

## WHO WE ARE

Alignment Rockford is a collective impact organization whose mission is to align community resources in support of public school strategies to raise student achievement, improve the health and happiness of our children, and advance the economic and social well-being of our community.

## WHAT WE SEE

Alignment Rockford envisions all students graduating from high school with marketable employment skills and enrolling in post-secondary education and training. They are eager to live, work, learn, create, and play in the Rockford Region as contributing adults.

## COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Collective impact is a centralized infrastructure, a dedicated staff, and a structured process that leads to a common agenda, shared measurement, continuous communication, and mutually reinforcing activities among all participants.

## PRINCIPLES

- Focus on those with the greatest need first
- Target academics and the whole child
- Comprehensive and multifaceted approach



“Alignment Rockford effectively brings together community resources in support of our public schools. It is difficult to imagine leading our District without their continued support.”

*Ehren Jarrett, Superintendent  
Rockford Public Schools District 205*

## PURPOSE

- Enable children to succeed
- Align with the school district’s strategic priorities
- Design solutions focusing on high-yield challenges
- Solve complex problems
- Work of serving public schools is multi-generational

**TEAMS** develop solutions surrounded by these needs identified by the public schools

- Healthy Starts: equip families of children ages 0-5 with the tools needed to excel in school
- Career Awareness: create a K-12 system to increase student career awareness
- Academy Expo: create, run, and manage the Academy Expo event, which connects students to careers to curriculum through hands-on career demonstrations
- Pathways: increase student engagement, preparation and placement in post-secondary training and employment or education
- College Readiness: create an engaged school and community culture where all students expect to pursue higher education or professional training beyond high school graduation

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since its inception in 2010, Alignment Rockford's accomplishments have included creating a dramatic rise in community awareness about the challenges and opportunities facing Rockford Public Schools, and implementing the Alignment system of principles, structure, process and technology to design and deliver solutions.

During 2014 the value of **incremental tangible goods and services** provided through Alignment Rockford solutions to support Rockford Public Schools is conservatively **estimated to exceed \$560,000**.

### *Other successful Alignment Rockford solutions:*

#### **Talk2Me**

##### **Pilot:**

A consistent social/emotional learning message about secure infant attachment, called talk2me, has been developed by a group of community child development experts based on research and best practices. Many children start school with deficits related to lack of secure attachment as infants. As a result, their sensory, language and cognitive development is compromised.

##### **Results:**

- Train the trainer program: In 2012, 139 people from 31 organizations received training at 10 sessions, and 100 medical staff from 6 pediatric and family practice clinics received training
- Ad campaign value of collateral materials and promotion: \$30,000

#### **Preschool Enrollment**

##### **Pilot:**

Increase parent/community awareness of the Rockford Early Childhood Preschool Program and engage community sites to host on-site screening and enrollment in locations where families gather.

##### **Results:**

- Nine additional sites engaged and hosted screening and enrollment for preschool
- Enrollment on target to exceed that of 2013-14 school year

#### **Academy Expo**

##### **Pilot:**

In September 2013, engage Rockford Public Schools' 9th, 10th, and 11th graders in a variety of career experiences to assist them in making an academy selection in January 2014. It also forges a relevant link between student curriculum and future careers.

##### **Results:**

- 5,000 high school students
- 140 career booths
- 581 Industry Experts
- 107 Hospitality Ambassadors
- 14 in-kind sponsors
- 3 cash sponsors
- 2,921 on-site donated hours
- 98% of Industry Experts intend to return in 2014

In 2014, the Academy Expo included the addition of Belvidere School District students.

## **Teacher Site Visits**

### **Pilot:**

Teacher site visits will link high school staff to work environments associated with an academy pathway theme so teachers develop new relationships, increase relevance of curriculum, and increase curriculum rigor to improve college and career readiness for all students.

### **Results:**

Over 250 academy teachers visited more than 30 businesses, forging relevant connections between businesses and teachers in order to build relationships that benefit student engagement

## **Academy Support Teams**

### **Pilot:**

Identify, recruit, and train Academy Support Team (AST) members to serve as networkers and act as a resource for the College and Career Academies of Rockford at Auburn, East, Guilford and Jefferson High Schools and Roosevelt Alternative High School.

