Think Together was founded 25 years ago from a need to provide a safe and welcoming place for children and youth to receive academic support.

For more than two decades, Think Together has worked side by side with education leaders across California to grow our services from its humble beginnings as a single afterschool center in Costa Mesa funded solely by the generosity of our earliest donors to the state’s largest nonprofit provider of expanded learning programs serving close to 200,000 students.

While there’s much to celebrate, there’s also much to reflect on and respond to. There’s a deepening divide of outcomes for students. Those hit hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic—mostly lower-socio-economic individuals and families—are lagging even further behind academically and feeling the mental-health and social-emotional effects.

This divide was made clear when results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), often called The Nation’s Report Card, revealed that two out of three students did not meet state math standards, and more than half did not meet English standards on state assessments taken in the spring of 2022.

Yet, there’s hope. As California has grappled with the impacts of the pandemic, it has also increased its investment in education and supports including plans for universal expanded learning. Previous funding served about 15% of the students at a typical school. In the new environment, all students will have access. This implies a growth of six times current program levels just at schools we currently serve!

To meet this moment, we need the same kind of village of supporters from Think Together’s earliest days to bring their ingenuity, creativity, and resources to continue the growth trajectory, enhance program quality, and recruit and retain the best talent for our young people. Together we can forge ahead with renewed hope and determination in our work with schools to change the odds for kids.

As I reflect on the three years in which I had the opportunity to lead Think Together’s board, it’s been a whirlwind of activity. In the fall of 2019 we launched a strategic planning initiative with the pro bono support of Boston Consulting Group. In the midst of that process, we acquired the expanding learning division of the nonprofit organization, Youth Policy Institute, which had suddenly closed its doors. The acquisition saved programs for 10,000 students as well as 450 jobs.

In March 2020, the pandemic hit and schools closed. With no idea of what the future might bring, we needed to respond with new supports for our communities. Think Together also recently completed the acquisition of Orenda Education, which trains school leaders to improve the academic performance of their school systems. Now, with a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Orenda Education is turning its data-driven school improvement methodologies into software tools in order to scale its impact.

Why are we doing all of this work? Pre-pandemic, only about half of California’s 6 million students were performing at grade level, whereas 2 million students were—by any definition—struggling academically. In response to this, the Think Together board created a moonshot goal to close this gap—a vision we call Project 2 Million. We know there are examples of schools and districts that have closed these gaps, and we believe that Think Together can help replicate and scale these bright spots so that no child is left behind.

As you think about your time, talent, and treasure and how you might invest those valuable resources to make the world a better place, I would encourage you to join us at Think Together in our journey to change the odds for vulnerable kids. My life has been greatly enriched by my time being involved here, and I bet yours will be, too.
Think Together’s mission is to partner with schools to change the odds for kids.

To meet our mission, Think Together works with school districts and charter management organizations to deliver high-quality education and enrichment programs to students throughout the state. These programs wrap around students’ traditional school day, supporting their academic journeys before school, after school, during summer, breaks, and more.

Think Together’s school-improvement division, Orenda Education, supports Think Together’s mission further by providing teachers and school leadership with systems and tools to help ensure every student—no matter their demographic or circumstance—receives the premium education that only some students currently receive.
A YEAR IN REVIEW

Think Together Turns 25
This past year, Think Together celebrated 25 years of impacting students. Established as a nonprofit in 1997, the organization has grown from one volunteer-run program to serving 200,000 students in more than 500 schools throughout the state. Over the past 25 years, the organization has supported an estimated two million students throughout their education journey.

Now Hiring!
Over the past year, staffing became a top priority for Think Together. With new state grants helping to serve more students, the need to hire and train more Program Leaders to run expanded learning programs increased. Coupled with the challenge of statewide staffing shortages for all industries, Think Together invested in a new Talent Acquisition department to source, recruit, and hire quality applicants.

School Improvement Division
Think Together fully acquired school-improvement organization Orenda Education, formerly an affiliate of Think Together, to provide long-term sustainability and scalability for Orenda’s data-driven, equity-focused approach for educators. Now a Think Together division, Orenda was recently awarded a $4 million Education Innovation and Research grant by the U.S. Department of Education to digitize and distribute its school-improvement approach through an online platform to reach educators throughout the United States and impact more students.

Expanded Learning Opportunities Programs
Two years of pandemic-disrupted learning continued to negatively affect student performance in school. California lawmakers allocated additional funding and identified expanded learning organizations to provide the academic, social, and emotional support that students need. This historic funding allowed more students to be served for more days per year and more hours per day than ever before.

