



# Neighborhood Compass Newsletter

Quarter 2, 2023

*A quarterly update from your U.S. Department of Education Promise Neighborhoods Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) team*

Welcome to the second *Neighborhood Compass Newsletter* of 2023. The Promise Neighborhoods TTA team is especially proud to share the [latest news about three new grantees](#) for fiscal year (FY) 2023:

- **63106 Promise to Success** (Urban Strategies Inc.) adds St. Louis, Missouri.
- **Evansville Promise Neighborhood** (University of Evansville) in Evansville, Indiana, adds a second neighborhood in Indiana.
- **SR1 Promise Neighborhood** (SR1) in Ridgeland, Mississippi, joins Delta Health Alliance as the second Mississippi-based grantee and fourth Promise Neighborhood.

This quarter's newsletter features [virtual course announcements](#); [K–12 solutions from Promise grantees](#) in Mississippi, Michigan, and South Carolina; [updates on TTA activities](#); and other [helpful resources](#).



*Literacy Fellows started in Indianola Promise Community and expanded to Delta Health Alliance's two additional neighborhoods to serve third-graders across the Mississippi Delta.*



*Grand Rapids Southeast Promise Neighborhood uses an appreciative, strengths-based, growth-focused approach to learning.*



*Lancaster Promise Neighborhood's Extended Day Program provides engaging activities outside school hours.*



## In the News

### *Which Promise Neighborhoods made headlines?*

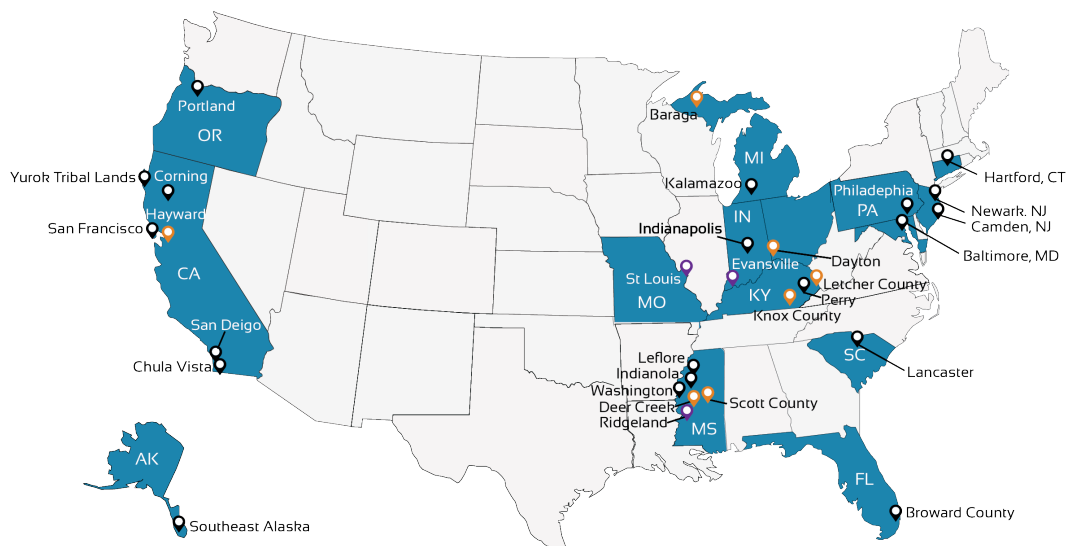
**Welcome to the new grantees!** [The Department of Education](#) recently awarded three new Promise Neighborhoods grants from the 2022 competition, forming the FY 2023 cohort. These new grants total over \$15 million for Year 1 of their projects. This is in addition to the four new Promise Neighborhoods grantees and two extension grantees awarded in December 2022 through the FY 2022 grant competition cycle, which total more than \$25 million for Year 1 projects. The FY 2023 cohort includes 63106 Promise to Success in St. Louis, Missouri; Evansville Promise Neighborhood in Evansville, Indiana; and SR1 Promise Neighborhood in Ridgeland, Mississippi, marked by purple pins on the map.



