



HOME WORKS!

THE TEACHER HOME VISIT PROGRAM

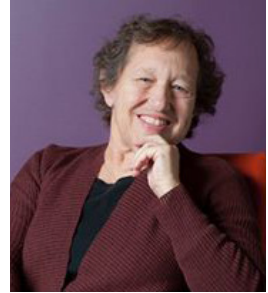
Mission: Partnering families and teachers for children's success.

Vision: All families are engaged in their child's learning.

2019-20 Annual Report

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Admittedly, I took on the role of Board Chair reluctantly—not because I don't believe deeply in the life-changing role HOME WORKS! plays in bringing teachers and families together to achieve academic success for children; not because I don't recognize and understand the link between social justice and educational opportunity; and not because my white privilege wanted me to believe that there was nothing I could really do to make meaningful change. I was reluctant because I am a rule breaker, because I don't know or appreciate the Robert's Rules of Order, because I am more comfortable leading from the middle.



Six months into this role, I am SO GLAD to have taken on the Board Chair role. The organization is doing amazing things. I am flanked by an amazing Executive Leadership committee and fully engaged Board members who care so deeply about our mission and vision. I call us the true believers, because as things became challenging and as remote learning widens the gap in education for under resourced communities, we all dug in. We are inspired by the tireless (and I do mean tireless) efforts of Karen Kalish, CEO and Founder, whose vision and passion move all of us to want to do more and be more for our children. Karen is amazing and it is a privilege to partner with her.

It is so humbling to see how the HOME WORKS! staff execute, document, and measure our programs so we can share what we learn with other school districts throughout our community as well with those in other states. We have dubbed the 2020-2021 school year a "learning lab," furthering HOME WORKS! commitment to continuous improvement and development of best practices in parent and family engagement. In a school year marked with a plethora of questions and issues, our staff tackle them with resolve, persistence, and caring. When COVID-19 made teacher home visits impossible, the staff pioneered virtual home visits. They have taken all that they learned from every obstacle teachers faced and every solution they uncovered to ensure that virtual home visits would succeed this school year. If you know Karen Kalish, you know that "no" is followed by "Now what?" and "Whatever it takes." In literally the click of an email she rounded up 35 community volunteers to help the students in a low-performing school have access to the internet to accommodate distance learning.

So what have I learned in six months? I have learned that we all care—the Board, the staff, the teachers, and the parents. We all care deeply about our children, because they are all our children. We want them to have the tools to succeed in school and in life. I have learned that there truly are things that we can and must do to make meaningful change. And most of all I have learned we are all rule breakers at HOME WORKS!.

**Kind Regards,
Harriet Blickenstaff**

P.S. Robert's Rules of Order do have a place.

*Southeast Middle Site
Coordinator Tonya Malone
stands with a student sharing
about his home visit,
November 2019.*



WHO WE SERVED

In 2019-20, HOME WORKS! was in 30 schools in nine districts and five charter schools across Missouri. There were three early childhood centers, 20 elementary schools, three middle schools, and four high schools.

The program had three components: home visits, family dinners, and Parent Teacher Learning Team meetings.

Boonville School District

- Hannah Cole Primary
- Boonslick Technical Education Center

Charter Schools

- City Garden Montessori
- Confluence Academy – Aspire Elementary
- Confluence Academy – Old North Elementary
- North Side Community School – Elementary
- North Side Community School – Middle

Francis Howell School District

- Henderson Elementary

Hazelwood School District

- Arrowpoint Elementary
- Twillman Elementary
- Southeast Middle

Lindbergh School District

- Crestwood Elementary
- Dressel Elementary

Marshall School District

- Spainhower Alternative

Mehlville School District

- Beasley Elementary

Parkway School District

- Ross Elementary

St. Louis Public Schools

- Stix Early Childhood Center
- Gateway Elementary
- Mason Elementary
- Meramec Elementary
- Pamoja Preparatory Academy at Cole
- Patrick Henry Downtown Academy
- Washington Montessori
- Woerner Elementary
- Vashon High

Wentzville School District

- Heritage Primary
- Prairie View Elementary
- Stone Creek Elementary
- Frontier Middle
- Pearce Hall Alternative

WOW!!!

2019-2020 PROGRAM STATS

2,407 Total Home Visits

2,185 Students Reached

485 Staff Participated

30 Family Dinners

2,433 Family Members at Dinners

407 Family Members Attended Parent Teacher Learning Team meetings

8,632 Total Reach
(People Impacted)

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT



Megan Smith
Kindergarten Teacher
Stix Early Childhood Center, SLPS



You have no idea how this makes us feel as parents to welcome teachers into our home simply because they care to know what our life outside of school looks like. After parenting for 20 years, this is a first! It truly brings a sense of community to our home and shows our son that education is important and that his teachers do care about him."