For 25 years, there has been an undercurrent of our original motto still coursing through our daily work: Teaching, Helping, Inspiring, Nurturing Kids—Together.
—Randy Barth

Project 2 Million
Think Together continues to envision a state where the two million students who are currently not meeting grade-level standards receive the academic support they need to prepare them for college and a fruitful career. Although the pandemic has intensified this challenge, this year’s exciting developments, including Expanded Learning Opportunities Programs grants, universal pre-kindergarten, and Orenda Education’s digitized platform, are steps toward transforming our vision into reality.

PRE-COVID

| 15% of students had access to programs |
| 6 LEARNING HOURS |
| 180 DAYS PER YEAR |

TODAY

| 80% of students have access to programs |
| 9 LEARNING HOURS |
| 210 DAYS PER YEAR |
Think Together is proud to partner with school districts and charter management organizations throughout California to support our mission.

For a list of the districts we serve, please visit: thinktogether.org/annualreport2022

I love Think Together, and I have been here since kindergarten!
—4th grade student, Orange Unified School District in Orange County

189,706
STUDENTS

572
SCHOOL SITES

49
DISTRICT PARTNERS

27
CHARTER PARTNERS

SONOMA COUNTY
6,761 STUDENTS
1 DISTRICT

BAY AREA
2,665 STUDENTS
3 DISTRICTS

KERN COUNTY
2,822 STUDENTS
1 DISTRICT

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
44,967 STUDENTS
8 DISTRICTS

RIVERSIDE COUNTY
25,900 STUDENTS
13 DISTRICTS

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
9,628 STUDENTS
1 DISTRICT

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
26,181 STUDENTS
13 DISTRICTS

IMPERIAL COUNTY
8,972 STUDENTS
1 DISTRICT

ORANGE COUNTY
59,660 STUDENTS
7 DISTRICTS

SAN DIEGO COUNTY
2,150 STUDENTS
1 DISTRICT
Our mission is to partner with schools to change the odds for kids. We do this by providing academic and enrichment support in the following focus areas:

**EARLY LEARNING**
Think Together’s Early Learning programs promote school readiness for children from birth to 5 years of age. Programs include early literacy, early math skills, preschool, and parent education.

**EXPANDED LEARNING**
Expanded learning programs wrap around a student’s typical school day to provide academics, enrichment, physical fitness, and social-emotional support. Programs include after school programs, summer (and other non-instructional days), and tailored student support services. Programs are free of charge for families.

**SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**
Orenda Education is Think Together’s school improvement division, partnering with schools’ teachers and leadership teams to close the achievement gap and improve student outcomes, such as mastery of English-language and math curriculum, increased graduation rates, and college readiness.

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**Early Learning**
Think Together’s Early Learning programs provide the youngest students and their families with the tools and skills they need to start their academic journey with success. Programs include state preschools, parent academies, Learning Link, early literacy and math programs, Read for the Record, and Raising a Reader.

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**I am happy with the program and that there are funds for families like me, as a single mom.**
—Early Learning parent, Orange County

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**IMPACTED**

54,324

**STUDENTS & THEIR FAMILIES**

86% of Think Together preschool students met or exceeded expectations for math

88% of Think Together preschool students met or exceeded expectations for literacy

GOLD assessments
Afterschool K–8
Afterschool, Think Together’s flagship program, is only one component of expanded learning, which includes all programs that wrap around a student’s typical school day. Think Together offers programs free of charge for families on school sites.

**35,337 STUDENTS SERVED**

**Additional Funding Provided Enhanced Programs After School for Students**

- 282 schools benefited from... sports programs
- 134 schools benefited from... STEM programs
- 60 schools benefited from... AVID
- 33 schools benefited from... visual and performing arts programs
- 42 schools benefited from... other enhanced programs

High School
Think Together High School afterschool programs are drop-in programs, providing enrichment, college and career guidance, mentorship, and a safe space for teens.

Students engage in college continuum support, workforce and career readiness; enrichment in subjects, such as art, gardening, ceramics, gaming, and dance; and life-skills workshops, including lessons in financial literacy, driver’s education, food handlers’ certification, and more.

**4,019 STUDENTS SERVED**

**33 HIGH SCHOOLS**

*It’s amazing. It lifts up communities into a better way and helps everyone find their interests they never knew they had.*

—High school student, Lakeview Charter High School in L.A. Metro region

**23 COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED TOTALING $24,000**

**92 INTERNSHIPS TOTALING $26,000**

**97% of students said they felt a sense of belonging because of Think Together**

**90% of students who attend Think Together enjoy school more**
Think Summer
Students join Think Together for up to nine weeks of summer, receiving academic support and enrichment to mitigate learning loss. This past year, additional funding allowed students to expand their horizons with field trips to off-site locations, such as zoos and museums, and on-site experiences with cultural performances and special guests.

