

Presentation Form

ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATIONS

School and District's Certifications

The signatures of the school principal and district superintendent (or equivalents) on the next page certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of their knowledge. *In no case is a private school required to make any certification with regard to the public school district in which it is located.*

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades early learning to 12.
2. The school has been evaluated and selected from among schools within the Nominating Authority's jurisdiction, based on high achievement in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental and sustainability education.
3. Neither the nominated public school nor its public school district is refusing the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district wide compliance review. The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) is not subject to the jurisdiction of OCR. The nominated DoDEA schools, however, are subject to and in compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements to comply with Federal civil rights laws.
4. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the public school district concluding that the nominated public school or the public school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan to remedy the violation.
5. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the public school or the public school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
6. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the public school or public school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or public school district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.
7. The school meets all applicable federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools

Name of Principal:

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name:

(As it should appear on an award)

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space*

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.



Tami Timmer

Date:

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent:

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

N/A

Date:

(Superintendent's Signature)

Nominating Authority's Certifications

The signature by the Nominating Authority on this page certifies that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of the Authority's knowledge.

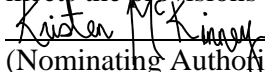
1. The school has some configuration that includes grades Pre-K-12.
2. The school is one of those overseen by the Nominating Authority which is highest achieving in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental and sustainability education.
3. The school meets all applicable federal civil rights and federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

Name of Nominating Agency:

Name of Nominating Authority:

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify to the best of my knowledge that the school meets the provisions above.



Date: February 19, 2021

(Nominating Authority's Signature)

SUBMISSION

The nomination package, including the signed certifications, narrative summary, documentation of evaluation in the three Pillars, and photos should be submitted online according to the instructions in the Nominee Submission Procedure.

OMB Control Number: 1860-0509
Expiration Date: December 31, 2023

Public Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1860-0509. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 37 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit P.L. 107-110, Sec. 501, Innovative Programs and Parental Choice Provisions. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202-4536 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1860-0509. Note: Please do not return the completed ED-Green Ribbon Schools application to this address.

U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School 2021 Missouri Application



School Contact Information

School name: Flance Early Learning Center	Street Address: 1908 O'Fallon Street	
City: St. Louis	State: Mo	Zip: 63005
Website: flancecenter.org	Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/flancecenter/	
Principal: Tami Timmer	District	
Principal Email: ttimmer@flancecenter.org	Principal Phone: (314) 881-0881	
Lead Applicant and Position (if different): Kiara Fite, Outcomes and Evaluation Specialist		
Lead Applicant Email: kfite@flancecenter.org	Lead Applicant Phone: (314) 881-0881	

School Eligibility and Compliance (put an x by all that apply)

The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades Pre-K-12.	x
The school has been evaluated and selected from among schools within the Nominating Authority's jurisdiction as highest achieving in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental and sustainability education.	x

Neither the nominated public school nor its public school district is refusing the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district wide compliance review. The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) The nominated DoDEA schools, however, are subject to and in compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements to comply with Federal civil rights laws.	x
OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the public school district concluding that the nominated public school or the public school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan to remedy the violation.	x
The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the public school or the public school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.	x
There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the public school or public school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or public school district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.	x
The school meets all applicable federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.	x

School Characteristics

<u>Level</u> (X) Early Learning Center () Elementary (PK-5 or 6) () K-8 () Middle (6-8 or 9) () High (9 or 10-12)	<u>School Type</u> () Public (X) Private/Independent () Charter () Magnet	<u>How would you describe your school?</u> (X) Urban () Suburban () Rural	<u>Total Enrolled:</u> 64 <u>Graduation Rate:</u> 100% <u>Attendance Rate:</u> 77%
Does your school serve 40% or more students from disadvantaged households? (X) Yes () No			
Percent receiving FRPL: 86%	Percent limited English Proficient: 7%	Percent total disadvantaged students – without double counting , provide the total percentage of students that are receiving FRPL and/or have limited English proficiency and/or have learning disabilities: 86%	

