





Shawn Gerth  
Executive Director

### MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The events of the past year—the pandemic, wildfires, political division, and a national reckoning for racial justice—have been inflection points that underscored the urgent need to bring increased resources and support to the children and families of East San José.

We know that for children to flourish, their families and communities must thrive. A rich brocade of diverse and committed partners came together at Educare, creating a community hub for resources of all kinds, including free high-quality early childhood education, vaccinations, formula, home learning kits, fresh produce and much more.

We offered virtual and in-person learning for our students, which came with significant challenges. Teachers rose to the occasion, engaging the children with projects that could be easily adapted to available resources. Our staff then navigated the complexities of reopening safely, providing a model for others to follow.

We are excited to announce we opened our first TK classroom at Educare, in conjunction with founding partner Franklin

McKinley School District (FMSD). This year, our TK students are learning onsite, and we are expanding our early learning alignment with FMSD. The quality we provide for TK students and families can be a model for the state as universal TK is rolled out.

This year, more than ever, the children and families we serve needed our partnership and adaptability. Thanks to our supporters, we were able to be agile and responsive to best meet families' needs, including hybrid learning, emotional support, online family classes, essential resources, and safe community events, like drive-through pizza nights.

Thank you for your partnership in helping families thrive!

In solidarity,

Shawn Gerth  
Executive Director

*Photo disclaimer: All state and county health guidelines continue to be followed at ECSV, including face masks and social distancing. Some photos included may be from prior to the pandemic.*



## MISSION

Close the opportunity gap for children birth to age 5 by offering high-quality early childhood education and support services.

## VISION

Ensure every child has the best start to life.

### IMPACT NUMBERS

Classrooms	115
Family Workshops	224
Professional Development	119
Community Events	2,294
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>2,633</b>



## The Importance of Early Learning

Educare was founded on the tenet that your zip code should not determine your destiny or limit your potential.

The science is clear – the first five years have a lasting impact on life outcomes. In fact, 90% of a child’s brain develops within the first five years of life. Children’s brains are wired to learn as much as they can. Educare is designed to support optimal cognitive, physical and social-emotional development.

Structural and overt racism, combined with poverty, conspire to place challenges in front of our children and families and undermine equity in our communities. These factors mean that some children, through no fault of their own, are likely to enter kindergarten behind their peers, with lasting effects.

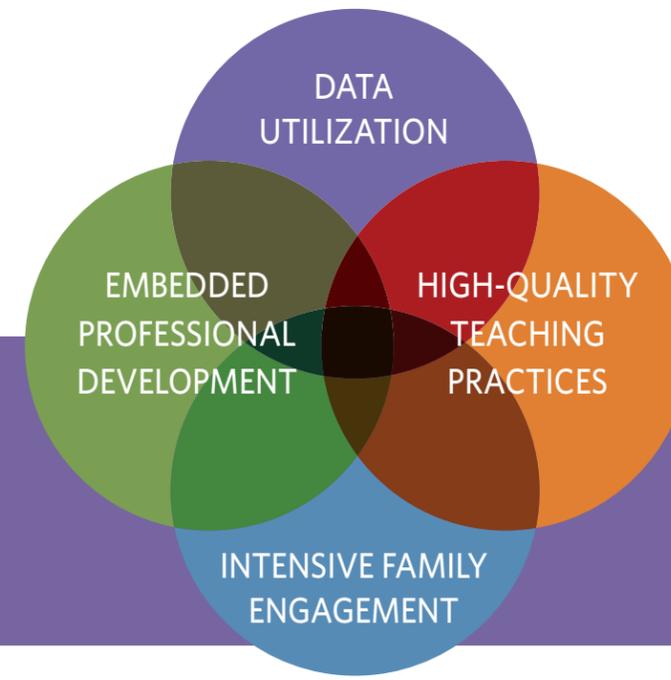
Strong language abilities, social-emotional skills and parent-child relationships at an early age are all predictive of a child’s future success in school and life.

