

East Palo Alto Kids Foundation

Every dollar you give touches a student, a teacher and a family.

SPRING GRANTS:

This Spring, East Palo Alto Kids Foundation awarded 164 grants directly to experienced teachers and 3 new teacher grants. Your generosity means we put \$117,980 dollars directly into classrooms in East Palo Alto and eastern Menlo Park during a critical and difficult school year.



Since 1993, EPAK has been a community based, all-volunteer organization whose mission is to promote educational opportunities by awarding grants to teachers in the classrooms of East Palo Alto and eastern Menlo Park.

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE: Spring Forward Together

As we enter a third pandemic year, the applications for EPAK spring grants confirm teacher optimism and resilience. Our community returned to the classroom this semester against the background of the Omicron surge. Regardless, the schools we support have adopted an inspirational and determined approach to keep schools open, safe, and focused on learning. New York Times personal health columnist Jane Brody talks about the resilience of teachers and students in a recent article. Quoting family therapist Dr. Pauline Boss, "Children are naturally resilient, and they will be stronger for having survived this bad thing that happened to them. They'll bounce back and grow from it."

EPAK is dedicated to helping our community ensure that our students have the resources and skills to learn, grow, and adapt. We have disbursed 167 grants this February, retaining the more flexible funding criteria we adopted at the beginning of the pandemic.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, this round of grants will fund maximum impact projects and classroom needs from essential science equipment, maker space tech tools, to foundational reading and writing books and more. EPAK is proud of its dedicated, highly skilled all-volunteer board that allows over 93% of our donations to go directly to teachers and students. Testimonials from our teachers underscore EPAK's effect. As Belle Haven's Joyce Tabasa writes,

"The occupational therapy room has been a positive, safe, and fun space to help students learn ways to regulate their behavior, emotions, and activity level. With the support and resources from our EPAK grant, our students are finding strategies to help with coping, calming and self-regulating. Thank you for the opportunity to provide our students with an enriching environment where they are able to learn and flourish and reach their greatest potential."

And from Kelsey Barnes, KIPP Valiant Community Prep teacher,

"With my EPAK grant I was able to purchase enough lab goggles for every student in all six of my classes (approximately 180 students). Students were incredibly thrilled to be able to have their own pair of "scientist goggles" to wear during experiments. Some even insist on wearing them during science class because it helps them get into the "science mindset" better. With these materials I was able to complete many major experiments and several smaller modeling activities."

Each year over two hundred teachers receive grants from EPAK to enrich their classroom teaching in a myriad of ways. From social and emotional learning to hard science, your donations make an enormous difference in our neighboring communities. As you welcome springtime, please support EPAK in 2022.

Nisha Pillai, EPAK Board President

EPAK supports the following schools in East Palo Alto and eastern Menlo Park with direct teacher grants:

Belle Haven Elementary School
Costaño Elementary School
Los Robles McNair Academy
Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle School
East Palo Alto Charter School
East Palo Alto Phoenix Academy

East Palo Alto Academy High School
KIPP Esperanza High School
KIPP Valiant Community Prep
All Five Preschool
Ravenswood Preschool Special Education
Oxford Day Academy
Tide Academy

GRANT HIGHLIGHT

EPAK supports over a dozen schools in East Palo Alto and eastern Menlo Park. One is All Five, a preschool committed to “bringing equity to early education at a time when children’s brains grow the most.” Teacher Asha Bhote from All Five described her EPAK Fall 2021 grant:

“The EPAK Grant has helped us tremendously to



support our children’s growth and learning at All Five by providing them with engaging, inspiring, and educational materials such as large and individual chalkboards, sidewalk and mini chalks.

The colorful chalks and the chalkboards provided a vibrant

opportunity for the children to explore their creativity and imagination while also building their fine motor skills as well as their overall gross motor skills.

They were helpful in boosting the children’s creativity while also improving their attention span. The flexibility of using chalk to draw on chalkboards provided children the opportunity to explore and support their self esteem as they discover new ways to express their ideas. As they feel the texture of the chalk while drawing, they were able to engage with mind and body connection throughout the process.

The chalkboard also required the children to use their whole body which encourages attention, engagement, and persistence.”

EPAK Board of Directors

Stacy Arevalo	Jeannine Marston
Lara Burenin	Nisha Pillai
Audrey Crowley	Karen Ross
Henning Heine	Renee Scott
Ellen Jones	Jenna Wachtel Pronovost
Nancy Kerrebrock	Erin Wakshlag

***GO DIGITAL! provide your email address
at epak.org/go-paperless
to receive electronic communications!***