Summary Statement

Flance Early Learning Center's mission is to "provide excellence by educating and nurturing young children, supporting families and strengthening community". We serve quality education and care to a racially, culturally, developmentally, and socio-economically diverse population of children between ages six weeks and six years to ensure healthy physical, emotional, and social development. Flance was founded with a desire that all children have the best possible start in life, regardless of their families' socioeconomic development, so we address healthy development in a comprehensive way. By providing our children, families, staff, and community with resources and education, we encourage them to be environmentally and health-conscious to catalyze change within their communities. In 2021 we will sponsor an AmeriCorps Member to serve as our first Sustainability Coordinator, ensuring that we continue to improve school and community health, lower our environmental impact, and incorporate sustainability into all facets of curriculum and instruction.

Flance was built with LEED certification in mind, and the building itself contributes to increased environmental literacy and wellness of people and the planet. It was designed to bring the outdoors in—daylighting is used in 90% of the building, every classroom has immediate access visually and physically to the outdoors, and classrooms are named for trees native to Missouri. 75% of our roof is comprised of reflective materials, and the HVAC system can be controlled remotely even when the building is unoccupied. We use Energy Star Portfolio Manager to track gas and electricity usage and we have reduced our total GHG Emissions Intensity by 37% over the past two years. Two-thirds of our grounds are comprised of water-efficient and regionally appropriate plants, and we have bioswales and raingarden plants to retain stormwater and minimize runoff. This school year, we have been more proactive in reducing our waste production. Flance received a donation of three compost bins located by our community garden to make use of food waste. We also received 30 recycling bins, 2 recycling carts, and numerous educational materials from St. Louis City Recycles to help us educate and practice good recycling habits. This inspired us to begin a recycling tracking system and become more cognizant about ways we can encourage and support sustainable practices. Our newly established Green Team, comprised of administrative, teaching, and custodial staff, is working to educate all staff about waste reduction and how to incorporate this topic into classroom curriculum and school culture.

We encourage our families to make healthy life choices. Our chef prepares nourishing meals, including organic baby food, for our students incorporating a variety of fruits and vegetables daily. Our deliberate programming includes ongoing nutrition education, gardening education, physical activities, outdoor playtime, and nutrition and health-based professional development at least twice a year for staff. As a result, Flance was named the only Gold Level Healthy Way to Grow Center in the United States by the American Heart Association in October 2020. Flance was recognized for providing healthy environments for children, families, staff, and communities. In partnership with Affinia Health Care, Flance houses an on-site health clinic to provide a wide range of health services for Flance families. As a designated EnVision Center by HUD, since May 2020 we've provided over 25 tons of free fresh produce valued at over \$180,000 to Flance families and our 63106 community neighbors via a weekly Free Fresh Food Box program. The 63106-zip code is one of the poorest zip codes in Missouri and is a food desert with limited access to affordable and nutritious food. When safe to do so, we are eager to return to utilizing our school to provide support through cooking classes for families and providing meeting space in our community room for a variety of events that have included parenting classes, movie nights, resume workshops, and job trainings.

Health and the environment are embedded in the curriculum, from math lessons that involve making a healthy snack to vocabulary acquisition reflective of the natural world and valuing stewardship. Community partnerships further enhance these efforts. For example, Flance partner Urban Harvest helps us with nutrition education with our on-site community garden. We incorporate Urban Harvest's expertise in our curriculum for Pre-K classrooms, which includes planting, harvesting, gardening, and natural scavenger hunts. Children learn about fresh fruits and vegetables and the harvest supplements student and staff meals. When possible, we even share it with our families. In 2020, students harvested 200 pounds of produce. In August 2020, we

started an after-school program that encouraged neighborhood children from ages 8 – 14 to explore and learn about our garden.

Flance strives for excellence through educating and nurturing children, supporting families, and strengthening community by introducing them to practices and options that empower them to make healthy life choices. By exposing them to habits such as healthier food options, physical activity, and green practices, we can help ensure a better future for the children we serve and our community.

