



WORK PLAN 2025-2029

Union City Family Center

Union City, Alameda County

Neighborhoods Ready for School Initiative

Neighborhoods Ready for School (NRFS) is a place-based initiative launched by First 5 Alameda County in 2018 to support equity and neighborhood-led investment, programming, and policy related to early childhood development, family health and well-being, and kindergarten readiness.

This work plan was prepared by the NRFS team at Union City Family Center: Marcus Lam (Director of Student and Family Services), Jennifer Hawkins (UCFC Coordinator), Imelda Rivas (UCFC Early Childhood Community Specialist).



Executive Summary

The Union City Family Center (UCFC), part of the New Haven Unified School District, was founded in 2012 to address disparities affecting Union City's lower-income families, primarily serving students of color and English-language learners. With a rapid expansion from 300 (in 2013) to more than 3,000 individuals annually (in 2014 - 2023), UCFC collaborates with more than 40 partners, prioritizing tailored programs for children aged 0-5 and focusing on kindergarten readiness across academic and social domains. Through community-driven initiatives, this four-year plan portrays UCFC's aim to sustain culturally responsive programming (in 2022-2023 New Haven Unified School District served students with 45+ languages in the community [Spanish, Punjabi, Tagalog, Mandarin]), strengthen partnerships, align with the district's educational model, and expand specialized services. The center's visionary budget outlines potential growth, emphasizing the importance of comprehensive evaluation tools to measure outcomes and success in supporting the diverse needs of Union City's families.



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Our Story



The Union City Family Center (UCFC), launched in 2012, was formed as a community response to educational, health, and income disparities in Union City. The UCFC has grown rapidly since 2012, from annually serving 300 individuals with 10 partners to serving more than 3,000 (in 2014-2023) individuals annually as community need and rise in homelessness increased, with a collaborative of 40 nonprofit and civic partners.

UCFC is housed as an agency within the New Haven Unified School District (NHUSD) in Alameda County. The school district serves a majority of students from lower income households. More than 90% of children and youth we serve are students of color and approximately one-third are English-language learners. UCFC leverages funds and shares resources with our partner agencies addressing health, access to food, housing, and financial services.

The Union City Family Center is a partnership of families, schools, community, and public and private organizations working together to promote “cradle to retirement” success. The UCFC strives to build community by engaging and preparing youth and adults to participate in transforming their communities, so that every child, family, and community member will have at their fingertips high-quality services and opportunities needed to thrive.

UCFC’s approach focuses on the social, health, and educational development of children through wraparound programs and services that improve children’s family and neighborhood environments. We achieve results through improving/increasing: **Academic Achievement** by removing barriers and creating opportunities to enable all students to reach their highest aspirations; **Community Strengthening** by promoting equity and addressing social injustices through culturally relevant and authentic engagement of community members, family strengthening, community transformation, supporting families’ confidence and capacity to address their own needs by building on their strengths, assets, and capacity for resilience; **Health & Wellness** by creating a pipeline of integrated best practice programs to give our children and families seamless support from birth through college to maximize their outcomes; **Impact & Outcomes** by strengthening services through impact-driven and evidence-informed practices that evaluate program outcomes and create a feedback loop.

The UCFC model for this work is **Collective Impact**. UCFC serves as the anchor organization for a collaborative of over 40 partners—educators, employers, public officials, social service providers, and community residents—working together to provide an integrated system of care, utilizing evidence-based practices, to support the success of all members of the Union City community and beyond.

Imelda Rivas, Early Childhood Community Specialist

Schools are sort of the heartbeat of a city because if you’re going to survive as a city you need your immigrant families to grow to a point where our families understand how they belong in that city. That only has long-term benefits for our whole community.



Our Vision for Neighborhoods Ready for School

Our vision is to strengthen families and neighborhoods through systemic support and services that prepare parents and caregivers of children ages 0-5 for success in school and beyond. Through our partnership with Neighborhoods Ready for School (NRFS), we provide 0-5 tailored programming and work to address the basic needs of families including hygiene, diapers, groceries, health care and case management, while supporting family connections and engagement. Our classroom programs, such as Tot Time and Story Time, provide families with models for learning, while supporting children in developing the four domains of kindergarten preparation: academic, social-emotional, self-regulation, and physical. Housed within the school district's Student and Family Services, UCFC can support and follow families as their children enter kindergarten, sustaining trusting relationships and building community with families over time.

