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# Executive Summary: Northern Nevada Grade-Level Reading Coalition CSAP

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Facilitated by the  
United Way of  
Northern Nevada  
and the Sierra

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Assisted by DCA, Inc.  
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<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>BACKGROUND</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>COMMUNITY OVERVIEW</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>DATA</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>STRATEGY FRAMEWORK</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>IMPACT OBJECTIVES</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>STRATEGIES</b> .....	<b>7</b>
SUPPORTING FAMILY ENGAGEMENT .....	7
ENSURING CHILDREN BENEFIT FROM STRONG EARLY LITERACY SUPPORT SYSTEMS .....	9
PREVENTING CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM .....	11
ENHANCING SUMMER LEARNING .....	13
<b>CAMPAIGN STRUCTURE</b> .....	<b>15</b>
BACKBONE INSTITUTION .....	15
COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP GROUP/FUNDERS SUBCOMMITTEE .....	15
SUMMER LEARNING WORKING GROUP .....	16
ATTENDANCE/CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM WORKING GROUP .....	16
EARLY LEARNING AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT WORKING GROUP .....	16
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>17</b>

## Introduction

For most of 2017, leaders from throughout Northern Nevada joined together to create a regional coalition and a plan to ensure that children are literacy proficient by the end of grade three. In so doing, they set an ambitious, yet achievable near-term goal, harnessed an impressive array of local assets, aligned with major statewide early childhood literacy initiatives, and developed collaborative efforts to address the scale of need.

Equally important, these founding partners of the Northern Nevada Grade-Level Reading Coalition have launched a cause that is rapidly gathering momentum. During the final stages of launching this Community Solutions Action Plan (CSAP), additional individuals and groups continue to reach out to provide new ideas and suggest roles they may perform. These include new contacts for children with learning disabilities and foster children; new discussions with leaders in the faith-based communities, the National Civic League, arts groups, groups interested in enhancing literacy across all academic content and others.

As this emerging cause moves forward, we are expecting to continue to attract more partners that want to work together to further develop our strategies and leverage their efforts in support of children throughout the region. With this in mind, we view this CSAP as a living document that will evolve to embrace a growing and sustained partnership.

## Background

In **2014**, the United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra completed an in-depth review of the following questions: Should we devote our United Way entirely to the pursuit of a specific outcome? If so, what should that outcome be? The review resulted in a Board decision to focus the United Way's attention and resources on achieving a dramatic increase in children's literacy proficiency by the end of grade three.

The United Way invited funding proposals consistent with its new direction in **2014**. It applied the following criteria for its review: Initiatives should encompass an initial three-year period. They should involve networks of organizations working collaboratively toward measurable results in support of early childhood literacy development. They should have broad geographic reach. And the United Way's investment should be matched by additional funds raised by the grantees. The United Way's funding initiative supported four partnerships:

1. **The Northern Nevada Literacy Council**, located in a low-income area of North Reno, serves English language learners and adults seeking to earn a high school degree. A key aspect of their approach is family literacy – engaging children and their parents in simultaneous support for literacy development. These are based on well-tested strategies developed by the National Center for Family Learning as well as an award-winning program called Family Storyteller developed by the University of Nevada,

Reno. The Council expanded that program across Northern Nevada, partnering with community-based non-profits and libraries.

2. **Sierra Nevada Journeys** is dedicated to the advancement of STEM learning and is integrating early literacy development into its programming across programs for students and families. It is partnered with the Great Basin Institute, Desert Research Institute and Nevada Outdoor School to magnify its work in Reno throughout the region.
3. **The Wells Family Resource Center** works in partnership with Great Basin Community College, and the five-county library system to offer consistent, high quality literacy programming throughout this predominantly rural/frontier region.
4. A partnership of the region's five **Boys and Girls Clubs** uses a proven tool to assess children's reading proficiency prior to, and after, participating in literacy building programming. This has enhanced their ability to individualize assistance to the children they serve, identify those in need of the most intensive support, evaluate the overall strength of their programming, and report on their results.

