



2023 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT



The Power of Collaboration: Uniting
the Private and Public Sectors to
Propel Kenosha Forward, Together.

MESSAGE
FROM THE
EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR



BUILDING OUR
FUTURE TEAM

(pictured below, left to right)
Tatjana Bicanin, Executive Director;
Lawrence Kirby, Community
Engagement Network Manager;
Kevin Meagher, Data Manager;
Felicia Dalton, Director of
Strategic Initiatives

Dear Friends,

In 2023, Building Our Future achieved significant milestones centered on advocacy, scaling effective strategies, and enhancing our partners' capabilities through continuous improvement. Our commitment to connecting people, organizations, ideas, and resources continues to boost our community, with an emphasis on data sharing, collaboration, training, and shared goals as fundamental pillars of our approach.

Our Smart Beginnings Network organized impactful advocacy efforts, championing child care support and education. From voicing concerns in listening sessions with Governor Evers to actively participating in events like **"Day Without Child Care,"** our network partners embodied the power of advocacy in safeguarding the future of Kenosha's children.

In the realm of education, our community partners dedicated themselves to ensuring every child in our community can read and succeed. The establishment of an early-literacy steering committee marks a pivotal step in understanding literacy challenges, identifying solutions for caregivers, and underscoring the profound benefits of literacy for children and families.

Building on our commitment to continuous improvement, 2023 saw the launch of the third iteration of the Continuous Improvement Cohort, uniting teams from Kenosha County's youth-and family-serving organizations. This initiative propels us forward on the path to building better student outcomes and removing barriers hindering every child, young adult, and family from realizing their full potential.

Remaining steadfast in our commitment to empower underserved communities, we rebranded our monthly gathering from CommUNITY Conversations to the Collaborative Community Network in 2023. This change underscores our collective-action approach and reinforces our dedication to amplifying voices through collaboration.

As you explore the details of our 2023 Annual Impact Report, let us collectively celebrate our successes, learn from our challenges, and continue to pave the way for a brighter future. **Building Our Future is more than a name; it is a promise and a commitment to creating better outcomes for all young people in Kenosha County.**

Thank you for being instrumental in our shared mission. Together, we are actively shaping a future filled with limitless potential.



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DATA SNAPSHOT

Outcome	Network	Indicator	Baseline Year	Change from Baseline	Current Value
KINDERGARTEN READINESS	SMART BEGINNINGS	Social Problem Solving	2020	-2%	87%
		Persistence	2020	-1%	93%
		Attends and Engages	2020	-1%	91%
		Managing Emotions	2020	-2%	93%
		Children Living w/ Food Insecurity	2018	-3%	13%
		Clinical Care Ranking	2020	+4	48 / 72 counties
SCHOOL SUCCESS	EARLY GRADE READING	Percent of third-graders proficient in reading	2016	-9%	36%
	FUTURE FOCUS	Percent of eighth-graders proficient in math	2016	-10%	24%
HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION	FUTURE FOCUS	4-year high school graduation rate	2015	+1%	89%
POST-SECONDARY ACCESS & COMPLETION	EQUITABLE ENROLLMENT COLLABORATIVE	Enrollment in first fall after high school	2016	-12%	43%
	LUMINA TALENT HUB, HERA	Percent of population ages 25-64 with a post-secondary credential	2016	+5%	40%
EMPLOYMENT	FUTURE FOCUS	Unemployment rate in Kenosha County	2015	-2%	3%

Data Notes and Sources: Social Problem Solving, Persistence, Attends and Engages, Managing Emotions: Teaching Strategies GOLD data self reported and provided by KUSD Early Learning and Westosha Head Start programs representing the percentage of children meeting or exceeding expectations in Spring 2023. | Children Living with Food Insecurity: Feeding America, Map the Meal Gap (2021): <https://bit.ly/3GSxhs3> | Clinical Care Ranking: A ranking of Kenosha compared to Wisconsin's 71 other counties and tribes. University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute (2023). Clinical Care Ranking. Kenosha data: <https://bit.ly/4100YTn> | Early Grade Reading, Eighth Grade Math: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Download type: Forward, forward_certified_2022-23.zip <https://bit.ly/2KEnBnU> | High School Graduation Rate, Enrollment in First Fall after High School: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Download type: High School Completion, hs_completion_certified_2021-22.zip, Postsecondary Enrollment, postsecondary_enrollment_current_2021-22.zip, <https://bit.ly/2KEnBnU> | Postsecondary Access & Completion: U.S. Census Bureau (2022). ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables: S1501 - Educational Attainment. Population 25+ with Associate's, Bachelor's, or Graduate/Professional degree. <https://bit.ly/3qcgqoZ> | Employment: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (2022). Tables: Labor Force Data by County, 2022 annual averages. <https://www.bls.gov/lau/home.htm#cntyaa>

