

# NORTHLAND EARLY EDUCATION CENTER

*“Leading the way in Early Intervention and Education”*

## **OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT ANNUAL REPORT**

January 1 through December 31, 2021

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Northland Early Education Center (NEEC) provides quality early education and therapeutic intervention for the youngest and most vulnerable members of the community and has done so since 1981. NEEC provides these vital services for children age’s birth to five who have special needs and children who have typical needs in fully – inclusive classrooms. Accredited by both the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), NEEC’s early education and therapy programs meet and uphold the highest and most rigorous standards in the nation.

As a 501(c)3 organization, NEEC relies on a variety of sources to fund our program and services. On average, 50 percent of NEEC’s funding comes from parent paid tuition, as well as an additional 42 percent from fees for services from contracts NEEC has with the Missouri First Steps program, Clay County Developmental Disabilities Resource Board, Platte County Board of Services and other state and local governmental entities. The remaining 8 percent come from charitable contributions received from generous community members, corporations and foundations.

Frequent and honest evaluation of any program is one of the keys to success and that is why NEEC utilizes an Outcomes Measurement format for evaluating annual goals. The Outcomes Measurement Report serves as a motivating and tracking tool, allowing us to better qualify the impact that our programs have on the children and families we serve. The NEEC Board of Directors, administration, and staff believe that the well-organized, thoughtful, and honest program evaluation the Outcomes Measurement offers is imperative to furthering our mission to provide early education and therapy services for children who have special needs and children who have typical needs, in a fully inclusive classroom environment in order for them to reach their full potential.

\*The numbers in the report were heavily impacted by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and do not reflect a typical year of service.

## SERVICE DELIVERY/PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Output Measure</b>	<b>Current Value</b>	<b>Target Value</b>
Provide Physical Therapy	Units <sup>1</sup> of Service Provided	2,233	7,000
Provide Occupational Therapy	Units of Service Provided	993	1,500
Provide Speech & Language Pathology	Units of Service Provided	1,912	2,000
Provide Special Instruction	Units of Service Provided	870	1,500
Provide Early Education	Number of Children Served	199	190

### Early Childhood Education and Therapeutic Intervention Program

NEEC provides early education and therapy services for children who have special needs and early education for children who have typical needs age's birth to five. NEEC also provides a before and after school/summer program for children enrolled in kindergarten through fifth grade who have special needs. NEEC's 12 early education classrooms are staffed by dedicated childcare professionals, including a lead teacher with a Bachelor's degree in special education, early childhood education or a related field. All lead teachers prepare weekly lesson plans that fully utilize and incorporate the principles of the Project Construct curriculum framework. In a Project Construct classroom, children build their own knowledge, at their own pace and development level, through play and interactions in a well-facilitated educational environment. As a result, children become critical thinkers and creative problem-solvers while developing a love of learning.

Children are screened upon entry into the program and continually assessed each day; milestones are recorded in each child's individual portfolio and discussed at bi-annual parent-teacher conferences. Due to COVID-19 safety measures these conferences were transitioned to more frequent parent-teacher communications via email, phone call, pick-up and drop-off conversations and our parent communication technology. Success for a child, either with special needs or typical needs, in a NEEC classroom is demonstrated by the child's ability to think critically and creatively, problem solve, and cooperate with other children in a learning environment. At NEEC children attain these skills in a fully-inclusive classroom environment, meaning that children are separated by age, not developmental level.

In addition to high quality, fully-inclusive early education, NEEC offers therapy services for children with special needs who qualify. NEEC's therapy department specializes in physical and occupational therapies, speech and language pathology and special instruction. The therapists work collaboratively in a teaming model to ensure the whole family's needs are being met. Primarily, the NEEC therapy program collaborates with Missouri's First Steps program to determine the appropriate level of therapeutic intervention for children from birth to age three. NEEC therapists also work with families and children through Medicaid, and private pay. Each child that receives therapy services through NEEC has some form of individualized goals and a plan on which the therapy services are based. Predominately this plan takes the form of either an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or an Individualized Education Program (IEP). An IFSP guides the therapy process for children (aged birth – three) with special needs based upon the family needs and goals. An IEP is for children three and older and consists of a written plan developed by a team to help an individual child with educational goals. All therapy service plans at NEEC include a statement of the child's present levels of educational and/or developmental performance, measurable annual goals, and outlines the specific services that will be offered to help the child meet these goals. Success for a child receiving therapy services through NEEC is as individualized as the child.