Engagement, Benchmarking and Recognition

List the members of the team that helped prepare documentation and their role in the school

1. Kiara Fite, Outcomes and Evaluation Specialist
2. Tami Timmer, Executive Director
3. Naeem Slaise, Director of HR and Operations
4. Latrice Dinkins, Enrollment Coordinator
5. Phyllis Robinson, Education Specialist

List any programs you are currently using to benchmark your progress in sustainability

1. ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager
2. Our own recycling tracking system

List any recognition or awards you have received in the last five years related to your efforts in any of the pillars

1. Healthy Way to Grow Center (Gold Level) by the American Heart Association
2. EnVision Center by The US Department of Housing and Urban Development
3. Breast Feeding Friendly Worksite Award (Gold Level) by Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
4. Breast Feeding Friendly Child Care Award by Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
5. Taking Steps to Healthy Success (The National Early Care and Education Learning Collaboratives Project)

Pillar I: Sustainability - Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs

Energy and Greenhouse Gases

- Flance has been tracking our energy consumption through Energy Star Portfolio Manager. We track gas and electricity usage, but we are looking into tracking other sources of energy. Energy Star does not yet offer scores for daycare/preschools due to minimal data collected nationally for these property types which is needed to compare energy usage across buildings and establish meaningful scores, so we do not currently have an Energy Star Score. However, we will continue to utilize Energy Star Portfolio Manager as a tool for benchmarking and tracking our progress. Based on the data from the beginning of 2019 to the end of 2020, we have reduced our Source EUI by 36.3%, our Site EUI by 33.2% and our Total GHG Emissions Intensity by 37.2%. Moving forward we will continue to be cognizant and proactive in reducing excessive energy consumption.

- Our building was built with LEED certification in mind. The goal was to bring the outdoors in while also being able to easily access the outdoors from inside. We utilize daylighting in 90% of our spaces to reduce the need for having the lights on and flexible lighting control solutions in classrooms to minimize the need for all lights to be on depending on the needs of room.
- 50% of our building has individual comfort controls that allow individuals to set their temperature preferences within a given range. Having individual controls allow us to increase overall satisfaction and energy savings.
- At least 75% of our roof surface comprises of reflective materials, which reduces the heat that is absorbed from the sun which reduces our energy bills.
- Flance has an automated HVAC Control System that is accessible through computer. We can remotely change the temperature, lighting, and other systems if we are not present in the building. This is helpful in energy efficiency and maintenance costs.
- There is limited use of external lighting on our campus due to operation hours. We do not have light poles around the building or on our parking lot to reduce light pollution.

Water and Grounds

- Our campus landscape speaks for itself. 42.34% of our grounds are made up of open space. 64.5% of our open space is vegetated with regionally appropriate or water-efficient plants. These include, but are not limited to azaleas, American beech trees, yarrows, river birches, swamp milkweed, asters, irises, and several rainwater plants. They are mostly concentrated by the front of our building and in between our playgrounds in the back, though are also included in several bioswales that assist with water retention and control water runoff.
- Rainwater collected from our roof is captured in two eight-foot covered cisterns, which is then used to water and irrigate the garden and bioswales.
- We are a strictly smoke-free campus. We want to ensure the health of our families and promote healthy behaviors by preventing smoking. To enforce this, we have signage in the front of our building and policies that prohibit smoking within 25 feet of the building.
- We are planning on installing a French drain by our community garden to better irrigate the area. This will help our garden become more accessible during wet days.
- Flance is establishing a hydroponic garden with engineering students with Engineers Without Borders at Washington University to develop year-round gardening as well as botanic education and sustainability.

Waste

- Currently we are actively reducing our waste. Last year, we installed three compost bins, which are used to repurpose food waste and we have over 30 recycling bins placed in classrooms, offices, and public spaces. Before distributing recycling bins into every space within Flance, only 26% of our spaces had a recycling bin. Now 100% of our spaces have a recycling bin. To further our waste reduction, we have started a recycling tracking program to see how much we are able to recycle. Our custodial staff as well as our chef were informed on how they can easily track recycling when they dispose the recyclable materials in the recycling

collection. Ultimately, we are creating a center-wide habit of recycling and waste diversion.