SCAN HERE >
for more info
about our data
dashboards



SMART BEGINNINGS

Nurturing Futures: Smart Beginnings Network in Advocacy and Scaling What Works



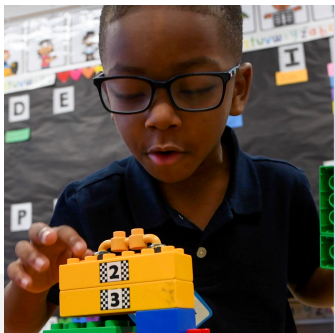
Smart Beginnings At A Glance:

- > 27 Network Partners (Private and Public)
- > Smart Beginnings Network Meets Monthly (12 meetings per year)
- > 1,670 Kindergarten Readiness materials distributed in Kenosha

SCAN HERE >
to access
Kindergarten
Readiness
materials



VISION



All children in Kenosha County enter Kindergarten ready to learn on the first day of school.



To see more data on Kindergarten Readiness in Kenosha, < SCAN HERE

BRIGHTSPOT: Wisconsin Early Education Shared Services Network (WEESSN)

The Southeastern Wisconsin Child Care Workforce Coalition led by Building Our Future laid the groundwork to invest in and align child care supports by supporting the expansion of the Wisconsin Early Education Shared Services Network (WEESSN) to the region in late 2021. Through WEESSN, child care providers can access resources, knowledge, and expertise to build their capacity, stabilize their operations, and improve the quality of care for children and families. The network also fosters a community of practice among child care professionals, enabling them to share best practices, learn from each other, and advocate for their needs. WEESSN is a leader in early childhood shared services and a great partner for systems change in Kenosha County.

Child Care Providers receiving support from WEESSN in...

...2022

49

...2023

60

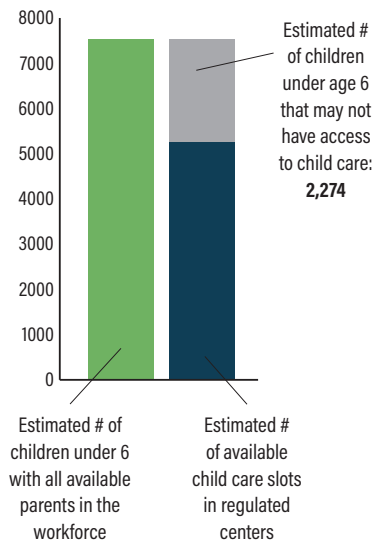
Data Notes and Sources for graphs on page 5: Child Care Availability in Kenosha County; Estimated # of Children Under 6 with all available parents in the workforce; U.S. Census Bureau (2022). ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables: B23008 <https://bit.ly/48RM3M1>, Estimated # of Child Care slots in regulated centers; Wisconsin Department of Children and Families Licensed and Regulated Child Care Directories <https://bit.ly/3Saulqu> | Median Household Income by Race: U.S. Census Bureau (2022). ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables: S1903 <https://bit.ly/480IXlg>, Infant Child Care Costs: Wisconsin Department of Children and Families Market Rate Survey; data not publicly available

