

**Asheville Buncombe**  
**United for Youth Network**  
**Partnership Agreement**

United for Youth is a multigenerational, cross-sector, cradle to career partnership built on the foundational principle that **“Equity and Educational Excellence are Inseparable.”**

Together, with youth and family leadership, we work to ensure educational outcomes are determined by the high quality of our schools and partner organizations, the abundance and accessibility of opportunities in our community, the strength of our collaborations, and never again predictable based on a student’s race, home language, family income, or any other dimension of identity.

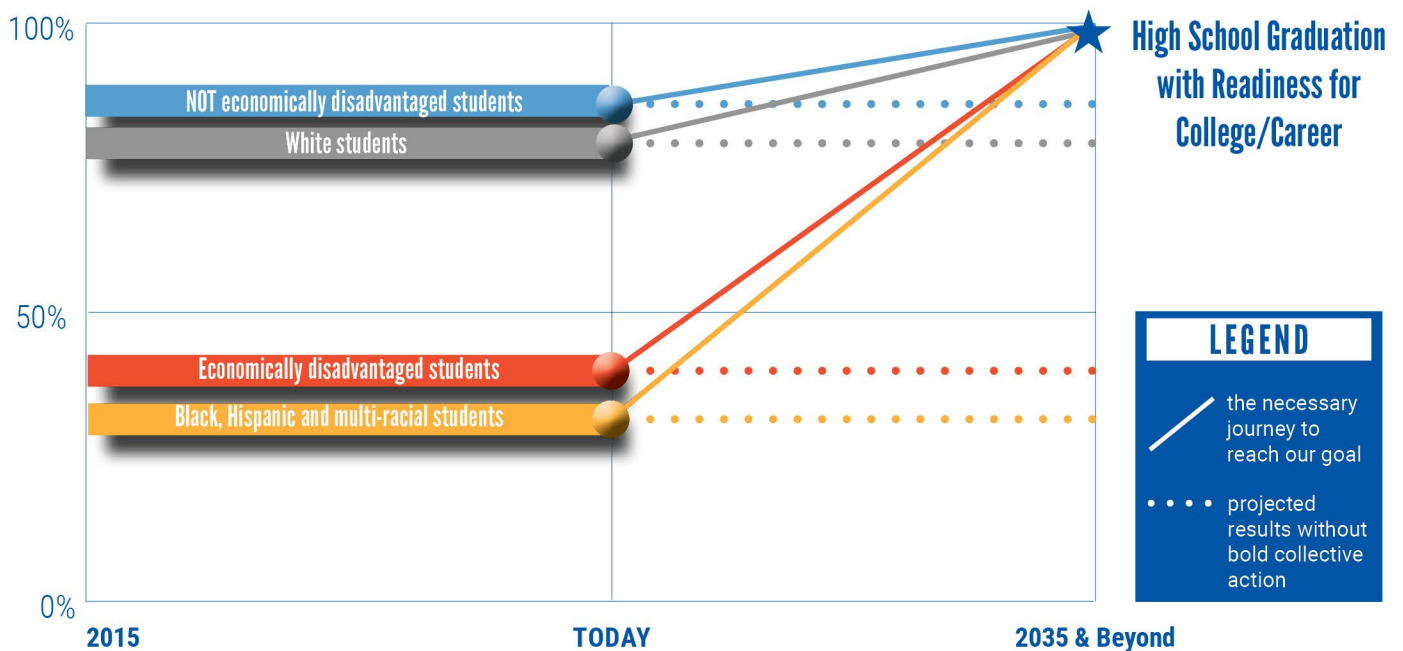
**Our Vision:** ALL children and youth learn, grow and thrive in a vibrant, healthy and connected community.

**Our Mission:** To actively identify and remove barriers to opportunity and co-create solutions that support student success.

**Our Goal:** By 2035, ALL Asheville City and Buncombe County students graduate from high school ready and fully prepared to pursue their goals and dreams.