- We have replaced 50% of the garbage bins in our classrooms with recycling bins to reduce the number of items thrown in the trash. We are encouraging all staff to recycle items that can be recycled.
- We have an easily accessible and designated area for the collection and storage materials for single-stream recycling.
- We started a Green Team that strives to make Flance a greener place through education and awareness. One of their biggest efforts is to reduce our waste, which relies on the active participation of everyone in the center.

Transportation

- We are strategically located in the middle of a neighborhood. 50% of our families live around our area in our urban zip code, 63106, and our proximity encourages families to walk to Flance daily. Flance is also located right off the bus route, which is also frequented by our families and our staff members.
- Flance provides preferred parking for low-emitting and fuel-efficient vehicles, which makes up for 5% of the total vehicle parking capacity.
- Flance is conveniently located close to downtown for working parents and family members to reduce their commute time.

Purchasing

- We do not purchase Styrofoam and are finding more ways to make our purchasing habits more environmentally friendly. Moving forward we are working on purchasing more Energy Star efficient appliances for the building such as our new printers for teachers.
- In alignment with CDC recommendations for the pandemic we have purchased more disposable products, but we do plan to use our reusable plate ware and utensils once it is safe to do so. Previously we washed plates and utensils yet now are having to purchase large amounts of disposable products for safety precautions as prescribed by health recommendations.
- We are starting up reusable plate and utensil usage as we move forward from the pandemic. Flance wants to reduce our waste and utilizing reusable products will drastically cut it down.

Pillar II: Health - Improve the Health and Wellness of Students and Staff

Environmental Health

- Our custodial staff conducts a thorough cleaning of taps, faucets, and drinking fountains throughout the day and an even deeper clean is done once we are closed for the day. We have hired a “porter” position designated to maintain the cleanliness of the building during operating hours.

- We conduct monthly inspections with a pest control agency of both our interior and exterior spaces. Additionally, we conduct annual bird inspections to help address unwanted nesting.
- We have the appropriate roof slope and drainage, door sweeps, annual HVAC inspections, and conduct ongoing maintenance to mitigate any future moisture issues.

Food and garden waste are disposed in our composting bins. It reduces our waste that goes into our landfills and helps us save money on fertilizer.

- Flance's Urban Garden consists of 20 raised beds that are intentionally designated to help the garden flourish. Our garden grows fifteen varieties of vegetables, herbs, and fruit. The first two rows are for pollinator plants to attract pollinators to the garden. The third row is for cover crop plants and to focus on soil health and erosion. These include asparagus, cantaloupe, and peppers. The fourth row utilizes the "Three Sisters Gardening" layout which strategically places corn in the middle off the bed and then is surrounded by beans and vegetables.
- Additionally, our mulch is recycled materials from tree removals provided by the regional electric company, Ameren.

Nutrition and Fitness

- Flance implements a holistic approach to education. We pride ourselves on being able to provide nutritious foods for our children, staff, and families. With the help of our partnership with Urban Harvest and our community garden we can harvest and provide nutritious produce. Every day our chef cooks all-natural meals, including organic baby food, which include produce harvested from our community garden. Any additional food harvested and not used to feed our children is distributed to our families at no cost. Our goal is to expose children and their families to fresh fruits and vegetables as most of our families live in food deserts with extremely limited access to affordable fresh food. Physical activity is a part of every day at Flance with daily outdoor activities (weather permitting).
- Every single classroom has direct access to a fresh air space. Flance has three playgrounds, each for specific age groups, and an urban garden. This, along with the required physical activity everyday, encourages our children to stay active.
- We do not accept any outside food for birthdays and school events to ensure that the food that is served to our children is nutritious.
- We are recognized as a gold level Breast-Feeding Friendly Worksite and a Breast-Feeding Friendly Child Care Center by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior services. Flance welcomes anyone, including our families and staff members, to utilize our breastfeeding room that has a natural skylight.
- Every month we hold a nutrition program designed and led by our chef and Education Specialist. The purpose of this program is to educate children about healthy eating habits by showing them how to make their own snacks in a fun way. One of the most popular programs was the Yogurt Building Program where the kids learned how to make math patterns with the toppings for the yogurt.
- During inclement weather, our indoor "Gross Motor Room" is utilized as an indoor playground by the different classrooms. Flance is committed to providing daily physical activities for our children, rain or shine.
- We are GOLD certified as a Healthy Way to Grow Center by the American Heart Association for our efforts to combat obesity through health programming that focuses on nutrition and physical activity.

