

Family Resource Centers Annual Report

Tennessee Department of Education | 2022-23



Table of Contents

- Overview 3
- Family Resource Center Approach 4
- Impact Summary 6
- Direct Services* 7
- Referrals* 8
- Partnerships and Contributions* 9
- Framework 11
- Families 12
- Readiness 14
- Communities 16
- Successes, Challenges, and the Path Forward: *Opportunity for All* 18
- Appendix 19
- Program Descriptions* 19
- References 22

Overview

Since 1993, Tennessee Family Resource Centers (FRCs) have served as a strong partner to families and communities for local education agencies (LEAs). Serving as a welcoming hub of support(s) tailored to district and community needs, FRCs have repeatedly proven their strategic support strategies enhance an LEAs overall mission focused around three pillars:

Families: *Develop an interconnected and consistent approach that responds to the mental health and wellbeing needs of students and families.*

Readiness: *Develop and integrated approach that ensures a pathway to prosperity for every student and family.*

Communities: *Develop programs and partnerships targeted to unlock the potential of students, families, and schools.*

FRCs continue to raise the bar in redefining how to ensure supports to all families through innovative programmatic efforts. While the work evolves, the core mission of *unlocking potential* has never wavered.



Mission

Tennessee Family Resource Centers **unlock potential.**

Vision

Tennessee Family Resource Centers unlock potential by serving as a resource and support hub. FRC's proactively **engage** with their communities to **empower** students and families, bridging gaps to ensure they **evolve** together through connected systems of support unique to each community.

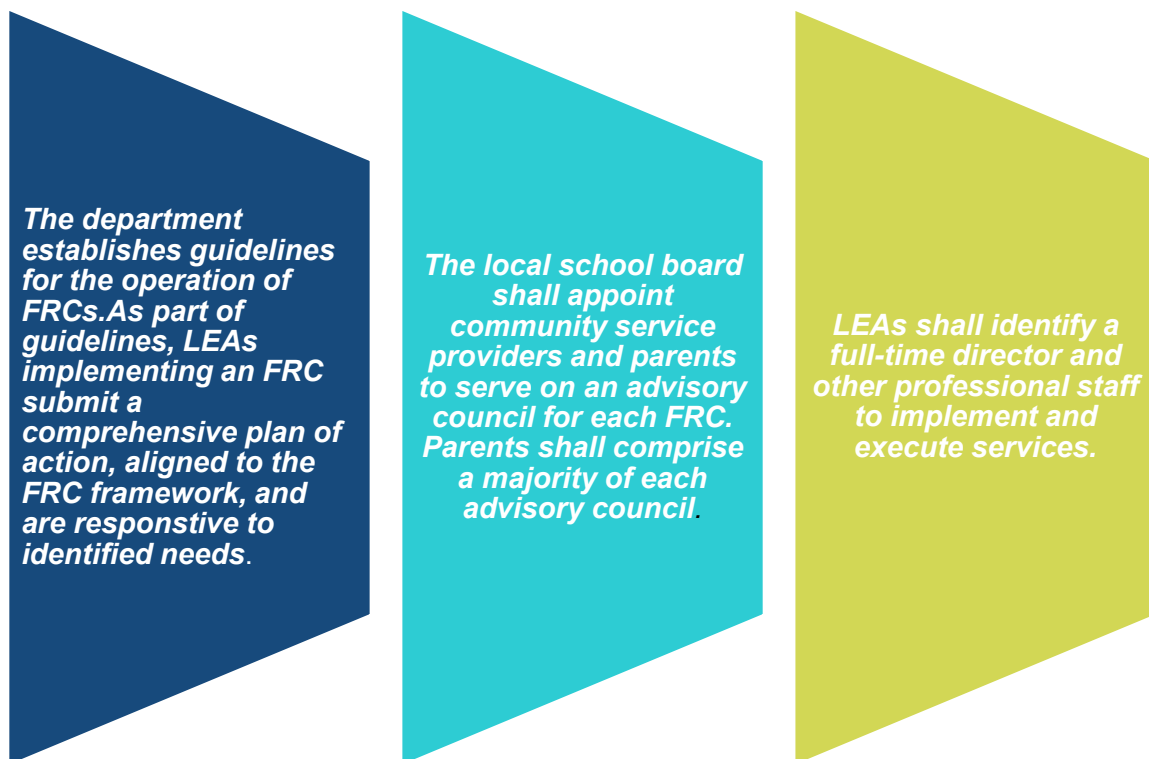
Serving as welcoming hubs for families that promote engagement and support services such as mental health and social services within their respective LEAs FRCs engage schools and community stakeholders to identify barriers hindering the social, personal, physical, and academic well-being of students. FRCs then empower students and families by providing high-quality services through a coordinated system of support.

This approach allows FRCs to lead efforts to increase access to essential support in real time, address chronically out of school, and empower families through early intervention.

FRCs have served hundreds of thousands of students and families and remain steadfast in their commitment to being a critical bridge between school districts and families.

