



PRESCHOOL MATTERS!

TESTIMONY GIVEN BEFORE THE STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
APPROPRIATIONS SUB COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
MARCH 2, 2016
DR. NKECHY EKERE EZEH, CEO
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, AQUINAS COLLEGE

W. K. KELLOGG FOUNDATION 2010 – AN EVOLUTIONARY TIME

“At the heart of this evolution is recognition that the families of vulnerable children live in a complex ecosystem in which the conditions creating their vulnerability frequently become self-reinforcing and perpetuating, constituting a kind of “deflationary spiral” from which it becomes nearly impossible for the families to extricate themselves.”

Sterling K. Speirn, WKKF 2010 President and CEO

2010 WKKF Annual Report

W. K. KELLOGG FOUNDATION 2010 – AN EVOLUTIONARY TIME

“As we close out 2010 and begin a new year, I cannot remember a time of greater transformation for philanthropy in general, or for the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in particular. Nor, frankly, can I remember a more exciting period.”

“And in redefining success in terms specific to each community, we are essentially venturing into uncharted territory with every program we undertake.

But given the need for new models, and the primacy of creating systemic, sustainable change in the interests of the most vulnerable among us, the risk seems not only appropriate, but essential.”

Fred P. Keller, WKKF 2010 Chairman of the Board

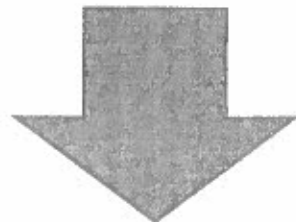
2010 WKKF Annual Report

THE STATE OF GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN 2010



83% of children not ready
for Kindergarten

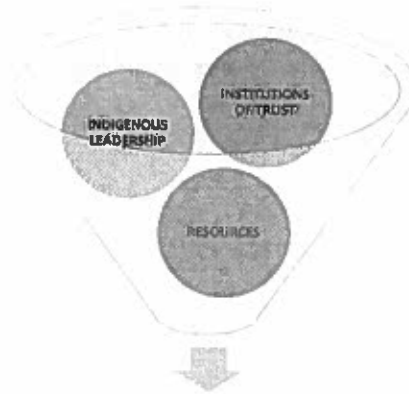
2009 'State of Schools' address by GSRP Superintendent Bernard Taylor