Coordinated School Health Program

- Flance is named in honor of I. Jerome Flance, M.D., and his wife Rosemary. Dr. Flance made legendary contributions to the St. Louis community as a practitioner in private and public health care. His contributions included opening a free medical clinic in the Jeff-Vander-Lou neighborhood of St. Louis and working in community health care as the Washington University Medical Center's representative for the redevelopment of the Forest Park Southeast Community. He was passionate about giving all children the best possible start in life, regardless of their families' socioeconomic circumstances. Prior to his passing in 2010, he helped develop the concept of a center that would address the healthy development of children in a comprehensive way. Flance honors the memory and legacy of Dr. Jerome and Rosemary Flance. Our namesake is an embodiment of what Flance has stood for from the very beginning, which is putting health equity as our priority.
- Our partnership with the American Heart Association supports our policies that model and promote healthy life habits. We provide nutrition lessons for our children through fun, hands-on activities. These have included taste tests, gardening lessons, and cooking activities.
- Additionally, meals for our children and staff include a variety of fruits and vegetables, which some have been harvested from our community garden. We also have increased our emphasis on physical activities that are incorporated into the daily lesson plan and reduced screen time. As a result, in November 2020 we were named the *only* GOLD Certified Healthy Way to Grow Center in the US by the American Heart Association.
- Flance provides health services in partnership with Affinia Health Care. Through our on-site clinic we provide health screenings, immunizations, free flu shots, well child visits, growth assessments, and lead and hemoglobin tests for our children and families with the help of a nurse practitioner.
- Our partnership with Delta Vision provides annual hearing and vision screening for our students.
- We hold a biannual dental screening and checkup for our children at no charge with the help of local dental services.
- All children are required to be outside for an hour a day (weather permitting). During inclement weather, we have our Gross Motor Room where children can get in their physical activity while being indoors. Regardless, we have an emphasis on physical activities and physical health in our lesson plans so we can promote the importance of staying physically healthy.

Pillar III: Learning - Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

Curriculum and Assessment

- Flance's partnership with Urban Harvest allows for an on-going educational curriculum which incorporates nutrition, gardening, and health education. One of the biggest contributions from Urban Harvest is in the upkeep of the community garden and educating our children in a variety of engaging ways. Some of the activities includes scavenger hunts, plant identification, harvesting, planting, tastings, and learning about fresh food and basic nutrition. This all encourages our children to be more curious about the environment around them while learning about healthy food options.
- Our commercial kitchen is set up to not only prepare food for us, but also to be used as a teaching tool. We have a Display Kitchen where our chef conducts cooking demonstrations for our families. This is another way

we inspire healthy eating, by showing different variations of healthy food that families can make on their own. In 2019, six cooking classes were held for children and families with produce from our garden. Due to COVID, this program was suspended in 2020 yet will be reimplemented when it is safe to do so.

- Flance's monthly nutrition program educates our children about healthy eating habits by engaging them in the process of making healthy snacks. Not only do they learn by observing, but they also learn how to do it themselves and enjoy a healthy treat at the end of it.
- A new addition to Flance is the creation of the Green Team, which includes administrative and teaching staff. The goal of the Green Team to make Flance a greener place through education and awareness.
- They are working first to educate our staff on the importance of starting green habits like recycling so there can be a collective effort at Flance to be greener. Once that is completed, the Green Team is planning to create fun and engaging ways to teach our children about recycling.
- Flance is applying for a mobile kitchen grant to maximize our emphasis on nutrition. We plan to acquire a mobile food prep cart that can be used for our monthly nutrition program so our chef can easily teach the children. This cart will also be useful for providing healthy food in outdoor events, to families when they are picking up their children, and other future programs we develop.

