



## 2024-2028 STRATEGIC PLAN

BELONG Partners is an education equity nonprofit that believes in a future where everyone thrives because they know they matter and belong. For 15 years, we have partnered with schools and organizations predominately in marginalized communities, across the Pacific Northwest, to build equitable communities where students have dignity, voice, and agency. Our unique approach challenges traditional practices and systems in education that rely on compliance, punishment, rewards, and exclusion. We work alongside educators, forging strong relationships over time that challenge the status quo and ignite transformative change. Our approach integrates brain science, trauma-responsive, culturally relevant, and restorative practices, with social-emotional learning (SEL) strategies.

Partnering with us enables schools and youth-serving organizations to shift adult mindsets, cultivate equitable communities where students thrive academically and socially, and shrink racial disparities.

**Vision:** We believe in a future where everyone thrives because they know they matter and belong.

**Purpose:** We build equitable communities that center the dignity, voice, and agency of young people.

**Approach:** We partner with schools and organizations to transform the ways adults teach, parent, and care for youth.

In the face of prevalent issues in the education system, such as widespread exclusionary discipline and persistent disparities in academic growth, compounded by a global pandemic and a lack of appropriate funding, the need for our services has become more urgent than ever before. Our 2024 – 2028 strategic plan positions us to expand our impact, reach a larger audience, grow internal capacity, and increase earned and contributed income.

To realize this ambitious plan, we are committed to investing in our internal capacity in a way that is aligned with our values. This encompasses implementing a shared leadership model, adding new positions in program and development, and expanding board membership, all while centering equity in our practices, systems, and policies. Simultaneously, we will expand and diversify our revenue streams, aiming for \$1 million annually in contributed revenue through various grant sources and individual donors.

In the next 5 years, we will work with our independent evaluation partner to pursue evidence-based designation for our program. This status combined with tailoring our workshops for new and diverse target audiences, and collaborations to explore advocacy in the education equity arena will establish us as leaders in the social emotional learning field, actively shaping the future of education.

**As BELONG Partners evolves, our vision and purpose remain unwavering: building equitable communities that center the dignity, voice, and agency of young people, so that everyone thrives because they know they matter and belong.**

## Goals and Objectives

### GOAL 1 Expand Our Impact

**Achieve Evidence-based Designation** by collaborating with Education Northwest (independent evaluator), which will ensure access and increase funding for our approach. Working with EdNW on evaluation designs and funding opportunities, we will expand our whole school partnerships to 50 local schools by FY 28 for a rigorous study.

**Establish the BELONG Partners Network**, by developing our criteria and strategy for transitioning District Model schools to a level of partnership where they independently sustain the program. We'll define qualification criteria, ensure a successful transition process, and implement ongoing communication, including annual convenings, and knowledge-sharing through our learning management system.

**Launch Early Learning & Youth Service Provider Workshops.** Once we have finalized the BELONG Partners Early Learning Workshop and materials in FY 24, establish partnerships for grant funding, and schedule 8 workshops per year by FY 28. Similarly, finalize the BELONG Partners Youth Provider workshop and materials, market to youth-serving organizations, and aim for 20 workshops annually by FY 28.

**Explore Workplace Wellness Workshops.** We will investigate the feasibility of BELONG Partners workplace culture workshops, with the goal of fostering safer and healthier work environments for adults while generating revenue to support school initiatives. Begin with a feasibility study, establishing a team to research and propose service options and pricing models for corporate work.

### GOAL 2 Raise Awareness of Our Work

**Foster a Culture where All Staff and Board Members Serve as Ambassadors** for the organization, promoting relationship-building and pursuing opportunities for program growth and organizational development. We'll determine marketing needs to guide the development of an annual plan, develop assets, and provide staff and board training. Additional activities include outreach targets for board members, and a process for staff members to strategically submit proposals and present at conferences.

**Secure a Position in the Education Equity Space** to help shape policies, practices, and resource allocation. A staff and board committee will research advocacy and collaboration possibilities. We

hope to identify and be engaged with equity circles, advisory boards, and coalitions by FY 25. Establish relationships with legislators and education union representatives.

### **GOAL 3**    **Grow our Internal Capacity in a Way that Centers Equity and Aligns with our Values**

**Create and Implement Shared Leadership** structure aligned with our organizational values. In FY 24, establish a board & staff workgroup to research and propose an internal leadership structure. We'll work with our equity consultant (In the Works) to develop an application process and selection criteria for internal applicants. In FY 25, launch the new Leadership Council, starting with shadowing the existing council (ILC), and developing a performance feedback structure. By FY 26, the Leadership Council is established and will provide guidance and recommendations with advisory support from the leadership structure workgroup.

**Cultivate a Culture of Equity-centered, Anti-racist Tools and Practices** within staff and board. Our Collaboration & Accountability Circle will drive implementation. We'll partner with In the Works in FY 24 and FY 25 for professional development, coaching, and the development of caucusing structures, as well as an Equity Assessment tool to ensure continuous progress and alignment with equity goals.

**Scale our Internal Capacity** to support delivery of our approach to 50 local schools and 8 district model schools, providing the necessary infrastructure and systems to conduct an evidence-based study.

**Cultivate an Engaged Board of Directors** for robust support of BELONG Partners. Recruit and train diverse members, expanding the board to 20 members for enhanced representation based on demographics and expertise. We will continue our focus on fostering transparent and trusting staff and board relationships.

### **GOAL 4**    **Increase Contributed Income to Support Sustainable Scaling**

**Increase Development Staff FTE** to meet funding goals. Research needs and build a job description that supports our strategic plan. Bring on a full-time development role in FY 25.

**Increase Total Contributed Income** to approximately \$1 million annually by FY 28.