These groups worked with the United Way to develop a learning cohort cluster model, looking for commonalities of challenges and then figuring out how to address them more effectively. Because rural resources are limited, it is essential to have a clear understanding of each community's unique culture, assets and challenges and to build strong relationships with those who can lead the work. The United Way's funded partners have done this through extensive legwork.

This work came at a time when the State of Nevada had made a major commitment in Spring 2015 to the same objective, led by Governor Brian Sandoval, the state legislature, and the Nevada Department of Education. The state's involvement included the development of a strategic plan, provision of new funding, establishment of common standards and assessment measures, retention measures and related support for struggling children, and an infrastructure to support instructional improvement in grades K-3.

In October **2015** the United Way hosted meetings involving their partnerships and numerous other private and public sector leaders concerned about advancing early childhood literacy in order to explore further collaboration. A number of attendees committed leadership, resources and aligned programs of their own. The meeting culminated in a shared vision for literacy's role in bettering lives for people in our region: adopting the slogan "Literacy is the Cure" for a kick-off event.

In a May **2016** the United Way convened a follow-up meeting, facilitated by DCA, Inc., for a deeper discussion of how to proceed further. The meeting resulted in agreement to pursue the possibility of participating in the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading. Subsequently, the United Way Board appropriated funds to engage DCA in determining the scope of the effort, building a Coalition, and developing a Community Solutions Action Plan.

## Community Overview

The Northern Nevada Grade-Level Reading Coalition will serve children and families in the following counties: Carson City, Churchill, Douglas, Elko, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, Lyon, Mineral, Pershing, Storey, Washoe and White Pine. This is a large geographic region that includes urban, suburban, frontier and Native American communities.

County <sup>1</sup>	Population	Median Age	Poverty Rate	Median Income	Employee Growth Rate
Carson City	54,482	43	16.8%	\$47,670	30.4%
Churchill	24,252	39	16%	\$47,415	-2.66%
Douglas	47,260	49	10.6%	\$58,535	-0.08%
Elko	51,562	33.5	11%	\$71,800	1.69%
Eureka	1,669	44	9.7%	\$60,250	-2.85%
Humboldt	17,067	35	10.5%	\$65,212	6.92%
Lander	5,946	37	11.5%	\$78,190	3.7%
Lyon	51,657	43	16.5%	\$47,255	1%
Mineral	4,566	49	20%	\$39,000	9.8%
Pershing	6,722	41	17.5%	\$45,230	2.3%
Storey	3,929	55	7.5%	\$64,830	-2.2%
Washoe	446,900	38	13.7%	\$56,380	5.0%
White Pine	9,974	39	11.5%	\$57,100	3.5%
TOTALS	676,329	41.9	13.3%	\$56,836	4.34%

Each of the 13 counties is served by their own school district. In addition, each county has its own library system with the exception of the Elko-Lander-Eureka Library System, which combines three counties.

Statewide, Nevada has been below average for national rankings on high school graduation and postsecondary participation. Of the 25 years and older population 15.4 percent has less than a high school degree, 28.7 percent has completed high school but not attended post-secondary education, 33.5 percent has completed some college or an associate's degree, and 22.4 percent possess a bachelor's degree or higher.<sup>2</sup>

The state and region was one of the hardest hit areas of the nation in terms of the economic impact of the Great Recession. However, there has been a strong recovery. Northern Nevada is expected to add around 50,000 jobs between 2014 and 2019, according to a report by the Economic Planning Indicator Committee. The companies boasting the highest number of new jobs for the region are in e-commerce. The region is struggling to provide the workers to meet this demand, in part because of low rates of educational attainment

<sup>1</sup> Source: Data USA

<sup>2</sup> Source: StatisticalAtlas.com

and because of a lack of affordable housing. Leaders in all sectors stated that enhancing early childhood literacy is a key strategy toward building a skilled workforce for the long-term.

## Data

As a result of Nevada’s Read By Grade Three legislation, there is now a statewide system of common assessment spanning kindergarten through grade three. There are regulations that adopt the MAP assessment tool (Measurement of Academic Progress) and there are shared statewide assessment tools for pre-k.