48% students graduate High
School in 4 years

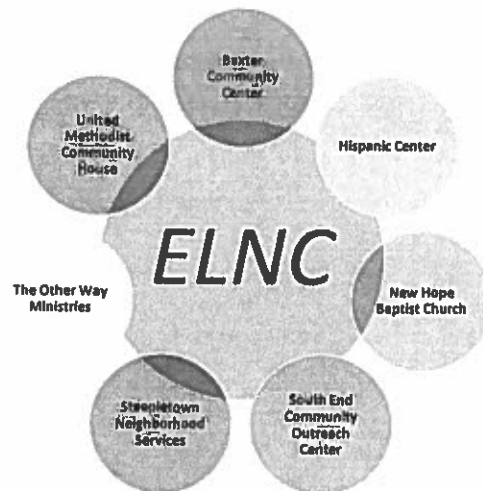
<https://www.mischookidato.org>

CONCENTRATED INTERVENTION STRATEGY



FOCUSED ON CHILDREN NOT READY FOR KINDERGARTEN

A NEW MODEL EARLY LEARNING NEIGHBORHOOD COLLABORATIVE

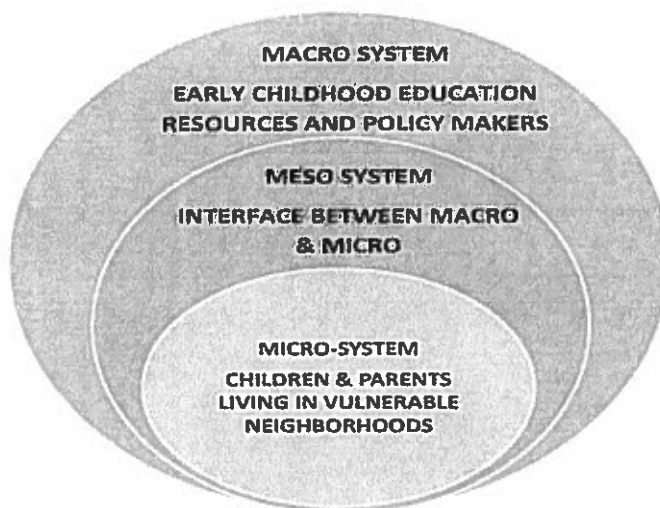


CURRENT REALITY RESEARCH

CURRENT REALITY FOR OVER 5,000 CHILDREN 0-4 LIVING IN THE ELNC TARGET NEIGHBORHOOD

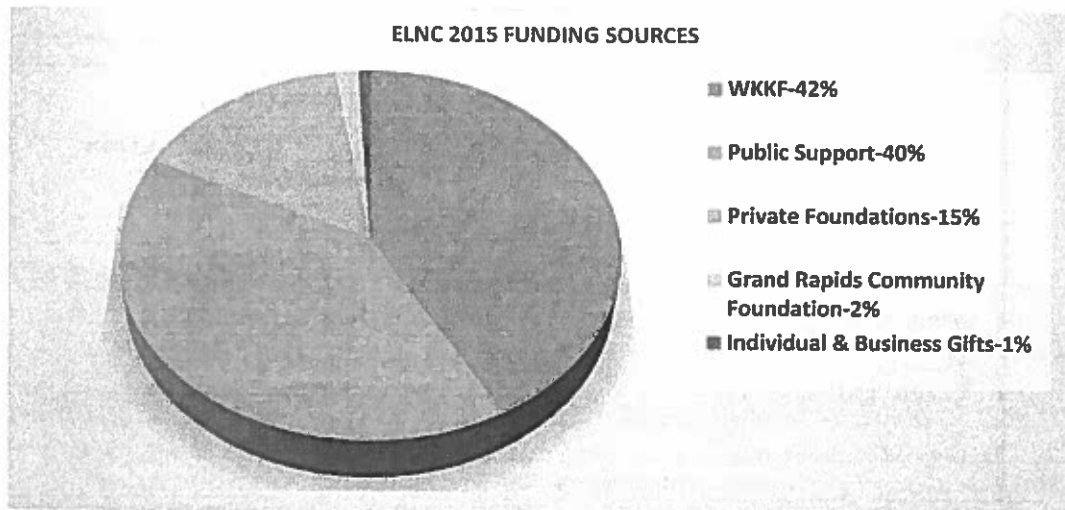
Medicaid Covered Births	66%
Moms without a high school degree	55%
Infants born into poverty	26%
% of children with access to 4yr old preschool- Full Day	18%
% of children with access to 4yr old preschool- Half Day	41%
% of children with NO access to 4yr old preschool	41%

