

North Penn United Way

2012-15 INVESTMENT PLAN

STUDENTS SUCCEEDING IN SCHOOL



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North Penn United Way (NPUW) is pleased to announce its 2012-15 plan for investing dollars and leadership to help more North Penn and Indian Valley children enter kindergarten “ready to learn” and more students “succeed in school.”

INTRODUCTION: A NEW INVESTMENT PLAN AND PROCESS

This document is part of a comprehensive plan to ensure United Way dollars, leadership, and partnerships make the greatest and most lasting difference in the lives and neighborhoods of North Penn and Indian Valley residents who face the greatest barriers to self-sufficiency and well-being.

- A. We have sharpened our focus to **3 Community Goals** to anchor all investments:
- Students Succeed in School
 - Older Adults are as Independent and Community-Connected as Possible
 - Residents have a Strong Safety Net
- B. We will make three-year investments in a **strategic mix of programs and initiatives** aligned with these Goals.
- C. We are committed to **Results-Based Accountability (RBA)***:
- Assessing the performance of all NPUW program and initiative investments in changing customer lives and thus contributing to the Community Goal
 - Tracking measurable indicators at the overall population level for each Community Goal (where change will require community-wide investments and efforts beyond those of NPUW).
- D. Program awards will thus reflect applicant proposals that best demonstrate the following **investment criteria**:
- Alignment with one of our 3 Community Goals
 - Alignment with targeted customers, strategies, and North Penn/Indian Valley locations presented in the Investment Plan for each Goal
 - Proposed programs that are evidence-based and/or considered “best practice” models
 - Solid process of measuring service quantity, quality, and customer results (*Student and Older Adults goals*); service quantity, quality, and customer satisfaction (*Safety Net goal*)
 - Demonstrated capacity to yield positive customer results and/or satisfaction.
- E. The **investment process** will also have the following changes:
- Additional agencies will be eligible to apply for program funding (all those successfully completing the NPUW “Qualification Standards” process), and
 - Awards will be based on competitive scoring per the aforementioned investment criteria, with no pre-determined or historically-based amounts to be considered for any program or agency.

**RBA is a framework authored by Mark Friedman and presented in his book Trying Hard is Not Good Enough: How to Produce Measurable Improvements for Customers and Communities. See page 5 for website and pages 8 & 9 for United Way testimonials.*


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USING RBA TO DEVELOP THIS INVESTMENT PLAN

1. Beginning with our *ultimate goal*, “All North Penn and Indian Valley students will succeed in school and graduate from high school, ready for work or continued education, and ready for life,” we selected...
2. *Measurable indicators* related to school success for tracking whether progress is being made over time towards this goal:
 - % Children entering kindergarten ready to learn
 - % Students reading on grade level in 3rd grade
 - % Middle school students proficient in math and reading
 - % Students earning high school diploma (with academic proficiencies)
3. We secured local data (economic, social, education) about pre-school children, students K-12, and the families of both to begin developing a *baseline for each indicator*. See page 5.
4. As convener of the *Greater North Penn School Readiness Initiative*, we have devoted intensive energy to learning how and why early childhood development is so imperative to student success. A Phase I Summary Report chronicles this compelling information as it relates to the youngest citizens in our community.
5. We explored “*what works*” - what would make the biggest difference in having more children and students “on track” at each critical point in the educational journey,
 - conferring with numerous “community impact” United Ways across the country about how they are targeting resources to help more students succeed (*including Rochester, New York; Dane County, WI; and Lehigh Valley, PA*);
 - researching program strategies that have the most evidence-based support, including “United Way’s Education Strategies: Improving Success for Children and Youth.”
6. To help determine “What would be the *best way for NPUW to invest dollars* in programs/services and special initiatives?” and “What would be the *best way for NPUW to provide leadership* to achieve the most positive results?”...
 - We invited the larger community to give input to these questions during Education Strategy Sessions on October 29 and November 17, 2011. See page 7 for roster of 31 participants.
 - We are in conversation with the leadership of both North Penn and Souderton Area School Districts about investment and collaboration ideas that have the most promise for supporting as many at-risk students as possible.
7. This process has produced the *NPUW Investment Plan* presented on the following page. This plan targets children birth to 12th grade, as well as their parents/families, with a *priority target population* being pre-school and early elementary school children living in low income families and those who are/will be English Language Learners (ELL).