In K-12, there are tools to measure children’s literacy progress three times a year and a literacy baseline that went public in 2016. This will allow children’s proficiency to be tracked consistently down to the school level, providing a core measure on which to focus all efforts and pinpointing areas of greatest need.

**In 2015-16, with 92% of third graders (8,235) tested, the regional literacy proficiency rate was 48%.<sup>3</sup>**

<b>Third Grade Literacy Proficiency By County</b>				
<b>County<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>Number Enrolled, 2015-16</b>	<b>Number Tested</b>	<b>Percent Proficient</b>	<b>Percent NOT Proficient</b>
Carson City	618	570	51%	49%
Churchill	288	259	44%	56%
Douglas	416	295	58%	42%
Elko	797	732	44%	56%
Eureka	23	22	41%	59%
Humboldt	218	202	43%	57%
Lander	74	71	45%	55%
Lyon	671	617	44%	56%
Mineral	35	30	53%	47%
Pershing	50	46	35%	65%
Storey	27	25	44%	56%
Washoe	5,646	5,163	49%	51%
White Pine	117	103	26%	74%

<sup>3</sup> Source: CRT New NV Standards, Year 2015-2016, Grade 3

<sup>4</sup> Source: CRT New NV Standards, Year 2015-2016, Grade 3

Disaggregation reveals the following literacy proficiency rates for third graders across the 13-county region:

American Indian	29.6%	Black	28.5%
Hispanic	36.1%	White	60.2%
Two or More Races	54.9%	Asian	69.0%
Pacific Islander	45.1%	ELL	25.6%
		Non-ELL	53.3%

The United Way has assembled charts detailing the levels of third grade literacy proficiency for every elementary school in the region to be addressed by the Northern Nevada Grade-Level Reading Coalition.

In Washoe County, there is opportunity for a “best practice” data sharing approach. The School District has built reports that track at the student level what School-Family Partnership programming their families are involved in, identify families of high-risk students who haven't been engaged yet, and direct support as needed. The District is interested in enabling external organizations to share information with the District’s data system, an opportunity addressed by this CSAP.

Nevada is working on a statewide longitudinal data system beginning in early childhood with the support of Infinite Campus, which the Department of Education adopted in 2015. This may create opportunities to track the long-term impact of improving early childhood literacy rates.

## Strategy Framework

Between September and December 2016, DCA conducted a landscape assessment in preparation for the development of a Community Solutions Action Plan for the Northern Nevada region. The assessment involved extensive 1-1 discussions with regional leaders in the fields of child and family serving non-profits, public education, government, business, philanthropy, and media.

In January 2017, the United Way convened those who had expressed interest in being a part of the Grade-Level Reading Coalition. In a meeting facilitated by DCA, these early participants established a series of working groups to develop Coalition strategies and determine partner roles. Together, they determined the Northern Nevada Coalition will be based on the following construct:



Between February and May 2017, DCA facilitated meetings of working groups devoted to each area of strategic focus. In June 2017, the United Way and DCA convened all partners to review and approve the results.

## Impact Objectives

As indicated above, the overarching near-term goal is to increase end-of-third-grade literacy proficiency from 48 percent regionally to 75 percent by the end of the 2020 academic year. In pursuing this goal, the Coalition will focus particular attention on assisting children who are attending or living near the lowest performing schools in the region. The Coalition partners have agreed upon the following performance measures:

- Increase parent knowledge and engagement, with emphasis on those with children in lowest performing schools.
- Increase the number of families with home libraries and library cards for young children.
- Improve the percentage of children assessed as ready for kindergarten.
- Increase literacy proficiency rates of children in grades 1 and 2.
- Maintain or increase literacy proficiency over summer months as measured by end-of-grade scores and post-summer scores.
- Reduce the percentage of chronically absent first through third grade students in Washoe School District.

# Strategies

## Supporting Family Engagement

Families are the front line of our cause. But Grade-Level Reading Coalition partners say too many primary caregivers don't yet understand their essential role as their children's first teachers or how to perform it. In response, the United Way will lead a sustained communication effort targeted to parents and other immediate caregivers.