ELNC- A MESO SYSTEM

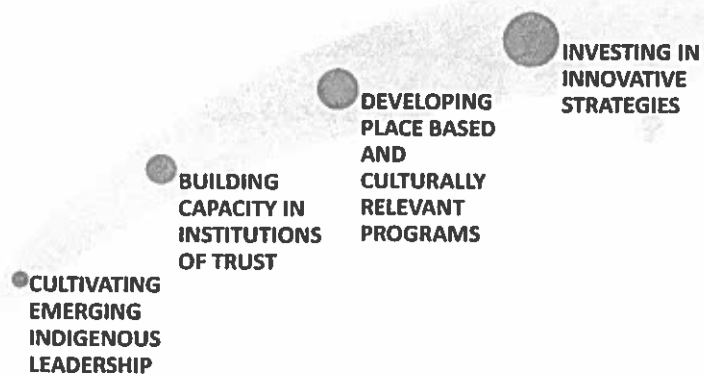


ELNC FUNDING

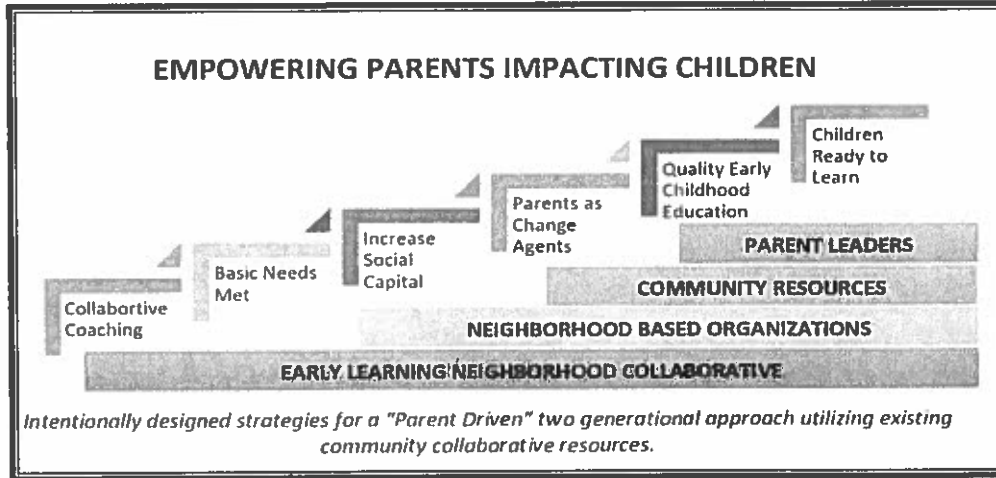
ELNC 2015 FUNDING SOURCES



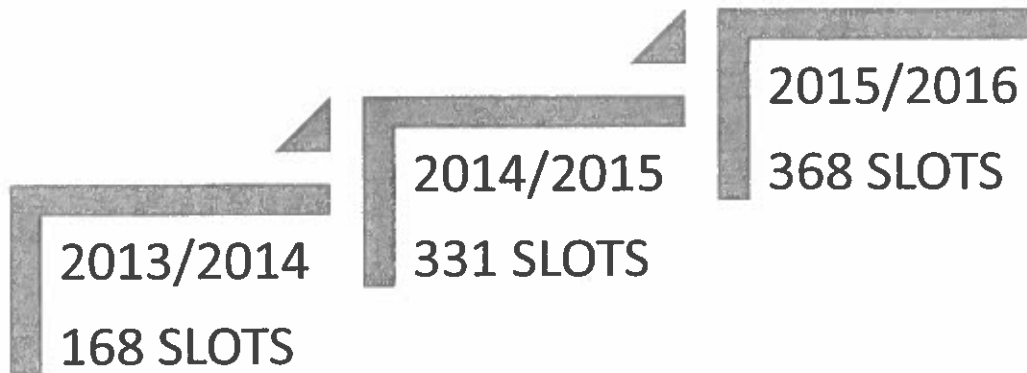
ELNC BOTTOM UP



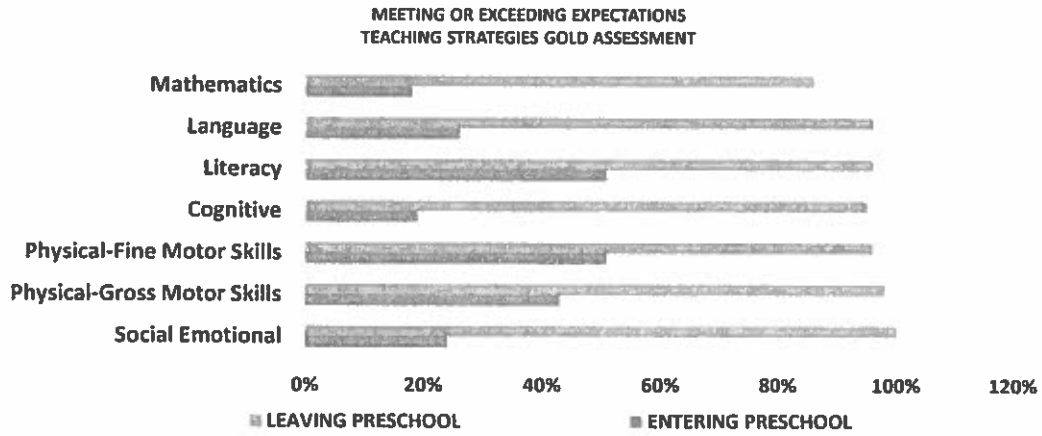
ELNC TWO GENERATIONAL



ELNC GSRP FUNDED 4 YR OLD PRESCHOOL



ELNC RESULTS- 2014/2015 GSRP ALL CHILDREN



SUMMER VACATION

THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP
What Happens to Children
DURING THE SUMMER?

