focused on Student Data

Grant administrators expressed that the PFSS grant has provided the opportunity for them to develop meaningful partnerships within their communities focused on specific student outcomes. Three years into the grant cycle, grant administrators agreed that partnerships are now built on clear, common missions that direct goal setting, self-assessments, and planning. One administrator expressed that the grant has *“...opened my mind to what community partners can do.”* This collaboration among existing partners and the expansion of new partnerships has also facilitated a shift in perception around the use of student data for planning and decision-making focused on achieving desired student outcomes. Additionally, the strengthened partnerships around collecting, analyzing, and adjusting program services based on the data have, as one grant administrator said, *“allowed grantees to utilize data in ways they have not been able to otherwise.”*

The focus group participants explained that stakeholders are more comfortable with the practice of collecting, discussing, and using data to modify and enhance plans and programs. In addition to this renewed focus on using data to track progress on student outcomes, the partnerships formed as a result of this grant have allowed the grantees to more accurately target specific student needs. A few participants mentioned how this focus on community partnerships helped them to discover a deeper layer of support that was needed for students and families, such as access to mental and physical health practitioners, nutrition resources, and other student and family support services.

### Challenges Addressing Student Outcomes

Focus group participants were also asked to identify and discuss any challenges they experienced during the first three years of the PFSS grant. They began by referencing the original PFSS legislation, which listed the nine student outcomes. Although they recognized that each of these outcomes is critical for student success, the grantee stakeholder teams found it difficult to address each of these outcomes at the same time during the first three years of the grant. They further explained that their efforts directed towards one or two of the student outcomes often left minimal resources available for the remaining areas outlined in the legislation.

Other challenges mentioned by the grant administrators included building necessary support from faculty and staff at each of the schools around the grant partnerships, possibly due to a lack of understanding of the grant’s purpose and potential impact on students and families. With regards to their individual grant partnerships, the grant administrators explained that it was often challenging to convey to their partners how their specific contributions impact the student outcomes. For example, community partners that ensure students and families have access to regular meals may not thoroughly understand how their work impacts student achievement in the classroom. The grant administrators expressed a desire to ensure that

all partners understand how their resources and support work together in complementary ways to promote success of the grant program and directly impact student outcomes.

## Opportunities for Future Impact

When asked about the grant's biggest impact on their organizational practices, as well as opportunities to maintain grant services in the future, administrators discussed their regular practice of continually assessing structures and partnerships that are best suited for meeting the needs of the current goals and phases of the work. They also emphasized the importance of all stakeholders collectively identifying and maintaining focus on the biggest "levers of impact" for each of the student outcomes identified through the grant. One of the biggest organizational impacts they discussed was the use of school personnel (i.e., School Coordinators, Community-School Facilitators) to build, strengthen and maintain critical school-community relationships. These roles are an important part of the infrastructure developed by grantees to strengthen communication between the school and the community regarding desired student outcomes.

Another important discussion during the fall focus group centered on the usefulness of the grant evaluations during the first three years, as well as suggestions to make future evaluations more meaningful for grantees and partners. Grant administrators expressed that the current evaluation activities have been helpful in examining partnership structures and interactions as well as studying which outcomes are/are not improving based on student data. One administrator commented that the evaluation reports have been extremely helpful in ongoing efforts to mobilize partnerships within the community. The administrator elaborated that the reports have been valuable beyond the specific program and that other leaders within the school district look forward to reviewing in order to learn from the community's successes over the year, as well as opportunities for growth.

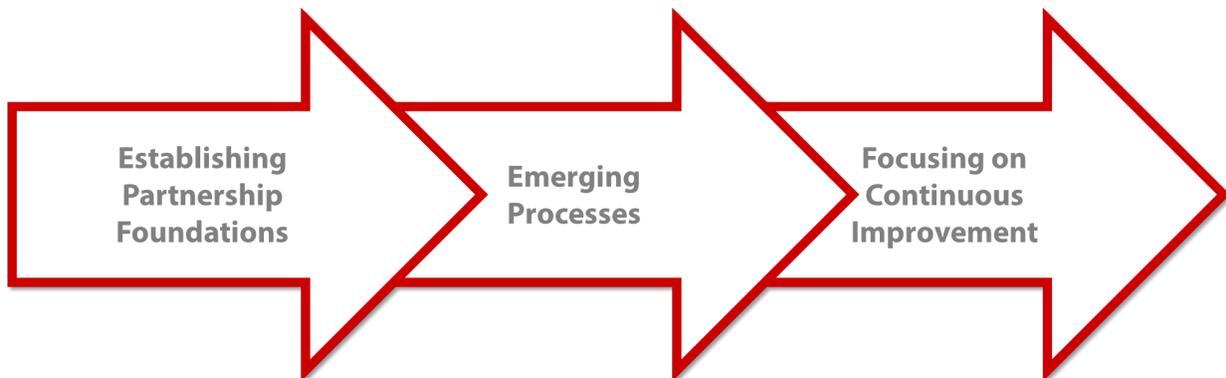
While some grant administrators offered examples of how the evaluation reports have been helpful during the past few years, others expressed that now may be the right time in the grant cycle to adjust the evaluation plan moving forward. Suggestions for new evaluation activities or focus areas generated by the grant administrators are summarized below.