### **Results:**

- Four Academy Support Teams at each high school (Auburn has six)
- Up to 75 community members serve on each AST supporting the high school academies

## **Free Teacher Summer Workshops**

### **Pilot:**

Provide professional development workshops for public school teachers and support staff during the summer of 2011. All workshops gave a greater understanding of behavioral health topics and their impact on teaching and learning.

### **Results:**

Workshops held on the following topics

- Mental health awareness and crisis interventions
- Social/Emotional Learning
- Self awareness: recognizing one's emotions as well as one's strengths and limitations
- Responsible decision-making: making ethical, constructive choices about personal and social behavior
- Relationship skills: forming positive relationships, working in teams, and dealing effectively with conflict
- Social awareness: showing understanding and empathy for others
- Self management: managing emotions and behaviors to achieve one's goals
- Cultural community awareness and connections
- Locating local community resources to support behavioral health
- Teacher wellness

## **STRUCTURE**

Alignment Rockford is governed by a Governing Board which meets quarterly and includes key policy-makers from civic, educational, business, cultural, service and social service organizations. They are responsible for simultaneously catalyzing a change environment and stabilizing that same environment to sustain efforts. A separate Operating Board meets monthly to monitor the work of Alignment's solution design teams and connect them to needed resources. They are the capable tacticians and the consummate networkers who ensure that the work of Alignment always responds to the District's strategic needs.

## PROCESS

All Alignment teams form in response to a District's request. They are chaired by a public school executive and vice chaired by a recognized community leader. Each Alignment team follows the same process cycle, and each phase in the cycle is composed of multiple steps.

### Solution Design

Beginning the process cycle is the important solution design/tactical planning phase which identifies a solution that responds to the strategic need.

### Community Engagement

The team engages the community with Alignment's unique Invitation to Participate (ITP)<sup>™</sup> tool. The ITP<sup>™</sup> asks organizations to align their existing resources to support the strategic needs of the public schools.

### Pilot Implementation and Evaluation

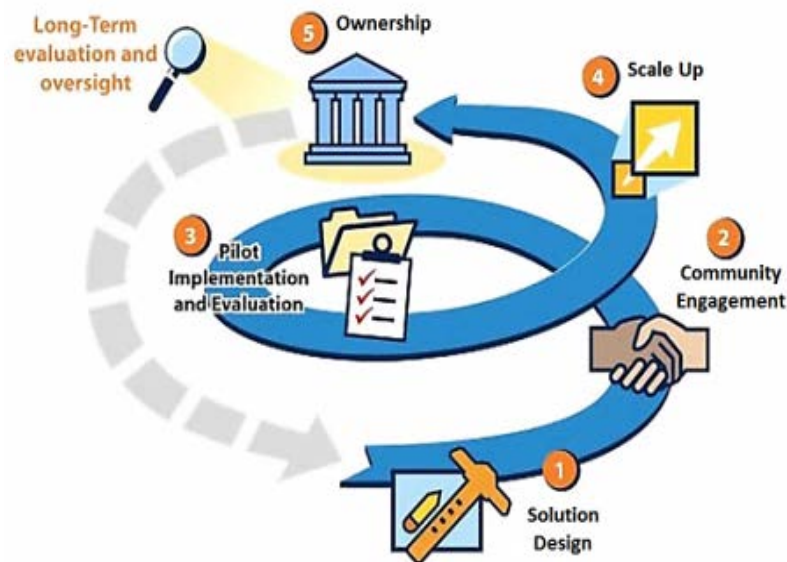
Solutions are piloted, assessed and improved before serving an entire target population.

### Scale Up

The team examines the data, analyses the data to determine if/how to expand, and then when and where to expand the project. The team will then develop a plan for expanding to additional sites based on capacity and need.

### Ownership

As Alignment solutions mature they migrate to the school district and become a part of its usual practices to support all students. Alignment organizations utilize proprietary principles, structure, processes, and technology. This is key to pilot program success, fundamental to outcomes evaluation, and critical to effective replication and institutionalization.



All Alignment participants are selflessly committed to creating a positive and constructive atmosphere as they shoulder the responsibility of advancing Rockford Public Schools strategies for student success.