In fact, a recent research [study](#) following the long-term impacts of high-quality preschool found that educational and behavioral outcomes improved, including reduced instances of suspensions and incarceration, and increased SAT test taking and scores, high school graduation, on-time college enrollment, four-year college attendance, and estimates of college graduation.

Educare exists to transform the life outcomes of the children and families we serve.

**WITHOUT A HIGH-QUALITY EARLY EDUCATION, AT-RISK CHILDREN ARE**

- 25%** MORE LIKELY TO **DROP OUT** OF SCHOOL
- 40%** MORE LIKELY TO BECOME A **TEEN PARENT**
- 50%** MORE LIKELY TO BE PLACED IN **SPECIAL EDUCATION**
- 60%** MORE LIKELY TO **NEVER ATTEND COLLEGE**
- 70%** MORE LIKELY TO BE **ARRESTED FOR A VIOLENT CRIME**



As part of a national network of 25 Educare Schools, ECSV ensures children have the best start to life.

## The Educare Difference

Based on current research in early childhood education, social work and related fields, Educare has four pillars to support children, birth to age 5, in becoming academically, socially and emotionally prepared for kindergarten: High-Quality Teaching Practices, Intensive Family Engagement, Embedded Professional Development, and Data Utilization.

These core features, together with the Reggio Emilia-inspired approach, work in concert to drive positive outcomes for children and families, focusing on preventing the persistent achievement gap for low-income children from taking root in the early years of a child’s life.

Rigorous research shows that Educare’s pillars work:

- Students, including multilingual children, outperform their low-income peers on vocabulary assessments.
- Children who enter Educare at younger ages have higher levels of vocabulary skills at kindergarten entry than children who start Educare later.
- Dual-language learners benefit even more from earlier entry and longer involvement in Educare, demonstrating stronger gains in English language ability.
- More time in Educare is associated with higher ratings of social-emotional skills, including teacher-rated self-control and initiative, among most children.

### What is the Reggio Emilia-Inspired Approach?

ECSV is inspired by the Reggio Emilia philosophy of education that originated in Northern Italy. This educational philosophy is an innovative approach, which values the child as strong, capable and resilient, rich with wonder and knowledge.

Grounded in the belief that children have the right to the opportunities to reach their potential, the approach has self-directed learning and exploration at its core. While using this philosophy for inspiration, ECSV creates our approach to fit the children and families we serve.



## The Home-School Connection

We recognize parents as their children’s first teachers, partnering with them to support their children’s early learning and wellbeing. This challenging year was no exception. With the changing circumstances and guidelines during the pandemic, we provided online and in-person learning for our students. Focused on learning continuity and student and family wellness, our teachers brought their creativity and passion during a stressful time.

One of the many challenges of the pandemic was the risk of lost learning during such a vital stage of development, particularly the interpersonal skills that come from children playing together, sharing, and talking. Teachers and family engagement specialists coached parents with strategies to support their children’s development at home. From yoga to themed days to show-and-tell, teachers centered lesson time on engaging students and families through a variety of activities.

### The Why

With parents often working multiple jobs or attending school and the demands of financial security, children experiencing poverty show gaps in their early vocabulary development. These early differences have lasting effects on a child’s academic success later in life. We provide support to families to build on the vocabulary development they receive in our classrooms.



45% of ECSV families indicate that their households are food insecure.

## Growing Minds

The gardens are flourishing at Educare this year. We:

- installed 14 raised garden beds in our larger garden area and a new sustainable garden,
- installed 16 garden beds in the “backyards” of the classrooms, and
- partnered with Valley Verde to provide family gardening workshops and install home gardens for 20 families.

Children learned how to grow organic vegetables, fruits, flowers and succulents, experiencing hands-on STEAM lessons, mindfulness, and self-directed nature exploration. Not only do the vegetable gardens offer an amazing educational opportunity, but they also allow families to receive fresh, culturally-relevant, organic vegetables.



### The Why

Outdoor learning opportunities offer many benefits to children, including stress reduction, stimulation of scientific observation and language development, motivating children to become stewards of our land, encouragement of responsibilities and social skills. With 45% of ECSV families indicating that their households are food insecure, the gardens provide essential fresh produce for our families.





