



EPEL

Elgin Partnership for Early Learning

ANNUAL REPORT | 2020



WHO WE ARE:

EPEL helps all Elgin/U-46 families with children ages birth through five years old, especially those furthest from opportunity, connect to traditional and non-traditional early education opportunities, intensifying the impact of local efforts to prepare their communities' children for success in school and life.

EPEL uses a "Together We Can" mantra to mobilize partners, funders, policymakers, program providers, and our community to build early learning awareness and unite efforts to improve access, support, and equitable opportunities for families and the youngest learners.

OUR MISSION, OUR VISION:

Elgin Partnership for Early Learning is building a connected community dedicated to helping all young children thrive.

Our children are happy, healthy and ready for kindergarten!

WHAT WE BELIEVE:

EPEL is driven to ensure that all children have access to quality early care and education in Elgin and surrounding communities that will attend School District U-46 Kindergarten in the future. In partnership with our stakeholders, we are committed to promoting policies and practices that intentionally meet the needs of children and families from diverse backgrounds and social identities.



A MESSAGE FROM AMBER:



Ten years ago, President Barack Obama was re-elected, Lyft car-sharing service was launched, ExxonMobil was the largest company, and an early childhood collaboration, Elgin Partnership for Early Learning (EPEL), was established.

In 2011, community leaders gathered around a table for coffee in downtown Elgin to envision what a community would look like where "ALL" children had access to high-quality care, coordinated early childhood services, and support to enter Kindergarten prepared and ready to learn. The idea was that cross-sector partners would work collaboratively to create a community of

support and care with an outcome of thriving children and families. EPEL was formed as a collective impact organization to support our youngest children and their caregivers while working together as a community to address the opportunity and achievement gap as children enter Kindergarten.

EPEL's vision, "All children happy, healthy, and ready to learn," can not be achieved alone. As you see, after ten years, we have re-imagined our logo from fitting puzzle pieces (partners and services) together to overlapping circles with a child and caregiver in the center to represent building a connected community dedicated to helping young children thrive. EPEL's new logo reflects the partners overlapping support and services (Early Learning and Leadership, Health, and Family Leadership and Support) while always keeping children and family at the center of our discussions and goals. The person in the middle of the logo might be a parent, grandparent, educator, caregiver, neighbor, or community member supporting the journey from birth to Kindergarten for the child they are embracing.

I hope you will take a minute to reflect on our community's future, the children that are our future workforce, and where you or your organization fit into the circles of care in the first 2,000 days of a child's life. Join the movement and invest in the future.

Together We Can build a strong foundation and brighter future for our youngest learners.

Amber Peters
Executive Director, Elgin Partnership for Early Learning

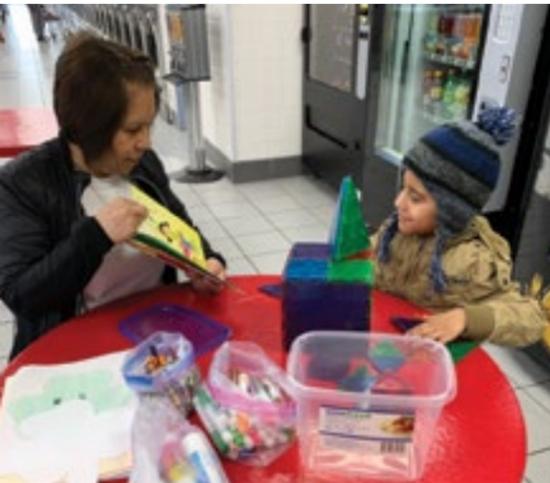


CONNECTING AND MOBILIZING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

EPEL and our partners have a plan to create a coordinated, high-quality early childhood system that will narrow the achievement gap for children entering Kindergarten.

Using a collective impact model, EPEL examines and works to build connected local systems with partners to create ways to impact capacity, to provide resources, early childhood initiatives, information, and support for families and providers of children under five years of age.

- With the City of Elgin and Alignment Collaborative for Education, early learning signs were installed in local parks to build Kindergarten readiness skills.
- With YWCA Elgin and Gail Borden Public Library, books and story time were added to 3 laundromats to promote early learning anywhere and everywhere.
- With mobile food pantries, books and resources were distributed to families while they waited.
- With partners, special topics were discussed at collaboration meetings.
- With many businesses, *While You Wait Book Baskets* were installed throughout the community so families could read while they waited.
- With School District U-46 a common message (**Talk, Play, Read, Do, & Write**) was adopted so that all children starting at birth will build a strong foundation for learning during the critical first 2,000 days of early brain development.