Family Resource Center Approach

Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA) § 49-2-115 permitted LEAs to expend Basic Education Program (BEP) funds during the 2022-23 academic year to plan and implement an FRC. The statute has been updated to reference the Tennessee Investment in Students Act (TISA) and will allow LEAs to expend such funds for the planning and implementation of FRCs beginning in the 2023-24 academic year. FRCs shall be to maximize the potential learning capacity of the child by ensuring the school and neighborhoods are safe and socially enriching, that families are strong and able to protect children and meet their basic needs and that children are physically healthy, emotionally stable, socially well-adjusted, and able to connect with enriching opportunities and experiences in their schools and communities. During the 2022-23 academic year, the department allocated \$3.05 million in grant funds to support LEAs in sustaining FRCs. LEAs received an award amount of \$29,611.65 per center.



Key Guideline Requirements:

- Ensure new FRC personnel attend trainings as set forth and required by the department.
- Determine a physical location for the FRC that is in or near the school/district the FRC serves.
- Establish and maintain adequate funding through the combination of state, local, and/or other mechanisms to ensure operations and program goals are sustainable.
- Develop and implement a coordinated system of supports for students and families aligned to LEA needs and adhere to components set forth by the department.

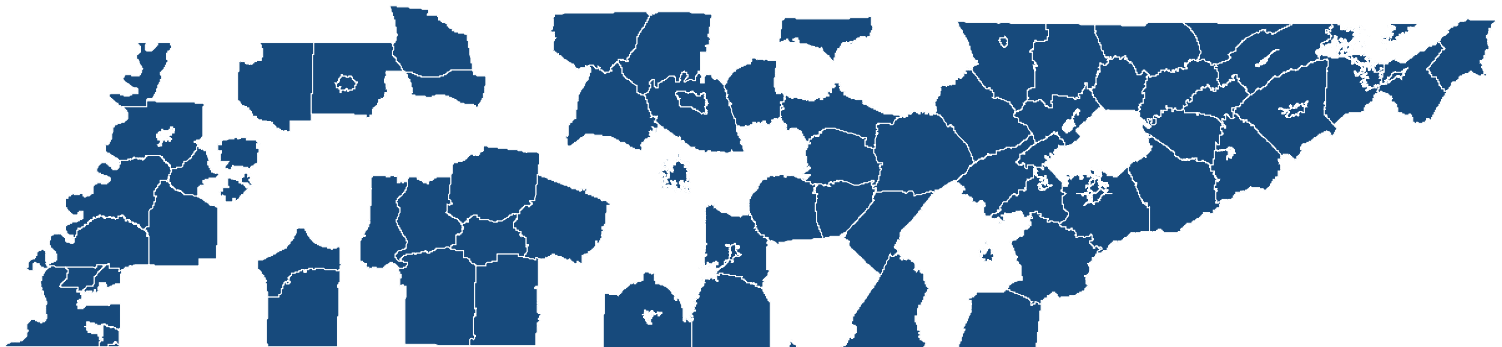
- Develop and implement meaningful ways to engage students, families, schools, and the community to address and support program initiatives and goals.
- Engage in local and state programs and processes to develop and support improvements in school-aged and family-serving programs with similar goals.
- Establish and sustain meaningful relationships with school personnel, students, families, community organizations, philanthropic groups, etc. to broaden and link available community resources.
- Identify and secure financial and/or technical assistance through collaborations and partnerships with community agencies and organizations.
- Establish a system for evaluation and monitoring to assess the effectiveness of FRC programming.
- Provide interagency services/resources information on issues such as parent training, crisis intervention, respite care and counseling needs for families of children with behavioral/emotional disorders.

Family Resource Center Advisory Council

Advisory Councils serve as a guiding body and support of FRC programming. The work and guidance of an advisory council is the backbone of FRC effectiveness. The FRC director shall facilitate the activities and operation of the advisory council. In accordance with the established purpose of FRCs, the advisory council shall:

- Sustain a membership representation of at least nine members.
- Ensure parent membership represents a majority.
- Acquire and sustain a diverse membership such as: parents, school personnel, school board member(s), elected officials, state agencies, non-profit organizations, community service organizations, philanthropic groups, citizens and/or individuals at-large, mental health, health care, juvenile services professionals, etc.
- Meet at least twice a year as deemed necessary by the council and FRC director.
- Maintain a record of meeting agenda(s), attendance, minutes, and other relevant information pertaining to the facilitation of the advisory council.
- Develop and implement programmatic plans and strategies to communicate to stakeholders that include but are not limited to potential funders, volunteers, benefactors, etc. that support student and family needs.
- Engage in activities that accurately and meaningfully determine school and community strengths, weaknesses, and needs, and develop plans and strategies aligned to the overall FRC strategic approach.