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<sup>1</sup> One unit is equal to 15 minutes.

### Before-, After-, Summer- School Age Program

In order to fulfill a growing need recognized in our community, NEEC provides a before-, after-, summer-school age program for children enrolled in kindergarten through fifth grade who have special needs. This program, which meets before and after public school and during the summer months, has its own teaching staff that incorporate each child's Individual Education Plan goals into the classroom's daily activities and lesson plans. Knowing that the fully-inclusive environment is the most appropriate for all children, this program is seeking to incorporate typically developing peer models. However, space for this program is limited and children with special needs still remain the number one priority for this continued learning program at NEEC.

### Licensing and Accreditation

The Northland Early Education Center is proud to be accredited through both the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). Additionally, NEEC is a licensed private agency with the Missouri Department of Health and holds certification through the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. These accreditations, licensures and certifications ensure that NEEC's program standards are among the highest in the nation. These also ensure our ability to provide support for students and families who need additional care, which may not be provide by other organizations nearby.

### Service Area

NEEC serves children age's birth to 5 who have special needs and typical needs, as well as children who have special needs children enrolled in kindergarten through fifth grade primarily in Clay and Platte counties, as well as surrounding counties in the Kansas City Metropolitan area.

## **2021 ACTION PLAN GOALS AND RESULTS**

**GOAL:** Update marketing materials to reflect the expansion and renovations.

**RESULT:** Marketing materials were tabled for the year to reserve funds and focus on pandemic related issues. This goal will carry over into 2022.

**GOAL:** Fully staff and enroll children in all classrooms.

**RESULT:** The COVID-19 pandemic and its effects has caused staffing shortages, mainly teacher assistants. Enrollment was intentionally halted in order to continue to provide appropriate care and maintain accreditation at the available staffing levels. As of December 2021, NEEC was 80% staffed and enrolled at 78%.

**GOAL:** Secure the final funds needed to close the expansion and renovation loan.

**RESULTS:** Also due to the COVID-19 pandemic, mainly due to the inability to host crucial fundraising events, NEEC wasn't able to secure extra capital funds and was forced to finance the remaining \$600,000 needed to complete the campaign. This goal will carry over into 2022.

**GOAL:** Train and prepare board members for the development of 2023-2025/7 Strategic Plan

**RESULTS:** As a result of the various complications and needs of the year, the board decided to focus on the current and emerging concerns of the organization rather than a long-term plan. This year has required a micro-management focus of operations, health, safety, and ever-changing gamut of information surrounding the pandemic, financial, and societal concerns. Although goals have been set for 2021, NEEC's Board of Directors will use 2022 to develop a comprehensive 3-5 year strategic plan.

**GOAL:** Add new board member(s) that is or has practiced in the medical field, preferably pediatrics

**RESULTS:** Four board members resigned in 2021 after long, dedicated terms. NEEC recruited one board member who is a local pediatrician.

**OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT ANNUAL REPORT**  
**January 1 through December 31, 2021**

<b>Effectiveness Objective</b>	<b>Expectancy Goal</b>	<b>Current Number/Total</b>	<b>Current Percent</b>	<b>Time of Measure</b>
Children with special needs enrolled <sup>2</sup> at NEEC who transitioned into their least restrictive environment	100%	6/6	100%	December 2021
Children with special needs receiving services from NEEC, who made progress on at least 75% of their early education goals	90%	49/53	93%	December 2021
Children with special needs receiving service in the area of Special Instruction at NEEC, who made progress on at least 75% of their IFSP goals	90%	22/24	92%	December 2021
Children with special needs receiving service in the area of Occupational Therapy at NEEC, who made progress on at least 75% of their IFSP goals	90%	24/27	89%	December 2021
Children with special needs receiving service in the area of Physical Therapy at NEEC, who made progress on at least 75% of their IFSP goals	90%	122/124	98%	December 2021
Children with special needs receiving service in the area of Speech and Language Pathology at NEEC, who made progress on at least 75% of their IFSP goals	90%	44/46	96%	December 2021
Students graduating to kindergarten, who do not receive special education services, will score above the 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile for their age in all five domains on the Battelle Developmental Inventory to determine elementary school readiness.	100%	19/19	100%	December 2021
<b>Efficiency Objectives</b>				
<b>Efficiency Objectives</b>	<b>Expectancy Goal</b>	<b>Current Number/Total</b>	<b>Current Percent</b>	<b>Time of Measure</b>
Enrollment as compared to full capacity	95%	125/172	73%	December 2021
Children who transitioned from home based therapy to the on-site Early Education and Therapy program	10%	0/55	0%	December 2021
Average enrollment of children with special needs as compared to the enrolled student population	43%	49/125	39%	December 2021
Children with special needs who received services from NEEC <sup>3</sup> compared to the entire student population	50%	139/276	50%	December 2021
Staff retention exceeding 1 year	75%	62/82	75%	December 2021
<b>Service Access Objective</b>				
<b>Service Access Objective</b>	<b>Expectancy Goal</b>	<b>Current Number/Total</b>	<b>Current Percent</b>	<b>Time of Measure</b>
Children with special needs on the waiting list	0%	6/28	21%	December 2021
<b>Satisfaction Objectives</b>				
<b>Satisfaction Objectives</b>	<b>Expectancy Goal</b>	<b>Current Number/Total</b>	<b>Current Percent</b>	<b>Time of Measure</b>
Parents/families who expressed satisfaction with the services provided by NEEC <sup>4</sup>	100%	30/30	100%	December 2021
Parents/families who rate their child's learning experience at NEEC as "adequate" or better <sup>5</sup>	100%	30/30	100%	December 2021

