



CITY
EDUCATION
PARTNERS

10 YEAR

Impact Report
2015-2025





Dear Friends and Partners,

Ten years ago, City Education Partners was born from a bold idea: that San Antonio could better serve its students by daring to think differently, investing courageously, and acting with urgency.

Our founders had a vision rooted in equity and powered by community. That vision still drives us. Like many of the students we champion, I grew up in the very gaps we're working to close. Educators believed in me before I believed in myself—and that belief, paired with action, is at the heart of CEP.

Since our founding, CEP has helped attract millions of dollars in national investment, launch breakthrough school models, build a diverse pipeline of educators, and empower families to advocate for the schools their children deserve. Our work is anchored in a simple truth: when cities invest in great schools, strong educators, and informed families, transformation becomes not just possible—but unstoppable.

But let's be clear: this isn't a victory lap. It's a rallying cry.

Too many students remain off track. Too many families are unheard. Too many educators are under-supported. And too often, our systems respond with caution when boldness is what's needed.

This moment isn't a capstone—it's a catalyst.

We're not slowing down. We're doubling down. The next decade demands deeper partnerships, louder voices, and bolder action. We're ready. And we invite you to stand with us.

Let's shape the future of education in San Antonio—together. Our kids deserve nothing less.

With gratitude and determination,

Dalia Flores Contreras
Chief Executive Officer
City Education Partners

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Daring to Dream, Committed to Deliver

Why We Began: A Citywide Call to Action

A decade ago, of the nearly 100,000 students living in San Antonio’s urban core, only about 6,000 were enrolled in A or B rated schools, and fewer than 5% would earn a college degree. Life expectancy differed by 20 years depending on your zip code. The system wasn’t broken; it was working exactly as it was designed.

CEP was born of bold dreams—and we honor that legacy not by looking back, but by leaping forward.

Early Investments, Early Signals

Our first major investment—the Advanced Learning Academy (ALA)—reflected our founding spirit: bold, community-rooted, and talent-driven. ALA, co-designed with San Antonio ISD (SAISD) and Trinity University, was more than a school—it was a signal of what’s possible when innovation and equity converge.

With gratitude to our founding and past leaders—including Joel Harris, Ken Halliday, Bob Sohn, Jackie Moczygemba, Mark Larson, Lionel Sosa, Jordana Epstein, and John Hayes—whose leadership helped shape our founding vision and lasting legacy.

ORIGIN STORY



How We Formed: A Coalition with Courage

CEP wasn’t created to be just another nonprofit. It was built to be catalytic. Launched from the San Antonio Area Foundation with support from local and national funders, CEP began by listening. Community visits to Somerset ISD, Southside ISD, and the west side of San Antonio revealed a painful disconnect between family aspirations and available school options. We stepped in with humility and urgency.



CEP in the Ecosystem: Championing the Conditions for Citywide Success



San Antonio’s public education landscape is complex—15 school districts, 30+ charter networks, and persistent inequities. Real change requires more than programs. It requires a shared commitment. That’s where CEP comes in.

Over the past decade, we’ve served as a trusted education champion: thinking long-term, bridging boundaries, and staying rooted in what’s best for students. We help connect the dots between school quality, educator talent, family voice, and policy—and we do so with humility, collaboration, and focus.

Other cities—like Newark, Denver, and Washington, D.C.—have shown what’s possible when cross-sector stakeholders align around equity and excellence. But this progress requires more than policy shifts. It takes enduring leadership, bold investment, and a long view.

That’s the role we aim to play in San Antonio.
We create space for parents to advocate, educators to innovate, and philanthropy to invest boldly. We convene, connect, and catalyze. And we stay through transitions—because lasting change requires staying power.

Families have always pointed the way. High-quality schools remain our true north. CEP has fueled the growth of great schools, strengthened the talent pipeline, and empowered parents as informed advocates for change.

We’re just getting started.



Key Focus Areas & Major Investments



The Strategy Behind the Impact:

A Community-Informed Blueprint for Change

Theories of change matter. They shape how organizations see challenges—and what they believe can be possible.

At City Education Partners, ours wasn't drawn from afar. It was built by walking the halls of local classrooms, sitting with educators as they named both daily challenges and moments of breakthrough, and listening to families who want nothing more than for their children to thrive and love learning.

Those conversations—and the trust built in them—taught us where to focus and how to lead: by investing in great schools, supporting great educators, and elevating the voices of families and caregivers.

KEY FOCUS AREAS



That's why we've supported more than 30 grantees—seeding student-centered, diverse school models that reflect the richness of our city. **For every \$1 CEP invests, we attract \$7 in national funding.** This catalytic model has created over 25,000 new, high-quality school seats across San Antonio.