Professional Development

- Flance education staff receives professional development on nutrition and physical activity at least twice a year. This allows for our staff to model and promote healthy life habits to our children and our families. Our Enrollment Coordinator trains all staff that serves food in accordance to Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. These training cover nutritious food, child nutrition, meal pattern requirements, fostering healthy eating habits, infant feeding and other specifications that allow our staff to be well-informed about nutrition.
- Our teaching staff is required to be CPR certified as a preventative measure.
- We are actively looking into more ways we can help our staff think and act greener. With the help of our Green Team, our staff will gradually learn the best practices they can do at Flance and at home and pass that knowledge on to our children and families.

Outdoor Learning Experiences

- Flance understands that children need to connect with nature and engage in outdoor play. Our community garden exposes children to a wide variety of fresh fruit and vegetables on our campus. With the help of Urban Harvest and other generous donations, we created an urban garden with 20 raised beds as a part of our nutrition and outdoor learning experience. This garden is used as a teaching tool to show fun ways our children can learn outside of the classroom. The children learn by the different lessons outside and by assisting us maintain the garden through taste testing, weeding, watering, and picking fruits and vegetables. In 2020, with the help of our children we harvested 200 pounds of produce!
- Flance has three Adventure Playgrounds that children have access to daily. These playgrounds have and continue to provide a wonderful opportunity for our children to increase their outdoor exercise time, curiosity, and exploration. Open-ended outdoor play promotes all areas of development, especially self-control, which is essential for academic learning. Our playgrounds provide children access to fresh air and space to let their

imagination run wild in a unique urban setting.

- There are also several informational boards between the playgrounds that show both graphic and textual information about the importance of outdoor experiential learning. That serves as a reminder to why we emphasize the need for teaching our kids outside of the classroom as well.
- Our playgrounds are always accessible to our community when Flance is not in session. Everyone is encouraged to exercise and have fun on our playground and explore the community garden.
- We are currently researching into more opportunities and ways we can bring our education outside. One of the potential opportunities we're looking into is building an outdoor classroom with a Cob building, which uses earthen plaster, wood and stones to create hand shaped structures. This would allow us to maximize our potential for teaching outdoors, while placing the children in an infrastructure that is sustainable.

