

PLAYWORKS NORTHERN CALIFORNIA ANNUAL REPORT

2024-25



PLAYWORKS

A MESSAGE FROM OUR FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Playworks Northern California Community,

After three incredible years as your Northern California Executive Director, I am excited to step into my new role as Playworks California Vice President. While my title will change, my connection to this extraordinary team, and to our region, remains as strong as ever. I am so proud of everything we have accomplished together and I can't wait to support Playworks Northern California from a statewide perspective.

Looking back on my time as Executive Director, fills me with awe at our collective resilience and innovation. Since 2022, we haven't just rebounded from pandemic challenges, we've redefined what's possible. Together, we've sharpened our strategies, improved our school prioritization and matching process, and dramatically expanded our Relay and Pro Consultative programs to equip more adults with the tools to create transformative play experiences to youth in the Bay and beyond. We've proven that when we dream big and work together, anything is possible.

The numbers speak for themselves: 98,787 children discovered joy, confidence, and connection through play the past year alone. Partnerships like our consultative support to Del Norte in the northernmost part of our state broke new ground for our impact reach. And day after day, countless stories from coaches in the field reminded us how something as seemingly simple as recess can change a child's entire school experience. The achievements you will read about in this annual report belong to all of you... our passionate staff, dedicated partners, generous donors, and tireless advocates who believe in the power of play to shape brighter futures.

As I transition to my statewide role, I do so knowing Northern California's future is in the most capable hands. The momentum we've built together is unstoppable, and I'll be cheering you on louder than ever from my new vantage point. Thank you for making these past three years so profoundly meaningful. #OneTeamOneDream.

With joy and gratitude,



Laura Medina Quintanar Powers



Laura (bottom left) and family
at Spark Play 2025

THE YEAR IN REVIEW: FROM LEARNING TO STRATEGY

In the 2024-2025 program year, we moved decisively from planning to implementation, creating a bold roadmap that will guide our work through 2028.

Below is a brief summary of how we mobilized to transform our vision into a plan.



1

Collective Vision, Collective Impact

Guided by the principle that "if you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together," the operationalization of the strategic plan was co-created by managers and directors across every department in Northern California. Through collaborative planning sessions, we moved beyond simple cross-departmental coordination to forge a shared vision, where every team member's expertise contributes to our region's brighter future.

2

Focus Where It Matters Most

With limited resources and boundless need across Northern California's vast landscape, we made intentional choices to by 1) Strengthening our Bay Area core, deepening roots in our founding communities, and 2) Focusing expansion in three key regions: Sacramento's urban centers, Fresno/Madera's agricultural communities, and Monterey's coastal areas. This targeted geographic approach ensures we direct resources where they can create the most transformative change.

3

Digital Innovation

Sparkling Play Everywhere: Our upgraded Spark Play digital platform unlocked exciting new possibilities this year. Staff embraced this tool as a springboard for creativity, exploring how it can enhance both internal learning and external support for school partners. As we move forward, Spark Play will be key to scaling quality and accessibility across our region.

OUR IMPACT

98,787

students served

690

of youth leaders

198

of School and Community-Based Organization Partners

46

of schools receiving Coach, Relay or Team Up

Every year, Playworks surveys our partner schools to learn about the impact of our programs and find ways to improve. Here are a few highlights from educators surveyed this year:

98%

of educators reported Playworks **increases the number of students that are physically active**

97%

of educators reported Playworks **creates an engaging learning environment for students.**

96%

of educators agree that Playworks **increases the number of students engaged in healthy play with their peers.**

94%

of educators agree that Playworks **strengthens relationships between students and adults in the community.**



CELEBRATING PARTNERSHIPS THE POWER OF PEOPLE AND PARTNERSHIP



EL CAMINO HEALTH DISTRICT

El Camino Health District has been one of our greatest partnerships. Through community collaboration, El Camino Health District helped us partner with 8 schools in the Sunnyvale district, which provides us the ability to serve the whole district, to create safe, healthy, and engaging recess experiences for students.

This work aligned with El Camino Health District's Community Benefit Plan's goals to increase opportunities for daily physical activity. More than that, it reflects our commitment to ensuring every child gets to experience the joy, connection, and learning that comes through the power of play.



