



Erie Together Activity Update **August 2016**

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The activity described in this report is aligned with Erie Together's priorities and desired outcomes as reflected on our "impact plans". These impact plans are the documents that guide all of Erie Together's work, and provide context for understanding the overall movement. The impact plans can be found at www.erietogether.org/impact-plans.

Action Team 1: Early Childhood Readiness and Success

- Six Block by Block events organized by Erie Together's Early Childhood Awareness Task Team took place throughout the summer. The purpose of these events is to increase awareness of the importance of early childhood education and success and third grade reading proficiency, and to connect families to local resources. These events were made possible through ECGRA funding and were carried out with the help of volunteers from local agencies, Mercyhurst Prep students and alumni, and other community members. The number of children and families reached far exceeded last year's results. [Click here](#) to learn more.
- Mercyhurst University students packed Kindergarten Readiness Tool Kits on Monday, August 22nd as part of the Mercyhurst Day of Service. Students from the Barber National Institute are scheduled to complete the packing in September for back-to-school events. Tool Kits are currently available for organizations wishing to distribute. For more information, contact nicole@erietogether.org.
- A task team is in place to evaluate current measurements in relation to impact plan goals. The team is looking into existing data measures and considering any necessary revisions.
- The Transition Task Team has been reconstituted to focus on early childhood transitions to kindergarten, identifying existing efforts and gaps and sharing resources.

Action Team 2: Aligning Education to Careers

- Erie Together, in coordination with Gannon University, U.S. Senator Pat Toomey's office, and Career Street will host a Youth Civic Engagement Symposium on Friday, September 16th. The event will include speakers at the federal and county court houses, Erie City Hall, and Gannon University. All school districts have been invited to participate on a first-come, first-served basis, but we are limiting seating in this pilot year.

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- The recently revised eighth grade survey was deployed by Career Street in May to gauge career awareness, exploration and preparation across Erie County. Erie Together's goal is for 80% of local students to have three or more career exploration experiences by the end of their 8th grade year. The results show 43% of local students currently have three or more experiences, a 20% increase from the previous year.
- The Extended Time Programs Task Team continues to research existing models to connect more students with high-quality programs.
- Erie Together is facilitating a College and Career Pathways task team consisting of nearly all local school districts and other relevant stakeholder groups including business/manufacturing, workforce development and others. This team has met three times and is making great progress, having developed a working definition of "college, career and life readiness" and a scan of local pathways efforts, and they are beginning to share best practices across districts.
- Erie Together's More Caps and Gowns Project is in its second year of existence, working to connect more caring adults to local youth to enhance their lives and educational success. Girard School District, in cooperation with Penn State Behrend, is entering its second year of mentoring efforts, and beginning this year, Mercyhurst University will be working with Joanna Connell School to launch a pilot program in September. Erie's Public Schools is also working within the More Caps and Gowns Project in another way to launch "Check and Connect" within one of its buildings.

Action Team 3: Individual and Family Stability

- The Getting Ahead program (formerly known as FACTs) is getting a makeover. The program will soon have its own logo and new outreach materials. Look for the newest updates at www.erietogether.org/getting-ahead.
- The Human Services Directory Promotion and Reducing the Stigma Task Teams continue outreach through a social media campaign and are identifying ways to track success of this campaign. Gannon University recently requested updates from organizations listed on the directory and changes have been made accordingly. A new team has been created to review the layout and content of the directory.
- The Pennsylvania Soldiers and Sailors Home has taken over updates for the Veteran's Portal. The Vet Portal is a direct result of Erie Together discussions. [Click here](#) to send information for upcoming veteran events.

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Action Team 4: Aligning Workforce and Economic Development

- The Erie County Reentry Services and Support Alliance (ECRSSA) now has a home at GECAC and will be launched soon thanks to funding provided by United Way of Erie County and The Erie Community Foundation. Interviews are underway for the required staff positions, and once the employees are in place the ECRSSA will become operational. Additionally, a "reentry workforce summit" is being planned for September 27. Visit www.erietogether.org for more information.
- The Diversity Barriers Task Team is developing a resource for employers. The piece includes relevant myths and facts, and benefits to having a diverse workforce, along with resources that employers can draw upon to help support their diverse workforce. The team is also discussing ways to distribute this resource and measure its impact.
- A new task team has been created to discuss Erie Together's possible role in transportation issues, specifically obtaining a driver's license for job purposes. The team will be focusing on a community awareness campaign on the importance of obtaining a license as its first task.

Miscellaneous:

- The Erie Together Cross Team meeting was held in June with more than 70 attendees. The input and ideas collected are being reviewed by volunteers on numerous task teams to identify next steps. Thank you to all who attended.
- Kathy Bastow, an active volunteer for the Early Childhood Readiness and Success team was recently recognized in the Erie Times News *Positively Erie* series. Kathy is a tremendous asset to Erie Together and leads various task teams. [Click here](#) to see the article.
- Erie Gives Day took place on August 9th. Erie Together ended the twelve hour online giving push with \$2,333 raised from 25 donors. Thank you!
- The Erie Redevelopment Authority is administering a lead abatement program to reduce and eliminate lead poisoning in young children. This program conducts "lead hazard control" activities on home exteriors, windows, high-risk paint, flooring and dust, and soil at no cost for eligible owner-occupant homeowners and for a fraction of the cost for eligible landlords. Funding is limited, and projects will be undertaken on a first come-first served basis for those meeting eligibility requirements. Please visit www.erietogether.org to learn more.

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