## 15 States 30 Promise Neighborhoods

Grantee won FY 2022

Grantee won FY 2023



All FY 2022 and 2023 grantees will complete first-year activities such as needs assessments together. Learn more about the [U.S. Department of Education awards](#).

**South Ward Promise Neighborhood (FY 2017 and 2021 grantee).** New Jersey News 12 featured [South Ward Promise Neighborhood's Healthy Beginnings](#) program aiming to provide Black women with better pre- and postnatal care. The program's focus is on improving the maternal outcomes for Black women in Newark's South Ward by introducing evidence-based solutions and interventions to increase healthy birth outcomes.

**Hope Zone Promise Neighborhood (FY 2022 grantee).** The William Julius Wilson Institute attended the Omega Community Development Corps (Omega CDC) Hope Rising! Gala. Omega CDC is the backbone organization for the new grantee Hope Zone Promise Neighborhood. Harlem Children's Zone founder and president Geoffrey Canada gave the keynote address. [See the Tweet about the gala.](#)



*Omega CDC staff with Geoffrey Canada*

**Broward UP Promise Neighborhood (FY 2021 grantee).** Broward UP recently visited SBSC (formerly South Bay Community Services) Promise Neighborhoods in San Diego and Chula Vista (FY 2018 and FY 2012/Extension, respectively) to share pipeline strategies and strengthen Promise Neighborhoods' in-person connections.



*Broward UP and South Bay community services staff*



## Promise Neighborhoods TTA Highlights

### *Have you heard about the new virtual courses for 2023?*

Virtual courses provide opportunities for grantees to explore a complex topic or set of topics through a series of guided learning opportunities. They are typically composed of four or five 90-minute sessions. We will offer the following virtual courses starting next quarter:

- **Sustainability in Promise Neighborhoods.** Beginning in summer 2023, this virtual course will provide an opportunity for grantees to work on their sustainability planning and consult with peers during the process. The course will build on the 2022 sustainability course by offering team time during each session to accomplish planning goals.
- **Community Engagement for Community Change.** Beginning in the third quarter of 2023, this virtual course will provide an opportunity for Promise Neighborhoods to learn about the process of community engagement as a building block for community change. The course will include two sessions with new content and two working sessions for grantees to act on what they learn.

Please watch for more information from [PromiseTA@insightpolicyresearch.com](mailto:PromiseTA@insightpolicyresearch.com).



## Promising Strategies

### *What strategies do Promise Neighborhoods find most effective in K–12?*

**Learn about Indianola's Literacy Fellows (FY 2012 and Extension grantee).** [Indianola Promise Community](#) (IPC) is one of three Delta Health Alliance (DHA) Promise Communities in Mississippi. As a FY 2012 grantee, IPC has had time to strengthen and grow its promising solutions. One of the solutions IPC developed is Literacy Fellows, a literacy support team operating in all three DHA communities. The team provides high-quality, research-based reading instruction and intervention to struggling third-graders in local elementary schools. The teaching is designed to match students' individualized needs and takes place in small groups. The instruction focuses on fluency, phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension. Students are selected to participate in the program based on beginning-of-year assessment scores. Since the establishment of Literacy Fellows in 2015,



the program has helped over 400 students. For more information, contact Katelyn Ables at [kables@deltahealthalliance.org](mailto:kables@deltahealthalliance.org).