These schools are designed to meet students where they are and move them forward.

- **Celebrate Dyslexia Schools** serves students with learning differences in a multisensory, inclusive environment.
- **Triumph Public Schools** provides flexible, personalized support to students balancing school with work or caregiving.
- **Advanced Learning Academy**—created in partnership with CAST Schools, SAISD, and Trinity University—offers project-based learning and remains a flagship for innovation.

Together, these campuses—and others in our portfolio—demonstrate how thoughtful design, strong partnerships, and smart investment can meet diverse student needs.

And the results are real:

Citywide reading proficiency has risen nearly **12 points since 2021**—most notably in the urban core.

CEP-supported schools are **outperforming city averages** and keeping pace with statewide academic growth.

These schools don't just improve outcomes within their walls—they raise the bar across the region.

Quality Schools: Our North Star

We prioritize expanding access to high-quality public schools as the most powerful lever for equity. Every student deserves a school that sees them, challenges them, and prepares them for a choice-filled life.



KEY FOCUS AREAS

KEY FOCUS AREAS

Teacher Talent:
Strengthening the Pipeline

Transforming schools starts with great educators. CEP has invested deeply in building a stronger, well-trained teacher pipeline for San Antonio—starting early and sustaining support across a teacher’s journey.

Since 2015, CEP-backed efforts have trained and recruited over 1,140 new teachers.

In 2024, we launched **TEACH San Antonio**, a regional platform connecting more than 5,000 aspiring educators to preparation programs. We also convene a **Talent Community of Practice**—a network of 70+ partners working together to strengthen recruitment, training, and retention citywide.



Early on, we built **SchoolFinder.org**, a CEP-created platform that helped thousands of families explore school options—and inspired the creation of the state’s official **TXSchools.gov**. During the COVID-19 crisis, we deployed microgrants that connected nearly 4,000 students to online learning and brought internet access to over 1,750 households.

We launched **PASEO (Parent Academy for Student Education Opportunity)** in 2020, providing parents with the knowledge and skills to navigate schools and advocate for their children. What began with virtual sessions during the pandemic expanded to in-person cohorts at 15 campuses across three school districts. More than 200 parents have taken over 1,100 advocacy actions—and earned \$150,000 in scholarships for their children’s education.



Our commitment begins early. Initiatives like Travis Early College High School provide early exposure to teaching through dual-credit courses, classroom experiences, and mentoring. Many students—most from underrepresented backgrounds—are already on the path to graduate with both a high school diploma and an Associate of Arts in Teaching.

We also champion paid, yearlong teacher residencies, which improve instructional quality, boost retention, and diversify the profession. Today, more than 100 residents train annually through UTSA, TAMUSA, and Region 20’s TOPP program. These immersive experiences pair aspiring teachers with expert mentors, building real-time skills and long-term confidence. Residents now match the performance of veteran teachers and are significantly more likely to stay in the profession.

Today, our strategy focuses on building capacity within trusted, parent-facing organizations. One key partner is Futuro SA, a civic group that has registered 700+ new voters, hosted 15+ legislative events, and launched a Family Advocacy Team that now includes 50+ trained leaders. In 2025, this team organized a parent-led candidate forum in District 6 that drew over 250 community members.

We continue to support family-focused organizations like Families Empowered and San Antonio Charter Moms, ensuring families have access to school options and support systems.

And the momentum is growing: recent polling shows education has surged from the 8th to the 4th top concern among San Antonio voters—second only to crime among voters of color. Families aren’t just ready for change—they are demanding it.

By investing in Grow Your Own pathways and high-quality residencies, CEP is helping build a durable, local educator workforce—one equipped to serve the communities it comes from.

Together, these three pillars—quality schools, great teachers, and empowered families—form the foundation of our first decade and the blueprint for what comes next.

Impact Snapshot

Citywide reading proficiency has risen nearly



10 POINTS in the last decade

Most notably in the urban core



From

6.1k students

to OVER

25k* students

in A and B schools in the urban core since our founding

**Note: Based on available data from 2023*

More than

25,000



new public school seats were created for San Antonio students

\$150K in scholarships

awarded to parents for children's education



1,140+

since 2015

new teachers

trained or recruited through CEP-supported initiatives

700+ new voters

registered through Futuro SA



In 2024 alone,

5,000+

aspiring educators connected through TEACH San Antonio

1,115+

collective parent advocacy actions taken



More than **100**

teacher residents trained annually through CEP-supported residency programs

Teacher Talent Pipeline Report

developed with Bexar County Collaborative to surface local educator challenges and recommendations.