The Parent Engagement Working Group identified and established six objectives and related strategies led by individual members of the working group in collaboration with partners working in specific locations throughout the region. They include:

1. Increase the number of households with home libraries containing age-appropriate reading materials (led by the Northern Nevada Literacy Council).
2. By 2020 every birth to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade child and their parents will have a library card in Northern Nevada (led by the Washoe County Library with support and local leadership from member librarians in the Nevada Library Association in the participating counties).
3. Expand use of KNPB programming and resources that presently serve more than 25,000 students via its *Ready To Learn* program (there is an online resource library for teachers). KNPB will explore how to help Coalition partners use these resources and will intensify distance learning programming in order to serve children and families in the region's frontier counties.
4. Focus resources on lowest performing schools in Northern Nevada based on English Language Arts results from the 2017 Criterion Referenced Tests (CRT) and Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) proficiency measures administered by the Nevada Department of Education.
5. Set up an effective framework to replicate programs with demonstrated success in frontier counties and Native American lands with assistance from the Nevada Association of County Officials, and the Nevada Association of School Boards as local advocates and champions for children in both public schools and home school settings.
6. Recruit new partners to champion parent engagement in ZOOM schools, Title 1 schools, frontier and Native American communities. Advocate for more Zoom and Victory resources to be directed toward family engagement from the state level.
7. Expand Children's Cabinet *I'm Ready for K!* resource in all counties and tribal lands as a guide for pre-K teachers and parents with children entering kindergarten.

The robust Department of Family-School Partnerships of Washoe County School District is a potential national model. Its *Parent University* is a cornerstone, teaching literacy, math and study skills in an interactive approach and in multiple languages. A teacher on staff ensures that content aligns with classroom instruction. *Parent University Family Access Days* expose first generation families to the University and help them understand the path to college and careers.

Washoe's *Family-School Partnerships* program employs a model developed by West Ed: Academic Parent Teacher Teams. Three times a year, teachers meet with parents to review their children's progress and model literacy practices tied to their child's data. This helps families set goals and move their children toward them. The Family-School Partnerships Program will seek funding to grow the Academic Parent Teacher Teams and to create a parent leadership academy.

In addition, there are 33 schools participating in a Parent Teacher Home Visit Project, adopted from Sacramento, involving 500 teachers and support staff. They meet with parents to build trusting relationships focusing on their hopes and dreams and secondarily share information about their child's progress, strengths and needs in depth and plan paths forward in partnership with them. The Department builds the capacity of teachers to work with families through 15 hours of in-service training, and participates in "Saturday Cafes" – a professional learning structure for teachers.

The Coalition will help advocate to expand and disseminate successful programs within the Washoe County School District and introduce WCSD's and Informal Education Providers' family engagement approaches to school districts throughout the region.

The Northern Nevada Literacy Council's role is important from a number of standpoints: In addition to providing family literacy programming, it is modeling for teachers how to work with both parents and children (another potential opportunity to connect with Read By Grade Three training) and providing a combination of adult basic skills and job-specific skills training in partnership with local industries. This provides an avenue to bring employers into the cause.

Another significant focus will be on the United Way's **Born Learning** program. Born Learning puts easy-to-understand, research-driven resources into the hands of caregivers. These include educational materials and products that make it simple and easy for parents, grandparents, informal caregivers and professional child care providers to understand child development and use "everyday moments" to help children start school ready to succeed.

Building on existing efforts, the United Way will work with Coalition partners to distribute Born Learning toolkits to new parents, care givers, and family members of young children. These will include handouts containing facts and best practices for different ages and stages of a young child's life and ideas on using everyday moments to spark language and learning skills.

The United Way has also led the development of three Born Learning trails in Reno/Sparks – a series of interactive signs that offer fun, active learning activities that help caregivers create quality engagement opportunities when out on a stroll with their children. The United Way will engage Coalition partners in promoting the trails and encourage other communities in the region to adopt their own versions.

As a companion effort, the United Way will engage Coalition partners in promoting the Vroom app, which provides activities caregivers can do in daily life to nurture children’s brain and literacy development. The Children’s Cabinet and The Children’s Alliance are planning to promote Vroom, so there will be a leveraging benefit in incorporating this into the Grade-Level Reading Coalition. (It is approved as a tool by the national Campaign.)

