

Recurring Meetings

Coalition partners are encouraged to attend meetings that are most relevant to their work.

- **Rice County Early Learning Coalition:** meets four times a year. School and community partners share what's happening in each community, provide grant updates, and coordinate recruitment and outreach efforts. *Partners include Faribault Public Schools, Northfield Public Schools, Growing Up Healthy, Rice County Public Health, and St. Olaf College*
- **Faribault Public Schools and Growing Up Healthy:** program staff and leadership meet every other month to align program practices, recruitment, and referrals. *Partners include Faribault Public Schools (Community Education, ESCE, ECFE, pre-K teachers) Growing Up Healthy (ParentChild+, Early Childhood Navigators) Rice County Public Health*
- **Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) Providers:** meet monthly. Meetings alternate as skills-building or networking.
- **Family Childcare:** the United Providers Association meets eight times per year. Offers a mix of training and networking opportunities for childcare providers.

Data-Driven Decision Making

- **Childcare centers, daycares and school districts**
Each winter, pre-K and kindergarten providers meet to review how current kindergartners are doing as they enter school. Together, the providers identify patterns and develop shared action plans. In the spring, district leaders meet one-on-one with childcare centers to review specific results and to strengthen communication between the schools and the early care providers.
- **Colleges**
Carleton College provides project-based evaluation services in partnership with a statistics class. St. Olaf connects students with ACE (Academic Civic Engagement) opportunities.
- **Growing Up Healthy**
Twice a year, staff review program data and make plans to improve reach and outcomes. They also collect participant feedback and share it with systems leaders.
- **Healthy Community Initiative**
Serves as the data backbone. Provides staffing and an online platform to facilitate data-specific evaluation and reporting projects.



No-cost opportunities available to coalition members

- Car seat technicians
- Spanish CPR certification
- CPR training days
- District-hosted professional development days (MEA and MLK Jr. Day)
- Early learning fellowships

Work Behind the Scenes

Because the Rice County Early Learning Coalition has been active since 2003, much of its work is now embedded in local policies, practices, and everyday partnerships—so embedded, in fact, that it can be hard to see. That's the nature of systems change! Many of today's efforts trace back to the coalition's early work and continue through individual organizations or ongoing collaborations between partners.



• **ASQ online:** Through a multi-year effort, early childhood screeners in Rice County have aligned to use the same early childhood developmental screener (ASQ) and use a shared online system to collect and transfer results between agencies. The online platform is hosted and paid for by HCI, with annual training offered to those who use the system. District staff also meet yearly with community-based screeners to share materials and recruitment/referral information. Participants include Head Start, Faribault Public Schools, Northfield Public Schools, and Northfield Hospital + Clinics.

• **All About Books:** Every year, more than 2,000 age-appropriate books are distributed at well-child check-ups. Purchasing and distributing the books is a heavy lift done by HCI, and we are always looking for donors and volunteers!

• **Transition Visits:** These visits are done as children are transitioning to kindergarten and are conducted at home whenever possible. They create a warm hand-off for families, giving them a chance to ask questions and learn about what to expect when school starts. They also provide an opportunity to form a bi-directional relationship between families and teachers. Transition visits take place in both the Faribault and Northfield school districts.

• **Bridges to K:** This free summer program is held at each of Northfield's elementary schools in August to ease the transition into kindergarten and provide a boost in readiness skills, such as listening, working in groups, orientation to classroom routines and the building, as well as academic activities focused on literacy and math. This program is specific to Northfield Public Schools.

• **Growing Up Healthy (GUH):** This Rice County initiative partners with Latine and immigrant families and community organizations to strengthen family well-being and community connection. GUH helps families with young children access early learning opportunities, supports neighborhood gatherings that build social connections, and collaborates with local partners to improve systems so they work better for all children and families.

To sign up for the Rice County Early Learning Coalition's monthly newsletter, visit: →