Marcus Lam, Director of Student and Family Services:

Some of the main challenges our immigrant families face are housing. Families that dream of coming to the United States and they land in Union City and they realize they can't afford to live here.

Community-Driven Priorities

The Union City Family Center has developed tools and practices for continual learning, including broad community input, participant data, and program feedback. Our Community Council, with approximately 20 members, meets quarterly to engage parents/caregivers, classroom teachers, and representatives of agencies and cultural organizations to prioritize support and resources. Our 40-agency collaborative meets quarterly to address regional needs, leverage funds, and share resources with partner agencies addressing health, access to food, housing, and financial services. We ensure social, health, and educational development of children through wraparound programs and services improving children's family and neighborhood environments and successful educational experiences from cradle to retirement (and beyond).

During intake, we identify family needs, provide case management, and link families with partner support. Annually, UCFC strengthens services through impact-driven and evidence-informed practices that evaluate program outcomes and future program/event planning and create a feedback loop including attendance, demands for supplies (such as diapers, clothing, and food), focus groups, questionnaires, and informal feedback.

An October 2023 questionnaire of recent Story Time participants whose children now attend elementary school, indicated that 100% of parents/caregivers would recommend the program. "[The program is an...] excellent way to meet other parents, and kids get to socialize" and "lo recomendaría por qué te prepara a ti y a tus niños es muy buen programa."

Eva Santiago, Parent Leader:

Estoy muy satisfecho por haber encontrado este programa, por haber llegado aquí a esta ciudad. Por todo lo que mi niña ha vivido y que yo no pude vivir y sobre todo porque la están preparando para el jardín de infancia. [I am very satisfied for having found this program, for having arrived here to this city, for everything that my girl has experienced that I did not get to experience myself and especially because she is being prepared for kindergarten.]

Below are some specific recommendations from parents participating in UCFC's 0-5 programming and our program adaptations to meet parents' needs and goals:

- "Please include more sessions and activities, field trips for all parents and kids that help kids to explore and prepare for the outside world, [and] come out of their comfort zone."
UCFC identified expanded field trips and community outings as part of our 4-year plan.
- "The Tuesday group has helped [my son] a lot with becoming more social, remembering cues and routines... which helps him be more prepared for school. I wish we [had] Tot Time on Thursdays, too."
UCFC now offers Tot Time twice a week.
- "I am so grateful for the Father's group in Spanish. My husband has been so involved with our kids since he started attending that group."
UCFC identified our Father Figures program as a continued high priority over the coming years.
- "We met different parents and we shared parenting strategies which helped me a lot."
UCFC identified continued informal parent/caregiver socialization as part of our four-year work plan.



Four-Year Priority Goals

1. Sustain and support culturally responsive programming and services for parents, caregivers, and families with children ages 0-5.
2. Sustain and expand partnerships that support families with children ages 0-5.
3. Link 0-5 programming to the district community-schools model.
4. Continue to expand tailored programs and services for specific 0-5 family populations: Special Needs, Pregnant & Parenting Teens, Non-English Speaking Families.

Measuring Success:

The UCFC Coordinator, Early Childhood Community Specialist Evaluator, and Community Schools Evaluator engage in results-based programming. Participant engagement and service use data are reviewed quarterly to make program or service-delivery modifications. UCFC shares outcomes annually to stakeholders including UCFC Steering Committee, Community Council, Collaborative, and School Board. Data is collected by the UCFC Community Specialist in Evaluation, and reviewed by our external evaluator. Ultimately, UCFC aims to follow youth participating in 0-5 programming as they matriculate into TK through high school graduation to understand the impact of services.