- Develop new evaluation tools focused on **partnership contributions towards achieving student outcomes**, instead of partnership processes and structures.
- Ensure timely, intentional **distribution of evaluation reports accompanied by facilitated discussion** with USBE PFSS specialists and evaluators to explore the implications of evaluation findings on future grant opportunities and ongoing support for implementation.
- Develop evaluation tools designed to examine **shared measures for the grantee "backbone" organizations**. (i.e., *How are these organizations holding their partners accountable for communication, data, and other responsibilities related to the grant implementation? How are the organizations creating and sustaining the infrastructure necessary to demonstrate evidence of progress towards student outcomes?*)
- Include a **family engagement component** in the new evaluation framework to study current family engagement data and explore any data gaps as possibilities for additional program services.
- Include evaluation activities designed to track student outcomes other than those listed in the original legislation, such as **social-emotional learning, attendance, other non-academic measures**.
- Design new evaluation activities to address the "What does this mean?" question that developed from the current evaluation framework. (i.e., **"What are the practices of**

the existing partnerships that are most successful in driving changes and deepening collaboration within a community?”)

## Emerging Progress

Finally, the grant administrators shared several examples of individual grantee successes and challenges of implementation of the PFSS grant. As they discussed these successes and challenges, the combined perspectives highlighted a progression of implementation stages within the grant cycle, reflected in the figure below. Despite the differences in their partnership experiences and progress towards student outcomes over the past three years, all grant administrators expressed that their teams have made significant progress in developing and strengthening partnerships, identifying additional needs among students and families, and creating momentum around identified student outcomes. In essence, they described having moved on from the first stage of establishing foundations for effective partnerships. Describing their teams’ overall progress towards student outcomes as “**emerging**”, the grant administrators all expressed appreciation for the grant opportunity, as well as for the ongoing guidance from the USBE during their development of critical infrastructures to support ongoing partnership collaboration. As they move forward into the final years of the grant cycle, grant administrators reported that the grantees will be more focused on the continuous improvement process as they develop and refine strategies to sustain these infrastructures and data processes.



# Implications and Considerations for the Partnerships for Student Success Grant

Based on the partnership survey and focus group data discussed in this report, we offer the following list of considerations to support efforts to strengthen and sustain the PFSS grant moving forward.

## **Partnerships**

Now that most grantee partnerships are fully developed, strengthened, and focused on specific student outcomes, more attention should be given to the next stage of partnership effectiveness. For example, how are partnerships ensuring that all students and families have equitable access and opportunities that result in the desired outcomes? Kania and Kramer (2015) emphasized that the five conditions of collective impact mentioned earlier in this report are not enough to create lasting change without an intentional focus on equity. Moving past the process and structures of partnerships will enable a more thorough study into the equitable practices of each team, the quality of the partner collaborations, and the impact the partnerships have on specific student outcomes (Wolff et al, 2016).

## **Grantee Logic Models**

The logic models developed by the new PFSS grantees in 2017-18 outlined their community partners and the various “activities” of each partner designed to support student outcomes. Consider refining the logic models as the grantees transition into the next phase of the grant cycle, shifting from partnership activities to specific contributions and impact toward equitable student outcomes. These updated logic models could identify the specific ways in which the grantees are using data and shared measures to bring about equitable outcomes that they’ve identified. As grantees draw on the strengths of each partner and address the distribution of resources and influence within the collective impact framework (LeChasseur 2016), these new logic models would essentially serve as navigation tools for the grantees, outlining the intentionality behind the partnerships and providing a roadmap for progress towards each outcome.

## **Community of Practice**

As evidenced by their candid discussion during the focus group, the grantees welcome any opportunity to hear each other’s experiences with various aspects of the grant. Sharing their own successes, challenges, unique resources, and lessons learned with one another provides a valuable experience and a very worthwhile investment. This community of practice among grantees has been established for the past few years, and has the potential to strengthen through intentional facilitation, guided data discussions, and real-life case studies based on grantee experiences.

