

Jefferson Elementary School

School Profile

2022

QUICK FACTS

Location: Fargo, ND (Urban)

Year Joined: 2018

Grades: K-5

Enrollment: 280

NDFSCS Implementation Team:

Principal, School Counselor, Site Coordinator and Targeted Case Manager



“This partnership really does make our school even better...It shows that we care and that we support our families and our students.”

— Beth Olson, Principal



Website:
www.fargo.k12.nd.us/jefferson

IMPLEMENTATION JOURNEY

Fargo Public School’s Jefferson Elementary is a wonderfully diverse school, with over 22 languages represented among their nearly 300 students—nearly 30 percent of whom are English language learners. Jefferson is also a true neighborhood school; it sits in the heart of the midtown Fargo neighborhood where many of its families reside, allowing students to walk to and from school nearly every day.

Jefferson Elementary’s NDFSCS implementation story is as unique as the school itself. While Jefferson has been a member of the Consortium since 2018, the two women currently leading the charge—Principal Beth Olson and Targeted Case Manager Sarah Omodt—have only been with the school since 2021. Together, Olson and Omodt have brought fresh perspectives and renewed energy for helping students thrive.

“I had always wanted to work directly with students, in the schools,” Omodt said. “When I saw that there was an amazing opportunity to be a Targeted Case Manager, I jumped at it.”

Omodt’s primary goal is to build relationships with students and families the school has previously struggled to reach. Through Targeted Case Management, Omodt can serve as a conduit between families and community resources, helping them access mental health services, as well as basic medical, dental, or optical care.

“Sarah can act as a bridge for those relationships. She’s really the listening ear for families. I’ve noticed many times that parents might not recall or understand exactly what the doctor has said. Sarah is ready and willing to help convey the message,” Olson said. “She is supportive of our parents at such a great level, which in turn impacts students.”

Additionally, the school has seen an increase in the number of community partners and providing support to students and families at the school. In collaboration with Sanford Health, Jefferson Elementary is able to offer a monthly on-site physical health clinic where students can receive medical support free of charge.

“For a lot of our families, there’s a big transportation barrier,” Olson said. “Having that service at the school has made a huge difference for those kids and families.”

On a local level, several Fargo businesses and organizations are supporting students and their families at Jefferson. Twice a month, Power Plate Meals packages and delivers nutritious meals to the school, which the school then distributes to students in need. In December 2021, Power Plate Meals delivered more than 80 holiday meal bags, ensuring that all students and families had a special meal to celebrate the holiday season.

These are just a few of the supports that Jefferson Elementary has been able to implement as a result of their involvement in NDFSCS. The school has also reignited Check & Connect, an evidenced-based dropout prevention program that pairs a dedicated mentor with at-risk youth. In the first year of reinstating Check and Connect, mentored students with chronic absenteeism saw improvement in attendance and overall school and family engagement.

“Our involvement with the NDFSCS Consortium really does make our school even better,” Olson said. “We’re able to be there for our families at a level that I don’t think a lot of schools have the opportunity to be. When things are more difficult and trying, we have someone that is more than willing to help and assist. It shows that we care and that we support our families and our students, and that’s huge.”



WHO WE ARE

We are a Consortium representing a variety of ND schools and organizations who are passionate about helping ND students and families succeed.



WHAT WE DO

We partner with local leaders to coordinate comprehensive supports in areas such as wellness, workforce readiness, and academic enrichment to help students, families, and communities thrive.



WHY WE DO IT

Students cannot learn when their basic needs are not met. Not all schools have the resources to meet all needs. NDFSCS supports schools and community partners in navigating these challenges together.



North Dakota Full-Service Community Schools serve as a place and a set of collaborative partnerships that embrace a whole-child, whole-family approach to student success.

Visit ndfscs.org/schools to learn more.