Activities & Timeline

Goal 1: Culturally Responsive Programming and Services for Parents, Caregivers, and Families with Children Ages 0-5

Steps	Staff Leads	Partners	Timeframe
Identify the essential onsite programs and activities for parents/caregivers.	Director of Student & Family Services (Director) UCFC Coordinator (UCFC-CO) Early Childhood Community Specialist (ECCS)	New Haven Unified School District First 5 - NRFS	Year 1: Review and assess program attendance, service, and resource usage data. Years 2-4: Annually update MOUs based on needs.
Ensure, improve, and expand ongoing professional learning, curriculum, and materials for all programs.	UCFC- CO ECCS Family Service Assistants (FSA)	New Haven Unified School District First 5 - NRFS	Yr 1: Evaluate current curricula for programs and identify professional learning (PL) needs. Yrs 2-3: Engage in PL. Yr 4: Evaluate PL. Purchase resources as needed.
Implement programs; assign staff, and conduct outreach.	UCFC- CO ECCS FSAs	New Haven Unified School District First 5 - NRFS	Yrs 1- 2: Assign staff to programs. Yr 3-4: Review staff assignments and programs. Yrs 1-4: Create quarterly and monthly calendar for outreach.
Develop tools for evaluation of programs including qualitative and quantitative data.	UCFC- CO ECCS Community Specialist - Evaluation (CSE)	New Haven Unified School District	Yr 1: Modify protocols: surveys, focus groups. Yrs 1-4: Conduct review (twice yearly).

Progress Tools:

- Reach 250-400 neighborhood families through workshops and program events annually.
 - Event listings and participant attendance
 - Demographic / Neighborhood data collection by participant area
 - 50% of families participate in more than one service/support area
- Pre and post confidential participant questionnaires.
 - Capturing growth in knowledge of a topic/skill
 - Understanding if the learnings are culturally appropriate
 - Evidence of dignity and belonging
- Annual participant focus groups conducted by UCFC.

Expected Outcomes:

UCFC's culturally responsive and diverse programming (including events and resources) will be reflective of the needs of a growing and diverse community with a reach into additional service/support areas.

Activities & Timeline

Goal 2: Sustain and Expand Partnerships That Support Families with Children Ages 0-5

Steps	Staff Leads	Partners	Timeframe
Identify partners and service providers that regularly work with our 0-5 families and develop MOUs with any specialized services for 0-5.	Director UCFC-CO ECCS	NHUSD - First 5 Alameda County NRFS - Help A Mother Out - SparkPoint Financial - Washington Hospital - La Familia - Tiburcio Vasquez - Health Center - East Bay Agency for Children - Bay Area Community Health	Yr 1: Review partnerships. Develop MOUs. Yr 3: Modify/review partnerships as needed for Yr 3/Yr 4.
Identify opportunities for expanded partnerships with current partners, including more field trips, community building, and online or onsite workshops.	UCFC- CO ECCS	New Haven Unified School District First 5 - NRFS Union City Library East Bay Regional Parks City of Union City Parks and Recreation American Heart Association	Yr 1: Identify new sustainable opportunities addressing gaps. Yr 2: Pilot programs. Yrs 3- Yr 4: Create new MOUs for programs.
Review any program gaps not met by current staffing or partners. Discuss with like organizations. Reach out to expand as appropriate.	UCFC- CO ECCS FSAs	First 5 - NRFS New Partners	Yr 2: Identify new sustainable opportunities addressing gaps. Yr 3: Pilot programs. Yr 4: Create MOUs for program partners.
Support systems and sustainability in partnerships.	UCFC- CO ECCS CSE	All 0-5 partners	Yr 1: Develop tools for MOU review. Yr 2- Yr 4: Use tool to develop MOUs based on needs.

Expected Outcomes:

UCFC will ensure gaps in services are met for families with children ages 0-5 within the neighborhood. Current partnerships will be updated, improved, and renewed annually. Partnerships will expand to more service providers to meet the needs of more families in the neighborhood.

Progress Tools:

- Annual partner survey to gauge sustainability, depth, and confidence in partnerships.
- Create or review MOUs for each partner to ensure alignment with goals and outcomes.
- Service gaps and needs are identified and addressed annually.
 - Map of service provider partners and services provided
- Additional partners are identified and piloted for service and program area needs.