## **Next Phase of Evaluation**

As the USBE prepares to conduct the next PFSS evaluation themselves, there are several opportunities to build upon the evaluation framework based on data from past reports as well as the recent feedback and suggestions from the focus group participants. The following are examples of how the evaluation may be adjusted to best reflect the growth of the grantee teams heading into the final years of the grant.

- Focus on partner contributions towards progress on student outcomes, not simply structures and communication processes of the partners.
- Offer individualized support for grantees, as they continue to track data on student outcomes. The use of the Continuous Improvement Cycle (UEPC 2019) shown in

Appendix B would serve as a particularly useful guide for these discussions, as grantee teams regularly review outcome data to make any needed adjustments to partnerships or identify additional recourses to meet specific student needs.

With the evaluation team facilitating these conversations with grantees centered around their challenges to specific outcomes, the evaluators will have firsthand knowledge and understanding about each of the grantee's successes, barriers, and strategies that are most successful for student growth. Having this level of understanding will enable the evaluators to identify and study specific partner interventions and data practices that contribute to positive student outcomes.

- Conduct individual grantee case studies during the next academic year, examining layers of collaborative support and progress towards identified student outcomes, following new grantee logic models, and dissecting any barriers to uncover gaps in resources, data, and partnerships. Individual case studies for each grantee will offer a thorough snapshot of progress among partners to showcase evidence towards positive student outcomes. Additionally, this provides a unique opportunity for USBE to consider a cross-case analysis to delve deeper into comparisons across grantees to explore effective practices within each of the nine PFSS outcomes.

## External Technical Assistance Providers

In addition to the opportunities mentioned above, USBE grant specialists and evaluators may consider a deeper exploration into the role that technical assistance providers play within each of the grantee teams. The PFSS legislation explained that these technical assistance providers will assist the partnerships in ***“...establishing shared goals, outcomes, and measurement practices, creating the capabilities to achieve shared goals and outcomes that may include providing leadership development training to members of the partnership; and using data to align and improve efforts focused on student success.”***<sup>3</sup> Wolff et al, (2016) identified technical assistance as one of the critical factors that may determine whether collaborative partnerships are effective at creating community and systems change. Given this point in the grant cycle, an assessment of exactly how the technical assistance providers are carrying out each of the roles listed in the legislation will further identify areas of success that can be shared and replicated with other grantees, as well as uncover any gaps in support that should be addressed immediately.

This assessment of the external assistance provided to each of the grantees will not only support the continued collective efforts of partners to attain desired student outcomes, but it will also provide the USBE grant specialists valuable data that could inform their identification of the “Approved External Technical Assistance Providers” for the next grant competition. As the USBE is tasked with maintaining this list of external organizations, it could prove challenging to have first-hand knowledge of the external providers' effectiveness in carrying out the responsibilities outlined in the original legislation. The analysis of their specific efforts and progress with each of the existing grantees would both inform future grant evaluations as well as provide helpful information to the USBE specialists in their facilitation of future PFSS grant competitions.

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<sup>3</sup> See SB67 legislation at <https://le.utah.gov/~2016/bills/static/SB0067.html>.

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## Appendix A. Grantee Logic Models<sup>4</sup>

Figure 9. Weber School District Logic Model for Roy High School Feeder Pattern



Figure 10. United Way of Northern Utah Logic Model for Ogden High School Feeder Pattern



<sup>4</sup> DIBELS is now Acadience and SAGE is RISE

Figure 11. United Way of Salt Lake City Logic Model for Cottonwood High School Feeder Pattern



Figure 12. United Way of Salt Lake City Logic Model for Kearns High School Feeder Pattern



Figure 13. Canyons School District Logic Model for Hillcrest High School Feeder Pattern