## Supporting Multilingual Learners

86% of ECSV students are multilingual learners. By creating the structures to support best practices in a variety of early learning settings, ECSV is serving as a model program to improve outcomes for multilingual learners.

Important components include:

**Family Engagement** - Parents are the most important partners we have. They make important contributions to the cultural and linguistic richness of our classrooms and provide daily support necessary for home language growth and development.

**Environmental Supports** - This includes all the ways that our environments promote an atmosphere of inclusiveness and support learning in all languages, such as learning materials, classroom organization, representation throughout the classroom, and the daily schedule.

**Instructional Supports** - Teachers use a variety of strategies to promote oral language abilities and social-emotional development, such as songs, chants, gestures, and experiential learning.

We hosted a five-part series focused on supporting young multilingual learners and their families to 90 participants, led by Dr. Carola Oliva-Olsen, with professional translation in Spanish and Vietnamese.

### The Why

While California has adopted educational policies aligned with current research on the benefits of early bilingualism, many multilingual learners still experience achievement gaps.

Research confirms that learning more than one language in the early years carries significant academic, social and cognitive advantages. **With 1.4 million multilingual learners in California alone**, early childhood educators need to adopt new strategies to help them realize their potential.



## The Art in Learning

In the early years, as verbal and written language skills are developing, art is one way children express themselves, explore the world around them, and develop their abilities. Whether it is painting, making, or drawing, art is a regular part of children’s day at Educare. One class explored using dirt as a medium on paper, while another used clay. Children learned about the ocean through painting and making their own aquariums. They express their feelings, ideas, interests and stories through art, including self drawings and portrayals of their family and life.

In addition to partnering with ECSV for our satellite children’s museum, the Children’s Discovery Museum did a virtual art workshop with students around a Pete the Cat book. Students received the book and art supplies to do the project at home.



### The Why

Art is an integral part of Educare’s Reggio-inspired approach, founded on the belief that children use 100 languages to express themselves. As language skills develop, art is one of their 100 languages. Art, in its many forms, also supports motor skill development, problem solving, and teamwork.



### FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER ACTIVITIES

#### FAMILY CLASSES

- 24/7 Dad
- Baby & Me
- Music & Movement
- Nutrition Classes
- Parent Cafe
- Positive Parenting Program
- Weekly Storytime
- Yoga
- Zumbini

#### RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION

- 51 Chromebooks
- 852 Diapers Kits
- 80 Easter Baskets
- 959 Baby Formula Cans
- 75 Fresh Produce Boxes
- 8,225 Prepared Family Meals
- 200 Essential Kits
- 900 Smoke Detectors
- 13,740 Weekly Household Groceries

#### COMMUNITY EVENTS

- 3 Virtual Pop-up Parks
- Census 2020 Kiosk
- COVID Vaccination & Testing Clinics
- Drive Through Events
  - Pizza Night
  - Trick or Treat
  - Holiday Car Parade
- Lunar New Year Event
- Flu Shot Clinic
- Spring Event



Hector Santiago

## Fabric of the Community

Recognizing that children’s wellbeing is inextricably connected to their families’ and community’s health, ECSV is designed to be a center for community life. Funded by **FIRST 5 Santa Clara County** and operated by **Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County**, ECSV’s Family Resource Center (FRC) supports the health and wellness of children, parents and caregivers. From parenting and enrichment classes to distributing fresh produce to community events, our FRC partners with families and community organizations to be a hub of education and resources.