2019

San Antonio School Finder launched

More than **35,000** unique visitors

16 in-person events reaching nearly **1,500** families

Platform transitioned to TEA's **TXSchools.gov**, now used statewide

Talent Community of Practice =

70+

partners spanning early education, higher education, and workforce development.

During COVID-19

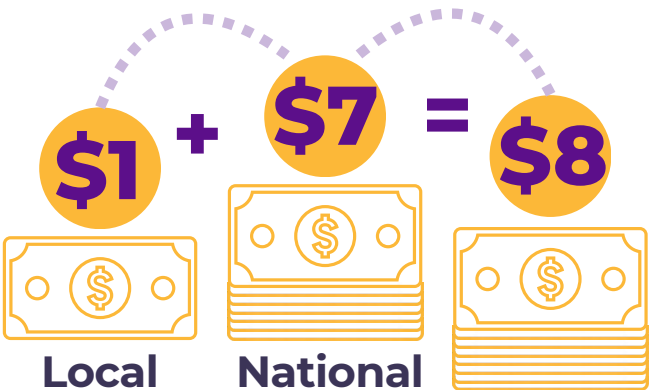
3,922 students

supported for online learning



1,750 households

provided with internet access



Every local dollar raised unlocks \$7 in national philanthropic investment



\$8 catalyzed



Strategic Bets That Shaped a Decade

City Education Partners was built to ask a simple but powerful question: What does San Antonio need—not just now, but next?

That mindset shaped a decade of bold bets and critical pivots: from starting schools to turning them around; from operating parent programs to funding community-led advocacy; from boutique teacher recruitment to citywide talent systems.

Some of those efforts have endured. Others taught us when to let go. All of them have helped refine our strategy.

What We Tried—and What We Learned

High-Quality Schools

We began by launching new schools and scaling proven models. Over time, we recognized the value of improving schools with strong foundations that had lost ground. Today our work includes a blend of targeted support for schools on the brink of excellence and a continued commitment to add new seats by scaling and replicating proven models. At the heart of all of our investments is a deep dedication to a quality seat for every child.

Effective funding is about knowing where dollars move the needle.

WHAT WE LEARNED



Teacher Talent

Early investments focused on recruitment platforms like Educate210. Though impactful, the model lacked long-term sustainability. Insights from school leaders revealed a deeper need: a full-spectrum platform supporting future and current educators. The result: TEACH San Antonio, which connects candidates with jobs, preparation programs, scholarships, coaching, and career pathways—built for scale, equity, and community voice.

We learned to shift from short-term fixes to systemic solutions.

Advocacy

Our direct family program, PASEO, empowered hundreds of parents and sparked over 1,100 advocacy actions. But we also saw the limits of stand-alone efforts. For family voice to shape systems, it must be embedded in trusted networks. That's why we now invest in community-rooted partners like Futuro SA—organizations that build lasting civic power and deepen impact.

Change happens faster when schools and systems share ownership of advocacy.



Ecosystem Infrastructure

Access. Connection. Transparency. That's how we help the education ecosystem thrive. From building School Finder (now scaled [statewide](#)) to launching Communities of Practice and publishing local data reports, we've focused on tools that inform decisions and align actors.

When COVID widened digital divides, we didn't wait. We deployed microgrants to connect 3,922 students and 1,750 households. Our approach blended urgency with strategy—proving that rapid response and long-term thinking can go hand in hand.

What Worked

-  Seeding school models grounded in talent and demonstrable success
-  Building scalable teacher pipelines—not boutique pilots
-  Funding trusted advocacy partners vs. running direct programs
-  Using data and convenings to break silos and build collective capacity

What We Learned

-  Not all early investments scale—design for sustainability
-  Parent voice is powerful when embedded in community
-  Local tools are important, but statewide alignment has greater reach
-  Convening builds shared strength and momentum

We share these lessons because learning is part of leading. We've never shied away from boldness—or from course correction. In every bet, we've pursued lasting change with discipline and purpose.

Our next decade starts now—and it will be guided by the wisdom earned in the first.

Bold Next Steps: The Next 10 Years Must Be About More

As we look ahead, one truth is clear:

While there are bright spots to celebrate, the overall picture remains sobering. Texas standards lag national expectations—and our students deserve better.

The next decade cannot be about comfort or convention. It must be about boldness, excellence, and unrelenting focus on what students need.

We will keep kids—not systems—at the center.

Student outcomes must drive every decision. We will hold ourselves and others accountable not for intentions, but for results. That means naming breakdowns, embracing discomfort, and insisting on excellence in every classroom.

We will double down on great teaching.