Community Engagement

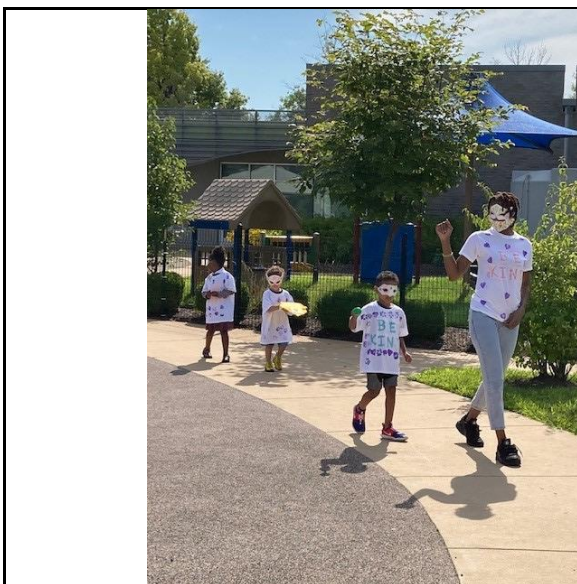
- At Flance we are intentional with how we engage with our community. Our building is shaped as a hug to symbolize how we are here to support an economically depressed area (63106 zipcode), which is made up of low-income families, a senior center, public schools and public housing. Low-income community members can apply through our partner, Youth in Need, to receive fully subsidized tuition that covers all costs of attendance (including meals) through their Head Start or Early Head Start program. This program is available for all families living in STL City or County, but priority is given to families who meet specific income guidelines, and who are working, attending school, receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or are in job training program. Homeless children and foster children are automatically eligible for this program. About 80% of our students are enrolled in this subsidized program to pay for their tuition. Another program we partner with is the Missouri Department of Social Services (DSS) who also offer tuition subsidies for 8% of our students.
- We support our community by providing or connecting them to resources. Flance's community room was designed to be a resource for community members and groups to use. We encourage community members to take advantage of the room and the events we host to support our community. Events that have been held in the community room include parenting classes, movie nights, resume workshops, and job trainings. Due to COVID we have not been able to fully utilize our community room for community events, but we do plan on hosting more events once it is safe to do so.
- In June 2020, HUD designated Flance one of only 70 EnVision Centers in the United States. EnVision Centers are centralized hubs that provide people with the resources and support needed to excel. As an EnVision center, we were able to start up our Food Box Friday Program in May 2020 and continued for 30 weeks. Through this program we provided 75 – 100 families with 15 – 20 pounds of free fresh produce. In total, we distributed around 60,000 pounds or \$180,000 worth of fresh food. Our target beneficiaries were members of the community, but we always provided several boxes for our families and staff to ensure that they also had the opportunity to have access to nutritious food. In addition to these food boxes, we always shared a few recipes each week that included the food in the boxes so they could prepare a healthy meal. Before Thanksgiving, we distributed 100 free turkeys and Thanksgiving sides in addition to our food boxes. Our program was critical in many ways especially considering the financial burdens that have come from the pandemic, but even more necessary because the area we serve in, the 63106-zip code is a food desert and residents don't have accessible grocery stores. Based on feedback we received after several weeks of the program, we advocated for adjusting the contents to include sweet potatoes, collard greens, and cabbage to better suit the needs of the community. This program was also important because we had community members, especially the seniors in the Senior Center across the street, help distribute the food boxes. Some

responses from our community members included, “this program is fabulous and really helpful during this time”, “this has helped me lose 13 pounds!”, and “this is a blessing. We would not know what to do while waiting on Food Stamps”.

- In the past we hosted a Foster Grandparents program where local retired “grandparents” came in regularly to read and assist classrooms. The program is temporarily halted and will be reinstated once it is safe to do so.
- As a Breast-Feeding Friendly Worksite and a Breast-Feeding Friendly Child Care Center we encourage Fance Families to breastfeed in our building for their convenience and ease.
- In August 2020, we initiated an after-school program that encouraged our younger community members, between the ages of 8 – 14, to be engaged in outdoor activities, specifically with our community garden. We want to extend our education and services to our community members to make them feel involved and that Fance is a resource they can go to.
- In December of 2020, with the help of our Community and Family Liaison and Fance Parents, we held our first annual Drop and Shop. This parent-led initiative gave Fance families the opportunity to donate gently used clothing, toys, and other unused items so that families could come and shop from these “recycled” items at no cost for the holidays. Once Fance families shopped, we opened our shop to community members. We wanted to conduct this gift-exchange during this difficult time to put families at ease and ensure that these unused items could be reused by a family that needs it.
- Fance is hoping to initiate a community art project. In the fall of 2020, we were scouting potential locations for the art project to be placed. Some included the side of the building or around the urban garden. We are looking into working with an artist native to the 63106 zipcode. The goal is to involve Fance Families, community members, and the after-school program members

MEDIA

“Fance at a Glance” video highlights the intentionality of Fance from our design, staff, and curriculum. It also showcases our campus and students. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zc_bdz-uD6k



1. Students from the Tulip Tree classroom lead by Ms. Lorraine marching in our Be Kind March through our outdoor play area and around our community members. They were marching for kindness between each other and to our environment



2. Students from the River Birch classroom are listening to Urban Harvest Educator, Arielle, talk about the life cycle of a pumpkin before they do some hands-on activities with pumpkins.



3. Community members aged 8 – 14 in our Afterschool Program searching for green beans and tomatoes to harvest with Executive Director, Tami Timmer.



4. Students in the Sassafras classroom engaging in their monthly nutrition program led by Education Ms. Phyllis and Chef LeRoy. Students were practicing their math skills with yogurt toppings and enjoying their healthy snack.