Through this partnership, we were able to implement our evidence-based model to meet the needs of students and educators through Safe and Engaging Recess, Junior Coach Leadership Program, Class Game Time, and Staff Training. ■

SALESFORCE VENTURES

Salesforce Ventures wrapped up the school year with us by spending a day at Buena Vista Children's Center, a K-8th grade after-school program. We filled their black top with bright colorful paint, bringing new yard games and murals. More beautiful playgrounds = more beautiful play for kids!



One of the many ways we get to play with our community is through Playground Beautifications. Thank you Salesforce Ventures for celebrating your 6th year partnering with us through making a playground more beautiful. ■



UP NEXT: EMPOWERING ADULTS TO CHAMPION PLAY

During the 2024-25 school year, Playworks Northern California is building a future where every one thrives by equipping educators to lead belonging, joyful, and transformative play. When adults champion play, school communities flourish.

As we invest in deepening our reach through the power of play, we're transforming recesses one by one. In April 2025, five Fresno Unified School District elementary schools experienced a Recess Rollout filled with two weeks of recess programming, 2 weeks of Classroom Game Times, Teacher and Yard Supervision trainings, Junior Coach Leadership Program Introductions, and Playworks Recess Kits.

This initiative was more than a short-term offering; it was a strategic investment in a region that had not yet had access to Playworks services. As we look ahead, we're excited to continue supporting Fresno USD and to build new partnerships that help bring the joy and benefits of play to even more students. ■



At the heart of Playworks Northern California's future is a fundamental truth: sustainable impact happens when we equip adults to be play champions. As we expand access to play across Northern California, we know that when adults model inclusive games, positive language, and simple conflict resolution (like rock-paper-scissors), they transform recess into a foundation for better school days.

By putting the right tools in educators' hands, we're creating schools where every child plays, thrives, and belongs. In the upcoming years you can expect to see an expansion of our Relay, Team Up and Pro Consultative Services. When we invest in adult leaders, we create schools where play isn't just an activity, it's the foundation for happier, healthier school communities. Stay tuned as we share stories of this impact in action! ■



Thank You to Our Partners in Play!

Playworks Northern California extends immense gratitude to the generous support of all our individual donors and volunteers. Our impact is the result of our collective investment and commitment to Playworks' mission to bring safe and healthy play to every kid.



Our School Partners

Alisal Union Elementary School District
Brentwood Union School District
Campbell Union School District
Cupertino Union School District
Davis Joint Unified School District
Dublin Unified School District
Elk Grove Unified School District
Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District
Fresno County Superintendent of Schools
Hayward Unified School District
Monterey Peninsula Unified School District
Moreland School District
Mountain View Whisman School District
Mt. Diablo Unified School District
Oakland Unified School District
Pacifica School District
Palo Alto Unified School District
Piedmont Unified School District

Pleasanton Unified School District
Ravenswood City Schools
Sacramento City Unified School District
Salinas City Elementary School District
San Francisco Unified District
San Leandro Unified School District
San Lorenzo Unified School District
San Mateo-Foster City School District
Santa Clara School District
Soledad Unified School District
South San Francisco Unified
Spreckels Union Elementary School District
Sunnyvale Unified School District
The Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District
Twin Rivers Unified School District
Ukiah Unified School District
Vacaville Unified School District
Washington Unified School District
West Contra Costa Unified School District

Our Funding Partners

Bernard E. & Alba Witkin Charitable Foundation
Blue Shield of California
Brickyard Berridge Fund
City and County of San Francisco:
Department of Children, Youth and Their Families
Dodge & Cox
The Eucalyptus Foundation
El Camino Health
El Camino Healthcare District
Fenwick Foundation
Franklin and Catherine Johnson Foundation
Golden State Warriors and Valkyries

Kaiser Permanente Northern California
Community Benefit
LinkedIn
Marsh & McLennan Agency
PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP
Quest Foundation
Rakuten USA
Ronnie & Karen Lott
San Francisco Giants
Saw Island Foundation
Sidney Frank Family Foundation
Warriors Community Foundation
Vodafone Foundation

Northern California Regional Advisory Board Members

Nick Nieto, Board Chair
Ava Quail
Annie Crangle
Rebecca Goldberg
Danielle Langford

Lauren Lightbody
Trinity Martin
Miriam Rollock
Christopher Sovell