<sup>2</sup> "Enrolled" and "Enrollment" refers to children who receive services on-site.

<sup>3</sup> Children with special needs who receive services on-site (including the before and after school program) as well as children who received home-based therapy services.

<sup>4</sup> Survey was sent to 82 families via email, 37% (30) responded.

<sup>5</sup> Survey was sent to 82 families via email, 37% (30) responded.

## **2021 HIGHLIGHTS**

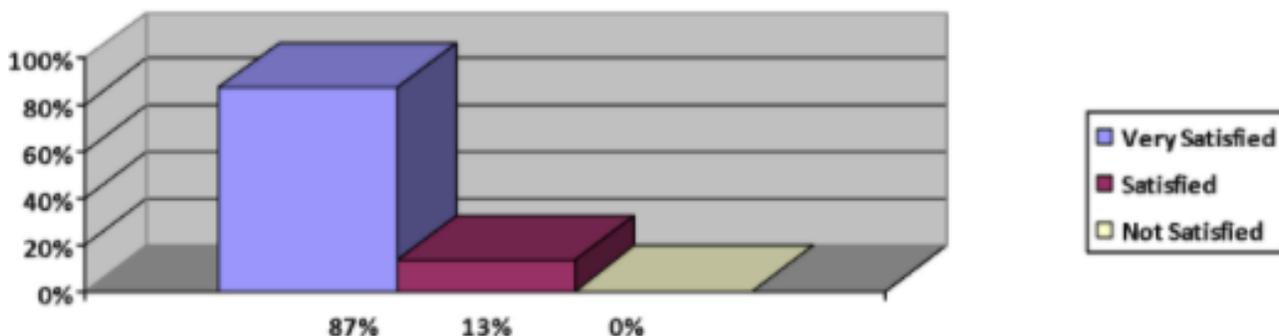
- Our doors remained open for all but eight weeks of this year, despite the pandemic. We closed to prepare and implement our COVID-19 policy and to perform a deep clean of our facility.
- During the closure, our staff continued to receive their full employment benefits. This was made possible with support from Clay County DDRB, Platte County Board of Services and the PPE program from the federal government.
- Thanks to generous funders that increased their support, NEEC was able to offer a wage increase in late 2021, which assisted our competitiveness during a labor shortage.
- We continued work on a new green space for the children we serve. The fenced in space is now sodded and functional, which was funded by the Mid-America Regional Council.
- In 2021, 276 children with special needs and typical needs received early education and therapy services. A 37% increase from 2019, and the largest number of children we have ever served in a single year.