Impact Summary



92
site locations

75
school districts

1,142
schools

61
counties

51%
of public-school districts
represented

501,314
of Tennessee's students with
access to an FRC



SNAPSHOT

108,076

Students Served

61,376

Families Served

780,324

Direct Services Provided

100,760

Referrals Made

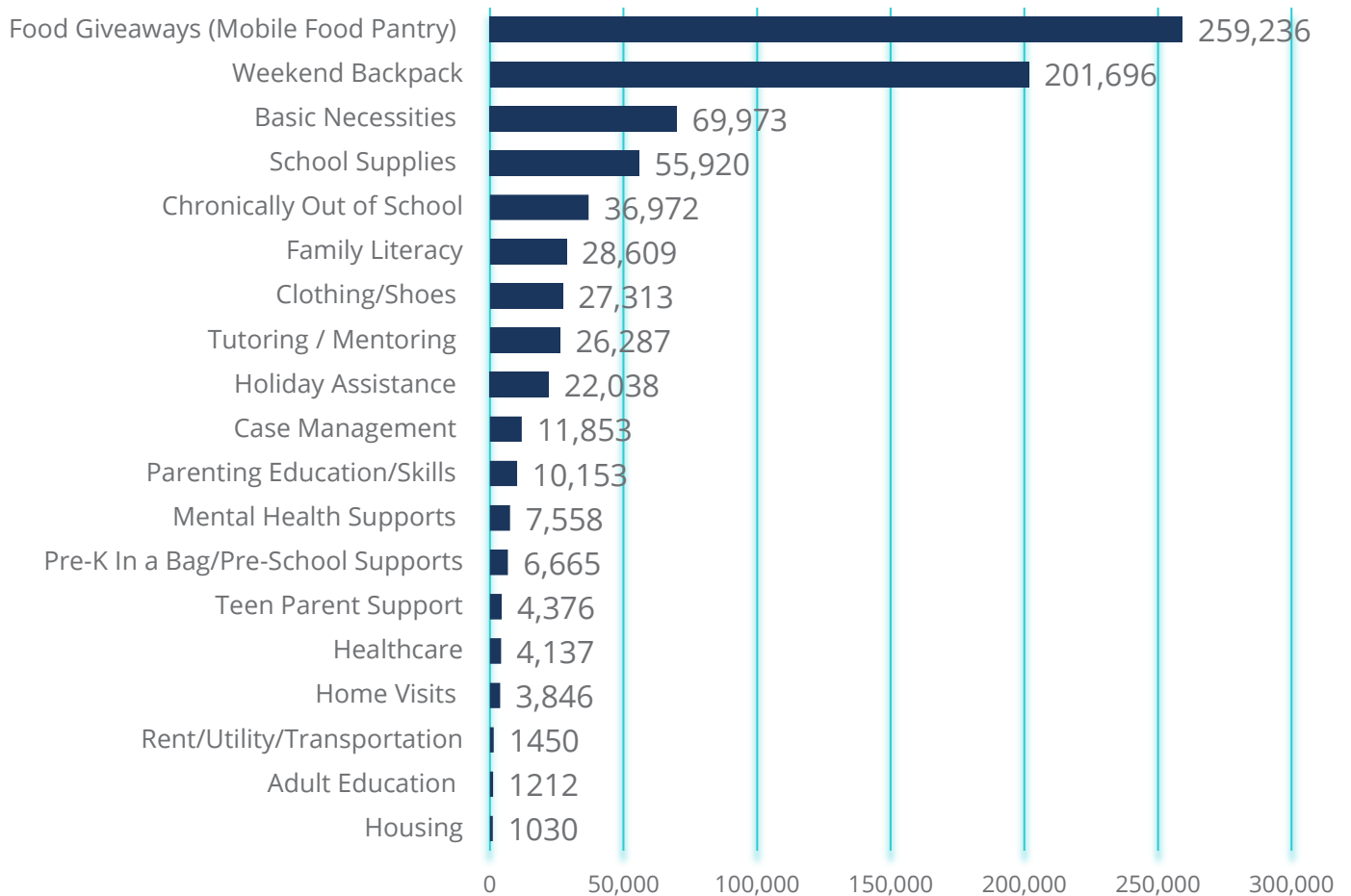
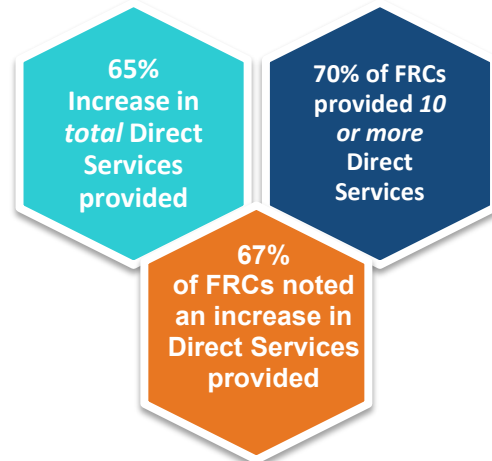
"All four of my children have attended Oak Ridge Schools since their Kindergarten year. I am beyond grateful for Mrs. Bruce and her colleagues. As a single mother, who has no biological family in the state of Tennessee other than my children, the struggle becomes unbearable. The monetary support I have received has been a God send in my times of desperation and I am beyond grateful that there is a program to help support struggling parents as myself. More than the monetary support, I would like to share that mental and emotional support is not anything money can buy. There are genuine people, with genuine hearts, genuine intentions, who genuinely care! So much of my faith and hope has been restored by knowing that I have support outside my household to lean into in our time of need. Thank you to all those that make, support, and advocate for this program,"

