



SHAWNEE COUNTY SCHOOLS COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

A Foundation for Action to End Student Homelessness

January 2019



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Executive Summary

Student homelessness is a critical policy problem across America. By the 2013-2014 school year, more than 1.3 students were identified as homeless (Ingram, et al. 2016; National Center for Homeless Education 2017). This assessment was prepared to support Shawnee County public school districts and community stakeholders in efforts to end student homelessness.

Shawnee County public school districts reported a total of 554 homeless students in the 2016-2017 school year.¹ The Kansas Department for Children and Families asked Vital Impact Consulting, LLC, to bring the collective impact model for community change to Shawnee County in support of efforts to launch an intervention based on the nationally recognized success of Impact KCK, which serves the Kansas City Kansas Public Schools in Wyandotte County. Impact KCK produced a 50% reduction in student homelessness in just 2.5 years, despite its location in the poorest of Kansas's 105 counties.

This community assessment is part of the first phase of work Vital Impact Consulting is providing in support of community action in Shawnee County. The second phase began in November 2018 with a Call to Action. This phase will also include a Collective Impact Forum, additional training workshops, and technical assistance in support of Shawnee County's collective impact program.

Assessment Focus

Some of the information presented in this assessment covers Shawnee County as a whole, while other information focuses on the City of Topeka. This arises from the fact that homeless students in Topeka Public Schools (TPS) make up nearly 85% of all homeless students in Shawnee County. While much of the activity required to end student homelessness in the county will occur in Topeka, this assessment incorporates key elements of analysis for the county as a whole. There are two reasons to extend the analysis beyond the Topeka city limits.

The first reason is equity. If a program for homeless students and their families is launched in Topeka, it is fair that the needs of students throughout the county are included in program efforts. The second reason is effectiveness. Experience with the Impact KCK program in Wyandotte County shows that homeless students and families in neighboring school districts are likely to relocate to the district served by the collective impact program addressing their needs. By making the Shawnee County

¹ Kansas State Department of Education

collective impact program inclusive of homeless students and families throughout the county, they can be served in their existing school district without relocation.

Demographics

Shawnee County's total population was slightly more than 178,000 in 2017. White, non-Hispanic residents make up nearly 75% of the total, while just under 8% are African-American. Residents who identify as Other Race or Two or More Races are nearly 9% of the population, and Hispanic or Latino residents are slightly less than 12%.²

With an estimated population of more than 126,000 in 2017, the City of Topeka is Shawnee County's largest city. White, non-Hispanic individuals are about 69% of the population, while African-Americans make up a further 10%. Residents who identify as Other Race or Two or More Races are about 10% of the population. Hispanic or Latino individuals are 14% of Topeka residents.

The county's median income for 2016 was \$52,088. Persons in poverty made up 10.9% of the population in that year. Shawnee County as a whole experienced a higher median income and a lower poverty rate than the City of Topeka for the same period. Topeka's median income was \$43,740 in 2016, and its poverty rate was 18.3%. The Kansas statewide average poverty rate was 13.3% in 2016.

Housing Affordability

Housing affordability is a factor in student homelessness throughout the United States. As a Midwestern metropolitan area of modest size, Topeka's housing market does not suffer extreme affordability challenges similar to cities on either coast or Chicago. However, rents rose sharply from 2010 to 2018, particularly for two-, three-, and four-bedroom units. This trend is likely a factor in the level of student homelessness present in Topeka and Shawnee County.

Community Assets

Topeka is home to a substantial array of community asset organizations. These organizations are found in the public, nonprofit, and private sectors. Many of these assets are likely to be available to residents throughout Shawnee County.

This assessment includes an analysis of Topeka's assets based on the 16 functional domains adapted by the Impact KCK program from the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix.

² Hispanic or Latino descent is an ethnic category rather than a race. Thus, members of this group may be of any race. In the United States, Hispanic or Latino persons are most often White.

Topeka has particular strengths in these domains:

- Housing
- Food
- Health care
- Life skills
- Family relations
- Mental health
- Community involvement and social support
- Safety

Some domains have fewer assets. These domains may have a service gap that should be addressed prior to program launch:

- Employment
- Income
- Child care
- Mobility
- Parenting skills
- Legal

Collective Impact

This assessment has been prepared as a foundation for effective community action to end student homelessness in Shawnee County's public school districts through the replication of the Impact KCK program that serves students in the Kansas City Kansas Public Schools.

Impact KCK is based on the collective impact model for community change introduced by John Kania and Mark Kramer in 2011. In less than a decade, collective impact has proven successful as a tool for improving educational outcomes, cleaning up rivers, helping public housing residents get jobs, reducing crime, and ending homelessness (Walzer and Weaver 2019; Hanleybrown, Kania, and Kramer 2012).

Collective impact is more than collaboration. It is a strategic, disciplined approach to complex social problems facing communities. Collective impact success is based on five conditions:

1. Common agenda
2. Shared measurement system
3. Mutually reinforcing activities
4. Continuous communication
5. Backbone organization (Kania and Kramer 2011)

The backbone organization is essential to collective impact success. The backbone facilitates success by coordinating the common agenda, creating a shared measurement system, coordinating mutually reinforcing activities, and facilitating continuous communication among partner organizations.

Collective Impact Program Launch

Careful selection of the backbone is necessary for program success. Moreover, the most suitable candidate may not be the most visible organization. For instance, the backbone organization must be willing to highlight the accomplishments of the initiative as a whole and that of individual partner organizations, rather than focusing attention on its own achievements. In addition, a successful backbone organization will have the capacity to:

1. Guide vision and strategy
2. Support aligned activities
3. Establish shared measurement practices
4. Build public will
5. Advance policy
6. Mobilize funding (Turner, et al. 2012)

Partner organizations must be willing to put competition aside and work towards community goals. Working relationships should be structured and include a commitment from the backbone and partner organizations for a period of time sufficient to meet program goals. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) should be entered into between the backbone organization and each partner.

Summary

The Kansas Department for Children and Families is offering Shawnee County stakeholders an exciting opportunity to replicate the success of the Impact KCK program. An analysis of community assets demonstrates that there is strong potential to end student homelessness by harnessing the power of collective impact for community change. The launch of this program will mean transformed lives for children, youth, and families. Students served by this program will experience greater stability, improved learning outcomes, and greater rates of high school graduation. The cycle of poverty will be broken.

Introduction

Homelessness among America's public school students rose dramatically between 2007 and 2013. By the 2013-2014 school year, it reached 1.3 million children and youth, double the figure for 2007-2008 (Ingram, et al. 2016; National Center for Homeless Education 2017). Public schools in Shawnee County are among thousands of school districts across the U.S. serving homeless students.

Within Shawnee County, Topeka Public Schools identified 468 homeless students during the 2016-2017 school year (Kansas State Department of Education 2017). This figure varied over the five-year period from the 2012-2013 to 2016-2017 school years from a high of 630 in 2012-2013 to a low of 419 in 2014-2015. The number of reported homeless students may be affected by challenges in identifying homeless students, as well as actual increases or decreases in the number experiencing homelessness.