**Equity-Centered Results**

We recognize that we cannot close opportunity/achievement gaps through historic approaches. Bold vision and action is required by our schools, Network partners and our community as a whole, to turn the trajectory of student-level outcomes and reach our shared vision and goal.



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**Theory of Action & Change**

By committing to working more boldly as individual organizations and by aligning and leveraging community resources as a Network, we will improve systems for equitable student learning and educational excellence.

By committing to a results-based accountability framework, we will support one another and hold one another accountable through continuous learning and course corrections along our path towards our shared vision, mission and bold community goal.

**Network Partner Commitments**

From grassroots organizations to anchor institutions, each partner's commitment is critical to our collective success as a community. While contributions and participation are unique to each organization, all Network partners sign on to the following commitments that endorse and support the Network's equity-centered vision:

- **Prioritize youth, parent, family and community leadership**
  - Integrate youth, parents/family voice and leadership in design, decision making and evaluation teams at all levels of organizational and Network operations
  
- **Encourage, support, and hold one another accountable for engaging every student in high-quality, student-centered, rigorous learning and teaching experiences**
  - Ground programming, curriculum and service-delivery in culturally-responsive and restorative practices
  - Integrate and institutionalize anti-racist and equity-centered policies and practices
  
- **Expand the depth and breadth of shared learning & professional development**
  - Actively engage in/support cross-sector learning opportunities in one or more of the following ways:
    - Support the identification and prioritization of community-wide learning needs/opportunities
    - Co-design, host, and/or sponsor shared learning opportunities
    - Dedicate staff and volunteer time for participation
    - Recruit or serve as trainer/facilitator
    - Promote events through diverse communication channels
  
- **Integrate Results-Based Accountability data/evaluation principles and practices**
  - Align relevant program-level performance measures with community-level indicators
  - Contribute relevant program-level performance measures to the shared data and evaluation plan
  - Co-design and support collective strategies for continuous quality improvement that enhance practices and partnerships towards achieving measurable results
  
- **Support a shared public policy agenda aligned to the equity-centered vision and bold community goal**
  - Actively advocate for and support policies as prioritized through collaborative decision making and community engagement

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➤ **Champion the collective and individual efforts of the Network**

- Dedicate staff and/or volunteer time to participate in cross-sector, school-based leadership teams, Network-level workgroups or aligned community-based collaboratives
- Inform Network stakeholders and cultivate new community supporters through aligned messaging
- Celebrate Network partners' successes
- Invite (and support) new and diverse organizations into the Network

➤ **For K-12 school and youth-services organizations: Integrate Early Warning and Response System (EWRS) best practices**

- Focus on the four components of a robust EWRS (data/software, practices, partnerships and culture)
- Collaboratively identify students or groups of students who could benefit from specific supports, implement the supports/interventions, monitor progress and course correct as necessary

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**Community-level Indicators**

**Community-level indicators are key markers on the path towards our shared vision and bold community goal.**

*Community Commitments - Education & Whole-Child Results - ALL Students Graduate Ready!*

We intentionally begin by tracking and monitoring change within our own partnership and practices.

How are we showing up for our students, families, community and one another?

**Progress with the following Network strategies will be tracked and reported annually for continuous quality improvement:**

- ✓ Equity-centered policy, practice and systems reform
- ✓ Shared learning and coaching for authentic engagement of youth and parent/family leadership
- ✓ Access to shared learning/professional development opportunities
- ✓ Restorative Practices training and implementation support
- ✓ Co-creation and design of Network strategy and investments
- ✓ Coaching and technical assistance for integrating Early Warning and Response System best practices
- ✓ Access to a shared data and evaluation system demonstrating collective impact towards the bold community goal
- ✓ Technical assistance and coaching regarding performance measures and evaluation best practices
- ✓ Shared learning, alignment and action on public policy advocacy
- ✓ Shared messaging platforms to spotlight both Network partner and whole Network successes