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

- 844-KID-INFO: Toll-free phone line to connect families to support, resources and enroll in early learning programs
- Website of resources for families, educators and stakeholders
- Engage families to meet basic needs and expand early learning experiences, e.g. diapers, literacy bags

HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT

- Provide developmental “check up” screenings including social-emotional throughout the community, such as food pantries, laundromats, EPEL website, etc...
- Connect healthcare partners to early childhood community resources to *Meet Families Where They Are*
- Sponsor *Learning on the Go* Summer programs and neighborhood pop-ups to connect families and children with resources to develop Kindergarten readiness skills

EARLY LEARNING

- Distribute *Getting Ready for Kindergarten* calendars in Spanish and English
- Increase the number of young children receiving services
- Partner with early childhood programs to support training and technical assistance of early childhood professionals that will increase the quality of early experiences provided
- Provide quarterly child care director and family care provider network meetings to connect, share information, and work together on solutions



“He is ready for kindergarten. He is happy doing all activities. Every day he asks me what we do.” -Margarita, YWCA Elgin ESL Mom

DID YOU KNOW?

EPEL supports children's growth and development in many ways.

Children who experience high-quality early learning and care programs are



more likely to graduate high school

ONLY 15%

of kindergartners in Elgin met readiness benchmarks



High quality birth-to-five programs for disadvantaged children can deliver a

13%

return on investment

There are only
2,000 DAYS
from birth to kindergarten

ONLY 1 OF 3
children of Elgin have access to preschool

85 - 90%
of brain growth occurs in the first 3 years of life

18,744 children
from birth to age 5 live in U-46 communities BUT
only 22%
of those have access to childcare

EPEL TAKES ACTION!

“With EPEL providing books, early learning information and other resources simultaneously as the food bank provides food, we are helping our neighbors together. - Northern Illinois Food Bank”

3,294
children served in neighborhood outreach



Awarded Organization of the Year 2020,
Elgin Hispanic Network

Designs & Delivers 11,000
Getting Ready for Kindergarten calendars annually

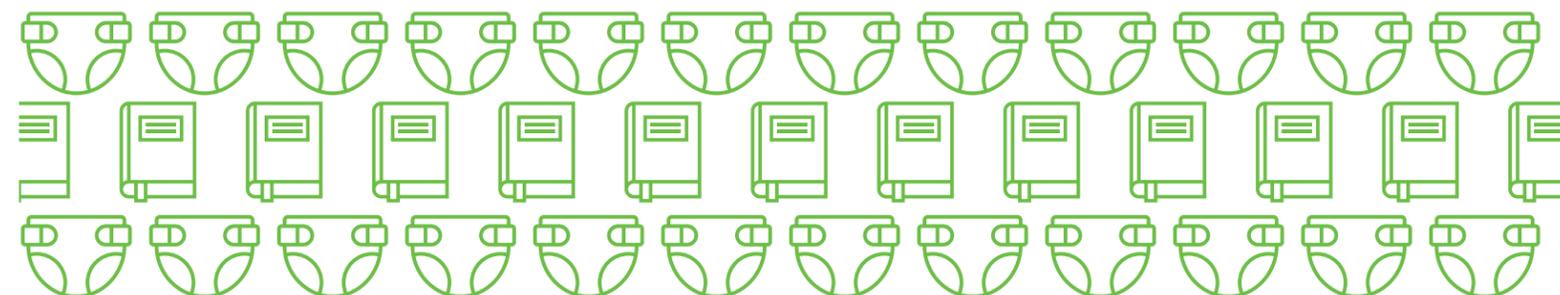
Connected 1,088 Families
with food pantries

Trained 175
Directors and in-home child care providers

Built 80 Partnerships

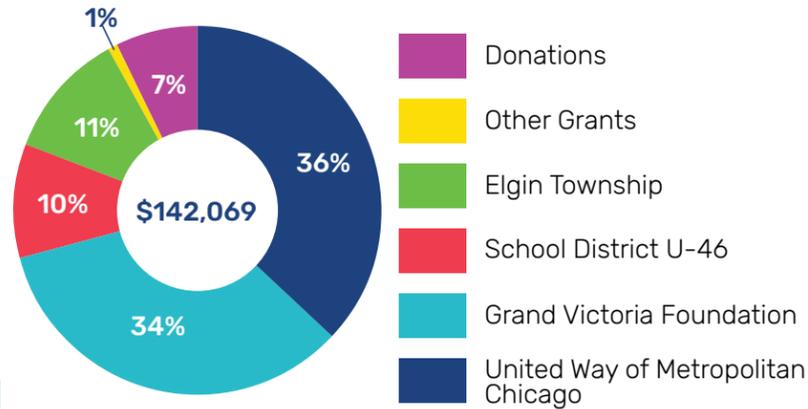
22,000
bilingual books given to children birth to eight

63,000 DIAPERS AND LITERACY MATERIALS DELIVERED



SCALING UP

You can help change the early childhood system by DONATING to EPEL so we can extend our reach to more children and families. We thank our current funders and welcome future donors!