School districts report student homeless data to the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) each year. The most recent data are for the 2016-2017 school year. Table 1 provides data for all school districts within Shawnee County. KSDE does not report homeless data for school districts with fewer than 10 homeless students as a means of preserving student privacy in settings where reporting a small number might lead to the identification of individual homeless students. Thus, school districts with an asterisk in Table 1 in place of an actual number of homeless students do not necessarily have zero homeless students; instead, they may have up to nine.

Table 1: Homeless Students in Shawnee County, 2016-2017

District	USD #	Homeless
Kaw Valley	321	*
Seaman	345	*
Silver Lake	372	*
Auburn-Washburn	437	74
Shawnee Heights	450	12
Topeka	501	468
Total		554

Given that three Shawnee County school districts show asterisks for the number of homeless students reported in the 2016-2017 school year, the total number for the county may be 581.³

³ This is calculated as 554 plus three districts, each of which may have reported up to nine homeless students. Thus, the total reported may be 554 plus 27 = 581.

Assessment Purpose

Student homelessness is a challenge in Topeka and Shawnee County. The purpose of this community assessment is to provide a foundation for effective action with a strategically multi-sector, collaborative approach. This assessment is intended to provide a foundation for success in addressing student homelessness based on the collective impact model for community change.

This assessment is the result of the first of two phases in a project funded by the Kansas Department for Children and Families. Phase I included intensive planning, networking, and research to provide the foundation for community action.

Phase II will include multiple training sessions and the launch of the implementation phase in a new program to end student homelessness. The program will be based on the collective impact model developed by Impact KCK. Impact KCK's lead organization, Avenue of Life, and more than 30 partner organizations **reduced student homelessness in KCKPS by 50% in just 2.5 years** using the collective impact model for community change (L.P. Cookingham Institute of Urban Affairs 2018).

Assessment Team

Vital Impact Consulting, LLC, of Kansas City, Kansas, provided assessment services to the public schools in Shawnee County and other community stakeholders. The project team is led by Desiree Monize, Vital Impact's Principal. More information about Vital Impact Consulting is provided in Appendix D.

Kansas Department for Children and Families

The Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) contracted for both phases of this project in July 2018. Through this process, DCF is bringing Impact KCK, the program developed and implemented in Kansas City, Kansas, to Shawnee County. Vital Impact Consulting, LLC, was selected by DCF based on the group's ability to bring Shawnee County methods that have proven successful in dramatically reducing student homelessness in the Kansas City Kansas Public Schools. DCF is investing in the future of Shawnee County's children, youth, and families by providing a foundation for replicating the success of the Impact KCK program.

Assessment Overview

This assessment includes the following sections:

- Executive Summary
- Introduction
- Demographics

- Topeka's Housing Market and Student Homelessness
- Shawnee County Public Schools
- Community Assets
- Collective Impact for Community Change
- Selecting the Backbone Organization
- Launching the Collective Impact Initiative
- Conclusion

This assessment provides a foundation for the design, launch, and implementation of a successful community program to end student homelessness in Shawnee County. Any assessment or plan is only as successful as the commitment and hard work of those who launch and implement the program. Thus, this assessment is a starting point in taking well-informed action. It is up to the community to make its program a success.

Demographics

This section provides context necessary for understanding the community. Designing an effective and culturally aware intervention for student homelessness must be based on knowledge of a community's population. Further, the extent of poverty within the community is another factor that must be considered in program design.

Population by Race and Ethnicity

Shawnee County. Shawnee County's estimated 2017 population was 178,187. The county's population was nearly level from 2010 to 2017, with growth of 0.14%. White, non-Hispanic individuals make up nearly 75% of the county's population, while African Americans are slightly less than 8%. Native American or Alaska Native persons are just under 1% of the population; individuals identifying as Other Race or Two or More Races are slightly less than 9% of the county's total population. Hispanic or Latino individuals are just under 12% of Shawnee County's population. Table 2 presents information on Shawnee County's population by race and ethnicity.

Table 2: Shawnee County Population by Race and Ethnicity

Shawnee County			
Total Population 2010	177,934		
Total Population Estimate July 1, 2017	178,187	% Change from 2010	0.14%
2010 Census Population by Demographic Group			
White	144,412		
African-American or Black	15,280		
Native American or Alaska Native	2,177		
All Other Races	8,685		
Two or More Races	7,380		
Non-Hispanic	158,631		
White, Non-Hispanic (Sub- population of Non-Hispanic)	134,549		
Hispanic or Latino	19,303		
2016 Estimates of Census Population by Demographic Group			
White	147,823	% Change from 2010	2.40%
African-American or Black	13,639	% Change from 2010	-10.74%

Native American or Alaska Native	1,576	% Change from 2010	-27.61%
All Other Races	6,493	% Change from 2010	-25.24%
Two or More Races	9,036	% Change from 2010	22.44%
Non-Hispanic	157,664	% Change from 2010	-0.61%
White, Non-Hispanic (Sub-population of Non-Hispanic)	133,541	% Change from 2010	-0.75%
Hispanic or Latino	20,903	% Change from 2010	8.29%
2016 Estimates of Census Population by Demographic Groups as a Percentage of Total Population			
White	82.78%		
African-American or Black	7.64%		
Native American or Alaska Native	0.88%		
All Other Races	3.64%		
Two or More Races	5.06%		
Non-Hispanic	88.29%		
White, Non-Hispanic (Sub-population of Non-Hispanic)	74.78%		
Hispanic or Latino	11.71%		

City of Topeka. Topeka had an estimated population of 126,587 as of July 1, 2017. Its population declined by slightly less than 1% from 2010 to 2017. White, non-Hispanic individuals make up slightly more than 69% of the population, while African-Americans are 10% of the city's residents. Persons identifying as Native American or Alaska Native are approximately 1% of Topeka's population, while those identifying as Other Race or Two or More Races are about 11% of the population (U.S. Census Bureau 2018).

Hispanic or Latino residents are slightly more than 14% of Topeka's population.⁴ Further, this group grew by nearly 6% from 2010 to 2016 (U.S. Census Bureau 2018). Table 3 presents information on Topeka's population by race and ethnicity.

Table 3: City of Topeka Population by Race and Ethnicity

City of Topeka			
Total Population 2010	127,473		
Total Population Estimate July 1, 2017	126,587	% Change from 2010	-0.70%

⁴ Hispanic or Latino identification is an ethnic designation rather than a race. Thus, a person of Hispanic or Latino descent may be of any race. Most Hispanic or Latino individuals in the U.S. are White.

2010 Census Population by Demographic Group			
White	97,172		
African-American or Black	14,423		
Native American or Alaska Native	1,758		
All Other Races	7,816		
Two or More Races	6,304		
Non-Hispanic	110,447		
White, Non-Hispanic (Subpopulation of Non-Hispanic)	88,839		
Hispanic or Latino	17,026		
2016 Estimates of Census Population by Demographic Group			
White	100,346	% Change from 2010	3.27%
African-American or Black	12,751	% Change from 2010	-11.59%
Native American or Alaska Native	1,164	% Change from 2010	-33.79%
All Other Races	5,795	% Change from 2010	-25.86%
Two or More Races	7,416	% Change from 2010	17.64%
Non-Hispanic	109,501	% Change from 2010	-0.86%
White, Non-Hispanic (Subpopulation of Non-Hispanic)	88,191	% Change from 2010	-0.73%
Hispanic or Latino	17,971	% Change from 2010	5.55%
2016 Estimates of Census Population by Demographic Groups as a Percentage of Total Population			
White	78.70%		
African-American or Black	10.00%		
Native American or Alaska Native	0.90%		
All Other Races	4.55%		
Two or More Races	5.80%		
Non-Hispanic	85.90%		
White, Non-Hispanic (Subpopulation of Non-Hispanic)	69.20%		
Hispanic or Latino	14.10%		

Population Diversity and Community Action

Population diversity in Topeka and Shawnee County indicates a need for community programs that are sensitive to differences in both language and culture. For instance, language can be a significant barrier in addressing the needs of homeless students and families. Cultural differences may also contribute to student and family reluctance to identify as homeless.