Reaching families disconnected from early childhood systems, in urban settings and especially in the frontier counties, is a special challenge. In addition to Born Learning and Vroom promotion, PBSKids will intensify promotion of its hundreds of hours of learning programming for parents and children to learn together.

The Reno Housing Authority will also be an important Coalition partner to help low-income families provide learning support for their children. The agency will do so with a pilot project to provide out of school time programming two days a week at a public housing site. Beginning in August 2017 and continuing throughout the school year and summer through August 2018, the pilot will feature volunteers assisting children with reading, math and science with books and instructional resources provided by the Washoe County School District and age-appropriate books to help children build home libraries. In addition, Renown Health will conduct outreach to help families connect their children with health care and ensure that they benefit from Reach Out and Read. Learning from the pilot, the Housing Authority will expand it to other low-income housing settings.

Another key family engagement strategy is to introduce Reach Out and Read within Renown Health System and expand it throughout the region. Renown will focus Reach Out and Read initially on the pediatricians serving the 30% or so of its enrollees who are low-income on Medicaid, then expand to Hope Community and the Community Health Alliance and ultimately to all pediatricians in the Renown Health system. If achieved, Renown hopes that all private practice pediatricians will come on board, participate and support the program.

## **Ensuring Children Benefit From Strong Early Literacy Support Systems**

The Coalition will align with and advocate for statewide systems building in the early care and education arena. Leaders of this work – the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council, Nevada Department of Education and The Children’s Cabinet – are Campaign partners, represented on its Coalition Community Leadership Group and working groups.

Since 2014, The Early Childhood Advisory Council has focused on the following goals:

- *Improve early childhood program quality and outcomes for children.* This involves creating alignment between Nevada Early Learning District standards and academic content standards based on the Common Core. It also includes strengthening the continuum of quality learning opportunities from birth through grade three.
- *Increase the number of high-need children attending quality early learning and development programs.* The initial focus has been on coordinating data collection and using policies to align agency efforts.
- *Close the achievement gap between children with high needs and their peers by supporting efforts to increase kindergarten readiness.* To date, this has focused on increasing the capacity of pediatricians to screen children for developmental delays and to provide supporting information to parents – work that is still at an early stage.

The Children’s Cabinet provides statewide leadership in early childhood system improvement, resource and referral assistance, parenting guidance, and training to pre-K providers. The Children’s Cabinet has produced a report on early care and education and its economic impact in Nevada in collaboration with Insight Center for Community Economic Development. It makes a strong argument for setting goals and making progress on improving quality through teacher training, full funding for Nevada’s Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) and strengthening the Nevada ECE workforce with a living wage and incentives for continuing education. The report does an outstanding job of linking high quality ECE to current and future workforce and economic development – a central theme of focus for the Northern Nevada Grade-Level Reading Coalition.

The Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council is expanding its strategic plan to encompass a coordinated system of support for children birth through grade three, focusing on early learning and development, family support and child health. Family support may involve expanding use of the Head Start family engagement model and health strategies may include working toward universal child health screening and health care access. In early 2018 the Council will establish goals and strategies for their areas of focus.

The Grade-Level Reading Coalition will work to ensure that its strategies align and support this system building. It will also assist The Children’s Cabinet and Children’s Advocacy Alliance in advocating for supportive public sector policies and investments, as appropriate.

The Grade-Level Reading Coalition will also align with and support the Nevada Read By Grade Three initiative. SB 391, Nevada’s *Read by Grade Three Act*, became effective on July 1, 2015. This statute was designed to dramatically improve student achievement by ensuring that all students will be able to read proficiently by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. SB 391 requires all school districts and governing bodies of charter schools to develop locally based literacy plans aimed at improving the literacy of all K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade students. It also requires every K-3 site to designate a Reading Learning Strategist to oversee literacy-based professional learning activities.

SB 391 emphasizes the implementation of early intervention measures in reading achievement for all K-3 students who are determined to be struggling in reading. Every public and charter school site is required to conduct progress monitoring of the reading performance of all struggling students with assessments that have been approved by the Nevada State Board of Education through regulation.