- Parent, Oak Ridge Schools

Direct Services

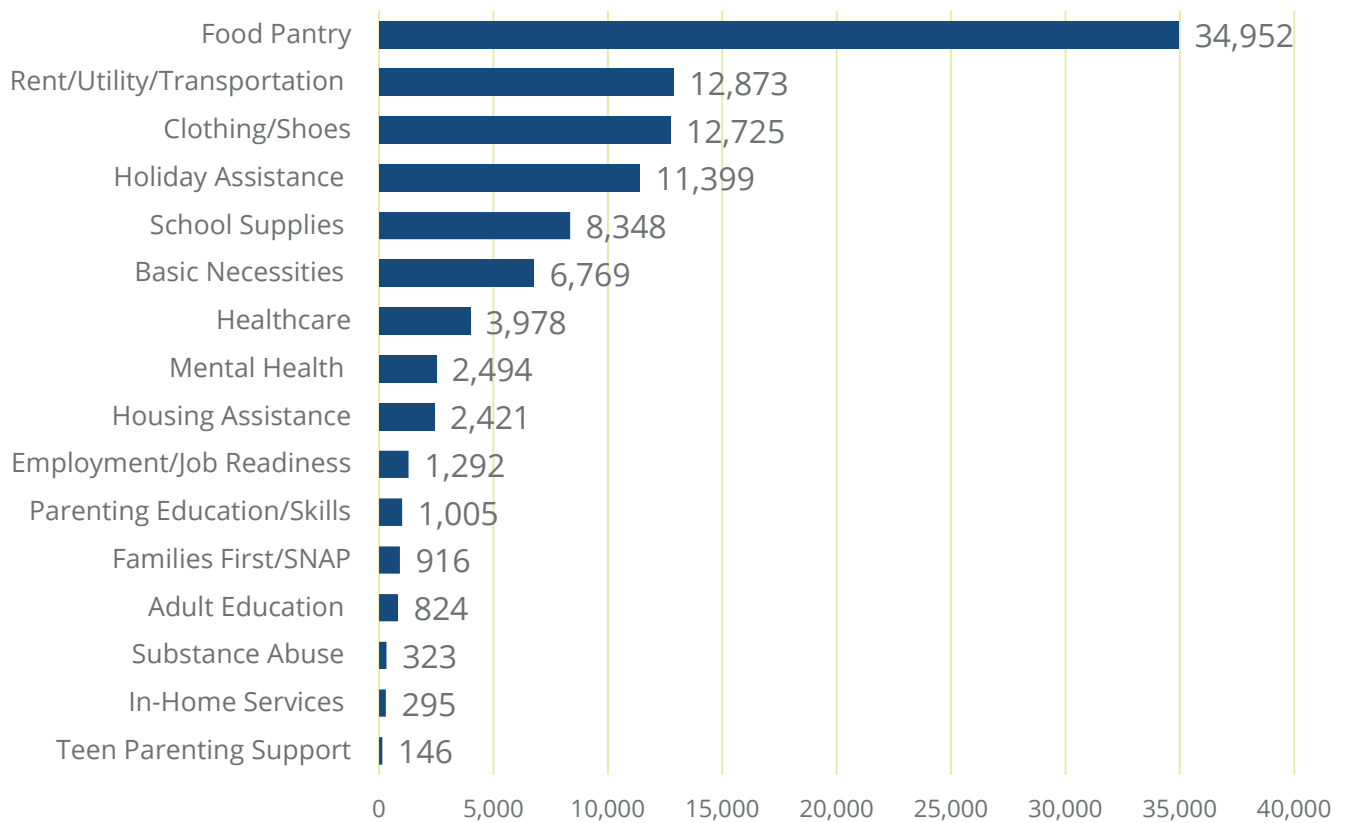
FRCs tailor their support and services to the specific needs of the students and families in their community. When possible, services are directly provided by the FRC to remove access barriers for families receiving those services. While each FRC's direct service offerings are unique and aligned with community-specific programmatic goals, the 19 services represented in the chart below

are the most commonly provided and represent some of the most significant needs of Tennessee students.



Referrals

FRCs work in unison with community providers to provide a consistent continuum of wrap-around support for families through referrals for services. This tailored approach ensures families receive access to essential support that cannot be provided directly by the FRC. During the 2022-23 academic year, over 100,000 referrals were made on behalf of students and families to external partners.



Partnerships and Contributions

FRCs work directly with key community stakeholders to identify needs and increase access to social services and mental health support to meet those needs. Each FRC advisory council maintains a diverse membership to encourage strong relationship and awareness building across the community and identify where partnerships and resources are most needed. The work of each FRC is accomplished in tandem with



Statewide Impact:

\$8,050,038 In-Kind Contributions

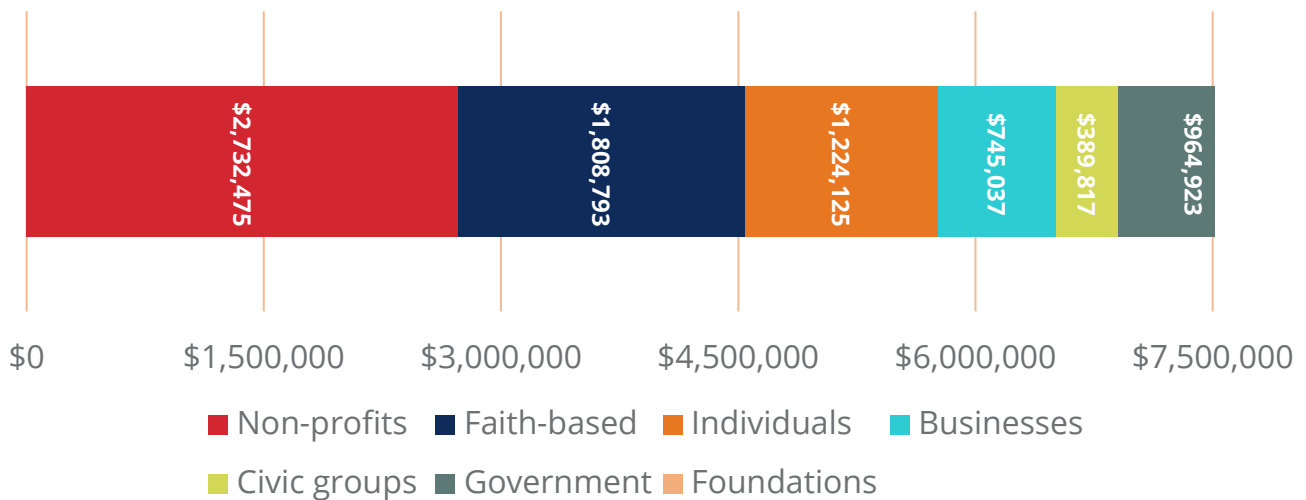
\$2,180,048 Monetary Contributions

4,162 Community Partnerships

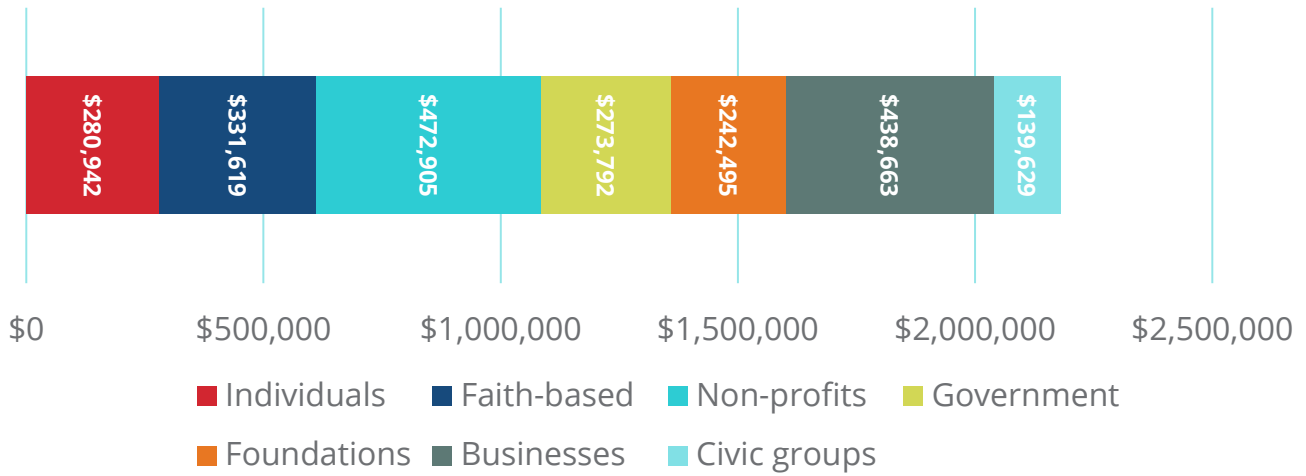
these stakeholders to identify specific ways organizations can offer direct support (through services and both monetary and in-kind contributions) and ensure an effective continuum of services are provided to students and families.

The funds awarded to each FRC by the department represent only a fraction of the total budget of each center. Budgets are determined based on local need and the remainder of needed operating funds are raised by each FRC director through solicitation of grants, contributions, and in-kind donations.

