

Educare Flint opened in 2017 and is the first school in Michigan to be part of the national Educare Learning Network, created by the Ounce of Prevention Fund and the Buffet Early Childhood Fund in 2003. The 36,000-square-foot school is on the grounds of Durant-Tuuri-Mott Elementary School and includes 18 early learning classrooms, as well as adult learning and training spaces.

Cummings Great Expectations adopts an Educare-inspired model that also incorporates the Reggio Emilia philosophy of early childhood education. Housed in a former elementary school that underwent significant renovations, Great Expectations Early Childhood was the first of the two schools to open as part of an effort to combat the effects of lead caused by the city's water crisis. This former elementary school opened in 2016 with 11 early learning classrooms, as well as adult learning and research spaces.

Ja'Nel Jamerson serves as the executive director of the Flint Early Childhood Collaborative and Educare Flint. In this role, he oversees Educare Flint's adherence to the Educare Learning Network quality standards, coordinates the FECC's strategic plan, and identifies resources to support a healthy, well-coordinated early childhood ecosystem in Flint. Ja'Nel also served as one of 13 appointees to Governor Snyder's PreK-12 Literacy Commission, which was tasked with providing policy recommendations and reports on the state's progress toward becoming a national leader in literacy. A native of Flint, with 10+ years of experience in education, Ja'Nel has worked in pre-college, K-12, early education, and collective impact initiatives in various roles. Leading up to his post at the Flint Early Childhood Collaborative, Ja'Nel served as Executive Director of the Flint & Genesee Literacy Network.



To learn more, please contact 810-600-5400, visit www.educareflint.org or follow @EducareFlint on Twitter.



**Flint
Early Childhood
Collaborative**

A project of the
Community Foundation of Greater Flint

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One of the key elements of the work of the Flint Early Childhood Collaborative is developing a strong two-generation strategy that leads to success for children and families. A two-generation strategy recognizes that there is a critical tie between the well-being of parents and their children's social-emotional, physical, cognitive and long-term success in life. Children benefit greatly when their parents get the help they need to overcome problems and become personally and economically healthy and stable. Stable families have the ability to focus on education and make it a priority while contributing to the economic resurgence and overall well-being of our state.

Policies that better support two-generation strategies which help children thrive and their parents to get ahead are necessary. With a more connected, region-wide, whole-family strategy that serves Flint children beginning at birth, families will be more adequately served. What's more, children will have the opportunity to achieve the cognitive, behavioral and health outcomes that they deserve and that Flint and Michigan need to prosper.

How can the city with the highest rate of childhood poverty in the nation become the city with the most promising outlook for its youth?

This is the heart of Flint's groundbreaking early childhood collaborative.



In America today, 15 million children—21 percent of all U.S. youth and 30 percent of children of color—are growing up in poverty.

IN MICHIGAN, 22% OF YOUTH ARE GROWING UP IN POVERTY:

22% in urban counties

24% in mid-sized counties

28% in rural counties

FLINT'S CHILDHOOD POVERTY RATE: 60%

Even with some recent economic gains, many families of all different sizes, geographies, races and circumstances are left behind. The threats and realities of economic insecurity are more pervasive now than ever and demand a response that is thoughtful, collaborative, objective, nonpartisan, cross-sector and multi-generational.



Such clear disparities underscore why we must invest in efforts that provide access to opportunity for all children and their families. Evidence demonstrates that high-quality early childhood interventions improve children's cognitive skills and academic performance, and are especially vital to families who are navigating stressful environments. High-quality early experiences improve children's emotional and behavioral outcomes with the associated long-term social benefit of reductions in criminal behavior and persistent adverse mental and physical health. **In these environments, children are healthy and safe, and parents and guardians are critical partners in the development and education of their children.** Such programs make critical contributions to thriving communities and are an early, essential component of a successful workforce and economic development efforts.

The Flint Early Childhood Collaborative is a diverse group of motivated partners instigating opportunity for Flint's youngest children and families. The collaborative works to inform public policies and practices, opens new doors for Flint's youngest children and their families, and serves as a pilot to other communities in Michigan and the U.S.

Partners include

- **Charles Stewart Mott Foundation**
- **Community Foundation of Greater Flint**
- **Flint Community Schools**
- **Genesee Intermediate School District**

The Flint Early Childhood Collaborative implements a “hub model” focused on meeting the needs of two generations – children and their parents or caregivers – while also serving as a central resource to other early childhood providers in Flint.

This hub includes Cummings Great Expectations and Educare Flint, two early childhood schools that provide:

1. The highest-quality education and care to 400+ Flint children ages 0–5 as well as new and innovative support to parents, caregivers and educators.
2. Unmet quality development support for other community-based educators.



The Flint Early Childhood Collaborative has invested in the Educare Model, which incorporates everything science says young children need to flourish:



1. **Data collection and analysis for continuous improvement**
2. **Embedded professional development**
3. **High-quality teaching practices**
4. **Intensive family engagement**

Children who receive the right supports in their earliest years are more likely to succeed in kindergarten and beyond.

Evidence shows that high-quality early childhood programs improve academic performance and behavioral outcomes for youth and have a **positive effect on parents and guardians.**

For every child at risk of not achieving school readiness, Michigan can save \$47,000 per child per lifetime.

MORE THAN HALF of Michigan third-graders did not pass state reading assessments in 2017.

If we cannot dramatically improve outcomes for our elementary students, those who are at least a year behind grade level in reading skills will have to repeat third grade starting in the 2019–20 school year.

90 percent of the brain architecture develops between birth and age 3. Children who get the right supports in those early years are **more likely to succeed** – not only in kindergarten, but far into adulthood.

Early childhood development is the critical first step toward building a **strong and prosperous workforce.**