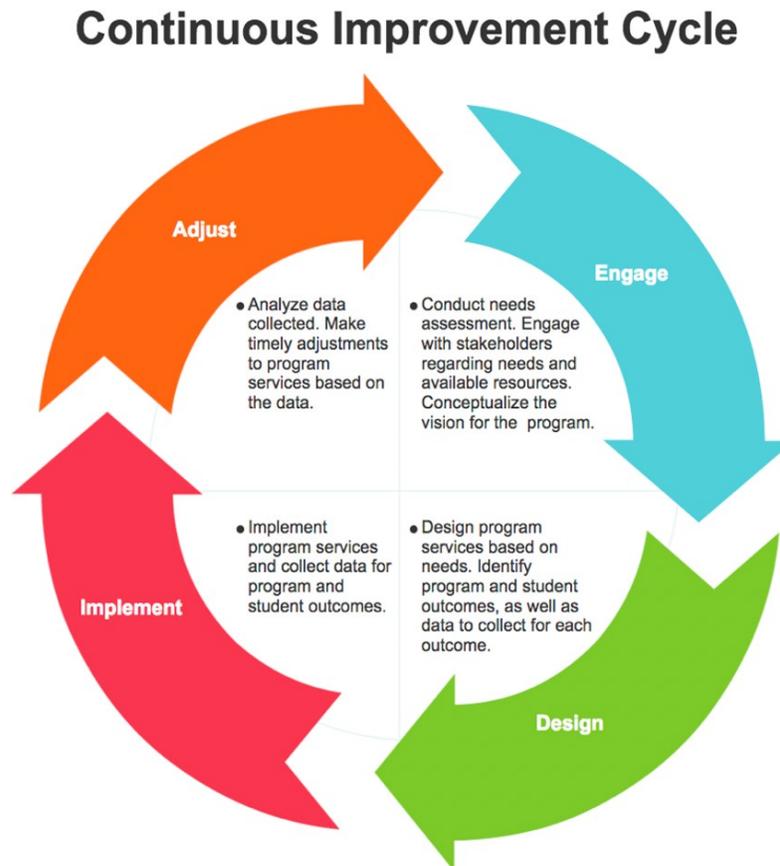


<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">High School Graduation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Boys &amp; Girls Club</li> <li>▶ Canyons School District</li> <li>▶ Canyons Education Foundation</li> <li>▶ International Rescue Committee</li> <li>▶ Larry H Miller Foundation</li> <li>▶ Latinos in Action</li> <li>▶ Midvale City</li> <li>▶ Promise Partnerships Regional Council</li> <li>▶ Salt Lake County Gov</li> <li>▶ Savage Services</li> <li>▶ Utah Afterschool Network</li> <li>▶ United Way of Salt Lake</li> <li>▶ Valley Behavioral Health</li> </ul>	<p>Afterschool Programs Address Chronic Absence Coaching and PD Credit Recovery Increase EL Proficiency Evidence-based Instruction Family &amp; Student Mental Health Individualized &amp; Scaffolded Student Supports Meet Family &amp; Student Critical Needs Mentoring Early Warning System Refugee Services Summer Programs Tutoring</p>	<p>AP &amp; IB Course Enrollment Rates School Attendance CAYCI Survey Results Diploma Credit Counts High School Graduation Rates WIDA Scores Increase School Connectedness Increase in diverse students enrolling in high level courses</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">College Attainment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Canyons School District</li> <li>▶ Canyons Education Foundation</li> <li>▶ International Rescue Committee</li> <li>▶ Larry H Miller Foundation</li> <li>▶ Latinos in Action</li> <li>▶ Midvale City</li> <li>▶ Promise Partnerships Regional Council</li> <li>▶ Sandy Area Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>▶ Salt Lake County Gov</li> <li>▶ Savage Services</li> <li>▶ University of Utah College of Education</li> <li>▶ University of Utah College of Social Work</li> <li>▶ Utah Afterschool Network</li> <li>▶ United Way of Salt Lake</li> </ul>	<p>Canyons District Programs College Information Meetings College Partnerships Concurrent Enrollment Participation Credit Recovery Programs FAFSA support Financial Literacy Nights Michigan College Readiness Program Support Campus Visits for diverse students Support Conference Attendance Support Meetings with College Mentors UCAA Participation Utah Futures</p>	<p>College Enrollment Rates USHE High School Feedback Report Participation in College Remediation Courses</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Career Readiness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Boys &amp; Girls Club</li> <li>▶ Canyons School District</li> <li>▶ Canyons Education Foundation</li> <li>▶ International Rescue Committee</li> <li>▶ Larry H Miller Foundation</li> <li>▶ Latinos in Action</li> <li>▶ Midvale City</li> <li>▶ Promise Partnerships Regional Council</li> <li>▶ Sandy Area Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>▶ Salt Lake County Gov</li> <li>▶ Savage Services</li> <li>▶ University of Utah College of Education</li> <li>▶ University of Utah College of Social Work</li> <li>▶ Utah Afterschool Network</li> <li>▶ United Way of Salt Lake</li> </ul>	<p>Align Family Learning Centers to Entrada Adult Education Coordinate with CTE Staff CTE Attendance Elementary Career Days</p>	<p>Adult Education Enrollment Rates CTE Course Participation CTE Completion Rates USHE High School Feedback Report</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Physical / Mental Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Boys &amp; Girls Club</li> <li>▶ Canyons School District</li> <li>▶ Canyons Education Foundation</li> <li>▶ Community Building Community ICHAMPS</li> <li>▶ International Rescue Committee</li> <li>▶ Larry H Miller Foundation</li> <li>▶ Latinos in Action</li> <li>▶ Midvale City</li> <li>▶ Midvale Road Home</li> <li>▶ Playworks</li> <li>▶ Promise Partnerships Regional Council</li> <li>▶ Sandy Area Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>▶ Salt Lake County Gov</li> <li>▶ Savage Services</li> <li>▶ Utah Afterschool Network</li> <li>▶ Utah Food Bank</li> <li>▶ Utah Health Policy Project</li> <li>▶ Utah Division of Substance Abuse &amp; Mental Health</li> <li>▶ United Way of Salt Lake</li> <li>▶ Valley Behavioral Health</li> </ul>	<p>Community Health Referrals Increase Participation in Extracurricular Activities Mobile Food Pantry Mobile Medical Clinic Mobile Vision Clinic Nutrition Education Playworks Coaches School-based Mental Health Support School Psychology Support School Social Work Support Weekend Food Backpack Program</p>	<p>CAYCI Survey Results Mobile Food Pantry Data Mobile Medical &amp; Vision Clinic Data Playworks Survey Results</p>