Poverty

Poverty often leads to homelessness. Shawnee County's poverty rate was 10.9% in 2016, while poverty in the City of Topeka was slightly more than 18%. The rate for Shawnee County was just under the figure for the U.S. as a whole, but somewhat higher than the rate for the Kansas statewide average. (American Community Survey 2016). Table 4 provides poverty data as a percentage of the population at the local, state, and national level.

Table 4: Poverty as a Percentage of Population, 2016

Shawnee County	10.9%
Topeka	18.3%
Kansas	13.3%
United States	15.1%

Topeka's Housing Market and Student Homelessness

This section provides an analysis of Topeka's housing market with a focus on how it affects student homelessness throughout Shawnee County. As the central city of the Topeka Metropolitan Statistical Area (Topeka MSA), housing market conditions in Topeka affect the entire county.

Analysis is based on U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Fair Market Rents (FMRs) and the presence of housing cost burden among Topeka's low-income households. A discussion of housing challenges facing low-income families is also presented.

Fair Market Rents

HUD publishes FMR data each year. HUD determines FMRs by surveying rent levels for units ranging in size from studios through four-bedrooms. The results are analyzed to determine the 40th percentile rent level for each unit size. The 40th percentile represents rents that are below average, but typically sufficient for reasonable housing quality. Table 5 provides Topeka FMRs for two-, three-, and four-bedroom units in 2010 and 2018.

Table 5: Topeka MSA Fair Market Rents

2 Bedrooms		3 Bedrooms		4 Bedrooms	
2010	2018	2010	2018	2010	2018
\$655	\$786	\$831	\$1,045	\$873	\$1,257

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Topeka's two-bedroom FMR rose by 20% from 2010 to 2018, while the three-bedroom FMR rose by nearly 26% for the same period. Rents increased fastest for four-bedroom units; the FMR for these units increased 44% from 2010 to 2018.

Increases in Fair Market Rents are unlikely to be met with similar increases in household income among low-income families. Thus, any increase in market rents increases the likelihood that low-income families will be unable to maintain housing stability. Many of these families are at risk of homelessness, and some will experience homelessness.

Housing Cost Burden

Housing cost burden is defined as paying more than 30% of gross household income for housing, including rent and utilities.⁵⁶ **Severe housing cost burden** occurs when a household spends 50% or more of its gross monthly income for housing (Williamson 2011). Table 6 provides information about the number of Topeka households experiencing cost burden or severe cost burden. Data provided were drawn from the city's *Consolidated Plan 2016-2020*; therefore, although they are the most recent data available, they must be interpreted with care, given that numbers may have changed since the plan was written in 2015.

Table 6: Housing Cost Burden in Topeka

Number of Cost Burdened Renter Households	Number of Severely Cost Burdened Renter Households
4,465	4,710
Total Number of Renter Households with Cost Burden or Severe Cost Burden = 9,175	

Source: *City of Topeka, Kansas Consolidated Plan, 2016-2020*

Severely cost burdened households have the greatest risk of experiencing homelessness. Even those experiencing simple cost burden (more than 30% through 50% of gross monthly income spent on housing) are at risk of not having sufficient financial resources for life essentials such as food, transportation, health care, and clothing. Further, they are also at risk of homelessness, as their resources are stretched so far each month that they are often only a car repair or medical bill away from being unable to maintain their housing.

Housing Challenges for Low-Income Households

While Midwestern housing markets are typically more affordable than the markets on either coast, a number of factors combine to present housing challenges to low-income families in cities across the country. The minimum wage level is a significant contributor to the lack of housing affordability, as is the job market's increased reliance on part-time employees since the Great Recession.

Minimum Wage Jobs. The Kansas minimum wage is set at the same level as the federal minimum; this has been \$7.25 since July 2009. Thus, although Fair Market Rents rose steadily between 2010 and 2018, earnings have been flat for many low-income households. Further, a household with a single minimum-wage earner working full time

⁵ Utilities for this calculation include electric, gas, water, and sewer. The calculation does not include telephone service.

⁶ Housing cost burden for homeowners is calculated similarly to renter cost burden. Instead of using the rent figure, however, it is the mortgage payment (including principal, interest, property taxes, and insurance) plus any homeowners' association fees that is added to utilities to get total cost of housing.

earns a maximum of \$15,600 per year.⁷ This translates into a gross monthly income of \$1,300. Thus, the maximum this household could afford to pay for housing each month is \$390, including utilities.

A Kansas family with two adults working full-time at minimum wage would have a maximum annual income of \$31,200. Their gross monthly income of \$2,600 means that \$780 is the most they can afford for rent and utilities. This family is far better off than the family with only one minimum-wage worker, but they are still likely to find it challenging to find an available unit for \$780, including utilities.

Many Service Sector Jobs are Part-Time Jobs. Many service sector jobs such as food service and retail work pay minimum wage or higher. However, even when wages are higher than the minimum, many businesses in the post-recession economy prefer to use part-time rather than full-time employees. This reduces the personnel costs of businesses by eliminating expectations of health insurance, a pension plan, or other benefits. Many service-sector employees are left patching together enough working hours based on two or three part-time jobs in an effort to make ends meet.

Unpredictable Earnings. Further, many jobs in the new, post-recession economy vary in the number of work hours available to employees in any particular month. This unpredictability from month-to-month is responsible for a great deal of financial distress among American families (Morduch and Schneider 2017). Any month with fewer hours than necessary to maintain housing stability is a month that puts a family at risk of homelessness.

Competing Budget Priorities. Low-income families face competing priorities in their household budgets. When incomes are low, any expense beyond food and shelter can introduce the risk of homelessness. Expenses such as car repairs, medical bills, and children's school clothes and supplies are examples of what can go wrong quickly in a low-income family's budget. Further, months with high utility bills also create risk of homelessness. Sometimes the choice becomes one of food or shelter.

The Link Between Housing Affordability and Student Homelessness. The number of homeless students in TPS and other Shawnee County school districts is substantially dependent on housing affordability. Housing affordability is a function of both the housing market and the job market. Housing markets with increasing rent levels are especially challenging for low-income households, and a job market with a high number of low-wage and part-time jobs is likely to translate into higher numbers of homeless students.

Families with students in Shawnee County public schools are likely to require a housing unit with two to four bedrooms. Using the HUD Fair Market Rents for 2018, a family

⁷ This figure will be lower if there are any days lost to sickness or other reasons.

with one wage earner requiring a two-bedroom unit would need a gross hourly wage of \$15.52 per hour in full-time, year-round work to afford \$807 for rent and utilities.⁸ A family with one wage earner requiring a three-bedroom unit would need a gross hourly wage of \$21.21 to afford \$1,103 for rent and utilities.⁹ Finally, a family with one wage earner requiring a four-bedroom unit would need a gross hourly wage of \$25.04 to afford \$1,302 for rent and utilities.¹⁰

A well-designed intervention is necessary to make stable housing a reality for homeless students and their families. Further, the intervention must include a permanent housing solution each family is able to sustain on a long-term basis.