In June 2016 the State Board selected the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment as the required Read by Grade 3 reading assessment to be utilized across all Nevada district and charter schools. All schools are required to use this assessment tool as of the 2017-2018 school year. For Kindergarten, the State Board approved the Brigance III Kindergarten Entry Assessment to serve as the required 30-day Kindergarten screener. Thus, for the first time in its history Nevada has a statewide literacy network grounded in common literacy data and a shared vocabulary.

The 2016-2017 school year served as a transition year for all K-3 public and charter programs across Nevada. The Nevada Department of Education is guiding local educators in making the transition to full implementation.

As a key component of this initiative, the Nevada Department of Education launched a major focus on educator training with a strong supporting infrastructure. The training program features an on-line training platform, regional meetings and a summer institute, focused on serving school-based educators. Topics include ensuring understanding of the state's literacy plan, providing effective instruction, assessing children's literacy proficiency, conducting data-informed decision making and working with parents and families. Coalition partners noted that if school and non-school professionals could learn together or at least receive similar training, this could have a powerful impact – creating more consistent quality, aligning efforts and building new school-community relationships. Such opportunities will be pursued as the Coalition progresses.

## Preventing Chronic Absenteeism

The Washoe County School District will take an initial lead role in reducing children's chronic absenteeism, under the management of its Intervention Department. The Department offers specialized services for students who are experiencing difficulties attending school, those who are habitually truant or who have dropped out, as well as support to the entire family unit. The department mission is to, "Ensure student success by removing barriers and building resiliency with families and children."

In the school year 2015-2016, 17 of the District's elementary schools reported a chronic absenteeism rate of 15% or higher and 3,355 of its total 64,000 students were confirmed truant by a school official or parent. The report demonstrated that the majority of students who engaged in truant behaviors or who were defined as chronically absent were low-income students or students of color, two populations who face various educational barriers.

The School District has the capacity to track absence issues in real time and its Intervention Department has a substantial infrastructure to reach out to youths and families experiencing difficulties and provide them with the support they need to reengage with school. However, the focus to date has been on middle and high school students.

As a result of the Grade-Level Reading Coalition planning process, the Intervention Department has added a focus on chronic early grade absenteeism to its existing efforts. The new approach will implement several practices across the district with a goal to decrease absenteeism in grades 1 through 3 during the school year of 2017-18:

- **General Practice:** The District will identify children experiencing chronic absenteeism district-wide and provide early intervention and enhanced resources to them and their families through an approach called Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS).
- **Trauma Informed Practice:** The District will implement trauma informed practice within a variety of educational settings across the district to include administrators, counselors, and teachers. The Intervention Department, in partnership with Counseling, MTSS, Equity and Diversity, and the PEACE (violence prevention) Project will work towards integrating concepts and strategies within current professional development opportunities to expand knowledge and tools to appropriately respond to behaviors associated with students who have experienced pervasive violence or trauma.
- **Elementary School/Early Intervention:** The Intervention Department will assign two of its Re-engagement staff to work with a total of 10 elementary schools identified as having the highest rates of chronic absenteeism. The specialists will work with school staff to identify students who are missing more than 5% of the school year. Once families of such children are identified, the specialist will reach out to them to develop an assessment to determine the reasons for the absences and provide differentiated support services and case management. In this way, the District will meet the unique needs of each family in order to improve attendance and access to resources. The Intervention Department will work in partnership with the Accountability Department to evaluate school-wide data such as attendance, discipline referrals, and grades. The case management procedures embed goal setting and collaborative evaluation and assessment of pre-determined goals.
- **Elementary Student Attendance Board,** an interdisciplinary group of professionals (Mental Health representative, MTSS Coach, Social Worker, Special education, Family Resource Center, Juvenile Justice etc.) will meet with students and their families experiencing serious challenges to develop action plans to address academics, social-emotional learning and the provision of community resources with goals of increasing rates of attendance, reducing tardiness, and improving school engagement. A case manager will then work in collaboration with each family to assist them in accessing resources, and will provide student mentoring and advocacy.