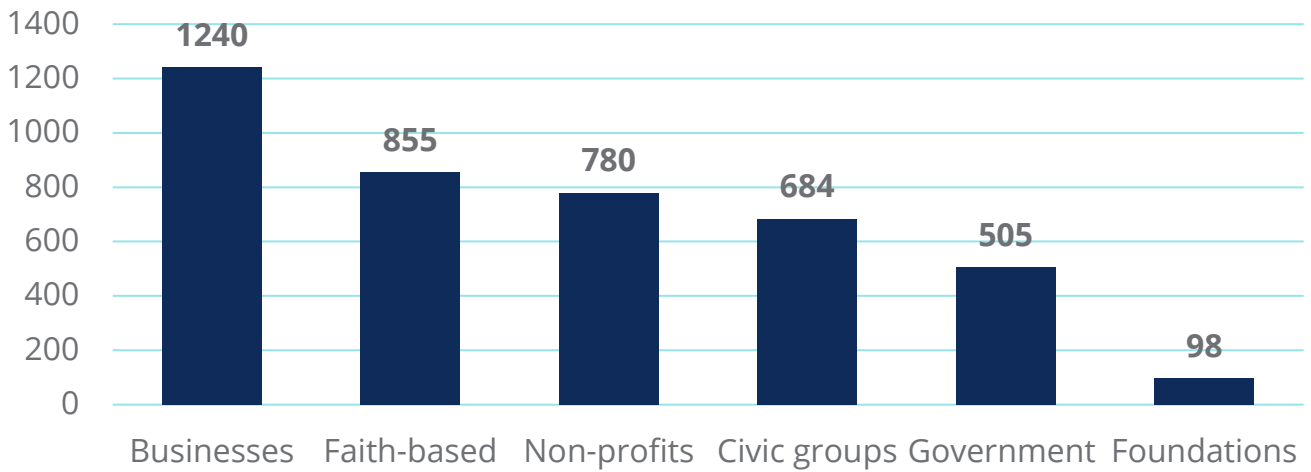
Local In-Kind Contributions



Local Monetary Contributions



Number of Partnerships



Framework

In April 2021, the department released revised FRC guidelines which included a strategic framework focused on three tenants: Families, Readiness, and Communities. FRCs develop an action plan with measurable objectives around each of the three tenants.



Families

As a part of program administration guidelines, FRCs develop and submit an action plan with measurable goals for two of the three objectives within each respective priority based on needs in their community. Each May, FRCs provide an evaluation of their progress and outcomes toward each goal to the department and highlights are detailed below.

FRCs develop an interconnected and consistent approach that responds to the mental health and wellbeing needs of students and families.

Family Support: *Focused on supporting students' and families' basic needs.*

Family Resource Centers offer a variety of opportunities that support both students and their families. Direct services, referrals, and collaborative programs with community partners are responsive to the specific needs of each community and include supports such as rent and utility assistance, provision of clothing, school supplies, and hygiene items, and partnerships to offer eye exams and dental care. Additionally, it includes summer feeding and weekend backpack programs.

- **Hancock County Schools** observed a 40% increase in the number of students and families served through the implementation of a targeted referral pathway.
- **Jefferson County Schools** observed a 34% increase in the number of students and families served by developing a communications plan focused on awareness for staff and families.
- **McNairy County Schools** observed a 42% increase in the number of students and families served through data utilization to determine needs, which resulted in service delivery realignment.
- **Van Buren County Schools** observed a 60% increase in the number of students and families served through an innovative partnership with their Chamber of Commerce. A partnership agreement with its Chamber of Commerce resulted in a physical location for families to access essential basic need supports and training opportunities.



Photos provided by Van Buren County Schools

Family Well-being: Focused on addressing the social and mental well-being of students and families.

FRCs offer a variety of services to address the mental health needs of students and families such as case management, school-based mental health services, and early intervention programs.

- **Hamilton County Schools** observed an 80% increase in referrals to social service and mental health stakeholders through student success planning within 50% of schools.
- **Henry County Schools** facilitated social skills sessions to students and observed a 93% improvement in behavior.
- **Putnam County Schools** observed a 60% increase in referrals to outside social service stakeholders to support its students/families in transition.

Family Sustainability: Focused on empowerment, opportunity, and stability for families.

Family Resource Centers offer opportunities for families to strengthen their parent support network and learn additional tools to support their child academically, socially, and personally. FRCs develop their training and education programs tailored to specific community needs.

- **Franklin County Schools** facilitated family empowerment classes focused on re-entry and noted 98% of attendees learned two or more new tools and strategies to support overall effective parenting.
- **Hawkins County Schools** observed 81% of families in transition successfully acquire adequate housing and essential supports through case management.
- **Warren County Schools** worked with families in transition through consistent case management and noted a 16% decrease of active cases.

Readiness

Chronically Out of School: Focused on reducing the number of students who miss 10 percent or more of school days. *All FRCs have a goal to address chronically out of school absence rates.

FRCs develop an integrated approach that ensures a pathway to prosperity for every student and family.

FRCs serve as an essential partner with the school and family to support consistent school attendance. FRCs provide many services to address or eliminate barriers to consistent attendance including provision of basic needs, referral coordination for social services, mental health, and/or health care, employment assistance, and case management. FRCs also support district awareness efforts about the importance of daily attendance.

- **Lincoln County Schools** instituted a team approach in partnership with the district attendance supervisor, Coordinated School Health, and social worker to support family-focused attendance, which resulted in a decrease in chronic absenteeism districtwide by 3%.
- **Maryville City Schools** facilitated an early intervention check-in with families at the highest identified need school and observed a 30% decrease in students who were chronically absent.
- **Oak Ridge Schools** implemented consistent check points with students and families, which resulted in a 7% decrease in chronic absenteeism.
- **Trenton Special School District** launched an early intervention attendance campaign focused on Pre-K through fourth grade and reduced the overall number of absences by 41%.