## **2022 ACTION PLAN**

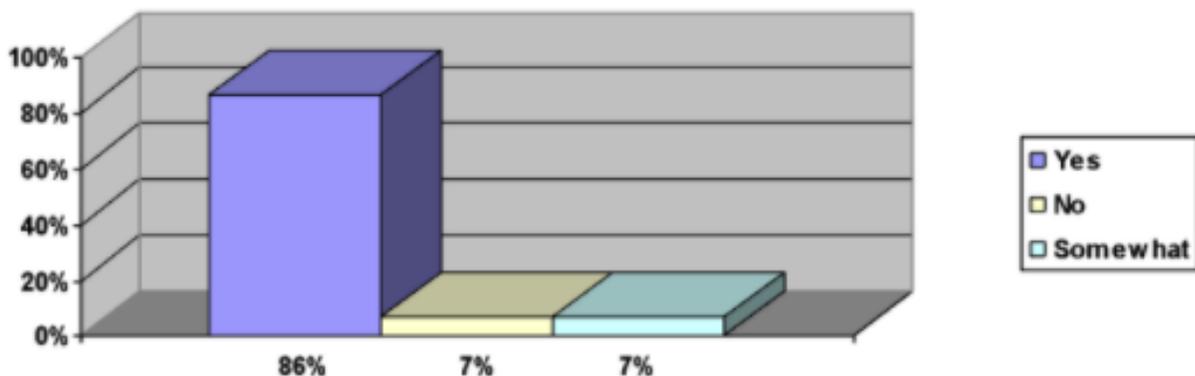
- Promotion and expansion of services will focus on the development of community partners, updating marketing materials, expanding the therapy program, and increasing family participation.
- Board retention and recruitment goals will focus on restructuring of the board recruitment process, orientation process, and sub committees. NEEC will increase board membership to 12 members and spend the latter half of the year focused on developing a comprehensive 3-5 year strategic plan.
- Faculty retention and recruitment goals will focus on professional development of and scholarship opportunities for assistant teachers, employment terms and benefits of lead teachers, and overall training of all staff.
- Fundraising goals consist of safely conducting in-person special events, increasing participation in our monthly giving program, and securing funds to close out remaining capital campaign debt.

The following graphs illustrate the results of surveys completed by 30 families whose children receive services at Northland Early Education Center.

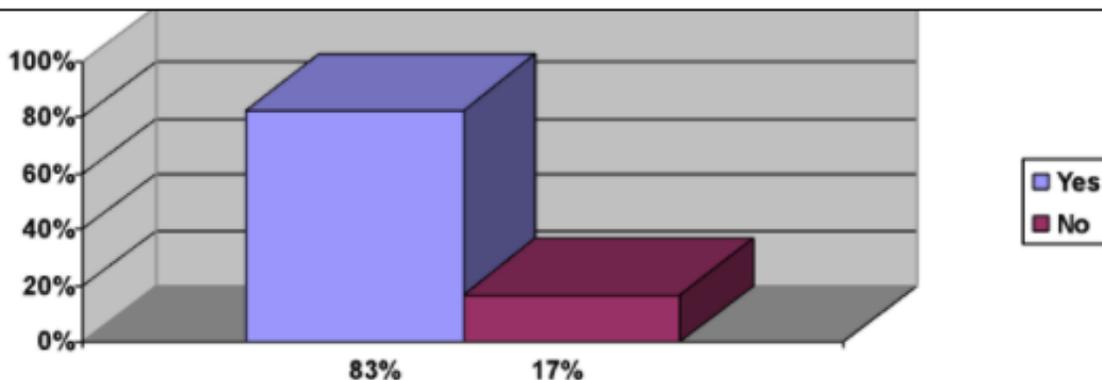
## Family Satisfaction with Services



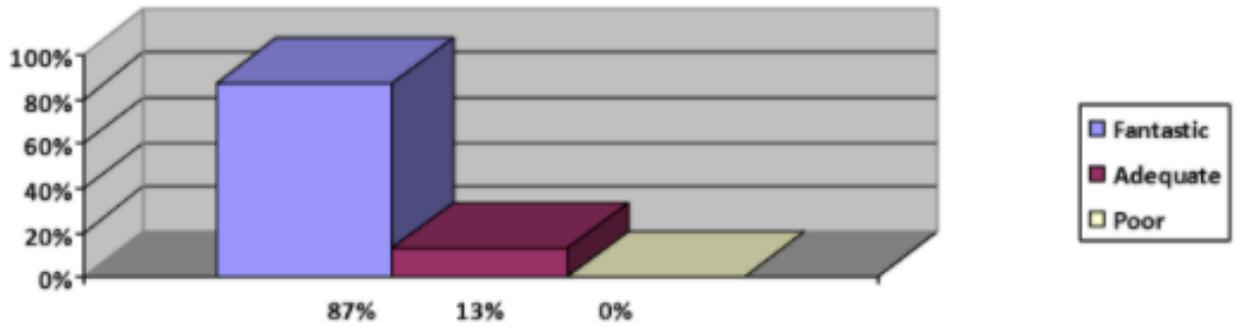
## Does your family feel welcome in the program?