ADVOCACY

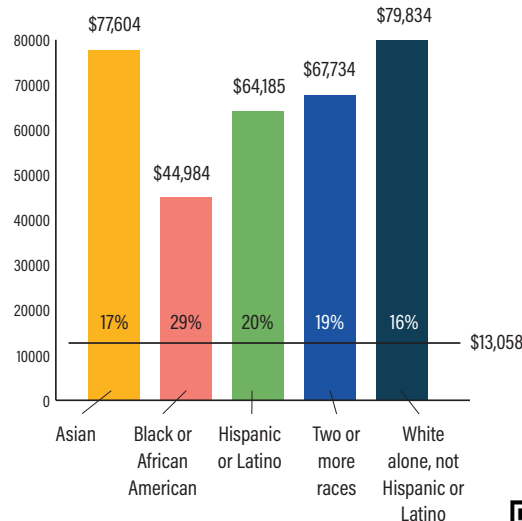
The Smart Beginnings Network advocated for increased funding, especially for low-income families, through initiatives like Child Care Counts. **As an emergency response to the pandemic, Child Care Counts secured over \$308M, stabilizing 4,248 child care providers, retaining 22,000 jobs, and supporting 113,000 children.** Facing an uncertain future during state budget discussions, a coalition strategically engaged stakeholders. Smart Beginnings Network members advocated to Governor Evers during listening sessions and engaged key legislators like Representative Tip McGuire from the Joint Finance Committee. Events like “Day Without Child Care” showcased the essential role of early childhood care and education.

Why advocate for Child Care?

Child Care Availability in Kenosha County
(2022 Estimate)



Median Household Income by Race compared to the
Annual Cost of Infant Child Care in Kenosha (\$13,058)



Infant care costs \$13,058 in Kenosha County. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, child care is affordable if it costs no more than 7% of a family's income. For families in Kenosha, it's closer to 20% and much higher when disaggregated by race. For example, the median income for Black or African American households is \$44,984. For those families, infant care would be almost 4X greater than the recommended guidelines.

Help Me Grow

SCAN HERE >
to read more about Help Me Grow



Despite emergency funding to support Child Care centers during the pandemic, there were still potentially 2,274 children under the age of 6 without access to Child Care in Kenosha. With the expiration of Child Care Counts funding, that number could grow even more.

Help Me Grow (HMG) in Kenosha is a cost-free resource, offering a comprehensive system for early identification and referrals to families. The program integrates an advanced data system for Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3 and ASQ: Social-Emotional) screenings. With a full-time Help Me Grow navigator actively promoting ASQ screenings, the initiative connects families with resources not typically accessible through hospitals or other healthcare agencies. Housed in the Kenosha Achievement Center, HMG operates as a centralized data hub, overcoming previous silos within Early Childhood Education (ECE) providers. In its inaugural year, HMG successfully connected parents with providers, leading to a significant increase in available ASQ data. Moving into 2024, the Smart Beginnings Network plans to develop strategies for supporting our birth-to-five population based on insights from a more reliable ASQ dataset.

Families enrolled

392

Children receiving one or more ASQ-3 and/or ASQ-SE screenings

672

Providers submitting ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE Data

7

Touchpoints w/ Families

800+

Help Me Grow provides a central hub connecting resources and services for families bridging the cracks many would otherwise fall through.

— Dr. Diane Gerlach, Pediatrician, Advocate Aurora Health

PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION

Early Grade Reading Initiatives for Lasting Change

Building Our Future is committed to ensuring all children in our community have the opportunity to read and succeed. In 2021, we recognized the need for additional literacy support in our local schools, especially after the pandemic disrupted the learning of many students. That is why we partnered with **Wisconsin Reading Corps, a nationally replicated, evidence-based program that trains and places tutors in elementary schools to work one-on-one with students who need extra help with reading.** This collaboration has provided four KUSD elementary schools with tutors, yielding improvements in the reading skills and confidence of their students.

VISION



All students in Kenosha County complete third grade reading at grade level.

Reading Corps At A Glance:

183 students have received tutoring support at six Kenosha county elementary schools (Frank, Brass, Jefferson, Somers, Grewenow, Silver Lake). Each of those students are averaging 60.9 minutes of tutoring every week. Of those students, 78.5% or 115 are exceeding their targeted growth.

The Reading Corps tutors have provided an equal “oar in the water” as an integral part of our Jefferson Crew! The Tier 2 literacy interventions have challenged our students to grow their skills in reading and, most importantly, their confidence that they are readers. — Kristy Makowka, Interim Principal, Jefferson Elementary

Wisconsin Act 20 made several comprehensive updates to literacy instruction in the state, designed to help improve reading and literacy outcomes for K-12 students. The 2023-2025 biennial budget supports the bill with a \$50 million investment to support districts as they work to improve outcomes for students.