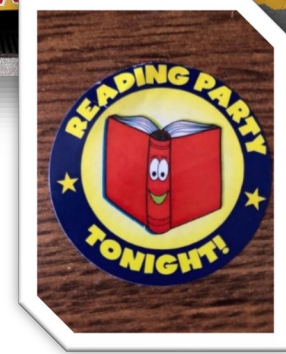
Photo provided by Stewart County Schools



Literacy: Focused on ensuring families are equipped with materials, trainings, and opportunities that help families thrive and improve their overall fluency in literacy.

FRCs offer a plethora of opportunities focused on increasing literacy for families. In partnership with schools, FRCs host literacy events, support adult education activities, facilitate family financial literacy classes, and disseminate resources.

- **Alcoa City Schools** partnered with one of their elementary schools to offer family literacy opportunities with students demonstrating an increase in literacy proficiency by 25%.
- **Bristol City Schools** welcomed community volunteers back in schools through its *Reading Buddies* initiative where 95% of students observed growth in literacy.
- **Morgan County Schools** launched virtual family literacy initiatives for early learners and noted 76% of students participating demonstrated on or above grade level literacy scores.



Photos provided by Bristol City Schools



Photo provided by Lebanon Special School District

Family Resource Centers Featured as Leader in Community Literacy Initiatives at the Reading 360 Virtual Summit

In February 2023, the department held its annual *Reading 360* Virtual Summit where over 2,500 educators, administrators, and community stakeholders heard best practices on supporting and elevating literacy efforts. During the summit, Bristol City Schools' FRC director, Kay Ward, shared about the successful work through their *Reading Buddies* initiative; Lebanon Special School District's FRC director, Beth Petty,

showcased how they cultivate literacy through their *Be on the Neon Read-a-Longs*; Henry County Schools' FRC director, Becky Holland, spotlighted its longstanding early literacy family initiative *Road to Reading*; and Murfreesboro City Schools' FRC director, Charise McDaniel, presented their essential partnership with United Way focused on meeting families at the beginning through its *Born Learning Academy*. FRCs lead key efforts to promote literacy by connecting the community.

Academic, College, and Career: Focused on addressing student, family, and community actions and knowledge necessary to expand opportunities for life success.

- **Dyer County Schools' Lunch Buddies** engaged schools and community partners by pairing a mentor with students, which resulted in 90% improvement in academics and attendance.
- **Franklin County Schools** provided after-school tutoring where 44% of students demonstrated improvement by five or more points in two subjects.
- **Robertson County Schools** partnered with its district Career and Technical Education (CTE) department to elevate career readiness among students and families, which resulted in a 12% increase in the number of students enrolled in a CTE course.
- **Lebanon Special School District** elevated its civics education initiative to incorporate opportunities for students and families where 86% of participants noted an increase in content knowledge.
- **Lenoir City Schools** implemented *Let's Talk* to support early learning. 80% of participants demonstrated on or above average around developmental milestones.

Communities

FRCs are uniquely positioned to effectively meet the needs of students and families by serving as the unifying component between school and community.

FRCs develop programs and partnerships targeted to unlock the potential of students, families, and schools.

Student and Family Engagement: Focused on encouraging positive relationships between families and school communities.

- **Haywood County Schools** led opportunities geared to strengthen family engagement in their child's academics where 96% of families stated the resources supported at-home learning.
- **Glenclyff High, in Metro Nashville Public Schools,** facilitated family focus groups and student forums where they observed a 90% increase in active engagement.
- **Loudon County Schools** launched a toolkit designed to support actively engaged families of pre-K students where 70% of families noted they learned one or more tips to support their child's development.

Resilient School Community: Focused on ensuring a safe, stable, and nurturing school environment.

- **Blount County Schools** facilitated professional development to school staff on trauma informed practices that resulted 92% indicating they learned one or more new strategies.
- **Lincoln County Schools** led a family support initiative to strengthen awareness and address vaping abuse that resulted in a 56% decrease in vaping citations.
- **White County Schools** facilitated professional development for staff related to social and personal wellbeing. 70% of staff trained indicated learning two or more new concepts.
- **Wilson County Schools** led ongoing technical support geared toward trauma informed practices, de-escalation, and school climate that resulted in a decrease in out of school suspensions in middle and secondary schools by 5%.

Community Partnerships: Focused on building alliances that improve the outcomes of FRC programmatic initiatives and strategy.

- **Greeneville City Schools** increased stakeholder volunteerism by 25% at quarterly resource events for families.
- **Hancock County Schools** observed a 30% increase in stakeholder contributions that support basic need initiatives.
- **Memphis-Shelby County Schools** launched a pop-up store at targeted schools to increase access to essential services and observed a 70% increase in community volunteer support.

Tracy Lawrence's Mission:Possible Partners with FRCs to Provide 1,200 Holiday Meals

Because of the successful relationship with Lebanon Special School District's FRC, Lawrence's organization wanted to expand its reach to neighboring counties during the holiday season. This endeavor resulted in providing 1,200 holiday meals to families in Lebanon Special School District, Murfreesboro City Schools, Metro-Nashville Public Schools, Robertson County Schools, Sumner County Schools, and Wilson County Schools.