**Read up on Grand Rapids Appreciative, Strengths-Based, Growth-Focus Approach (FY 2021 grantee).** [Grand Rapids Southeast Promise Neighborhood](#) (GRSEPN) is implementing high-impact strategies in K–12 schools and community partner organizations serving the GRSEPN neighborhoods. Design and implementation teams include educators, community partners, parents, and other individuals from the neighborhoods. These teams use an appreciative, strengths-based, and growth-focused process to identify high-impact strategies to “support children and families in achieving educational success and building healthy, successful, and stable lives” (GRSEPN’s mission). The GRSEPN approach follows these steps:

- Identify the strengths and assets within the community and the schools and organizations that serve the community.
- Identify and prioritize opportunities to build on community partners’ strengths with more robust evidence-based or informed models, strategies, and practices for achieving the GRSEPN mission and strengthening the GRSEPN cradle-to-career initiatives.
- Develop aspirations for what can be achieved through the implementation of more robust, high-impact models, strategies, and practices.
- Set priorities for implementing high-impact changes in each cradle-to-career initiative, and define measurable results to achieve.

In 2022, GRSEPN reported baseline data, and in 2023, its annual performance report data will help identify the most effective strategies and drive decisionmaking to adjust less effective strategies. This process is based on an appreciative inquiry process called SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results). By building and sustaining this system of GRSEPN cradle-to-career initiatives, the grantee seeks to fulfill its vision to “provide children, youth, and families with evidence-based and equity-producing learning experiences and family supports that empower them to make their own way into promising futures.” For more information, contact Patricia Reeves at [patricia.reeves@wmich.edu](mailto:patricia.reeves@wmich.edu).

**Discover Lancaster’s Extended Day Program (FY 2021 grantee).** [Lancaster Promise Neighborhood’s](#) promise to the community is to do “*whatever it takes with the community to make sure every child who lives in the zone has the opportunity for success.*” One of the strategies Lancaster has implemented to foster success is its Extended Day Program. The program offers a variety of free, onsite academic intervention and enrichment activities for students across Lancaster when school is not in session. It also provides fitness sessions, exposure sessions, healthy snacks, and transportation to and from the program. Students have the opportunity to select their preferred academic enrichment, fitness, and exposure sessions. Recently offered classes have covered topics such as healthy cooking, game design, fitness, mental health, college, music, athletic training, cosmetology, landscaping, robotics, and drones. For more information, contact Ebony Mitchell at [emitchell@lpnsc.org](mailto:emitchell@lpnsc.org).



## TTA Talk

*What is the Promise TTA team planning and curating for grantees?*



[Visit the Promise Neighborhoods Google calendar](#) for dates and descriptions of all upcoming events.



### Next quarter: We look forward to seeing you at the following events.

**\*Ongoing\* Data and Performance Measurement Community of Practice (CoP)** will continue meeting the first Wednesday of the month at 2:00 p.m. ET and follow its theme for the year, focusing on one or two Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) indicators each month. On July 5, participants will discuss GPRAs 2 (academic achievement) and 4 (graduation rates). On August 2, GPRA 5 (postsecondary enrollment and completion) will be the focus. Email [PromiseTA@insightpolicyresearch.com](mailto:PromiseTA@insightpolicyresearch.com) for more information.

**\*New and ongoing\* Leadership CoP** steering committee members met in May 2023 to kick off this new space for Promise Neighborhood leaders (project directors and their deputies) to surface and address challenges with their peers. The steering committee members follow:

- Ralph Aiello from Broward UP
- Liz Cortez from Mission
- Sh’Kur Francis from Lancaster
- Monty Hulse from Indy East
- Jamie Scott from Indy East

The steering committee invited project directors and other senior leaders to be members of this CoP, which will meet on the fourth Monday of each month from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. ET. Twenty leaders representing 14 Promise Neighborhoods attended the first convening May 22, 2023, which focused on governance structures. Topics for monthly meetings from June 26, 2023, will be determined by the committee and members. Email [PromiseTA@insightpolicyresearch.com](mailto:PromiseTA@insightpolicyresearch.com) for more information.

**\*Coming soon\* Racial Equity and Belonging CoP** is a new offering that will begin in the third quarter of 2023. This CoP is being formed in response to the 2022 TTA survey results and conversations with grantees. Email [PromiseTA@insightpolicyresearch.com](mailto:PromiseTA@insightpolicyresearch.com) if you are interested in joining the steering committee or to request more information.