HOME WORKS!
Parent



Did you have any students who benefited academically from home visits?

I had a student who just wanted to play and wasn't really focusing academically. When I shared this with the mom, we became a team. The three of us - child, parent and I - had a conversation about the importance of paying attention in class. When the student came back to school the next day he had a whole different outlook. He wanted to do his best in order to prove to his parent and to me that he had listened to our discussion. I saw his reading scores go up as he jumped five reading levels in a short period of time! The home visit significantly helped. His behavior changed, he started following directions, and I saw him transform into a more diligent student after the home visit.

How did the Parent Teacher Learning Team meeting positively impact students' classroom performance?

The Parent Teacher Learning Team meetings had a great impact on academic performance. Once parents attended these meetings, the level of sight word recognition shot way up for students because their parents began practicing words with them at home. There was a significant increase, from what students had previously learned all year, because I now had more cooperation from the parents. They kept checking in, well after the meeting ended, to see how their children were progressing with their learning. Before the Parent Teacher Learning Team meeting, sight level recognition growth was stagnant. After parents attended the meeting, students were soaring with new sight word knowledge!

Why are home visits so important?

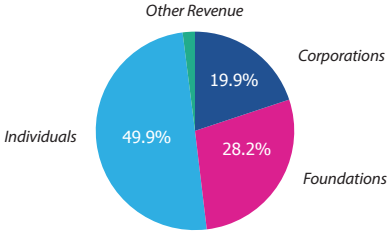
They cultivate a deeper relationship and build bridges between students, their parents, and teachers. During my first year of teaching at Stix, I got off on the wrong foot with one mom so I decided to make a home visit to help me form new, positive connections with both the student and his mother. During the visit, we worked closely together to set behavioral and academic goals with the student and recorded these goals on a student success plan that empowered us all by giving us each a role to play in helping this child progress and ultimately succeed. The visit put the parent and me in a much better place and the student did better in school - a win win all around.

Heritage Primary parent and child share a moment to draw together at a Family Dinner, October 2019.



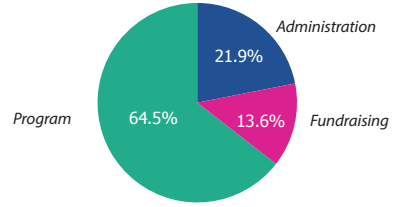
FINANCIAL REPORT

INCOME



Corporations:	\$186,715.90
Foundations:	\$265,539.27
Individuals:	\$469,704.68
Other Revenue:	\$19,133.05
TOTAL INCOME:	\$941,092.90

EXPENSES



Administration:	\$191,401.86
Fundraising:	\$118,708.59
Program:	\$564,376.46
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$874,486.91

TOTAL ENDING NET ASSETS

As of 6/30/19: \$399,885.42 (of which \$75,000.00 was temporarily restricted)

As of 6/30/20: \$514,768.45 (of which \$230,000 was temporarily restricted)



Source: Kerber, Eck, & Braeckel Independent Auditor's Report dated June 4, 2020. HOME WORKS! meets all charity standards of the Better Business Bureau.

SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT



Beasley Elementary Fifth Grade Teacher Joyce DiStefano shows a parent at-home learning activities during a Parent Teacher Learning Team meeting, October 2019.

Beasley Elementary, Melville School District

2019-2020 marks Beasley Elementary's third year as a HOME WORKS! partner school. Beasley has fully embraced and embedded the HOME WORKS! mission and vision into its parent and family engagement plan. Last year, 100% of Beasley's classroom teachers made home visits and conducted Parent Teacher Learning Team meetings for all grade levels. Over the past two years, 204 students and their families received home visits!

Frequently referred to as a 'rock star' school, Beasley staff commit to do whatever it takes to support their students and families. Led by dedicated and inspiring principal Andrea Deane, Beasley has provided resources and supports for families when needs are identified during home visits. From furniture to finances, Beasley staff find a way to break down barriers to student learning so families can be engaged in their children's education.



BOARD SPOTLIGHT



Karen Evans

Reading
Interventionist

*Patrick Henry
Downtown Academy,
SLPS*

How did you get involved in education?

After 30 years as an Executive Program Manager at AT&T, I decided to join Teach for America and ended up in SLPS at Patrick Henry 11 years ago — and I am still here as a Reading Interventionist! We are working with a transient student population so the work is challenging and rewarding.