Photo provided by Tracy Lawrence Mission:Possible

Successes, Challenges, and the Path Forward: *Opportunity for All*

Through grants, goods, services, and donations, FRCs *tripled* the state's investment

LEAs provided more than \$4.1 M in matching funds to FRCs

41% of FRC directors have one or more additional roles/responsibilities

49% of LEAs *do not* have an FRC

FRCs increased the number of students served by 85%

FRCs serve as a strong partner to families and communities for local education agencies. Serving as a welcoming hub of support(s) tailored to district and community needs, FRCs have proven repeatedly their strategic and supportive strategies enhance an LEAs overall mission. Moving forward, LEAs have the unique opportunity to ensure FRCs

are interwoven as a fundamental component of their work. The Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA) Act, Tennessee's student-based funding formula, includes FRCs as an operational strategy within the base component. FRCs being a part of TISA paves the path forward to ensuring opportunity for all LEAs to sustain and implement this work if they choose.



Appendix

Program Descriptions

Action Plan: Supports programmatic implementation and ensures alignment with the FRC strategic framework identified in the guidelines. School districts provide measurable objectives and mid/end of year outcomes to the department through the action plan on a recurring basis throughout the year.

Annual Report: LEAs are required by T.C.A. § 49-2-115 to submit an Annual Performance Report (APR) to the department outlining the outcomes of programmatic efforts. During the 2020-21 school year, the department worked in conjunction with the Advisory Council to revise the APR, ensuring the work of FRCs is effectively captured through appropriate data collection.

Guidelines: Revision of FRC Guidelines is required at least every three years by T.C.A. § 49-2-115. The revised guidelines established a vision and mission for Family Resource Centers in Tennessee.

Needs Assessment: A needs assessment is conducted biennially as required by the guidelines to provide critical feedback through the identification of key strengths and areas of deficiency related to the strategic framework. In partnership with the Advisory Council, a universal needs assessment optional tool was released in fall 2021.

New FRC Director Boot Camp: Launched in 2020, these virtual, one-hour monthly meetings provide new FRC Directors with the strategies, tools, and best practices needed to ensure their pathway to success during the critical first three months of the school year.

Professional Learning Series: Monthly professional development opportunity for all FRC personnel to broaden knowledge and establish a strong community of practice. This series equips attendees with best practices and strategies to support students and families and fosters connection among FRCs.

Regional Meetings: Provide a space of collaborative learning and networking across Centers of Regional Excellence regions.

Virtual Community Platform: The FRC Community Channel was launched in Microsoft Teams to be a one-stop-shop for FRC directors to network, share resources, and access all relevant FRC resources from the department.

Virtual Office Hours: Monthly opportunity to provide continued technical assistance support and other guidance related to FRC programs.

Direct Services and Referrals Program Descriptions

Adult Education: Offer/provide access for individuals interested in completing their High School Equivalency Diploma (HiSET).

Basic Necessities: Collect and make available basic care items such as soap, shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, and feminine products to eliminate the lack of resource barrier.

Case Management: Provide intensive follow-up and care coordination for families and students.

Chronically Out of School: Coordinate intensive support(s) to address chronic absenteeism (e.g., wraparound services, truancy board).

Clothing: Collect and make clothing available to students and families.

Employment/Job Readiness: Assisting and connecting individuals with employment skills and opportunities.

Families First/SNAP: Assisting and referring families to access families first benefits.

Family Literacy: Facilitate trainings opportunities for families that empower overall literacy efforts (e.g., financial literacy, family/child literacy).

Food Giveaways: Facilitate/host large food giveaways such as a mobile food pantry on a consistent basis to reduce food insecurity.

Healthcare: Provide access to healthcare opportunities for students and families (e.g., TennCare support, dental care coordination, partnership with Coordinated School Health).

Holiday Assistance: Facilitate and make available specific assistance for families during the holiday season.

Home Visits: Facilitate home visits to provide services as needed.

Housing, Rent, Utilities, Transportation: Provide access to opportunities to support families in need of rent, utilities, transportation (e.g., rental assistance, housing application assistance, utility assistance, transportation coordination).

In-Home Services: Referring families to external, coordinated wraparound supports as requested.

Mental Health: Provide access to mental health for students and families (e.g., telemental health, counseling).

Parenting Skills: Facilitate trainings tailored to empower parent/guardians to support their child(ren).

Pre-K in a Bag: Facilitate learning opportunities for families tailored to support and enhance motor skills and overall growth.

School Supplies: Collect and provide school supplies to classrooms, schools, students, and families to eliminate the lack of resource barrier.

Substance Abuse: Connecting individuals to necessary supports as requested.

Teen Parent Support: Facilitate trainings and provide access to opportunities that empower families.

Tutoring/Mentoring: Develop/lead tutoring and mentoring efforts for students and families.

Weekend Backpack: Facilitate/operationalize sending non-perishable food items to support meals for the weekend made available to students.

In-Kind and Monetary Contributions Descriptions

Businesses, Civic Groups, Faith-Based, Foundations, Government, Individuals, and Non-Profits: Support FRCs through volunteer hours, tangible items such as food, clothing, basic need supports, or monetary contributions.

**All services and support are developed and executed based on local need and decision making.*

References

ⁱ All graphs: Compiled from annual report data supplied by Family Resource Centers, May 2023