⁸ Annual income of \$32,280.

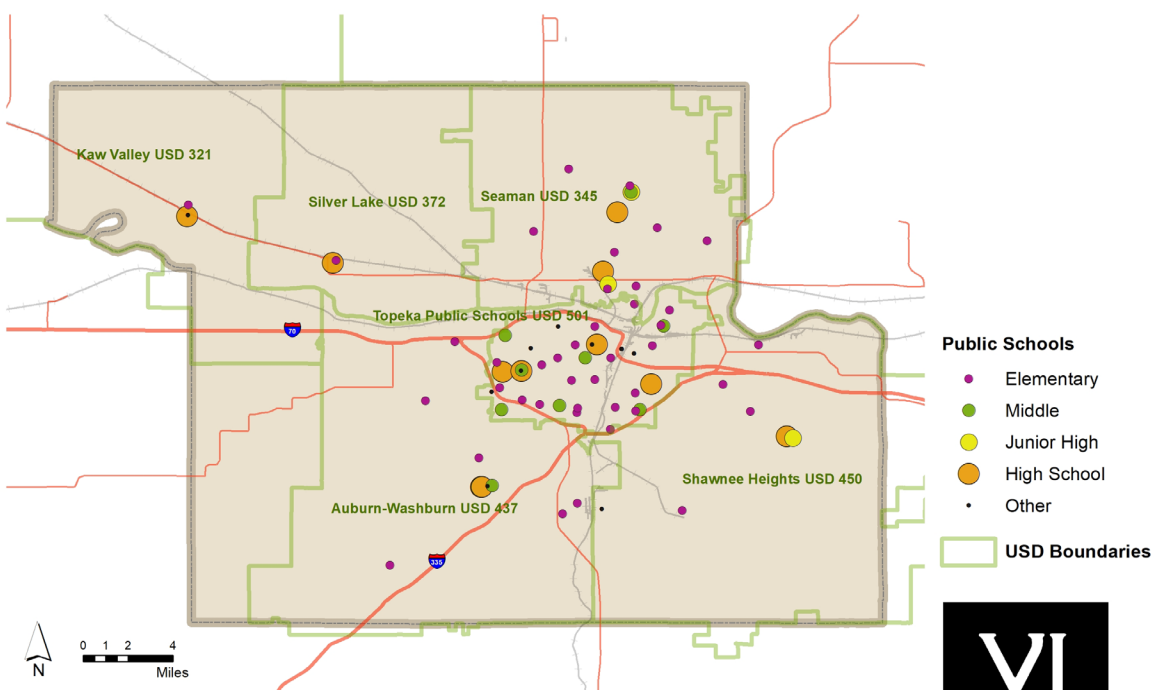
⁹ Annual income of \$44,120.

¹⁰ Annual income of \$52,080.

Shawnee County's Public Schools

This community assessment has been prepared to support Shawnee County's public school districts and the surrounding community in a county-wide collective impact initiative to end student homelessness. This section provides an overview of the Topeka Public Schools and homeless student data for school districts throughout the county. Figure 1 provides a map of Shawnee County's public school districts.

Figure 1: Shawnee County Public School Districts Map



Shawnee County Public Schools

Data Source: Kansas Adjutant General, 2013



Topeka Public Schools

Topeka Public Schools (TPS) is the largest school district in Shawnee County. Nearly 14,000 students are enrolled in the district. TPS has 36 schools and employs more than 1,300 teachers and 1,100 support staff. Further, TPS is diverse. White, non-Hispanic students are 38% of those enrolled, while 32% are Hispanic. African-American students are 17% of the student body, while 13% of TPS students identify as Other Race or Ethnicity (Topeka Public Schools 2018).

Homeless Students in Topeka Public Schools

Nearly 85% of homeless students in Shawnee County are served by TPS. Table 7 presents TPS student homeless figures for the 2012-2013 through 2016-2017 school years.

Table 7: Topeka Public Schools Homeless Students

2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
630	488	419	543	468

Source: Kansas State Department of Education

The number of reported homeless students in TPS varied over the five-year period represented by the 2012-2013 through 2016-2017 school years. While the 2016-2017 figure is 25.7% lower than the 2012-2013 figure, student homelessness remains a challenge. Further, while student homelessness reached a low of 419 in 2014-2015, it rose to 543 in 2015-2016, an increase of nearly 30%. Year-to-year changes may occur based on differences in the ability to identify homeless students, as well as changes in the actual number of homeless students.

Homelessness in Other Shawnee County School Districts

Outside TPS, school districts in Shawnee County reported 86 homeless students for the 2016-2017 school year. Given that KSDE does not report data for districts with fewer than 10 homeless students, this figure could be as high as 113.¹¹

One of the challenges in serving homeless students and families outside TPS is transportation. Public transportation for families to seek and receive services are unlikely to be available outside the City of Topeka. This will necessitate specialized outreach services to homeless students and families in these districts.

¹¹ KSDE's 2016-2017 report shows three Shawnee County school districts without student homeless data. This may indicate anywhere from zero to nine homeless students in each of those districts. Thus, there may be up to 27 additional homeless students across Shawnee County that have not been counted ($3 \times 9 = 27$).

Community Assets

Identifying community assets is a crucial step in bringing about transformation. Community asset analysis determines what resources are already available to address policy problems and also makes it possible to identify gaps in necessary services (Kretzmann and McKnight 1993).

Information about Topeka's community asset organizations was collected from multiple sources, including interviews with Kansas Department for Children and Families staff and others knowledgeable about Topeka and Shawnee County community organizations. Assets were also identified through online research.

Community asset information has been categorized by service domain based on the 16 domains adapted for the Impact KCK program from the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix. Tables 8-23 display organizations arranged by service domain. The list of service domains is also provided in Appendix B. An alphabetical list of community asset organizations appears in Table 24 in Appendix C.

Table 8: Housing

Catholic Charities
Community Action, Inc.
Cornerstone of Topeka, Inc.
Doorstep, Inc.
Federal Home Loan Bank of Topeka
Habitat for Humanity
Let's Help
North Topeka Outreach
SENT (Strengthening & Equipping Neighborhoods Together)
Shelter Plus Care
Topeka Housing Authority
Topeka Rescue Mission
Topeka Salvation Army
Topeka-Shawnee County Continuum of Care (CoC)
United Way of Greater Topeka
Veterans Administration Medical Center

Table 9: Employment

Café Barnabas
Greater Topeka Partnership (Cradle Through Career Initiative)
TARC, Inc.
Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library
Topeka Salvation Army
Topeka Workforce Center
Topeka Youth Project

Table 10: Income

Kansas Department for Children and Families
Social Security Administration
Topeka Bible Church
United Way of Greater Topeka