### RESOURCE PARTNERS

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Anthem                                   | San José Fire Department               |
| Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County | San José Parks and Recreation          |
| Children’s Discovery Museum              | San José Police Department             |
| City of San José                         | San José Public Library                |
| CVS                                      | Santa Clara County Office of Education |
| FIRST 5 Santa Clara County               | Santee Association                     |
| Franklin-McKinley School District        | Second Harvest of Silicon Valley       |
| Loaves and Fishes                        | Spade & Plow Organic Farms             |
| McLaughlin Area Tenant Association       | Valley Medical Center Foundation       |
| Office of Councilmember Maya Esparza, D7 | Valley Verde                           |
|  | Veggielution                           |

“I just want to thank the whole Educare Family Resource Center team for all the services that they provide to the community and for all the time they spend supporting my family. Since the first day we arrived at the Educare Center, the whole team was welcoming... As a parent, you really appreciate when someone dedicates time to your kids and gives them what they need to succeed.”



## Influencing the Field

Educare Schools across the nation are designed to be models for early learning in their communities. ECSV is no different, serving as an example of high-quality early childhood education and seeking to influence the field to improve outcomes for children and families.

We are proud that our Mentor Coach, Thena Gee, along with Dr. Carola Oliva-Olson, presented virtually on Preparing the Workforce to Serve Dual Language Learners: New Models from Communities in California, as part of the national QRIS 2020 BUILD Initiative Conference.

Embedded professional development is one of the cornerstones of the Educare difference. We continued it with vigor this year while moving it online. We conducted sessions simultaneously in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese, and offered learning opportunities to partner educators and community childcare providers, promoting greater equity, inclusion, and access to high-quality content.

Professional development topics included dual language learning strategies, mindfulness, virtual learning, Reggio Emilia approach, self-care yoga, family engagement, trauma-informed practices, and the impacts of the pandemic, racism, and the Black Lives Matter movement.





"I am proud that ECSV has managed to identify the needs of the children and families we serve and pivot our approach during the pandemic to best support the needs of the community. I am proud of the creative ways ECSV has delivered its services and the impact we make in the growth of the children in the community."



Patricia Villegas  
New Board Member 20-21



## Our Team

### 2020-2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jeff Sunshine, Chair 2021, Secretary 2020  
*The David and Lucile Packard Foundation*

Scott Moore  
*Kidango*

Mary Ann Dewan, Vice Chair  
*Santa Clara County Office of Education*

Jolene Smith  
*FIRST 5 Santa Clara County*

Juan Cruz, Treasurer  
*Franklin-McKinley School District*

Jason Vann  
*Franklin-McKinley School District*

Shannon Hunt-Scott, Secretary 2021, Chair 2020  
*The Scott Foundation*

Patricia Villegas  
*PV Consulting*

Michael Burke  
*The Buffett Early Childhood Fund*

**LEADERSHIP**  
Shawn Gerth  
*Executive Director*

Chris D. Funk  
*East Side Union High School District*

For a full list of staff,  
visit [Our Team](#).

Greg Kepferle  
*Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County*

**PARTNERS**  
To see our current partners,  
visit [Educaresv.org/partners](https://educaresv.org/partners).

Camille Maben  
*First 5 California*

Meera Mani  
*The David and Lucile Packard Foundation*

## Educare Network Public Policy Priorities

- 1 **UNIVERSAL CHILD CARE & EARLY LEARNING**  
Ensure families have access to high-quality, culturally-responsive, equitable early learning and care at no or low cost, in the setting they most prefer, during the time they need care.
- 2 **STABLE & SUPPORTED FAMILIES**  
Ensure young children and their families have adequate finances and resources to access the housing, care, services and supports needed to thrive.
- 3 **THRIVING EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE**  
Ensure early childhood teachers and staff are skilled, well-compensated and supported while promoting young children's learning, health and development.
- 4 **HEALTHY & SUPPORTED CHILDREN**  
Ensure young children have consistent access to the physical and mental health supports and services they need to thrive.
- 5 **STRONG EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS IN EVERY COMMUNITY**  
Ensure families experience continuity of care and responsive services as a result of aligned systems and policies.



**EDUCARE**  
CALIFORNIA AT SILICON VALLEY

1399 Santee Drive, San José, CA 95122

(408) 573-4800

[www.educaresv.org](http://www.educaresv.org)



---

Editor and Copywriter: Paula Harris, [Greater Nonprofits](#)  
Design: Laura Roden, [Graphic Assist](#)