Activities & Timeline

Goal 3: Linking 0-5 Programming to the District Community-Schools Model

Steps	Staff Leads	Partners	Timeframe
Identify alignment of UCFC supports for school transition and community school models, with an emphasis on schools with populations most engaged in UCFC early childhood support.	Director UCFC-CO	New Haven Unified School District Community Schools Grant Community Schools	Yr 1: Identify program alignment to community school. Yrs 2 - 4: Implement systems.
Conduct meetings with TK-K teachers at community schools to discuss needs of students and caregivers, including kindergarten readiness. *Participate in P-3 Collaborative.	Community Schools Coordinator School Sites FSAs ECCS	New Haven Unified School District Community Schools Grant Community Schools	Yr 1: Develop questionnaire and conduct listening session at three schools. Yrs 2-4: Conduct annual survey as follow up.
Develop/identify opportunities for student previews and parent/caregiver connects with TK-K teachers at community schools.	UCFC- CO ECCS FSAs	New Haven Unified School District First 5 - NRFS	Yr 1: Pilot at one of three community schools. Yr 2: Expand to two of three community schools. Yr 3: Conduct at all three schools. Yr 4: Sustain model for replication.
Using community school tools, review 0-5 prep and TK-K programs from caregiver and teacher perspective.	UCFC- CO ECCS CSE	New Haven Unified School District Community Schools Grant Community Schools Families	Yr 1: Develop/identify survey and other tools for caregiver/teacher use. Yrs 2-4: Implement tools. Yr 4: Evaluate progress.

Progress Tools:

- UCFC and NHUSD's community-schools sustainable and replicable model evidenced by growth at additional NHUSD school sites.
 - Events and participant data by school
- Children exiting from UCFCs programming and transitioning into NHUSDs TK/K (after attending at minimum 6 months of school):
 - TK/K Teacher Survey to follow-up regarding kindergarten readiness
 - Elicited feedback from parents/caregivers if their child/ren were ready or better prepared for kindergarten after completing UCFC programming
- NRFS Program Plan created for sustainability.

Expected Outcomes:

The UCFC and NHUSD community-schools is model a sustainable and replicable model that will enhance the pipeline between UCFC programs and NHUSD's TK-K enrollment, aiming to increase kindergarten readiness throughout the district.

Activities & Timeline

Goal 4: Continue to Expand Tailored Programs and Services for Specific 0-5 Family Populations: Special Needs, Pregnant & Parenting Teens, Non-English Speaking Families.

Steps	Staff Leads	Partners	Timeframe
Identify and implement needed programs, services, and activities for young parents, including teenagers.	Director UCFC-CO ECCS	New Haven Unified School District First 5 - NRFS Additional Funding Partner	Yr 1: Review needs. Conduct listening tour with young/teen parents and community stakeholders. Yr 2: Pilot tailored programs. Yr 3: Modify pilot based on data. Yr 4: Annually update MOUs based on needs.
Identify programmatic capacity to work with parents/caregivers with Special Needs. Find additional resources and partners as needed.	UCFC-CO ECCS FSAs	New Haven Unified School District First 5 - NRFS Additional Funding Partner	Yr 1- Review needs. Conduct listening tour with parents/caregivers. Yr 2: Pilot tailored programs. Yr 3: Modify pilot based on data. Yr 4: Annually update MOUs based on needs.
Identify any gaps in servicing non-English speaking families, including expanding current activities for more language specific program offerings.	UCFC- CO ECCS FSAs	New Haven Unified School District First 5 - NRFS	Yr 1: Review needs. Conduct focus group with parents/caregivers about needs. Yr 2: Implement pilot programs. Yr 3: Modify pilot based on data. Yr 4: Annually update MOUs based on needs.

Expected Outcomes:

Programming focused on pregnant and parenting teens, families with children with Special Needs, and non-English speaking families will increase the likelihood that families within these communities are able to enhance kindergarten readiness for their children, as well as view UCFC as an inclusive and welcoming space for all families.

Progress Tools:

- Increase services and programs for young parents.
 - Event/Program listings and participant attendance
- Increase services and programs for families of special needs 0-5 children.
 - Event/Program listings and participant attendance
- Pre and post confidential participant questionnaires.
 - Capturing growth in knowledge of a topic/skill, support, resource navigation, etc.
- Evolving tailored services and supports for parents and caregivers (diverse).