Table 11: Food

Boys and Girls Club of Topeka
Breakthrough House Club House
Carita's Corner Sandwich Ministry
Catholic Charities
Christ the King Catholic Church
East Topeka Senior Center
First Apartments
Grace Episcopal Cathedral
Hands of Hope Ministry
Harvesters
Highland Crest 7th Day Adventist Church
Highland Park United Methodist Church
Kansas Department for Children and Families
Let's Help
Lulac's Senior Center
Madison Street Apartments
North Topeka Outreach
Papan's Landing Senior Center
Silverback's Silver Supper
Topeka Bible Church

Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library
Topeka North Outreach
Topeka Rescue Mission
Topeka Salvation Army
Tyler Towers Apartments
United Way of Greater Topeka

Table 12: Child Care

Childcare Aware
Lifehouse
TARC
Topeka Rescue Mission
YWCA of Northeast Kansas

Table 13: Children's Education

Auburn-Washburn School District
Boys and Girls Club of Topeka
Early Childhood Collaboration
Family Service and Guidance Center
Greater Topeka Partnership (Cradle Through Career Initiative)
Kansas Children's Service League
Kaw Valley School District
Lifehouse
Prevention and Recovery Services
Seaman School District
SENT (Strengthening & Equipping Neighborhoods Together)
Shawnee County Campaign for Grade Level Reading
Shawnee Heights School District
Silver Lake School District
Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library
Topeka Public Schools
Topeka Rescue Mission
Topeka Salvation Army
United Way of Greater Topeka
USD501 Parents as Teachers

Table 14: Adult Education

Baker School of Nursing
Greater Topeka Partnership (Cradle Through Career Initiative)
Kansas Children's Service League
Lifehouse
Prevention and Recovery Services
Thrive Topeka
Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library
Topeka Workforce Center
Valeo Behavioral Health
Washburn School of Nursing
Washburn Tech
Washburn University

Table 15: Healthcare Coverage

Catholic Charities
GraceMed
Let's Help
Lifehouse
North Topeka Outreach
Stormont Vail Health
Successful Connections
TARC
Topeka Salvation Army
University of Kansas Health System St. Francis Campus
United Way of Greater Topeka
USD501 Parents as Teachers
Valeo Behavioral Health
Veterans Administration Medical Center

Table 16: Life Skills

Boys and Girls Club of Topeka
Café Barnabas
CASA of Shawnee County
Circles of Topeka
Family Service and Guidance Center
GraceMed

Greater Topeka Partnership (Cradle Through Career Initiative)
TARC
Thrive Topeka
Topeka Bible Church
Topeka Youth Project
Veterans Administration Medical Center
YWCA of Northeast Kansas

Table 17: Family Relations

Boys and Girls Club of Topeka
Childcare Aware
Christ First Counseling Center
Kansas Children's Service League
KVC Kansas
Lifeline Children's Services
Safe Harbour Recovery
TARC
USD501 Parents as Teachers

Table 18: Mobility

Kansas Department of Revenue (Driver Solutions)
Topeka Metro

Table 19: Mental Health

Christ First Christian Counseling
Family Service and Guidance Center
GraceMed
Heritage Mental Health Clinic
Kansas Children's Service League – Topeka
KVC Kansas
Lifehouse
Lifeline Children's Services
New Beginnings Health Care
Prevention and Recovery Services (PARS)
Safe Harbour Recovery
Successful Connections
TARC

TFI Family Services, Inc
Valeo Behavioral Health
Veterans Administration Medical Center

Table 20: Community Involvement and Social Support

Antioch Missionary Baptist Church
Boys and Girls Club of Topeka
Café Barnabas
Catholic Charities
City of Topeka
Community Resource Council
Fellowship Bible Church
God's Storehouse
Let's Help
Lifehouse
North Topeka Outreach
Safe Harbour Recovery
SENT (Strengthening & Equipping Neighborhoods Together)
Sole Reason
Successful Connections
TARC
Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library
Topeka Bible Church
Topeka Community Foundation
Topeka Justice Unity and Ministry Project (JUMP)
Topeka Rescue Mission
Topeka Salvation Army
YWCA of Northeast Kansas

Table 21: Parenting Skills

Childcare Aware
Countrystide Christian Church (Families Count)
Kansas Children's Service League
Lifehouse
Lifeline Children's Services
TARC
USD501 Parents as Teachers

Table 22: Legal

Ciy of Topeka Municipal Court
Lifehouse
Shawnee County Department of Corrections
Shawnee County District Court
Topeka Youth Project

Table 23: Safety

Carpenter Place
Catholic Charities
City of Topeka Fire Department
City of Topeka Police Department
Family Service and Guidance Center
Lifehouse
Safe Streets
Shawnee County Department of Corrections
Shawnee County Sheriff's Office
Successful Connections
United Way of Greater Topeka
YWCA of Northeast Kansas

Analyzing Assets

Shawnee County is home to a wide array of community assets. Many self-sufficiency domains are addressed by these organizations. However, some domains have relatively few identified assets.

Community Asset Strengths. There is particular strength in the following domains:

- Housing
- Food
- Health care
- Life skills
- Family relations
- Mental health
- Community involvement and social support
- Safety

Potential Gaps in Service. Service domains with relatively few identified assets may represent a gap in Shawnee County's capacity to address the needs of homeless

students and families in their journey to housing stability and self-sufficiency. The following domains are the smallest in terms of the number of organizations providing services and/or resources:

- Employment
- Income
- Child care
- Mobility
- Parenting skills
- Legal

Planning for Success

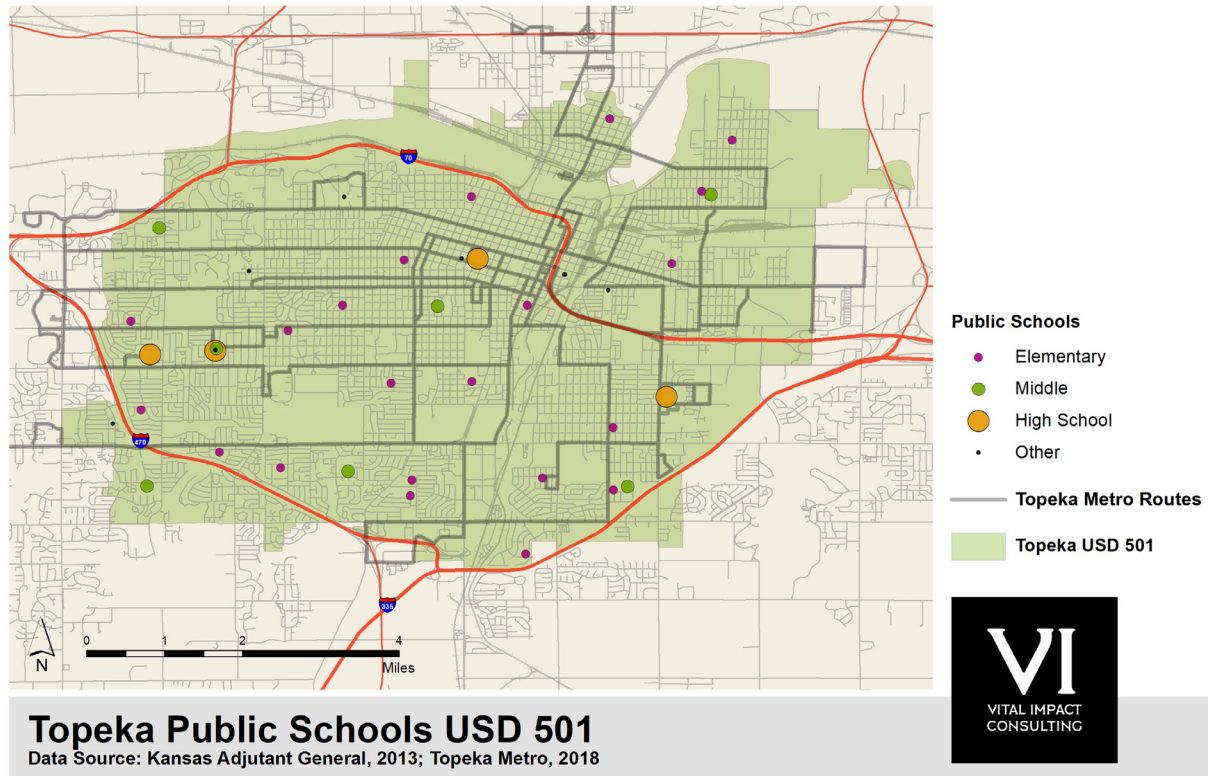
While the number of organizations within a domain is an initial indicator of potential strengths or gaps in the community's capacity to provide support for that specific function, additional information must be considered. It is important to carefully analyze the extent to which the array of services offered in each domain will be sufficient to produce the desired results. Further, the organizational and financial capacity within each domain must be examined to determine whether there is sufficient capacity to meet goals for ending student homelessness in Shawnee County. If gaps are identified, plans to fill them should be made prior to program launch.