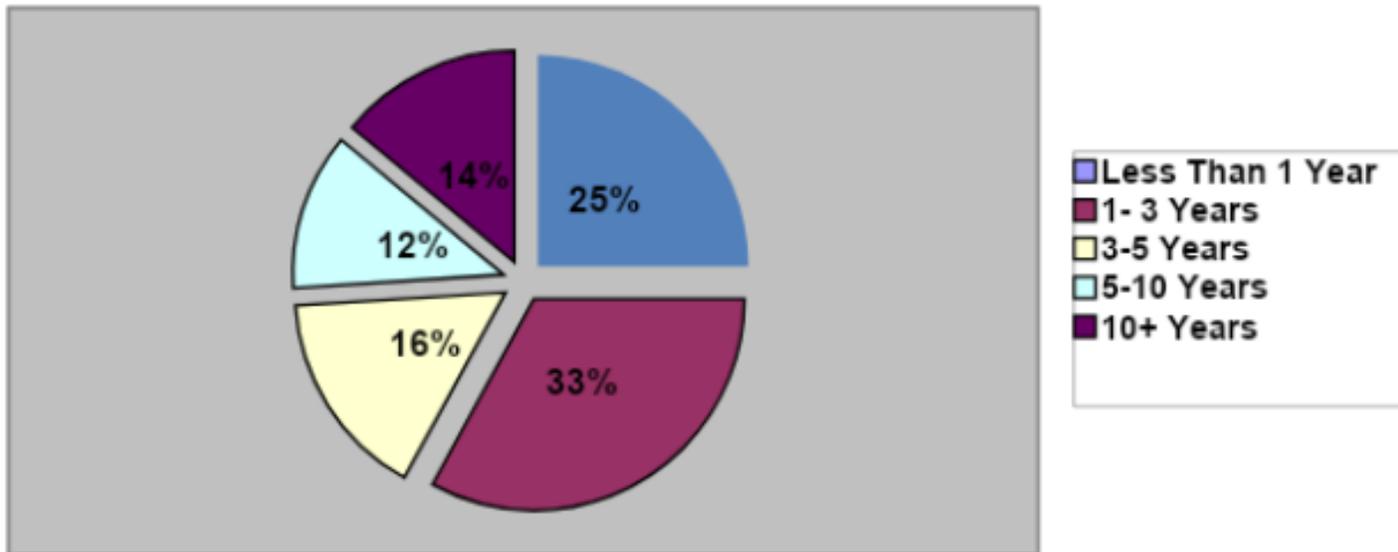
## Do you feel that your child's classroom teachers provided adequate communication over the year of 2020?



How would you rate your child's learning experience during his/her enrollment at NEEC?



**2020 NEEC STAFF RETENTION RATE**



\*The average annual turnover rate for child care staff is 30% in the United States.<sup>1</sup>

Descriptors	Status of current provision of services as of December 31, 2021				Total # served in 2021	Percent of Total served
	Receiving Services	Exited in 2019	Waiting	Not accepted		
	<b>Sex</b>					
Male	109	60	0	0	169	61%
Female	73	34	0	0	107	39%
Unknown	0	0	28	0	0	0%
<b>Age</b>						
Unborn	N/A	N/A	2	0	N/A	N/A
Birth to 2	100	25	16	0	125	45%
3 to 5 years	68	57	7	0	125	45%
6 to 14 years	15	11	3	0	26	10%
<b>National Origin</b>						
African American	14	10	0	0	24	9%
Asian	3	1	0	0	4	1%
Biracial	2	0	0	0	2	1%
Caucasian	101	58	0	0	159	57%
Hispanic	10	4	0	0	14	5%
Middle Eastern	1	2	0	0	3	1%
Unknown	49	21	28	0	70	24%
<b>Primary Disability</b>						
Autism Spectrum Disorder	5	7	0	0	12	4%
Chromosome Defect	5	2	0	0	7	3%
Developmental Delay	31	18	0	0	49	18%
Down Syndrome	16	1	0	0	17	6%
Heart Defect	4	2	0	0	6	2%
Premature	5	7	0	0	12	4%
Speech Delay	9	3	0	0	12	4%
Other	18	6	6	0	24	9%
<b>County of Residence</b>						
Clay	141	69	0	0	210	82%
Platte	35	25	0	0	60	16%
Jackson	4	0	0	0	4	1%
Johnson	1	0	0	0	1	.5%
Unknown	1	0	28	0	1	.5%