Figure 14. United Way of Northern Utah Logic Model for Ben Lomond High School Feeder Pattern

	Partners	Activities	Outcomes
Kindergarten Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Early Childhood Utah</li> <li>▶ Help Me Grow</li> <li>▶ OgdenCAN</li> <li>▶ Ogden School District</li> <li>▶ Parents as Teachers</li> <li>▶ United Way of Northern Utah</li> <li>▶ UpStart</li> <li>▶ YMCA of Northern Utah</li> <li>▶ Various</li> </ul>	Community Liasion Developmental Screenings (Children 0-3) Early Learning Coalitions Family Youth Specialists K-College and Career Team Partnership Coordinator Preschool Preschool Enrollment Programmer	Kindergarten Entry & Exit Profiles (KEEP) Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test
3rd Grade Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ OgdenCAN</li> <li>▶ Ogden School District</li> <li>▶ United Way of Salt Lake</li> <li>▶ United Way of Northern Utah</li> <li>▶ Other Partners</li> </ul>	Director of Community School Partnerships Family Youth Specialists K-College and Career Team Task Forces Partnership Coordinator Programmer	SAGE
3rd Grade Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ OgdenCAN</li> <li>▶ Ogden School District</li> <li>▶ United Way of Salt Lake</li> <li>▶ Other Partners</li> </ul>	Director of Community School Partnerships Family Youth Specialists K-College and Career Team Task Forces Programmer	SAGE
8th Grade Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ OgdenCAN</li> <li>▶ Ogden School District</li> <li>▶ United Way of Salt Lake</li> <li>▶ Weber State University</li> <li>▶ Other Partners</li> </ul>	Director of Community School Partnerships Family Youth Specialists K-College and Career Team Task Forces Transition Services Tutoring & Mentoring Programmer	SAGE
8th Grade Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ OgdenCAN</li> <li>▶ Ogden School District</li> <li>▶ United Way of Salt Lake</li> <li>▶ Weber State University</li> <li>▶ Other Partners</li> </ul>	Director of Community School Partnerships Family Youth Specialists K-College and Career Team Task Forces Transition Services Tutoring & Mentoring Programmer	SAGE
High School Graduation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ OgdenCAN</li> <li>▶ Ogden School District</li> <li>▶ United Way of Salt Lake</li> <li>▶ Other Partners</li> </ul>	Credit Recovery & Acceleration Director of Community School Partnerships Family Youth Specialists K-College and Career Team Task Forces Transition Services Programmer	High School Graduation Rates
College Attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Weber State University</li> </ul>	Opportunity Youth Navigator	WSU Enrollment
Career Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ OgdenCAN</li> <li>▶ Ogden School District</li> </ul>	Family Youth Specialists K-College and Career Team	ACT
Physical / Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Early Childhood Utah</li> <li>▶ Head Start</li> <li>▶ Help Me Grow</li> <li>▶ OgdenCAN</li> <li>▶ Ogden School District</li> <li>▶ Parents as Teachers</li> <li>▶ Prevent Child Abuse Utah</li> <li>▶ United Way of Northern Utah</li> <li>▶ UpStart</li> <li>▶ Weber Morgan Health Department</li> <li>▶ YMCA of Northern Utah</li> <li>▶ Various</li> </ul>	Community Liasion Developmental Screenings (Children 0-3) Early Learning Coalitions K-College and Career Team Preschool Preschool Enrollment Programmer	ASQ Developmental Screenings

## Appendix B. Continuous Improvement Cycle



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