In planning the collective impact initiative to end student and family homelessness in Shawnee County's public schools, it is important to be aware that while some of the identified assets will become collective impact partners, others will not. Further, some organizations may be willing to serve those referred to them by the collective impact initiative without being a formal part of the initiative. Although that may be helpful, the power of collective impact primarily comes from the group of organizations making a commitment to work as partners in a strategic and disciplined way.

Asset Proximity to Public Transportation

Figure 2 provides a map of TPS school locations and public transportation routes. This information can be used to plan the location of the backbone organization and/or service hubs.

Figure 2: Topeka Public Schools and Public Transportation Routes Map



Summary

Topeka and Shawnee County possess a considerable array of community assets. Community stakeholders must determine which organizations will become collective impact partners, what services they will provide, and whether there are any gaps in services that should be filled prior to program launch. Success in ending student homelessness in Shawnee County's public schools will depend on the capacity of partner organizations and each organization's willingness to work together towards a common goal.

The backbone organization selected to coordinate Shawnee County's collective impact program will be critical to success. The backbone must have capacity, commitment, and trust capital within the community. More information about the collective impact backbone organization and its selection is provided in sections that follow on Collective Impact and Community Change and Selecting the Backbone Organization.

Collective Impact for Community Change

Collective impact is a strategic, disciplined method for addressing complex social problems facing communities (Kania and Kramer 2011). Despite its relatively brief history, collective impact has been used throughout the U.S. and around the globe to clean up rivers, improve educational outcomes, help public housing residents get jobs, reduce crime, end homelessness, and address other social problems (Walzer and Weaver 2019; Hanleybrown, Kania and Kramer 2012).

Collective impact forms the basis for the Impact KCK program responsible for **reducing student homelessness** in the Kansas City Kansas Public Schools by nearly **50%** from the close of the 2014-2015 school year to the end of the first semester of the 2017-2018 school year¹² (L.P. Cookingham Institute of Urban Affairs 2018). Avenue of Life, a faith-based nonprofit organization in Kansas City, Kansas, is the backbone organization for Impact KCK.¹³ Impact KCK has received national recognition from the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) and the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY). Additionally, Impact KCK has been featured in an episode of the Public Broadcasting System's (PBS's) *Frontline* program.¹⁴

To learn more about how Impact KCK, Avenue of Life, and partner organizations dramatically reduced student homelessness, see the results of the program's assessment by the L.P. Cookingham Institute of Urban Affairs in the Henry W. Bloch School of Management at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. The Cookingham Institute also produced a community toolkit for replicating Impact KCK based on the assessment. Download these documents at <https://bloch.umkc.edu/cookingham/research-resources/impact-kck.aspx>.

More than Collaboration

Collective impact is more than collaboration. It harnesses the power of community through reliance on a strong lead organization that facilitates cooperation across multiple partner organizations. Known as the backbone organization, this agency provides not only strategic leadership and continuous coordination of an initiative's

¹² The end of the first semester of the 2017-2018 school year was January 2018.

¹³ Impact KCK was previously known under the names Impact Wednesday and 1400 Diplomas.

¹⁴ Recognition has been provided under the program names Impact KCK, Impact Wednesday, and 1400 Diplomas. All program activities have been conducted under the name Impact KCK since May 2018.

network of service providers, it provides accountability and transparency to the community and funding sources.

Conditions for Collective Impact Success

There are five conditions necessary for collective impact success:

1. Common agenda
2. Shared measurement system
3. Mutually reinforcing activities
4. Continuous communication
5. Backbone organization (Kania and Kramer 2011)

Collective impact is distinguished from isolated impact by its emphasis on these five conditions. Isolated impact describes situations where organizations are working in “silos,” often unaware that another organization is also working to address the same community problem. Even the most well-intentioned isolated impact efforts are unlikely to create long-term success, because social problems are complex and require well-coordinated multi-sector action.

While all partners are an important part of collective impact success, the critical role of the backbone organization must be emphasized. The backbone organization facilitates program success by coordinating communications among partners, undertaking the performance measurement function, facilitating the work of partners in conducting mutually reinforcing activities, and filling in gaps in performance when they arise.

Selecting the Backbone Organization

The backbone organization is essential for producing effective community change. Thus, the selection process is a critical step in the design and implementation of a successful initiative to reduce student homelessness through collective impact.

The backbone must have sufficient managerial expertise and financial resources. It should also be respected and trusted within the community and have a reputation for getting important things done.

Identifying Candidates

Experience shows that the best choice for backbone organization is not always the most visible organization. Highly visible organizations may already be committed to a particular way of working and have less flexibility than less visible organizations.

It is important to have conversations with community stakeholders that tactfully probe for information on what people and/or organizations are known for getting things done. These conversations should also include discussion of which organizations are most trusted by others in the community.

Shawnee County Backbone Candidates

Three organizations were identified as candidates for the backbone of a Shawnee County collective impact program to end student homelessness. These organizations are Sole Reason, Topeka Rescue Mission, and Topeka-Shawnee County Continuum of Care. Backbone organization selection as early as possible in the process will facilitate the successful program launch.

Backbone Essentials

The backbone organization must be capable of supporting the efforts of partner organizations and facilitating overall program success. Although the characteristics of backbone organizations will vary somewhat across communities and according to the types of challenges being addressed, there are six activity areas common to all successful backbone organizations. The successful backbone organization has the capacity to:

1. Guide vision and strategy
2. Support aligned activities

3. Establish shared measurement practices
4. Build public will
5. Advance policy
6. Mobilize funding (Turner, et al. 2012)

Experience demonstrates that the backbone organization must also be willing to share credit for program accomplishments and work to highlight the contributions of partner organizations. This is an intangible, yet essential, characteristic of an effective backbone organization.

