

DIRECTOR OF PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Job Description

The Buffett Early Childhood Institute at the University of Nebraska is seeking applications from highly qualified individuals for the position of Director of Program Development. This dynamic individual will conceptualize and lead systemic approaches to reducing achievement and opportunity gaps in early learning and education settings, birth through Grade 3, blending a working knowledge of applied research, high-quality practices, and effective family engagement strategies to improve school, community, and child outcomes. The Director reports to the Executive Director of the Institute and works closely with the other Institute directors, particularly Research and Evaluation and Early Childhood Workforce Development.

The goal of the Program Development unit is to support programs and activities that reduce or eliminate income- and race/ethnicity-based disparities in opportunity and social, cognitive, and academic outcomes among young children. Program Development works very closely with other units of the Institute, including the Institute Community Chairs, Communications and Marketing, as well as faculty and staff from the four University of Nebraska campuses. The Program Development area, which includes an associate director and program administrator, currently has 14 staff at the Institute, many of whom work primarily in the field, and has a budget in excess of \$2 million/year derived from Institute endowment, private gifts, and public sources. These personnel and funds support the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan, the largest birth – Grade 3 demonstration program in the nation.

Buffett Early Childhood Institute Profile

Envisioned as a new model for how public higher education is engaged in the first years of life, the Buffett Early Childhood Institute is a four-campus, university-wide, multidisciplinary research, education, outreach, and policy institute of the University of Nebraska committed to helping transform early childhood development and education in Nebraska and across the nation.

<https://buffettinstitute.nebraska.edu/>

The long-term goal of the Institute is to be a leading center where scholars, practitioners, community members, and policymakers collaborate to advance a unified approach that can improve the lives of young children and families and the systems that support them. Two signature programs characterize the principal activities of the Institute: the Achievement Gap Challenge and Early Childhood Workforce Development Program.

Applicants should note that the goals of the Institute are university-, state-, and nation-wide, but the location of the Institute administration is in Omaha. This position will work primarily out of the Omaha office.

Job Responsibilities

In addition to periodic unique tasks, the following list describes major responsibilities:

- Provide direction and build collaborative partnerships with leaders of a wide range of early childhood and primary grade services, with an emphasis on facilitating sustainable systems change.
- Work closely with Research and Evaluation and other Institute staff to facilitate the implementation of innovative, evidence-based birth – Grade 3 programming in school districts, community-based organizations, and agencies serving families of children placed at risk.
- In conjunction with the Workforce Development unit, conceptualize and lead the implementation of statewide professional learning opportunities for a wide range of practitioners and educators from birth through Grade 3, working with other partners and stakeholders.
- Serve as a state and national spokesperson for the Institute in promoting effective early childhood practices and provide a critical bridge in uniting the birth to 5 and PreK to Grade 3 communities.
- Identify and lead the development of strategies that leverage, spread, and sustain critical aspects of the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan. <https://buffettinstitute.nebraska.edu/our-work/childhood-plan>.
- Prepare grant applications that advance new ideas for program development and publish papers and other materials that describe the work of the unit.
- Work with state and national leaders to identify and develop public policies that will strengthen high-quality programs and systems for birth through Grade 3 learning and family engagement.
- Identify areas for critical programmatic partnership with faculty and staff on University of Nebraska campuses and engage them in programmatic and research efforts that enhance the early years.

Required and Preferred Qualifications

- Master's degree in child development/early childhood education or a related field; Ph.D. strongly preferred.
- Eight to 10 years' experience leading programs and/or systems of service that support children and families in the first eight years of life.
- Ability to think systemically and strategically in planning and coordinating multiple programmatic activities for children placed at high risk.
- Extensive familiarity with evidence-based models of early childhood programming and intervention.
- Ability to lead, supervise, and evaluate staff and create and sustain strong teams.
- Ability to work with a wide range of diverse constituents, including families and community members, preschools and public schools, home visitors, teachers, principals, and superintendents, communicating respectfully and effectively with each individual and group.
- Ability to enact values of diversity, equity, and inclusion in program and organizational activities and outcomes.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills and ability to manage multiple tasks/projects simultaneously; experience with grant writing, budgeting, and overseeing accounts.

Successful candidates will exhibit the following personality characteristics:

- The ideal candidate is agile, entrepreneurial, and a team player who seeks to advance the Institute and its goals.

- Knowledge, enthusiasm, and passion for the field of early childhood and ability to establish credibility in the education/human service and university communities.
- Must be a fast self-starter comfortable with attention to detail and ability to work independently, along with the judgment to seek supervision and/or input from others when necessary.
- A strong sense of the requirements of a stable organization and its long-term needs with the ability to exercise significant initiative and creativity in developing new value-added relationships with the Institute's stakeholders.
- Should be an optimistic, positive, resilient, insightful, and performance-driven decision maker, problem solver, and consensus builder.
- Someone who is mission-driven and is deeply committed to the values of the Institute.

How To Apply

Application review begins immediately and continues until position is filled.

Applications are processed through the online job posting at <https://careers.nebraska.edu>.

Follow instructions to complete the Applicant Profile. Along with your application, attach a cover letter, resume, and contact information for three professional references.

Direct questions about the position to: humanresources@nebraska.edu.

Direct questions about the online application process to: (402) 472-2111.

The University of Nebraska is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer and participates in E-Verify.