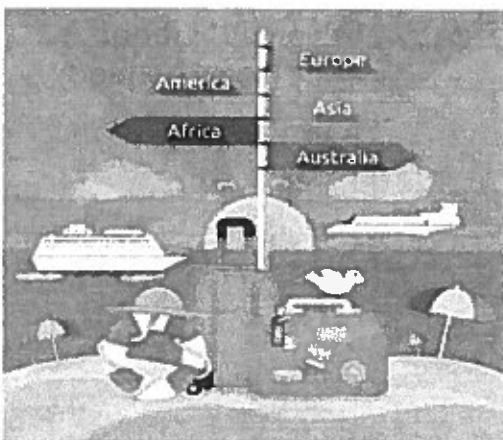


Summer Learning Loss is real!

- The summer learning loss phenomenon is not limited to older school-aged children but in fact, may be most important for children in their early years of schooling. In a particularly poignant study researchers (Downey, von Hippel & Broh, 2004) examined the summer learning in 17,000 kindergarten and first grade children from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study.
- The findings of this research found that even at an early age, school is a significant equalizer between strong and vulnerable learners.

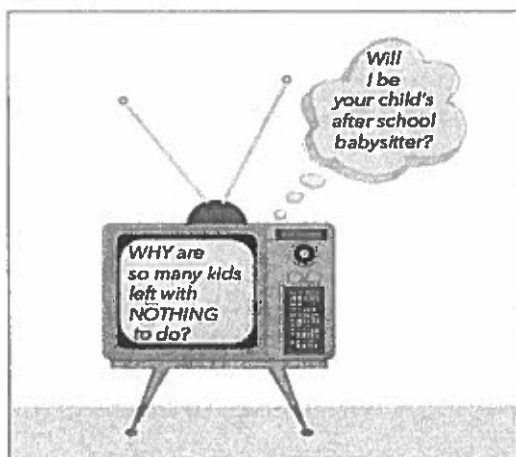
- The researchers concluded that even for children in kindergarten, the achievement gap between strong and vulnerable learners widened significantly when school was not in session during the summer months. In general, research illustrated clearly that the summer learning gap can be particularly problematic for vulnerable children and furthermore, that literacy skills may be the area of achievement that is most affected.
- **Supporting Emergent Readers During the Summer Months: A Cross-Sectional Study of Young At-Risk Readers.** (McNamara, Van Lankveld, Woodham, Bell)

SUMMER VACATION



- Many Americans have a wonderful image of summer as a carefree, happy time when "kids can be kids," and take for granted the prospect of enriching experiences such as summer camps, time with family, and trips to museums, parks, and libraries.

SUMMER VACATION



- Unfortunately, some youth face anything but idyllic summer months.
- When the school doors close, many children struggle to access educational opportunities, as well as basic needs such as healthy meals and adequate adult supervision.

- Based on research and what we know, vulnerable children will benefit from extending GSRP into the summer for students already enrolled in the program
- We also know that preventing Summer Learning Loss is our **ONLY** way of sustaining the current GSRP gains!!

WHY 3 YR OLDS? THE RESEARCH



BY AGE 4, THE AVERAGE LOW-INCOME CHILD FACES SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS AND IS **18 MONTHS BEHIND** MORE AFFLUENT PEERS.

Layzer, J. (in press). *Project Upgrade in Miami-Dade County, Florida*. Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates.

WHY 3 YR OLDS? ELNC FIRST HAND OBSERVATIONS

MEETING OR EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS
TEACHING STRATEGIES GOLD ASSESSMENT- FALL OF 2014