Launching the Collective Impact Initiative

This section is based on lessons learned from the Impact KCK program's successful efforts to reduce student homelessness in Kansas City/Wyandotte County, Kansas. These lessons provide a foundation for launching a collective impact initiative to end student homelessness in Shawnee County.

Call to Action

A Call to Action brought together community stakeholders to discuss student homelessness in Shawnee County in November 2018. The Call to Action must have a prompt follow-up with individuals and organizations making a commitment. Weekly meetings to structure working relationships and determine priorities and first steps are recommended.

Collective Impact Forum

A Shawnee County Collective Impact Forum will be held by Vital Impact Consulting, LLC, on January 31, 2019. The format will include a morning workshop where participants will learn more about collective impact and how it can be used to address student and family homelessness, as well as an afternoon session focused on strategic planning for the Shawnee County initiative.

Structuring Working Relationships

Collective impact requires strong working relationships. Further, it requires working relationships focused on doing whatever it takes to reach community goals for ending student homelessness. This means all must be willing to put competition aside and share program recognition rather than seek recognition for individual organizations.

Working relationships should be structured with Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) between the backbone and partner organizations. MOUs should cover a time period sufficient to meet the goal for ending student homelessness in Shawnee County public schools, as well as provide sufficient time to transition to "prevention mode" once the goal has been met. For example, Impact KCK backbone and partner organizations signed MOUs for a five-year period when the program was launched in 2015. Shawnee County's backbone and partner organizations will make their own determination about community goals and the time period for meeting those goals.

Moving Forward

There will be a transition period where the collective impact partners will move from meeting every week to every two weeks and then monthly. Regularly scheduled meetings allow backbone and partner organizations to promptly identify and overcome barriers to ending student homelessness. There must also be a communication system established between the backbone and all partners that will make it possible to take immediate action when situations arise between monthly meetings.

Data Collection and Analysis

Establishing a data collection and analysis system is critical to program success. Collective impact partners must agree on measures; it is best if this is done prior to the outset of program implementation. The backbone organization will coordinate data collection and analysis. The backbone will also regularly disseminate results to partner organizations, funding sources, and other stakeholders on a schedule to be determined in consultation with partners.

Conclusion

Impact KCK, a multi-sector community initiative serving homeless students and families in the Kansas City Kansas Public Schools, demonstrates that the collective impact model for community change can be effective in reducing student homelessness. This Community Assessment has been prepared with sponsorship from the Kansas Department for Children and Families to provide a foundation for action intended to end student homelessness in Shawnee County.

A successful collective impact initiative will require a backbone organization with sufficient capacity and commitment to facilitate success in reaching community goals for ending student homelessness. Success will also require participation by partner organizations representing the public, private, and nonprofit sectors coming together and working towards common goals.

A Topeka/Shawnee County Call to Action was held in November 2018. The next steps in the process of ending student homelessness will include a Collective Impact Forum that includes training and strategic planning sessions in a one-day event to be held on January 31, 2019. A critical next step will also be identifying the backbone organization.

The launch of Shawnee County's collective impact program is a critical period that will lay the foundation for meeting community goals for ending homelessness among students and families. Vital Impact Consulting, LLC, has been engaged by the Kansas Department for Children and Families to provide training and technical assistance for the launch of Shawnee County's collective impact initiative. Technical assistance will be available throughout calendar year 2019. Training workshops will begin with the Collective Impact Forum and extend through March 2019. This will allow the Shawnee County program to be built on lessons learned in Kansas City/Wyandotte County since Impact KCK's launch in August 2015.

The work ahead is exciting and has the potential to transform the lives of many Shawnee County children, youth, and families. A successful collective impact effort will lead to improved learning outcomes, high school graduation, and opportunities beyond high school for homeless students in Shawnee County's public school districts. These outcomes will be produced through interventions producing housing stability and family self-sufficiency. This transformation will benefit the City of Topeka, Shawnee County, and the State of Kansas by making it possible for many families to break the cycle of poverty and for formerly homeless children and youth to go on to adulthoods where they are well-equipped to reach their full potential.

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Appendix A: About Impact KCK

Why Replicate Impact KCK?

Impact KCK is a successful community effort to reduce student homelessness in the Kansas City Kansas Public Schools (KCKPS). Launched in August 2015, Impact KCK reduced student homelessness **by nearly 50%** in its **first 2.5 years** of operation.

Impact KCK has been recognized by regional and national organizations as an effective program for addressing America's growing challenge with student homelessness. The L.P. Cookingham Institute of Urban Affairs in the Henry W. Bloch School of Management at the University of Missouri-Kansas City recognized Impact KCK's success in May 2018 with a Community Service Symposium that provided results of a recently completed program assessment and disseminated information about what has made Impact KCK successful.

National recognition has been provided by organizations such as the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHYC) and the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH). Further, Impact KCK has been featured on a Public Broadcasting System (PBS) segment of *Frontline*.¹⁵ Impact KCK leaders are frequently contacted by school district and community representatives across the country with requests for information and assistance in replicating the program.

Effective Collaboration Through Collective Impact

Impact KCK is based on the collective impact model for community change. Collective impact is a very specific form of collaboration relying on a backbone organization to ensure effective, accountable collaboration across diverse partner organizations. Avenue of Life, a faith-based nonprofit organization centrally located in Kansas City, Kansas, is Impact KCK's backbone.

Collective impact is a disciplined, strategic approach to addressing complex social problems such as student homelessness. It engages organizations and people across sectors in partnerships through a shared vision and a shared performance measurement system. These features make collective impact a powerful tool for harnessing a community's expertise, resources, and commitment in producing transformation.

¹⁵ Impact KCK recognition prior to May 2018 refers to Impact Wednesday and/or 1400 Diplomas. The program name Impact KCK was adopted to better describe the seamless relationship between Impact Wednesday and 1400 Diplomas.

Two-Generation Approach

This community program addresses student homelessness and the need for housing stability to ensure successful educational outcomes with a two-generation approach. Once students and their families are referred to Impact KCK by the KCKPS homeless liaison, they receive both emergency assistance and a program that addresses parents' ability to provide a safe, stable living environment based on self-sufficiency. Parents participate in classes ranging from personal budgeting to housing, nutrition, and health care. An employment class and assistance in getting and maintaining a job are also provided. Case management services include the entire family.

Impact KCK Leadership

Impact KCK's lead organization is Avenue of Life, a faith-based nonprofit committed to helping people and families overcome poverty and become self-sufficient. Leadership for the Impact KCK program is provided by Avenue of Life's Executive Director.

Desiree Monize is the founder and Executive Director of Avenue of Life and has more than 18 years' experience in cross-sector management consulting, with 15 years' experience in nonprofit management. She is a visionary leader with a talent for rebuilding inefficient businesses with effective leadership and strategies needed for healthy growth and expansion. She is passionately committed to urban ministry and community development. As CEO of a nonprofit with the aim of breaking the cycle of poverty through community development in Kansas City, Kansas, and Kansas City, Missouri, Desiree leads the Impact KCK collaborative. Desiree is also Principal for Vital Impact Consulting, a consulting firm serving school districts, nonprofit organizations, and other community stakeholders.

Impact KCK Assessment and Toolkit

The L.P. Cookingham Institute of Urban Affairs in the Henry W. Bloch School of Management at the University of Missouri-Kansas City conducted an Impact KCK assessment for the purpose of identifying the key factors contributing to the program's success. *Impact KCK: Reducing Student Homelessness through Collective Impact* provides details about the program's history, operations, and achievements. It also presents an analysis of the most important factors in making Impact KCK a success.