Third-Grade Reading Proficiency as Measured by the Wisconsin Forward Exam for All Kenosha County Public Schools

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Black	20%	13%	No test	4%	5%	10%
Hispanic	27%	27%	No test	13%	13%	22%
White	48%	48%	No test	35%	42%	47%
Non-Economically Disadvantaged	53%	53%	No test	41%	45%	48%
Economically Disadvantaged	25%	25%	No test	13%	18%	23%



Data Notes and Sources: Third Grade Reading Proficiency: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Download type: Forward, forward_certified_2022-23.zip <https://bit.ly/2KENbNU>

BUILDING A BETTER TOMORROW

Our Commitment to Continuous Improvement

In June 2023, BOF launched its third iteration of the Continuous Improvement Cohort with teams from Kenosha Area Family and Aging Services (KAFASI), Women and Children's Horizons, and the LGBT Center of SE Wisconsin. The cohort — spanning nine sessions, eight team-coaching sessions, and approximately 24 hours of training and guided work — applied principles from the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Results Count framework, StriveTogether's Collaborative Improvement cycle, and other tools.

Teams identified desired outcomes for their clients, utilizing data, root-cause analysis, effective feedback, and strategy development to create measurable and equitable plans. Working collaboratively across programs within their agencies, teams engaged in constructive discussions to improve service delivery.

At the cohort's conclusion, each team gained valuable insights into better serving Kenosha's most vulnerable populations and set actions to change their systems:

- > The LGBT Center of SE Wisconsin team developed a plan to rebalance their workload so more time was spent on community outreach and personal connections, and less on administrative tasks.
- > KAFASI's team created sub-committees to establish an agency-wide policy for tabling at events, developing their elevator pitch, and increasing staff's cultural competence.
- > Women and Children's Horizons reallocated funds to support staff DEI training, and targeted community outreach and support groups for their most marginalized clients



Participating in the cohort has already led to better outcomes for our clients. For all of our clients, the agency is more intentional and thoughtful about the services we provide, when and how we provide them.

— **Jennifer Paine, Executive Director at Women and Children's Horizon**

Partner Coaching: Kenosha Fire Department

From 2022 to 2023, Building Our Future provided coaching to the Kenosha Fire Department, fostering a more diverse and inclusive organizational culture. The initiative focused on two key objectives: Establishing a workforce that reflects the Kenosha community and retaining a diverse team.

Total applications increased by 25%, with a noteworthy surge in applications from female candidates (32%), African American applicants (79%), Latino applicants (43%), and applicants of two or more races (56%). Subsequent interviews led to the selection of 30 candidates, of which 13 were females and minorities.

This involved identifying barriers to diverse recruitment, improving communication with potential candidates, advocating for diversity to elected officials, and launching targeted marketing campaigns.

To ensure retention, Building Our Future assisted in developing a comprehensive Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) plan, revising biased practices, evaluating the department's cultural climate, and addressing resistance to DEI initiatives.

In addition to coaching, Building Our Future provided real-time data and feedback mechanisms to support the department's equity initiatives. The Diversity Committee received essential resources and community connections, enabling comprehensive action. This sustained support led to significant improvements in the 2023 hiring process, with a 25% increase in total applications and notable surges in applications from underrepresented groups.

When we started the committee, we were all super passionate, but we didn't have a lot of direction. BOF was able to come in and direct our thoughts. — **Captain Tim Lewis**

PARTNERING TO CREATE CHANGE

Collaborative Community Network

Building Our Future is committed to empowering underserved communities, amplifying their voices through collaboration. In 2023, we rebranded our monthly gathering from CommUNITY Conversations to the **Collaborative Community Network (CCN)**, emphasizing our collective-action approach.

CCN meetings feature three key components:

- > **Community Spotlight:** Highlighting organizations, this segment fosters resource sharing, addresses challenges, and encourages collaborative problem-solving.
- > **Neighborhood School Update:** Building leaders from local public schools share successes and challenges, inviting community input for real-time problem-solving.
- > **Action Commitments:** Each meeting concludes with concrete steps toward positive change, demonstrating our dedication to community improvement.