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It is expected that the following community-level indicators will evolve over time as we progress towards our shared vision and goal. Community-level indicators are developed by the Network’s Results-based Accountability workgroup, which is tasked with the implementation of a shared data and evaluation system. Community-level indicators are aligned with other relevant/related collective impact initiatives ie. ACS and BCS Equity Initiatives, [Community Health Improvement Plan](#), [myFuture NC](#), [North Carolina Early Childhood Action Plan](#), [NC Pathways to grade-level reading](#), [NC State Board of Education](#), [Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce](#), [Buncombe County Government’s 2025 Strategic Plan](#), and [City of Asheville Strategic Priorities and Vision 2036](#)

**Social-determinant / Whole-child indicators:**

- ✓ Safety
- ✓ Nutrition and food security
- ✓ Housing stability
- ✓ Family economic security
- ✓ Physical, mental and behavioral health
- ✓ Social emotional development

**Education Pathway / Cradle-to-Career indicators:**

- ✓ Kindergarten readiness
- ✓ Grade-level reading and math
- ✓ On-time high school graduation
- ✓ Workforce ready
- ✓ College ready
- ✓ College completion

**An in-depth and inclusive community engagement process will be co-created and facilitated to define “Community Ready”**

**Early Warning and Response System dashboard:**

Dashboard indicators allow educators and community partners to track and problem-solve in live-time when a student, or group of students, is veering off course. Examples include:

- Attendance
- Behavior
- Core course grades
- Academic assessments, including EOGs
- Social-emotional learning survey results

Additional whole-child, family, and community leading indicators and dashboards will be co-created to demonstrate cross-sector commitments and work of the Network partners.

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**Organization-specific Commitments**

Each Network partner dedicates unique value-add contributions through their programs, policies and best-practice service delivery. **These commitments should reflect the bold and courageous actions required of us all to address systemic and structural barriers and injustice** to reach our shared vision and bold community goal.

**Specific program-level performance measures of these commitments will be included in the Network’s Results-based Accountability data and evaluation plan** to measure our progress and course correct through continuous quality improvement processes.

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**Buncombe County's Commitment:**

**Organization:** Buncombe County

**Initial Commitments:**

- Prioritize education within Buncombe County's strategic plan, including the following goals and objectives:
  - Increase kindergarten readiness
    - Attract, develop and retain early childhood teachers
    - Increase percentage of kindergarteners entering public school who demonstrate proficiency
    - Increase the percent of children ages 0-5 served by high quality licensed care
  - Increase third grade literacy rates, especially among underperforming students
    - Strengthen relationships among educational partners
    - Reduce racial disparities in student achievement
  - Improve college and career readiness
    - Increase digital resource training to area educators and students
    - Increase vocational and technical training for high school aged students
    - Support initiatives that support full option graduation (workforce, vocational, or college/university readiness)
- Align organizational initiatives with United for Youth network goals and create linkages across Buncombe County focus areas: Educated & Capable Community; Vibrant Economy; Resident Well-Being; and Environmental & Energy Stewardship.
- Participate in collaborative Results-Based Accountability work, and adopt shared data/evaluation principles, practices and measures as appropriate.
- Participate in United for Youth's Cross Sector Leadership Team.
- Participate in United for Youth workgroups as feasible, including School and Community Partners network convenings.
- Promote systems, policies and practices that support equity for all people and an organizational culture that embraces diversity and inclusion.
- Deliver & coordinate public services that support a vibrant, healthy and connected community, such as: Affordable Housing; Elections; Food & Nutrition; Economic Development; Justice Resource; Libraries; Public Health; Public Safety; Recreation; Social Work; and more.
- Budget annual general funds in support of education, including early childhood; k-12, community college, and educational support grants to community-based organizations.

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**Organization Sign-On**

**By signing on to the United for Youth partnership agreement, including the shared vision, mission and bold community goal, our organization commits to act in good faith to uphold the agreements described above.**

*This agreement will be reviewed and revised every three years from each organization's sign-on date. While withdrawal of any partner's commitment may occur at any time, all partners commit to keeping each other informed on all matters of common concern and to work together when problems or misunderstandings arise, in order to reach meaningful resolution.*

Authorized Official's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_