STEPPING IN

There are many ways **YOU** can support our children in becoming ready for Kindergarten!

Provide Financial Support:

- For operations, space, materials, and printing
- For training of early childhood professionals, technical support, and translation
- For Initiatives like *While You Wait* children's book baskets, *Getting Ready for Kindergarten* calendars, *Language in the Laundromat* and *Learning on the Go* neighborhood outreach

Become a Member of the EPEL Team:

- Family Engagement
- Community Initiatives
- Communication Committee
- Data Committee

Volunteer for *Learning on the Go* Initiatives:

- Summer Neighborhood Outreach
- Laundromats
- Community Book Baskets
- Bookmobile Pop-Ups

Share Your Skills and Talents:

- Mentor Potential Early Educators
- Become a Neighborhood Ambassador
- Design Materials

TELL YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS!

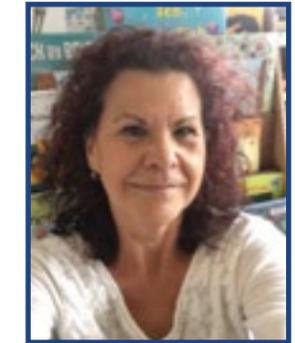
MEET OUR BOARD MEMBERS



Amber Peters
Executive Director,
Elgin Partnership for
Early Learning



Karina Nava
Executive Board
Co-Chair, City of Elgin



Kris Young
Executive Board
Co-Chair, YWCA Elgin



Fran Teti-Teal
Advocate Aurora
Health



Patricia Chamberlain
Chamberlain
Education Consulting



Rodrigo Lopez
Elgin Community
College



Jennifer Bueche
Gail Borden Public
Library



Michael Issacson
Kane County Health
Department



Dr. Jennifer Schening
Owner, Next
Generation Pediatrics



Katie Cox
School District U-46



Irma Figueroa
VNA Health Care

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

Elgin Partnership is supported by partners in Illinois who are committed to preparing the children of our community to be successful in school and in life.

Advocate Sherman Hospital,
Board Member Fran Teti-Teal*

Alignment Collaborative for Education

Altrusa of Elgin

Amita Health St. Joseph Hospital

Aunt Martha's Health Network Home Visiting

Bartlett Park District Preschool

Bartlett Public Library

Bethlehem Child Development Center

Blue Kangaroo Laundry

Boys and Girls Club of Elgin

Building Families Together

Centre of Elgin Preschool

Centro de Información

Chamberlain Educational Associates,
Board Member Patricia Chamberlain*

Children of America Child Care

City of Elgin, Board Member Karina Nava*

Community Organizing and Family Issues (COFI)

Community Crisis Center

Corbella Clinic

DayOnePACT

DCFS

Easterseals DuPage & Fox Valley

Elgin Academy

Elgin Area Chamber of Commerce

Elgin Community College,
Board Member Rodrigo Lopez*

Elgin Community College Early Childhood Lab School

Elgin Hispanic Network

Elgin Police Department

Elgin Township Funder*

Erikson Institute

Family Focus Healthy Families

Food For Greater Elgin

Gail Borden Public Library,
Board Member Jennifer Bueche*

Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois

Goddard School

Grand Victoria Foundation Funder*

Greater Elgin Family Care Center

Hamilton Wings

Harvest Christian Academy

Highland Christian Academy Preschool

iGrow Illinois

Illinois Action for Children

Illinois Department of Human Services

Illinois Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development

Ivy Academy

Jerri Hoffman Child and Family

JetXpress Laundry

Kane County AOK Network

Kane County Health Department,
Board Member Michael Issacson*

Kane County Regional Office of Education

Kids Above All (ChildServ)

Kids First Pediatric Dentistry Elgin and Skokie

KinderCare Bowes Road South Elgin

KinderCare Brewster Bartlett

KinderCare Main Lane

KinderCare South Street

KinderCare Spring Street

Kiwanis Club of Elgin

Law Office of Steffen & Kelly, P.C.

Learning Tree East

Learning Tree West

Little Royals Preschool at Larkin High School

Next Generation Pediatrics,
Board Member Dr. Jennifer Schening*

Northern Illinois Food Bank

One Hope United & Family Resource Center

Poplar Creek Public Library Streamwood

SCARCE

School District U-46,
Funder and Board Member**

South Elgin Parks and Rec

South Elgin Preschool Pals

Streamwood Parks and Rec

Streamwood Park District Preschool

Summit Early Learning

The Learning Experience

The Ivy Academy

Two Rivers Head Start

U-46 Parents as Teacher

United Way Metro Chicago Funder*

VNA Health Care, Board Member Irma Figueroa*

VNA Healthy Families

Well Child Center

Women on the Brink

YMCA Taylor Branch

YWCA Elgin, Board Member Co-Chair Kris Young*

YWCA Metropolitan Chicago

* Funder

** Board Member



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