Join us at the Wilson Heights CCN every fourth Wednesday and the Lincoln Park CCN every fourth Thursday of each month as we work together for a better future.

BRIGHTSPOTS

In August 2023, Joel Kaufmann, Principal of Brass Community School, addressed attendance challenges at our Lincoln Park/Uptown CCN gathering. Recognizing the commuter nature of Brass School, with students residing within 2 miles and ineligible for district busing, our network took action.

Inspired by the school's presentation, the network initiated a Walking School Bus project, mobilizing volunteers to strategically and safely walk students to school. Collaborating with community partners like the Kenosha Police Department and Congregations United To Serve Humanity (CUSH) — and with support from The United Way of Racine County, which actively operates walking school buses — we're set to launch a pilot at Brass School this spring. Our goal is to scale the program in the 2024-2025 school year.

SCAN HERE >
to listen to
the BOF podcast
about Walking
School Bus



VISION



To be a model community that builds partnerships through awareness, trust, and relationships to support the success of children and families.

The Kenosha Police Department is excited to partner with Building Our Future & KUSD to help create a Walking School Bus Program. This program aligns with our department's commitment to enhancing neighborhood safety and increasing community engagement. By emphasizing the importance of school attendance, we can demonstrate our investment in our community's youth by helping to increase school attendance. Collaborations like these are important in moving communities forward together. — Chief Patton

BRIGHTSPOTS

Last spring in our Wilson Heights CCN gathering, we organized a home-buying workshop with local community partner Chase Bank to help neighborhood families find pathways to home ownership. Fifteen families attended the bilingual gathering to learn how to access resources, programs, and loan opportunities to purchase their first homes.

In addition to the home-buying workshop, we explored the differences between parent involvement and parent engagement according to the Annie E. Casey Foundation's model. This included the Kenosha Unified School District's Community School Relations Coordinator engaging this network in a series of gatherings where parents shared their challenges navigating their children's school and identified the barriers that prevent parents from engaging with schools in meaningful ways.

From being someone who sat timid and passive to becoming the one who raises her hand first, Youth Voice Project has created a space for me to find my best qualities. Building Our Future proved that leaders are made not born.
— Destiny Garcia

Youth Voice Project

In 2023, Building Our Future continued its commitment to engaging high school students through the Youth Leadership Cohort. This initiative provided sophomores, juniors, and seniors with the opportunity to actively shape decisions impacting their lives. Students led and participated in projects, gaining practical skills such as conflict resolution, continuous improvement, organizing, and event planning. Empowered by the program, students designed projects to raise awareness about causes they were passionate about. The culmination of their efforts was a youth-led Community Town Hall Forum, featuring a panel discussion with School Board candidates. The students crafted insightful questions, aiding voters in making informed decisions about the candidates' platforms.

2023 Collaborative Community Network At A Glance

- > Total Attendees: 110
- > Total Organizations: 56
- > Total CommUNITY Spotlights: 10
- > Action Commitments Made: 29

SCAN HERE >
to watch the 2023
Youth-Led School Board
Candidate Forum:



Black Student & Family Network

Concerns about the success of African American students led us to convene a group of over 30 African American community members, educators, business owners, nonprofits, politicians, activists, and community leaders to deeply explore the root causes and create a plan to help families. Currently, the Black Student & Families Network meets monthly and is actively engaged in developing strategies aimed at improving third-grade reading scores among African American students, addressing the identified disparities and fostering a more equitable educational environment.



Equitable Enrollment Collaborative

In June 2023, BOF initiated the Equitable Enrollment Collaborative (EEC) in partnership with Higher Expectations of Racine County, Gateway Technical College, University of Wisconsin-Parkside, Carthage College, Racine Unified School District, and Kenosha Unified School District. This collective set a bold goal that aims to achieve a 62% post-secondary enrollment rate for high school completers in our region by the fall of 2028, with the additional goal of eliminating persistent equity gaps in enrollment by 2030.

In October 2023, we hosted our inaugural FAFSA summit in collaboration with RUSD and KUSD high school staff. The summit addressed changes to the FAFSA application, presented data on completion rates, and fostered the development of strategies to boost FAFSA completion in participating high schools. The EEC is actively working to devise and implement effective strategies to achieve our ambitious goals and enhance outcomes for our students.



