

EARLY LEARNING

Wyoming Preschool Development Grant Birth Through 5 Initial Grant Evaluation

Partner Align

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Wyoming's Push to Support Young Learners and Their Families

For many years, families in Wyoming had inconsistent access to quality early childhood care and education due to unique challenges like geographic spread, inconsistent definitions of quality, and a lack of coordination across systems and services. In 2019, the state received a \$2 million Preschool Development Grant Birth Through 5 aimed at improving early childhood opportunities and outcomes for Wyoming's youngest learners. The grant aims to support collaboration statewide, build partnerships to improve quality and delivery of services, and maximize parental choice in providers.

Align, the nonprofit administering the grant, used the funds to conduct a needs assessment, develop a strategic plan for achieving goals, implement strategic plan activities, and share information and best practices across the state. Education Northwest supported Align by conducting an independent evaluation of grant implementation.

How We Helped Align

Collaboratively developed data-collection protocols to gather relevant information on grant implementation

Developed data memos, visual displays, and a final report to help Align and its partners interpret data and communicate progress on grant goals

Administered surveys, interviews, and focus groups to diverse parties invested in early childhood care and education, including families; educators; preschool providers; and representatives from state agencies, colleges and universities, and advisory councils

Reviewed project documentation and attended meetings to understand grant progress

Building Statewide Capacity for High-Quality Early Childhood Care and Education

Using results from our evaluation, Align was able to complete mandatory federal reporting on grant implementation and progress. The team successfully applied for a second round of funding, allowing them to extend their work for three additional years. Data collected for the evaluation provided insight on how much progress was made in each goal area of the strategic plan, which can guide implementation of the renewal grant.

“Education Northwest transformed our work with and for young children, families, educators, and communities in Wyoming! They are trusted partners that have come alongside us to advance our impact by guiding us to think more deeply and act more intentionally in every aspect of our work—discovery, strategy, implementation, and evaluation.”

– Becca Steinhoff