SUMMER 2022
18,568 STUDENTS SERVED
40% INCREASE SINCE 2021
99% INCREASE FROM PRE-COVID (2019)

I have been fortunate enough to have had four children in Think Together at elementary school, middle school, and high school level over the past 10 years. It has been such a life saver for me as a working mom and such a fun place that all of my kids have enjoyed.

—Parent, Rialto USD in San Bernardino
Orenda Education partners with teachers and school leadership to close the achievement gap by building and refining systems and practices to improve student outcomes.

Breaking down the barriers to opportunity, equity and access in education by keeping students and their success as the centered focus is one of the most meaningful investments for our future generations. We are pleased to partner with Think Together and Orenda Education as they continue to transform the trajectory of students and the schools they attend.”

— Alyssa Santino, Program Director of the Joseph Drown Foundation
Statewide Staffing Solution
Think Together is leading the way to create solutions to support California’s increased need to hire qualified individuals to run critical expanded learning programs. Think Together is partnering with school districts, colleges and universities, and the top talent-acquisition professionals in the United States to form a Staffing Collaborative. This collaborative will enable expanded learning providers to hire the staff that is needed for universal expanded learning across the state, fulfilling California’s investment in educating today’s students.

Accelerate Learning
The pandemic amplified the need for students in underserved communities to have access to enrichment programs. These vital programs—which take place during afterschool hours and spring and summer breaks—provide the additional education, exploration, and enrichment that are essential for students to learn new skills and discover their passions. Think Together is forming key partnerships to offer enrichment “accelerators” in the arts, STEM subjects, and sports statewide. Accelerator pilot programs will begin in select schools by spring 2023.

Closing the Achievement Gap
Imagine an education system where all students master grade-level curriculum each year and graduate high school ready for college. Think Together’s school-improvement division, Orenda Education, has a proven approach to empower systemic changes within school systems to accelerate student learning and close the achievement gap. Orenda will be leveraging a $4 million Education Innovation and Research grant from the U.S. Department of Education to digitize and distribute their approach through an online platform. Soon, teachers and school leaders across the nation will have free access to tools, training, and modules that can improve student outcomes and impact the academic success and lives of students.

When I grow up, I want to be a teacher or a Think Together Program Leader.
—5th grade student, Bellflower Unified School District in South East Los Angeles region

New Opportunities Will Expand Early Learning
California has adopted Universal Prekindergarten; by 2026, all 4-year-olds in the state will have access transitional kindergarten in public schools to better prepare them for school success. Think Together is now supporting school districts with before- and after-school programs designed specifically for these young students.

Additionally, Think Together Early Learning has been awarded more than $2 million for General Child Care and Development (CCTR) grants with the California Department of Social Services. Our goal is to provide contracted sites with a comprehensive and cost-effective system of childcare and development services for children 0 to 3 years old and their parents.
Think Together’s generous donor community came together this past year to continue to fund excellence, innovation, and infrastructure to augment state and federal grants. We thank our corporate and foundation partners and individual donors for their gifts.

**TOTAL RAISED**

$3,550,000

$0.90

OF EVERY DOLLAR GOES DIRECTLY TO STUDENT PROGRAMS

**Philanthropic Funding Sources**

- **FOUNDATIONS**: 40%
- **INDIVIDUAL DONORS**: 30%
- **CORPORATIONS**: 19%
- **EVENTS**: 11%

**Raise A Hand event raised**

$645,000

Think Together’s work is important because it is fundamentally elevating the success curve for thousands of students. Their ability to impact the kids and narrow achievement gaps through education and targeted programming is powerful, and it’s rewarding to be involved in the process.

—Khary Espy, Sr. Relationship Manager, Northern Trust, Think Together supporter for more than 10 years

Donors in Orange County raise their hands to benefit student learning. To become a sponsor of our 2023 Raise A Hand event, please visit thinktogether.org/raiseahand
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C. Ronald Livingston
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Jack and Bette Wassom
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## FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING ON JUNE 30, 2022

### REVENUES

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### EXPENSES

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*(A) Includes allocated portions of $3.7m total combined philanthropic support received during the fiscal year.
(B) Includes recognition of $15M In-Kind program services, such as volunteer time and facility and snack costs, contributed by school district partners.*