North Penn United Way
2012-15 Investment Plan

Community Goal: All North Penn and Indian Valley Students Succeed in School

 <p>North Penn United Way</p>	<p>Children Birth-5 years on Track: Ready for Kindergarten</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre/post-natal home visitation Parenting education/skill-building Early ID (<i>identification</i>) & intervention: developmental delays Family literacy/ELL (<i>English Language Learner</i>) supports Quality and affordable early learning centers/opportunities 	<p>3rd Graders on Track: Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early literacy/ELL supports: students and families Extra academic supports (<i>before/during/after school and summer</i>) 1:1 tutors Building 40 Assets* 	<p>MS Students on Track: Attendance/Academics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extra academic supports (<i>before/during/after school and summer</i>) 1:1 tutors/mentors Building 40 Assets Absenteeism intervention Career exploration/mentors Early ID & intervention: at-risk behaviors/choices 	<p>HS Students on Track: Graduation w/Proficiency and /Ed/Job Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extra academic supports (<i>before/during/after school/summer</i>) 1:1 tutors/mentors Building 40 Assets Absenteeism intervention Career exploration/mentors Early ID & intervention: at-risk behaviors/choices Drop-out prevention Drop-out recovery
<p>Target PROGRAM Strategies for NPUW investment</p> <p>Priority Target Population: Low-income and/or ELL kids birth - 3rd grade</p>	<p>Family Supports for Children Birth - 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult literacy/ELL Education/GED Stable housing Employment Financial management 	<p>Supports for Families with K-12 Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult literacy/ELL and Adult Education/GED Stable housing Employment Financial management Engagement with child's school/child's education 		
<p>Priority SYSTEMS Strategies for NPUW investment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to and use of early learning centers/opportunities Pre-K to K transition supports: family and school (<i>K=kindergarten</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary to MS (<i>Middle School</i>) transition supports MS to HS (<i>High School</i>) transition supports Family engagement with K-12 schools and child's education "One-stop resource centers," e.g. Family Centers and/or Community Schools model 		
<p>KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES for Programs & Initiatives (Results-Based Accountability)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children are born at a healthy weight Children make consistent progress in early learning skills** Children are ready for kindergarten*** Parent/s of children are literate Parent/s of children attain HS diploma/GED AND ➔ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students improve in math and/or reading skills Students attend school regularly Students gain increased # of 40 developmental assets* Students show positive behavior at school Students earn high school diploma/have post-graduation plans for education, training, work Parent /s increase own education level Family attains/sustains employment and/or housing Family attains/sustains financial self-sufficiency 		

*40 Developmental Assets Youth Need to Succeed (Search Institute); **PA Learning Standards for Early Childhood; ***PA Standards Aligned System (S.A.S.)

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN: NORTH PENN UNITED WAY ROLES

- Invest in the most promising and aligned PROGRAM strategies via a “Request for Proposals” process.
- Promote communication and coordination between funded PROGRAMS and the two local school districts, North Penn School District (NPSD) and Souderton Area School District (SASD), including targeting of schools and grades in most need of supports and also early identification of students who are “not on track” or beginning to lose academic momentum.
- Strengthen NPUW collaboration with early childhood education providers to explore one or more pre-school SYSTEMS strategies in which NPUW might invest and/or lead in collaboration with one or more community partners.
- Strengthen NPUW collaboration with NPSD and SASD to explore one or more K-12 SYSTEMS strategies in which NPUW might invest and/or lead in collaboration with one or more community partners.
- Explore the most compelling ways NPUW Volunteer Connections might support both PROGRAM and SYSTEM strategies, including goal-focused engagement of older adults, faith communities, college students, and local businesses.
- Increase community awareness efforts related to the importance of early childhood development and education, the special learning challenges faced by low income and English Language Learner children and youth, and the unique opportunities we have to keep middle and high school students academically engaged through graduation.