Recruiting talent is only the first step. We're committed to making San Antonio a destination for educators—where teaching is valued, supported, and sustained. When we uplift the profession, we uplift everything around it.

BOLD NEXT STEPS

We will lead from the middle—boldly.

With school options growing, we'll continue to build bridges across sectors, elevating shared responsibility for every student. We'll foster honest dialogue, uplift diverse voices, and affirm: every child in every school is a San Antonio student.

We will ignite the next wave of local innovation.

Solutions should be designed with—not just for—our communities. We'll continue to bring national investment to local vision, sparking innovation that makes students and teachers feel seen, challenged, and inspired.



CEP didn't just invest—they helped refine the vision. Thanks to their support, we've been able to expand our reach and sharpen our focus on recruiting young leaders from universities right here in San Antonio."

- **Nick Garcia**, Executive Director, Teach For America SA

TALENT PIPELINE

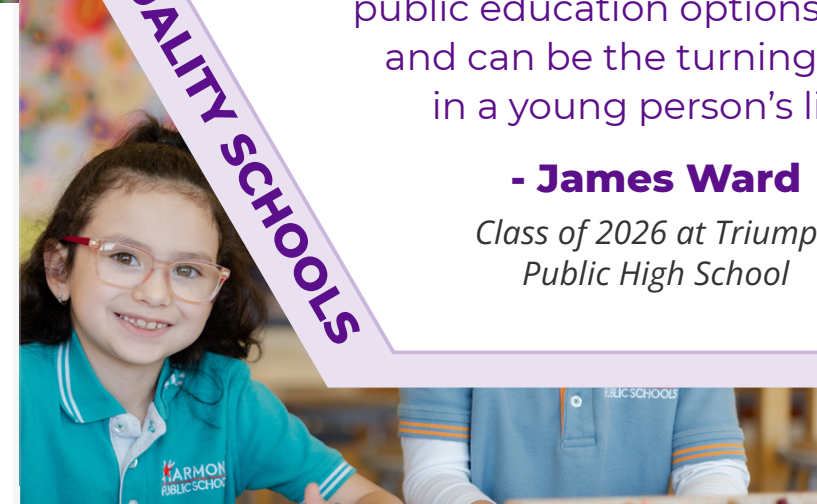


Having a second chance to pursue my education in an environment with flexible schedules and individual guidance has completely changed my perspective on life... I often think about how different my life might have been if I hadn't found Triumph. Stories like mine demonstrate that public education options matter and can be the turning point in a young person's life."

- **James Ward**

Class of 2026 at Triumph Public High School

QUALITY SCHOOLS



ECOSYSTEM



CEP offers a wide range of resources that demonstrate their commitment and shared values—including funding support for start-up schools, thought partnership, and a hands-on presence. They serve as mentors, provide access to resources, and advocate for our shared interests."

- **Jeanne Russell**

Executive Director, CAST Schools

We will name what's missing—and build it.

K-12 education must take its place as a civic priority. We will work to elevate its visibility, forge strategic partnerships, and drive the cross-sector leadership and investment needed to make transformation stick.

We're not entering this next decade quietly.

We move forward united by a bold belief: San Antonio can become a national beacon for what's possible in public education. And together—with those who share this vision—we will make it so.



With CEP's support, we've recruited active parent leaders and engaged thousands of San Antonio families through candidate forums, deep canvassing, civic action and educational sessions."

- **Daiana Lambrecht**

Executive Director, Futuro San Antonio

ADVOCACY



Board Acknowledgement

Stewards of Purpose: The Leaders Guiding CEP Forward

At City Education Partners, we are fortunate to be guided by a Board of Trustees deeply committed to students, families, and the future of San Antonio. These leaders bring diverse expertise—from education and philanthropy to business and community development—and they are united by purpose. They ask the hard questions, embrace possibility, and engage fully in our mission. Whether analyzing strategy, jumping into the work alongside staff, or lending their voice to key decisions, our board doesn't just advise—they act. Their leadership reflects the very spirit of CEP: bold, values-driven, and unwavering in the belief that transformation is not only necessary—it's possible.



Chris Barbic
PRESIDENT



Tiffany Grant
TREASURER



Jon Hinojosa
SECRETARY



Deborah Amini
TRUSTEE



Ryan Mays
TRUSTEE



**Romanita
Matta-Barrera**
TRUSTEE



Diane Warren
TRUSTEE

Mission & Vision

Our Vision:

We envision a future where every child in San Antonio attends a school that prepares them to powerfully engage with life.

Our Mission:

Our mission is to cultivate a vibrant educational ecosystem across San Antonio, ensuring every child in every zip code thrives, through great schools, talented teachers and leaders, and powerful advocacy.



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