In addition, the Cookingham Institute prepared the *Impact KCK Toolkit: A Guide to Replication* to assist communities wishing to replicate the Impact KCK program. The *Impact KCK Assessment* and *Impact KCK Toolkit* were funded by the William T. Kemper Foundation.

Both publications are available for download from the Cookingham Institute's Impact KCK webpage. Those intending to replicate Impact KCK will find them a source of

information and inspiration. Access these publications at: <https://bloch.umkc.edu/cookingham/research-resources/impact-kck.aspx>.

Impact KCK Assessment Author

The *Impact KCK Assessment* was written by Dr. Anne R. Williamson, Victor and Caroline Schutte/Missouri Professor of Urban Affairs and Director, L.P. Cookingham Institute of Urban Affairs, Henry W. Bloch School of Management, University of Missouri-Kansas City. The assessment is based on a year-long project conducted by Dr. Williamson and a team of Cookingham Institute professionals. Dr. Williamson brings more than 35 years' experience in public, private, and university leadership to her work with community stakeholders and students. She has led more than 30 community-engaged projects and has been recognized as a housing policy expert in United States District Court. Dr. Williamson is the lead faculty member for the urban emphasis within the Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree program at UMKC and is widely published in her field.

Appendix B: Impact KCK Service Domains

The 16 service domains used in the Impact KCK program appear below. They have been adapted from the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix, which contains 18 domains.

- Housing
- Employment
- Income
- Food
- Childcare
- Children's education
- Adult education
- Healthcare coverage
- Life skills
- Family relations
- Mobility
- Community involvement and social support
- Parenting skills
- Legal
- Mental health
- Safety

Appendix C: Community Asset Organizations and Services

This Appendix provides an alphabetical list of community asset organizations identified for this community assessment.

Table 24: Community Asset Organizations (Alphabetical Order)

Antioch Missionary Baptist Church
Auburn-Washburn School District
Baker School of Nursing
Big Brothers Big Sisters
Boys and Girls Club of Topeka
Breatkthrough House Club
Café Barnabas
Carita's Corner Sandwich Ministry
CASA of Shawnee County
Catholic Charities
Childcare Aware
Christ First Christian Counseling
Christ the King Catholic Church
Circles of Topeka
City of Topeka
City of Topeka Fire Department
City of Topeka Municipal Court
City of Topeka Police Department
Community Action, Inc.
Community Resource Council (CRC)
Cornerstone of Topeka, Inc.
Countryside Christian Church (Families Count)
Doorstep, Inc.
Early Childhood Collaboration
East Topeka Senior Center
El Centro de Topeka
Family Service and Guidance Center
Federal Home Loan Bank of Topeka

Fellowship Bible Church
First Apartments
God's Storehouse
Grace Episcopal Cathedral
GraceMed
Greater Topeka Partnership (Cradle Through Career Initiative)
Habitat for Humanity
Hands of Hope Ministry
Harvesters
Heritage Mental Health Clinic
Highland Crest 7th Day Adventist Church
Highland Park United Methodist Church
Housing and Credit Counseling, Inc.
Kansas Children's Service League
Kansas Department for Children and Families
Kansas Department of Revenue (Driver Solutions)
Kansas Department of Vital Statistics
Kaw Valley School District
KVC Kansas
Let's Help
Lifehouse
Lifeline Children's Services
Lulac's Senior Center
Madison Street Apartments
New Beginnings Health Care
North Topeka Outreach
Papan's Landing Senior Center
Prevention and Recovery Services (PARS)
Safe Harbour Recovery
Safe Streets
Seaman School District
SENT (Strengthening & Equipping Neighborhoods Together)
Shawnee County Campaign for Grade Level Reading
Shawnee County Commissioners
Shawnee County Department of Corrections
Shawnee County District Court
Shawnee County Sheriff's Office

Shawnee Heights School District
Shelter Plus Care
Silver Lake School District
Silverbacks Silver Supper
Social Security Administration
Sole Reason
Stormont Vail Health
Successful Connections
TARC
TFI Family Services, Inc
Thrive Topeka
Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library
Topeka Bible Church
Topeka Community Foundation
Topeka Housing Authority
Topeka Justice Unity and Ministry Project (JUMP)
Topeka Metro
Topeka North Outreach
Topeka Public Schools
Topeka Rescue Mission
Topeka Salvation Army
Topeka-Shawnee County Continuum of Care (CoC)
Topeka Workforce Center
Topeka Youth Project
Tyle Towers Apartments
United Way of Greater Topeka
University of Kansas Health System St. Francis Campus
USD501 Parents as Teachers
Valeo Behavioral Health
Veterans Administration Medical Center
Washburn School of Nursing
Washburn Tech
Washburn University
YWCA of Northeast Kansas

Appendix D: Vital Impact Consulting, LLC

Services

Vital Impact Consulting has invested in countless organizations over the past decade and excels in equipping clients to utilize their assets and strengths to solve the complex problems they face. Services include:

- **Collective Impact:** We provide extensive on-site training for organizations, school districts, cities, and states on how to implement the proven Collective Impact Model for Community Change as piloted by Impact KCK in Kansas City, Kansas.
- **Fundraising:** We work with your team to develop sustainable fundraising strategies, identify and acquire new donors, and provide grant-writing services.
- **Communication:** We work with your team to tell your story through marketing materials, including websites, logos, white papers, flyers, business cards, and more.
- **Strategic Planning:** We work alongside your board to facilitate and formulate a 3-5 year Strategic Plan that leads to lasting impact in your community.
- **Housing:** We provide training, planning, and expert consultation services for issues associated with affordable housing.

Leadership Team

Desiree Monize is the founder and Principal of Vital Impact Consulting. She is also founder and Executive Director of the faith-based nonprofit Avenue of Life in Kansas City, Kansas, and has more than 18 years' experience in cross-sector management consulting and 15 years' experience in nonprofit management. She is a visionary leader with a talent for rebuilding inefficient businesses with the effective leadership and strategies needed for healthy growth and expansion. She is passionately committed to urban ministry and community development. As CEO of a nonprofit with the aim of breaking the cycle of poverty through community development in Kansas City, Kansas, and Kansas City, Missouri, Desiree leads the nationally recognized Impact KCK program which reduced student homelessness in the Kansas City Kansas Public Schools by 50% in less than three years.

Derek Monize is a Principal with Vital Impact Consulting and has more than nine years' experience in Nonprofit Management. Derek's expertise is in helping organizations tell their stories to clients, funders, and their peers through Grant Writing, Case Development, Donor Messaging, Fundraising Communications Strategies, and Branding. Derek has worked with clients on fundraising campaigns of all sizes. Derek co-founded Avenue of Life and provides ongoing communications support for the Impact KCK collaborative and replicating programs. Outside of his professional activities, he is an active musician/songwriter and creative writer.

Our Team of Experts

The Vital Impact team includes experts in housing policy and urban planning, community development, strategic planning, program assessment and evaluation, needs assessments, trauma-informed care, intensive case management techniques, school district administration related to student homelessness and other challenges associated with poverty, fund raising, and community engagement.



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