### Looking ahead: Start planning for these events.

**The Leadership Development Program** will expand to include all FY 2022/2023 grantees beginning this fall. The Center for the Study of Social Policy designed this learning experience based on Results Count,<sup>™</sup> a leadership development approach developed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Grantee teams include backbone and partner organization members who will apply these concepts to improving attendance and chronic absenteeism GPRA indicators. Questions? Please contact [juanita.gallion@cssp.org](mailto:juanita.gallion@cssp.org).

Email [PromiseTA@insightpolicyresearch.com](mailto:PromiseTA@insightpolicyresearch.com) for more information about two new virtual courses:

- **Dates TBD:** Sustainability in Promise Neighborhoods Virtual Course  
Teams will apply concepts from the 2022 sustainability virtual course during each session to accomplish planning goals related to sustainability.
- **Dates TBD:** Community Engagement for Community Change Virtual Course  
Learn about and apply a community engagement process as a catalyst for community change in the Community Engagement for Community Change virtual course!

### Helpful resources

#### COVID-19 Response and Recovery in Promise Neighborhoods 2020–2022

Jillian Spindle, Chief Operating Officer at Mission Economic Development Agency, was the lead author of this field-initiated paper, which explores Promise Neighborhoods’ response to the COVID-19 pandemic and demonstrates investing in Promise Neighborhoods produces more than academic results: It ensures critical community infrastructure is available during times of crisis. Many experienced Promise Neighborhoods





contributed stories and data, including the following: Albina-Rockwood Promise Neighborhood Initiative in Portland, Oregon; Chula Vista Promise Neighborhood in Chula Vista, California; Deer Creek Promise Community in Washington, Mississippi; South Hayward Promise Neighborhood in Hayward, California; Indianola Promise Community in Indianola, Mississippi; Knox Promise Neighborhood in Knox County, Kentucky; Mission Promise Neighborhood in San Francisco, California; Perry Promise Neighborhood in Perry County, Kentucky; Promise Heights in Baltimore, Maryland; San Diego Promise Neighborhood in San Diego, California; South Ward Promise Neighborhoods in Newark, New Jersey; and STEPS Alaska in Southeast Alaska. We hope all Promise Neighborhoods can use this brief to continue to expand support for place-based, collective impact work.

### **Preparing and Fielding High-Quality Surveys: Practical Strategies for Successfully Implementing Neighborhood and School Climate Surveys in Promise Neighborhoods**

Published in 2015, this document builds on earlier guidance (e.g., chapter 7 of [Measuring Performance: A Guidance Document for Promise Neighborhoods on Collecting Data and Reporting Results](#)) and adds specific lessons learned from Promise Neighborhood grantees to provide practical guidance to prepare and manage high-quality Neighborhood and School Climate Surveys. Though geared toward the requirements of Promise Neighborhoods, much of this guidance should also be helpful to other organizations conducting similar survey efforts in their communities. For experienced grantees that want a refresher from the Leadership Development Program, review the 2020 publication [Advancing Results Through Leadership Development: Reflections on Technical Assistance for the Promise Neighborhoods Program](#).

### **You may have missed ...**

#### **Building the Cradle in a Cradle-to-Career Initiative Webinar**

This webinar showcased three opportunities for Promise Neighborhoods to promote kindergarten readiness and provide a framework to support Promise Neighborhoods' early care and education solutions. San Diego Promise Neighborhood and Perry Promise Neighborhood discussed topics such as capacity building, evidence-based approaches for accountability, and addressing the pandemic's impact on programming and assessment. Access the [brief](#), [webinar recording](#), [slides](#), and [measurement resources](#) shared.

Email [PromiseTA@insightpolicyresearch.com](mailto:PromiseTA@insightpolicyresearch.com) if you are interested in accessing other recordings of events you may have missed.

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