When were you introduced to HOME WORKS!?

I've been at Patrick Henry for 11 years. During my seventh year, HOME WORKS! came to Patrick Henry. It was eye-opening to me as a teacher. You can see what a student is bringing to the classroom, but once you see where the student is coming from it touches an empathy gene that can sometimes get lost in the shuffle. I remember one boy would do his homework right before class started every day. When I finally got the opportunity to talk to his mom about that on the home visit, I realized that he did not have a table or a desk, or anywhere to do his homework. There was a lot of commotion and siblings running around and it was clear he couldn't get a moment to himself. From then on, I created time at the end of the class for everyone to do their homework which gave him the opportunity to complete the homework in a stable environment.

HOME WORKS! really changed the culture at the school and the home visits really make the parents aware of how essential they are in their child's education. Their input is valuable and we have to work as a team to make challenges into opportunities for the students.

How were you brought onto the HOME WORKS! Board and what have you observed?

I knew I could bring insight to the board as an educator with home visit experience. Since I've been involved, I have seen the board reach an almost corporate level of function. The board is demanding a lot from the organization in terms of success and being held accountable to a standard of excellence and growth. We already know HOME WORKS! is successful but we want to back that up with data.



Principal Lisa Bohrmann

*Henderson Elementary,
Francis Howell
School District*

Home visits allow for true genuine conversation and connection between teachers and families. It was a real grassroots effort at the teacher level that ended up spreading like wildfire throughout the building. Due to home visits, parent communication has increased. Teachers are calling the home more often with positive touches and concerns as they arise because home visits created relationships.



Crestwood teacher Sarah Pichler with her students at a Family Dinner, October 2019.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Colleen Polak
Director of Program
Operations

In June, HOME WORKS! welcomed our new Director of Program Operations Colleen Polak to the team.

What drew you to HOME WORKS!?

When I came across the job posting for the position of Director of Program Operations at HOME WORKS!, I literally got goosebumps reading it. I immediately went to the website and devoured everything on it. The mission and vision spoke to me. I spent the last 12 years advocating one-on-one for the most vulnerable, the marginalized, those often left behind. At HOME WORKS!, I have the opportunity to contribute to change in our community, one family and teacher at a time. As we say in our training, parent and family engagement has a ripple effect. It may start as one home visit, but the benefits of that home visit have the potential to spread to the classroom, the school, the neighborhood, and ultimately, our community as a whole. Who wouldn't want to be a part of that?



What have you been most impressed with at HOME WORKS!?

Our staff's dedication to this work, to the success of parent and family engagement in schools, impresses me each and every day. From our brilliant program leaders working directly with tireless teachers, to our phenomenal data and administrative team supporting everyone behind the scenes, the focus on mission and drive for organizational success is palpable. Even our external contractors told me the importance of this work and how glad they are to be a part of it! Such a commitment to the success of children and families who often go overlooked is inspiring. I'm grateful and humbled to be a part of HOME WORKS!.

How have you and the rest of the program team been adapting to remote learning?

When I met Karen Kalish for the first time on her porch this past May I thought, "Wow! She has boundless energy, ideas, and passion for HOME WORKS!". In the short time I've been here, I've seen that same boundlessness shared amongst everyone who comes together to further HOME WORKS!' success. This is evidenced in HOME WORKS!' quick, decisive response to school building closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In March, it was clear that things had to change to serve our mission and vision. So HOME WORKS! quickly pivoted and piloted virtual home visits in several of our partner schools. My first job was to lead our team of Program Leaders to incorporate everything we learned from the pilot and create a new manual, resources, and training for teachers on how to make effective virtual home visits and lead virtual Parent Teacher Learning Team meetings. This year, over 100 teachers will complete 2,000 virtual home visits and hundreds of parents will learn strategies to use at home to enhance their child's learning. Because of HOME WORKS!, more families and teachers will partner for children's success.



Heritage Primary parent, student, and teacher get to know each other at a Family Dinner, October 2019.

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We are so honored and happy to be able to support such great work. HOME WORKS! is truly making a difference in our communities!



Patrick Henry students smiling for the camera at a Family Dinner, November 2019.



Rylee Shea

former HOME WORKS! Teacher

The virtual home visit facilitated the essential connection between school and home, and gave families an opportunity to feel heard and valued - especially during the pandemic. As educators, we desperately want to reach our students during this unprecedented time and these virtual visits are a way to navigate those communications. I was able to better meet my families' needs and empower them with supports and resources. As a result, I saw an increase in academics and a willingness to learn about technology. Ultimately, virtual home visits give our students and families a chance to see how deeply we care for them.



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