

United Way of Central Illinois

2023-2026 Education Investments

Helping children learn, achieve, and succeed while engaging families and communities

Total Education Investments: \$401,870



Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Illinois

Comprehensive Mentoring

Big Brothers Big Sisters has provided thousands of youth the opportunity for a caring, adult mentor in Sangamon County since 1972. They are seen as the “Gold Standard” of mentoring because of our child safety guidelines, nationally developed screening and training methods as well as our positive researched and vetted outcomes for youth.

BBBS accomplishes this work by pairing children (Littles) with caring adult volunteer role models (Bigs) through One-to-One mentoring relationships (Matches) that are built on trust and friendship. The Comprehensive Mentoring Program provides at-risk children with a positive and consistent One-to-One volunteer mentor to promote healthy development and functioning by reducing risk factors, improving social/emotional health and supporting academics.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Illinois

Mentor2.0

This program is designed to make a significant impact on the graduation rates of first-generation college students by leveraging the power of long-term, personal relationships through mentoring. The program goes beyond academic support and focuses on helping students develop essential non-academic skills and providing the necessary support for success in both school and life.

Mentor2.0 achieves this by integrating career-focused mentoring directly into District 186's AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) classes. By embedding mentoring within the educational framework, the program aims to empower students, particularly those who are the first in their families to pursue higher education, to overcome challenges and achieve their goals.

Boys and Girls Club of Central Illinois

Project Learn

Project Learn provides youth comprehensive year-round learning experiences to ensure they succeed in school. This educational enhancement initiative operates outside of school hours and consists of homework help, tutoring, high-yield learning and leisure activities, parent involvement, and collaboration with schools. Additionally, the summer component aims to bridge the educational gap that develops between school years.

The program operates 5 days/week during the school year and includes a full day summer component which offers fun and engaging theme-based activities to mitigate summer learning loss, specifically in the areas of reading and mathematics.



Boys and Girls Club of Central Illinois

Career Launch

Career Launch operates outside of school hours and supports teenagers in their educational journey, ensuring they thrive in school and beyond. With homework help, tutoring, career exploration, and parent involvement, the program empowers students to make informed decisions about their future. Through collaboration with schools and a robust summer component, Career Launch offers year-round learning experiences for high school success and post-graduation planning.

The summer program includes career cluster exploration, job shadowing, college visits, and job readiness skill development. Additionally, the program promotes financial responsibility and independence by teaching money management skills. Recognizing the importance of social-emotional well-being, Career Launch also provides opportunities for personal growth. By integrating academic support, career exploration, and life skills development, Career Launch equips teenagers with the tools they need for a successful transition to higher education and the workforce.

Compass for Kids, Inc.

Camp Compass

Camp Compass is a free summer learning initiative aimed at empowering underserved elementary students. This program serves as a vital tool in combating summer learning loss and bolstering reading and math proficiencies. With a commitment to bridging the achievement and opportunity gaps prevalent between low-income students and their more advantaged peers, Camp Compass goes beyond academics to foster holistic growth.

Alongside enhancing core subjects, the program prioritizes the development of social-emotional skills and offers a diverse range of non-academic enrichment activities such as field trips. By cultivating a camp-like atmosphere filled with engaging experiences, the students are instilled with enthusiasm, nurturing their attendance and participation. Through its dedication to improving skills during summer, this program



Compass for Kids, Inc.

Club Compass

Club Compass is a free, weekly program for low-income elementary-age children who attend Black Hawk, Dubois, Harvard Park, Graham, or McClernand Elementary Schools within District 186. The purpose of Club Compass is to provide our students with social-emotional and academic support, life skills, a safe space for them to learn and grow, and positive adult role models.

Every student who is part of our program has been referred to Club Compass by a teacher, Principal, Social Worker, or FACE Liaison at their respective school. Each participant comes from a low-income family and faces one or more additional risk factors such as homelessness, foster care, suspected abuse or neglect, food insecurity, and/or parental incarceration. Club Compass strives to empower these vulnerable children, offering them the resources and guidance they need to thrive academically, emotionally, and socially.

Girl Scouts of Central Illinois, Inc.

Girls Scout Leadership Experience Outreach Program

The Leadership Experience is a carefully designed program consisting of 8 sessions that are tailored to different age groups. The program encompasses various areas including entrepreneurship and financial literacy, life skill development, outdoor education, and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) education.

By engaging in a range of activities aimed at promoting well-being and fostering confidence, communication skills, and collaboration among peers, the Outreach program directly addresses the unique challenges that girls face. It empowers them on their journey to overcome obstacles and achieve their goals. The program strives to provide a supportive environment that equips girls with the necessary skills and mindset to conquer any challenge they may encounter.

Hope School Foundation

The Autism Clinic

The Autism Clinic at Hope is dedicated to fulfilling its mission of being a model program in the field of developmental disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder (ASD), specifically focusing on screening, diagnosis, and treatment of individuals with these disabilities.

The clinic helps children with ASD develop and strengthen their communication and relational skills, enabling them to succeed when they enter kindergarten. Alongside providing direct services to children, the Autism Clinic makes education for the children's families and communities a priority. With a commitment to evidence-based treatments, community advocacy, and education, Hope aims to support children and their families in reaching their full potential.



Springfield Public School, District 186

Camp Kindergarten: Ready, Set, Go!

Camp Kindergarten: Ready, Set, Go! is a comprehensive four-week readiness program designed specifically for children entering kindergarten who have limited or no prior exposure to preschool or preschool-like experiences. This camp is available to students residing in Springfield within the school boundaries of Matheny School, Feitshans School, Wilcox School, or Hazel Dell School.

Camp Kindergarten aims to equip students with the essential skills necessary for a successful transition to kindergarten and build a strong foundation for their educational journey. Through a range of carefully planned experiences, the program supports the development of crucial cognitive, social, and emotional skills. Additionally, students and their families are provided with resources to ensure a positive start to the school year for the child, their family, and their teachers.

Springfield Urban League

Freedom School

The Freedom School is a nationally recognized literacy-rich program that boosts children's enthusiasm for reading, cultivates positive attitudes toward learning, and enhances their self-esteem through activities and books that reflect their own images. Through a carefully crafted curriculum developed by the Children's Defense Fund, the program encompasses five essential components to support children and families: academic enrichment, parent involvement, civic engagement, intergenerational leadership development, and nutrition, health, and mental health.

Freedom School provides children with opportunities to discover the joy of reading and improve their ability to read, all while connecting to their own identities, cultures, and experiences. Nurturing a love for reading while promoting self-discipline, cultural awareness, and the values of community service and social action encourages confident, lifelong learners.