Plan Investment

FY '24-'25 remains the same as the '23-'24 NRFS budget.

FY '25-'27 continues to maintain and expand services with existing staff and accounts for an expected increase in staff salaries, benefits, and indirect costs. We anticipate an increase in the budget for '25-'27 by 10%, at minimum. 2024 is a union negotiation year—it is likely that staff salaries will increase. The budget will need to be revisited if funding continues at the same rate of '23-'24.

If there is room for growth in the NRFS budget in '25-'27, the UCFC will maintain existing staffing and add another 0.5 FTE classified position (Family Services Assistant) to expand programming. In-person Tot Time and Story Time currently has a growing waitlist of families (currently 25) who would like to participate, and it is UCFC's desire to increase all programming and add programs that align with the proposed four-year plan, including workshops and programming for youth with Special Needs and their parents/caregivers, teen parenting resources and services, and more.

Visionary Budget:

The visionary budget includes additional funding to hire a part-time credentialed pre-kindergarten teacher and 3.0 FTE classified staff along with maintaining current ('23-'24) staffing. Additional staffing would increase reach and kinder readiness programming from one to two days per week, currently at one hour of programming per Story Time and Tot Time, to five days per week at three hours per day of program. Our visionary budget would also require an increased investment in materials and supplies and increased funding for Contract Services (outside service providers).
Pre-K teacher (\$60/hour @ 4 hrs daily for 190 days + benefits)

Budget Tiers			
Budget Line items	FY 24-25	FY 25-27	Visionary Budget
Classified Management	\$192,844	\$212,128	\$212,128
Classified Positional (FSA)	\$ 67,050	\$ 100,318	\$100,318
Certificated Staff	\$0	\$0	\$45,600
Additional Hours (Special Projects)	\$3,214	\$3,535	\$4,000
Benefits	\$137,023	\$165,709	\$177,673
Programming Materials & Supplies	\$10,475	\$20,000	\$30,000
MISC (Print)	\$1,800	\$1,800	\$2,500
Contract Services	\$5,900	\$6,000	\$10,000
Indirect	\$24,053	\$25,000	\$30,567
Total	\$442,359	\$534,490	\$612,786

Acknowledgments

The Union City Family Center is a collective impact agency that unites the work of school and district personnel and local agencies. While Neighborhoods Ready for Schools funds much of our 0-5 programs, we leverage additional resources and partner services to provide high impact supports.

Listed below are the funders and partners that enable our 0-5 program to have significant impact.

Alameda County Health Care Services Agency	New Haven Unified School District
Alameda County Board of Supervisors	Sobrato Family Foundation
East Bay Community Foundation	S_ Donation
First 5 Alameda County - Neighborhoods Ready For Schools	Union City (Community Development Block Grant)
Kaiser Permanente Foundation	United Way Bay Area

STATE & FEDERAL GRANTS

California Family Resources (2021-2023)
Learning Communities for School Success (2022-2027)

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Alameda Alliance for Health	East Bay Community Foundation	New Haven Schools Foundation
Alameda County Board of Supervisors	East Bay Regional Parks	New Haven Unified School District
Alameda County Community Food Bank	Eden I&R	Ohlone College
Alameda County Health Care Services Agency Center for Healthy Schools and Communities	Faith in Action - East Bay	Safe Alternatives to Violent Environments (SAVE)
Alameda County Office of Education	Filipino Advocates for Justice	Safe Routes To School
American Heart Association	First 5 Alameda County	Sobrato Family Foundation
Bay Area Community Health	Fremont Bank	SparkPoint (FFRC)
Big Smiles	Fremont Family Resource Center	Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center
California Family Resource Center	Help a Mother Out	Tri-CED Recycling
Centro de Servicios	Help Me Grow	Union City Library
City of Union City	Inspire Church	United Way Bay Area
Compassion Network	Kaiser Community Foundation	Washington Hospital
Cypress-Mandela Training	Kidango	
Daily Bowl	La Familia	
East Bay Agency for Children	HAAC Family Education & Resource Center (FERC)	
	New Haven Adult School	
	NHUSD Migrant Education Program	



FIRST 5



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Cities & People Advisors provided coordination and guidance for the Neighborhoods Ready for School work plan development process.