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Crystal Callahan
Co-Trustee, The
Callahan-Palmer
Trust

John Jansen
Director, Kenosha
County
Department of
Human Services

Jeffrey Weiss
Superintendent
of Schools,
Kenosha Unified
School District

**Tamarra
Coleman**
Executive
Director,
Shalom Center

John Swallow
President,
Carthage College

Nicole Ryf
President,
Kenosha Area
Business Alliance



Osmar Aguilar
Executive Director,
Youth For Christ

Mitch Ferraro
Owner, Family
Legacy Real Estate

Karla Krehbiel
Regional President,
Johnson Financial
Group

Lynn Akey
Chancellor,
University of
Wisconsin-Parkside

Carolynn Friesch
CEO, United Way of
Kenosha County

Patrick Langston II
Senior Financial
Analyst, Namera

John Antaramian
Mayor, City of
Kenosha

Nicholas Galich
Staff Vice President
Administration,
Froedtert South

Jake McGhee
Vice President,
Chief Philanthropy
Officer, Jockey
International, Inc.

Tracy Bagan
Senior Operations
Manager, Amazon

Jeff Hill
Regional President,
Herzing University
Kenosha & Madison
Campuses

Carli McNeill
Deputy District
Attorney, Kenosha
County

Todd Battle
Director of Industrial
Investment, Zilber
Property Group

**Yolanda Jackson-
Lewis**
Coordinator of
Diversity/Student &
Family Engagement,
Kenosha Unified
School District

Crystal Miller
Chief Executive
Officer, Frontida
Management Group

Barbara Brattin
Director, Kenosha
Public Library
System

Donna Jamieson
President, Aurora
Medical Center
Kenosha

Jean Moran
Founding Executive
Sponsor of Building
Our Future

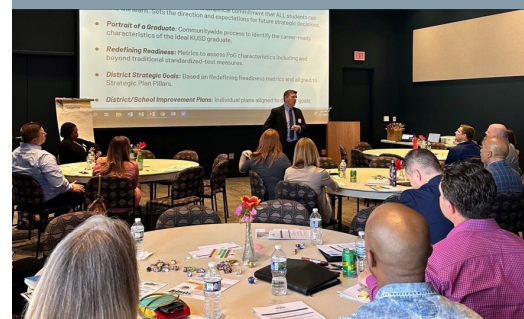
Gil De Las Alas
Chief Human
Resources Officer,
Uline

**Samantha
Kerkman**
County Executive,
Kenosha County

JP Moran
President/CEO,
LMI Packaging
Solutions

Nick Drummer
Director Human
Resources, Industrial
Division, Snap-on
Incorporated

LEADERSHIP TABLE



Brandon Morris
Vice President,
Evolution
Basketball, Inc.

Tara Panasewicz
CEO, Boys & Girls
Club of Kenosha

Ritu Raju
President, Gateway
Technical College

Robert Terwall
Founder, Hallum
Enterprises

Chris Weyker
CEO, KAC

INVESTING IN CHANGE

These dedicated funders invest in our core operations and systems strategies in order to ensure economic vitality and prosperity for all children in Kenosha County, cradle through career.



Kloss Charitable Foundation

Individual donors: Jean Moran, Shirley A. Duncan, John & Cameron Swallow.

A special thank you to Kenosha Unified School District which provided many of the photos throughout this report.

LEVELS OF GIVING

Investments in Building Our Future's work help us leverage more public and private resources to advance equitable outcomes across the community. **If you would like to support the work of BOF, please reach out to Executive Director Tatjana Bicanin at tbicanin@buildingourfuturekc.org.**

LEVEL	AMOUNT
Platinum Level	\$100,000 and up
Gold Level	\$50,000-\$99,999
Silver Level	\$30,000-\$49,999
Bronze Level	\$15,000-\$29,999
Trailblazer	\$10,000-\$14,999
Pioneer	\$9,999 and under





OUR MISSION

Together we will engage our community to provide an environment in which all contribute and excel.

OUR VISION

Everyone achieving personal potential from cradle to career.



SCAN
HERE >
to visit
our
website!



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