



EIPA's work with Early Learning Pennsylvania

Some Background –

Early Learning Pennsylvania (ELPA) is a broad-based coalition of children & family serving organizations advocating for access to high-quality early childcare and education and healthy development opportunities for all Pennsylvania children. In 2019, EIPA began meeting with members of ELPA to build a partnership between our associations. ELPA agenda focused on Pre-K, childcare, home visiting programs, perinatal and child health, and early intervention. However, the EARLY INTERVENTION component of their work was, at that time, under-represented.

EIPA joined Early Learning PA as a principal partner in creating their Early Intervention campaign which aligns with their other Early Childhood Education initiatives. This partnership began in 2021 by participating in planning sessions & subsequent focus groups designed to create a [Statewide Advocacy Agenda](#). This agenda promotes the work of the Early Intervention sector and acts as a roadmap for stakeholders and a training tool for policymakers and legislators.

Once the advocacy agenda was completed, a workplan of activities to address the identified priority areas was developed. Additionally, we began seeking funding to support the workplan. Currently, the work is being funded by the [William Penn Foundation](#) and [Philadelphia Health Partnership](#).

And now the work ahead –

EIPA is the only member of Early Learning PA whose mission is exclusively dedicated to Early Intervention. Other members of ELPA work on issues related or adjacent to EI, such as childcare, children's health, broad-based advocacy work on issues related to children and families, etc. As such, we are a key player in the work ahead; our collective experience and expertise about the needs of young children with special needs, inclusion, family engagement, and the strengths/needs within the Early intervention system is invaluable to this work.

If you have attended EIPA's annual retreat over the past several years or participated in your regional meetings, you've heard about our partnership with ELPA and how it has been evolving. By being better aligned with the early childhood education sector, our EI voice is amplified. The needs of "special needs kids" are really the needs of all children but we also know that our EI system is quite unique; there are key differences in our system that fundamentally affect how services are delivered to the children and families who are very often, those who are most in need in our state.

OK, now what? –

This partnership has resulted in a workplan of priorities and activities related to building a better Early Intervention system in Pennsylvania (be sure to check out the link to the Statewide Advocacy Agenda above). Because this work is being funded, there are opportunities for EIPA members to participate in the work and receive reimbursement for their time & expenses. Opportunities will be shared with members via the EIPA Listserv. If you are interested in participating, applying, and/or engaging in some of the work ahead, we welcome you! Because frankly, we need your expertise!

If you are interested and want to learn more about the partnership with ELPA, the workplan, and how you can participate, please join us for a zoom meeting on Wednesday, August 23, 2023 from 12-1. Members of EIPA's Executive Committee will share more information and answer your questions. No registration is required. The meeting will be recorded and shared with membership following the meeting.