- **Attendance Messaging System Pilot:** The District will launch a pilot project to directly target elementary schools with a chronic absenteeism rate of 10% or higher. The messaging program will work within an existing automated Blackboard system to send attendance related text messages to parents. Text messages will discuss the importance of attendance and suggest strategies to develop good attendance habit early on in a student's educational career. An Elementary Re-engagement Specialist will also be available to provide case management services for parents who identify a need for additional support from outside agencies. The text messaging intervention has two stages; the first stage will take place in fall 2017 and the second stage in spring 2018.

The Intervention Department will work in partnership with the Accountability Department to evaluate school-wide data such as attendance, discipline referrals, and grades for those schools that are participating in the attendance messaging program. The case management procedures embed goal setting and collaborative evaluation and assessment of determined goals.

As the results of these practices emerge, the Washoe County School District's Intervention Department will network with other districts in the Northern Nevada region to promote the importance of solving chronic absenteeism, describe the District's approach, and report its impact. The goal will be to encourage others to adopt a focus on early grade chronic absenteeism and demonstrate effective approaches.

## Enhancing Summer Learning

The Summer Learning Working Group addressed the issues related to the "summer slide" and discovered that several successful programs are in place throughout the region that are in need of expansion, coordination and cross-promotion. The group identified two performance objectives:

- Reduce the number of children experiencing summer months as higher-risk period of challenges to good nutrition, fitness and learning.
- Recruit, train and support parent facilitators and teachers to disseminate effective summer programs and training to all Northern Nevada counties and Native American lands.

A critical step to reach more families with summer learning and out of school time programs is to strengthen existing partnerships and recruit new partners with greater reach in frontier counties and Native American communities. To do so, the Grade-Level Reading Coalition will:

1. Form a durable Summer Learning Collaborative among Northern Nevada Literacy Council (NNLC), NV State Library Association, Boys & Girls Clubs of Truckee Meadows (BGCTM), UWNNS, Sierra Nevada Journeys, UNR Extension Service, and The Children's Cabinet, and new partners.

2. Recruit leadership of Migrant Seasonal Head Start, Washoe Tribe Head Start, Hawthorne Consolidated Services, Northern Nevada Food Bank, the Reno Housing Authority, the Reno Field Office of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Great Basin College to join the collaborative.
3. Recruit northern county champions through NV Association of County Officials (NACO) and NV Association of School Boards (NASB).

Programmatically, the Summer Learning Working Group identified nine existing programs or approaches that can be more widely disseminated by the Summer Learning Collaborative with funding assistance, and involvement by new partners with staff and locations in frontier counties. These include:

1. Expand BGCTM summer learning Reading A – Z, tutor training and books availability to Ely and White counties.
2. Expand NNLC *Family Reading Program* sessions at Sparks, Sierra View, Traneer, Mineral County and Washoe downtown libraries.
3. Extend invitation to all county libraries to join Washoe County Library partnership with Reno Aces summer reading recognition program.
4. Mobilize funding resources for staff support for Washoe County’s summer book distribution program and frontier partnership with NNLC.
5. Explore expansion of NNJ *Summer Wide Range* program for special needs children.
6. Invite all Northern Nevada libraries to partner and replicate summer programs like 2017 *Build A Better World*.
7. Expand viewership and utilization of KNPB’s *Summer Adventure* video programs that are offered in English and in Spanish throughout the region that were developed by PBS Kids for nationwide use. Regionally, KNPB offers local programs called Summer Adventure Around the Corner that provide in-person distribution of books, guides and video for parents and children.
8. Disseminate training on reading assessment programs to all schools and pre-k providers (San Diego Quick Assessment, Qualitative Spelling Inventory (QSI) or Community Connections.

The Summer Learning Working Group agreed to collaborate on the formation of a sustainability plan and budget for local, regional, state and local partners to review and consider to collaborate on grant applications, leverage distribution channels, and co-promote in the Spring of each year to help parents understand the resources available to them.

