



**MEDIA CONTACT:**

Amy Foster Parish  
Director, Communications  
Cell: 703-472-5997  
aparish@familieslearning.org

## **NCFL to lead Statewide Family Engagement Centers in North Carolina and Nebraska**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**LOUISVILLE, KY (OCTOBER 5, 2023)** – The U.S. Department of Education has selected the National Center for Families Learning (NCFL) to establish and lead the new North Carolina Statewide Family Engagement Center (NC SFEC) and to continue its leadership of the Nebraska Statewide Family Engagement Center (NE SFEC). In each state, NCFL will work alongside a consortium of state and local organizations to provide an equitable, coordinated continuum of family engagement support designed to build the capacity of families, schools, and communities and improve student and family well-being.

The need for robust, cohesive family engagement systems is longstanding, but the recent COVID-19 pandemic impact has intensified this need. [Studies show](#) that children whose parents are more engaged with their education are more likely to have higher school attendance, achieve better learning outcomes, have improved social emotional well-being, and are overall more adaptable and comfortable in school settings. Both state SFEC efforts will work to leverage the power of family engagement in education while centering low-income, minority, and rural families who have been historically underserved. NCFL's efforts are grounded in the latest research and applies Dr. Karen Mapp's *Dual Capacity-Building Framework*, as the gold standard in family engagement practices.

The North Carolina SFEC award represents a new opportunity for NCFL and its partners—including the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Book Harvest, North Carolina Parents as Teachers, University of North Carolina Greensboro, and local education agencies—to work together on family engagement strategies. In the coming months, NCFL will conduct statewide community asset mapping to examine educator and family needs, identify key community partners, and examine the potential for cross-agency collaboration to enhance existing family engagement efforts.

In Nebraska, NCFL has been a leader in the SFEC since 2018, alongside the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation and the Nebraska Department of Education. In that time, the NE SFEC served thousands of families across eight of Nebraska's 19 Educational Service Units. This new award will allow NCFL to expand upon this important work through evidence-based professional learning experiences and technical assistance, high-impact programming, and policy and advocacy efforts that deliberately elevate family voice and leadership.

“We’re thrilled for this opportunity to expand our Nebraska SFEC work and build new relationships supporting children and families in North Carolina,” says NCFL President and CEO Dr. Felicia C. Smith. “Over the next five years, we will work to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Nebraska SFEC and to operationalize and build capacity for family engagement, literacy, and leadership work in North Carolina. Several community partners have signed on to help us with these efforts, and I look forward to working alongside them to amplify the impact of family, school, and community efforts in both states.”

“It is well known that education starts in the home and that parents are a child’s first teacher,” says North Carolina State Superintendent Catherine Truitt. “Partnering with the National Center for Families Learning to create a North Carolina Statewide Family Engagement Center will help bridge the gap between families and schools. Engaged families lead to increased success for students in the classroom and beyond. I am excited for this partnership to come to North Carolina, and I look forward to working together to improve educational outcomes for students.”

“Nebraska families have benefitted for years with our partnerships created through this grant,” said Nebraska Commissioner of Education Brian Maher. “We are excited to continue our work with NCFL to expand our reach to even more families across the state. The best learning environments are ones where there is deep collaboration with families and education professionals, this opportunity will help expand that work and touch even more lives in Nebraska.”

These five-year grants are administered through the Statewide Family Engagement Centers program (84.310A) and are fully funded by Federal dollars. Total funding for the North Carolina SFEC grant is \$4,985,858. Total funding for the Nebraska SFEC grant is \$4,072,027.

###

#### **About the National Center for Families Learning (NCFL)**

NCFL is a national nonprofit that has worked for over 30 years to eradicate poverty through education solutions for families. We believe education is a shared responsibility and that collaboration among families, schools, and community members can lead to powerful learning experiences. NCFL’s vision is to establish coordinated and aligned family learning systems in 60 communities by 2030, built with and for families, to increase education and economic outcomes and create more equitable communities. For more information on NCFL, visit [familieslearning.org](https://familieslearning.org). To learn more about our 60x30 Vision or become a 60x30 partner, visit [familieslearning.org/60x30](https://familieslearning.org/60x30).