REFERENCED AND RELATED LITERATURE

- Results Based Accountability @ www.resultsaccountability.com.
- Greater North Penn School Readiness Initiative: A Phase I Summary Report, 2011.
- “United Way’s Education Strategies: Improving Success for Children and Youth,” United Way Worldwide, 2010 @ http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_1289.pdf.
- “Double Jeopardy: How Third-Grade Reading Skills and Poverty Influence High School Graduation,” The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2011 @ www.aecf.org (*Publications*).
- “What Works: Promising Practices for Improving the School Readiness of English Language Learners,” The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2004 @ www.aecf.org (*Publications*).
- “What Kids Need: The Building Blocks for Children and Youth,” The Search Institute @ <http://www.search-institute.org/developmental-assets>.
- “Investment Summary: Making Connections Indianapolis,” The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2009 @ www.aecf.org (*Publications*).

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SNAPSHOT OF LOCAL DATA RELATED TO THIS GOAL

- Eight percent (8%) of North Penn/Indian Valley children (143/1807) born 2005-08 were born at low birth weight/less than 5.5 pounds. (PA Department of Health)
- Five percent (5%) of North Penn/Indian Valley children (93 /1807) born 2005-08 were born to a mother without a high school diploma. (PA Department of Health)
- Five percent (5%) or almost 1,000 North Penn/Indian Valley families with children lived below the poverty level in 2010 (Claritas Inc. 2010 Census). “Poverty level” was defined by the US Department of Health and Human Services as \$22,050 for a family of four (4) regardless of location within the United States.
- A far more realistic view of poverty is presented by the PA Financial Self-Sufficiency Standard (FSSS), an annual income deemed necessary for a basic and decent level of living in each PA County. For 2010, the FSSS for a family of four (4) in Montgomery County was \$71,393. (www.pathwayspa.org) Over 55,500 Montgomery County children (birth-17) fell below this standard “300% poverty level” in 2010. (www.datacenter.kidscount.org)
- The reality of economic hardship is illustrated by the fact that a family must work 116 hours/week at 2010 minimum wage (\$7.25) to afford the average rent for a basic two-bedroom Montgomery County apartment (\$1,211/month), assuming the family is spending 30% of their income on housing.
- There has been a steady rise in the percent and number of poor K-12 students (free/reduced lunch eligibility) in both school districts in the last 5 years (2006-2010): from 10 to 17% (1,441 to 2,238 students) in North Penn School District and from 9 to 13% (611 to 873 students) in Souderton Area School District. (PA Department of Education)
- While a laudable 94% of students across both districts graduated from high school in 2010, 149 (10%) 3rd graders tested below grade level in reading, 131 (9%) 8th graders tested not proficient in reading, and 422 (28%) graduating students tested not proficient in reading and math. (PA Department of Education)
- Additionally, a rising number of high school graduates across both districts were reported as “not going anywhere” (further education/training) after graduation: from 171 in 2008-09 to 241 in 2009-10, a 41% increase. (www.datacenter.kidscount.org)
- Across both districts, a higher percentage of low income students and English Language Learner students were not “on track” academically, compared to other subgroups. (PA Department of Education, 2010)



Results Based Accountability Testimonials from Local United Ways

Results-Based Accountability (RBA), as defined in the book, "Trying Hard is Not Good Enough," is a framework for producing measurable improvements for customers and communities. A growing number of United Ways and other funders across the country are using RBA to achieve community improvements in education, income and health. Below are comments from some of the United Ways that are leading the way:

"RBA is such a clear and easily understood method for identifying the change we want to see in our communities and then for making a realistic plan to achieve that change. We have used RBA with our community partners to successfully reduce binge drinking among teens and young adults and to reduce childhood obesity in our county. The precision and discipline of RBA has made us favorably competitive for national foundation and government grants. I highly recommend RBA to United Ways."

**Mary Lou Goeke, Executive Director
United Way of Santa Cruz County (CA)**

"The goal of all of our United Way community impact efforts is to improve the lives of people in our communities. The RBA process is a strategic, time-efficient, ongoing, easy to understand, and measureable way by which we can ensure that the efforts we undertake to help people are resulting in the outcomes we seek."