# Campaign Structure

## Backbone Institution

In the ideal, the United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra will serve as the initial backbone organization for the Coalition for at least its first two years. This will involve the following responsibilities:

- Managing the Coalition’s communications strategy
- Convening and facilitating the Coalition’s Community Leadership Group
- Convening and facilitating strategy working groups to ensure effective follow-through and coordination of strategy implementation
- Raising funds on behalf of the Coalition and assisting partners, as needed, in securing funding for their roles

The United Way board has voted to designate initial funding for a full-time, senior-level Coalition Manager. The Grade-Level Reading Coalition manager will be a member of the staff of the United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra and report to its CEO.

When the Coalition is fully established, the United Way may transfer its backbone role to another Coalition partner organization. If so, that process will be undertaken with full involvement of Coalition partners.

## Coalition Leadership Group/Funders Subcommittee

The Coalition Leadership Group will provide strategic oversight, advocacy and communications support, and resource development support. In the latter role, it will include a funders subcommittee whose members will treat the Coalition as a high priority for their own funding. They and all Coalition Leadership Group members will assist as needed in securing funding for the Coalition. This may involve participating in briefings and other meetings with regional philanthropists, foundations and corporations and opening doors to new prospective funders.

The Coalition Leadership Group will perform a lead role in reporting Coalition progress publicly. In addition, it will receive and review progress reports from each of the Coalition’s strategy groups and offer guidance and other assistance as needed. In some instances, they may be called upon to assist in advocacy for supportive public sector policies and they will be asked to promote the Coalition within their individual circles of influence.

The Coalition Leadership Group will appoint co-chairs who will work with the Coalition manager to plan, convene and facilitate meetings and manage member involvement. The Coalition Leadership Group will meet quarterly and members will be available to meet and provide assistance individually, as needed.

## **Summer Learning Working Group**

The Summer Learning Working Group will be responsible for planning implementation and reporting of the Coalition's summer learning strategies as described in this CSAP. The Group will select a chair or co-chairs that will work with the Grade-Level Reading Coalition Manager to schedule, plan, host and facilitate meetings.

Meetings will take place at least once every two months (potentially monthly during the spring and summer months) and will be devoted primarily to planning and monitoring strategy implementation; participation in the Coalition's communications efforts; and assessing impact. The Summer Learning Working Group will report its progress and its funding needs to the Coalition Leadership Group.

## **Attendance/Chronic Absenteeism Working Group**

The Attendance Working Group will be responsible for planning implementation and reporting of the Coalition's strategies to reduce chronic absenteeism as described in this CSAP. The Group will be chaired by Rechelle Murrillo, Coordinator of the Washoe County School District (WCSD) Intervention Department and composed of WCSD staff and community partners involved in the implementation of the Department's chronic absenteeism strategies. They will report their progress to the Washoe County School District and to the Coalition Leadership Group.

## **Early Learning and Family Engagement Working Group**

The Early Learning and Family Engagement strategies have been combined under one working group that will be responsible for strategy planning, implementation and reporting. The Early Learning and Family Engagement Working Group will select a chair or co-chairs that will work with the Grade-Level Reading Coalition Manager to schedule, plan, host and facilitate meetings.

Meetings will take place at least once every two months and will be devoted primarily to planning and monitoring strategy implementation; participation in the Coalition's communications efforts; and assessing impact. The Early Learning and Family Engagement Working Group will report its progress and its funding needs to the Coalition Leadership Group.

## Conclusion

This is an era of remarkable opportunity to make lasting gains in early childhood literacy throughout Northern Nevada. There is statewide public sector leadership, action and investment focused on achieving third grade reading proficiency. Regional leaders share that commitment to progress, recognizing the enormous economic and social benefits to success. Most important, there are outstanding resources already in place to support Grade-Level Reading Coalition strategies and an enthusiastic willingness to partner in achieving significant outcomes.

The region's Community Solutions Action Plan and supporting Grade-Level Reading Coalition is structured to make the most of these assets. While the focus is on a near-term goal – ensuring that 75% of Northern Nevada third graders are literacy proficient by 2020 – there is a commitment to build upon that progress and sustain it over the long term. With that in mind, this CSAP should be viewed as a living document that will continue to evolve in response to future challenges and opportunities.