**Ted Granger, President
United Way of Florida**

"Results Based Accountability provides a framework for the kind of long-term thinking required to truly change community conditions. The RBA structure enabled us within a six month time frame to realign our community impact agenda around Education, Income and Health and at the same time, build a culture of measurement and shared accountability for results. Through a community driven process we selected four population results and their key indicators. We then used the concept of performance measures to help guide our contract negotiations with our community impact partners. We now have the ability to track, improve and report the results of our strategies on a quarterly basis. Results Based Accountability helped us accelerate our community impact agenda."

**Dan Duncan, Senior Vice President of External Relations
United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona**



"United Way of Central Iowa has utilized Results Based Accountability (RBA) methods for the past several years. Using RBA with community partners helps us to look at what they will do and who is better off, ultimately helping us measure towards community goals. The evolution of this work has allowed us to reach common measures for focus areas and has allowed for a greater common understanding of the work across the community. Recently UWCI adopted the Results Scorecard which feeds RBA information into a common dashboard, allowing us to see progress on program performance measures of partners and how the collective is advancing the common good by reaching our community goals. We are extremely excited about this tool as a way to share with our staff, board and community partners about progress on our collective work to turn the curve."

Nicole M. Beaman, MSW, LISW
Vice President of Community Impact
United Way of Central Iowa

"One of the reasons that the North Penn United Way has chosen to use Results Based Accountability (RBA) is the fact that it provides a systematic yet simple to use platform to determine community and agency goals and to attain community level and agency level results. We believe that the simple and common language approach is crucial to the unified work of multiple agencies and organizations. The education and training of RBA will allow the community and the agencies to develop just a few results as well as indicators of those results so that we all can gauge the effectiveness of their work. We are looking forward to how this will assist our community in addressing its needs and turning the curve with results. We are also excited to be able to make more strategic investment decisions."

Cheryl Clarke, Director of Community Impact
North Penn United Way (PA)

"The need to achieve results and accountability within the nonprofit sector has become the measuring stick for success. Utilizing the RBA framework has helped me develop a greater understanding of what it takes to improve the performance of programs, agencies, and service systems."

Mark Johnson, Vice President,
Community Funding and Special Initiatives
United Way of South Hampton Roads (VA)

"Results Based Accountability helps us to refocus and concentrate our energy on what we want to achieve in the community and to tailor our strategies to make that happen. It will also enable us to demonstrate our effectiveness to investors and gives us the data we need to build the capacity and effectiveness of funded agencies and other partners."

Diane R. Bessel, PhD, LMSW, CNM
Director of Community Impact
United Way of Buffalo & Erie County (NY)

"Using the Results Based Accountability Framework has been tremendously significant in the work we do in the central Maryland region. We have been able to clearly and succinctly articulate our results in the areas of Education, Income and Health. Having offered community trainings to our partners, we are working with community partners to achieve those results. Equally important is the fact that we are able to show our funders, stakeholders and the general public the impact of our work - how much we are doing, how well we are doing our work, the number of people who are better off, and the positive changes in our communities"

Marian Amoa
Assistant Director, Outcomes & Evaluation
United Way of Central Maryland (UWCM)

"We decided to marry our Community Impact model to RBA some years ago, and this journey continues to bring focus and direction to how we plan, partner, invest, and hold both our grantees and ourselves accountable for making a difference. Most recently, a board member sponsored an after-work celebration to honor 19 agencies with programs receiving a "high green" rating for RBA performance. Key stakeholders and donors are looking to our United Way to spread this kind of "partnership with accountability" throughout the nonprofit community."

Janice Lovegrove, Vice President, Community Impact
United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley (PA)

"Our United Way is just at the beginning of using RBA. RBA is a tool that we can (and will) use with our agencies and grants process to ensure we are getting the expected results. Or if we are not getting the results, to be able to recognize this and make appropriate adjustments."

Anne Bryant
Executive Director
Franklin-Southampton Area United Way (VA)

For more information on how to get started,
please contact:



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