

Funding Accelerate Philly

presented by

The Fund for the School District of Philadelphia



Bold Investments

Better Outcomes

Brighter Futures

2023-2028

“A strong public education system is essential to the well-being of Philadelphia and its people.”

“The William Penn Foundation believes in the power of education to transform lives and supports efforts dedicated to helping students realize their potential. Our investments to expand and enhance summer learning, school-based early literacy, playful learning, and other programs aim to ensure that all students have access to high-quality learning opportunities that prepare them for success. Only through sufficient, stable funding can schools offer the instructional supports and enrichment necessary for students to thrive. With continued investment in public education, Philadelphia can foster economic progress, strengthen communities, and advance equity.”



- Jennifer Stavrakos, Program Director, Great Learning, William Penn Foundation

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Kathryn Epps Roberson, President & CEO of The Fund for the School District of Philadelphia

The School District of Philadelphia's mission is to prepare its students for the future they desire. Since 2015, the District, students, families, businesses and foundations in Philadelphia have entrusted The Fund for the School District of Philadelphia to support that mission through strategic partnerships and dollars raised to benefit our children and schools.



Over the years, The Fund has aligned our fundraising efforts with the immediate and long-term needs of the District. We welcomed investments from GlaxoSmithKline to support math and science education, contributions from the Hess Foundation to enhance literacy programming and build school play spaces, more than 100,000 COVID-19 test kits from Wawa to keep teachers and students safe, and in-kind gifts of food and produce from FCM Hospitality to help more than 730 students prepare for careers in the culinary industry, among many other examples. We have also worked closely with partners like the William Penn Foundation, Comcast, the GIANT Company, PECO, and others as they found opportunities for direct investment into District programs and initiatives, and helped those efforts grow to scale.

Now with Accelerate Philly there is a District-wide roadmap that incorporates the Board of Education's Goals and Guardrails that will strategically guide investments going forward. Together we will create innovative and evidenced-based programs that have the power to transform outcomes for our children.

In June of 2022, Tony B. Watlington Sr, Ed.D was sworn in as the Superintendent for the School District of Philadelphia. On day one, he committed to this District becoming the fastest improving urban school district in the nation. In May of 2023, the delivery of Accelerate Philly - the transformative five-year strategic plan for the District - provided the blueprint to make this goal possible. Exactly one year and one week later, I was announced President and CEO of The Fund on the promise that I would strengthen our public-private partnerships as we - The Fund, the District, and the city - work toward our shared goal of building better futures for our children. **With Accelerate Philly, we now have the five-year game plan for getting this accomplished by 2028.**

Progress is not possible without investment. At The Fund, we will be working closely with the District's Office of Strategic Planning, responsible for the implementation of Accelerate Philly, to ensure that we are always focused on the ever evolving needs of students. We have an audacious goal informed by an ambitious plan that has the potential to positively change the trajectory for a generation of young people.

And we need you. The Fund has set an overall goal of raising \$40 million for the strategic priorities and actions laid out in Accelerate Philly by 2028, and an immediate goal of raising \$6 million in year 1.

Let's make this happen. Join us as we Accelerate Philly.

The Fund and the School District: Partners in Advancing Public Education in Philadelphia



THE **fund** FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA



MISSION

We identify, coordinate and connect philanthropic resources—through effective public-private partnerships—to leverage investments in local public schools.



About the School District of Philadelphia

The School District of Philadelphia is the largest educator of public school students in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. As one of the largest school districts in the United States, the District serves more than 116,000 students in Philadelphia's 218 public schools.

Core Values

- Safety is imperative to the District's work.
- Equity requires needs-based distribution of resources.
- Collaboration involves gathering and honoring community voices.
- Joy inspires active engagement and belonging.
- Trust is built through good communication, public transparency, and holding ourselves accountable.
- Ambition requires the District to work with urgency to accelerate student achievement.

The Board of Education is the governing body responsible for overseeing all policies and budgetary decisions of the School District of Philadelphia. In 2020, the Board took a close look at what empowers all students to succeed in and beyond the classroom. The result was five Goals and four accompanying Guardrails that outline what our students must know, what they should be able to accomplish, and what building conditions our students need to achieve the best possible outcomes.

The Goals and Guardrails are designed to coordinate efforts across the District to drive improved student success and, in turn, serve as the long-term measurable outcomes for Accelerate Philly, the District's five-year strategic plan.

Accelerate Philly centers around five priorities connected to one big goal: **to improve the future of every child in the School District of Philadelphia.**

When we focus on...

- Engaging with families and community members in the education of all students,
- Prioritizing the social-emotional well-being, mental health, and intellectual and physical safety of all students and staff,
- Centering schools and school leadership teams as the units of change,
- Advancing equity through everything we do and every decision we make; and
- Aligning our resources, trainings, and accountability structures to a limited number of innovative and research based priorities.



We will then **transform learning and life outcomes** for all students.

The School District of Philadelphia **has many successes** to build on.

Student test scores **have improved** in 13 out of 17 areas for students in grades 3-12.

PSSA Math

- The percentage of grades 3 through 8 students who scored Proficient or Advanced increased by 4.2 percentage points from 16.5% in 2021-22 to 20.7% in 2022-23.
- The percentage of grades 3 through 8 students who scored Below Basic declined by 4.9 percentage points, from 61.7% in 2021-22 to 56.8% in 2022-23.
- The percentage of grade 3 students who scored Proficient or Advanced increased by 5.7 percentage points from 20.8% in 2021-22 to 26.5% in 2022-23.
- The percentage of grade 3 students who scored Below Basic also declined by 6.9 percentage points from 58.9% in 2021-22 to 52% in 2022-23.

PSSA English Language Arts

- The percentage of students who scored Proficient or Advanced in grades 3 through 8 remained stable at around 34%.
- The percentage of grade 3 through 8 students who scored Below Basic declined by 1.8 percentage points from 28.2% to 26.4% between 2021-22 and 2022-23.
- The percentage of grade 3 students who scored Proficient or Advanced increased by 2.9 percentage points from 28.1% in 2021-22 to 31% in 2022-23.
- The percentage of grade 3 students who scored Below Basic on the PSSA ELA declined by 6.6 percentage points, from 38.2% in 2021-22 to 31.4% in 2022-23.



PSSA Science

- The percentage of students who were proficient in Science increased 3.1 percentage points from 37.1% in 2021-22 to 40.2% in 2022-23.
- The percentage of grade 3 through 8 students who scored Below Basic declined by 2 percentage points from 35.6% to 33.6% between 2021-22 and 2022-23.

Keystone Literature

The percentage of 11th grade students who scored Proficient or Advanced in Literature increased by 6.3 percentage points from 47.6% in 2018-19 to 53.9% in 2022-23.

Keystone Biology

- The percentage of 11th grade students who scored Below Basic declined by almost 5.2 percentage points from 43.2% in 2018-19 to 38% in 2022-23.
- Additionally, the percentage of eligible 12th grade Career and Technical Education (CTE) students, who scored competent or above on an industry-aligned National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI) test, increased from 43.4% in 2021-22 to 49.1% in 2022-23, an increase of 5.7 percentage points.

And during the 2022-2023 school year:

- Safety Pathways increased by 7 from 6 in 2021-22 to 13 in 2022-23.
- Student Attendance increased by 3 percentage points from 57% in 2021-22 to 60% in 2022-23.
- Teacher Attendance increased by 7 percentage points from 77% in 2021-22 to 84% in 2022-23.
- Dropouts decreased by 265 students from 3,917 in 2021-22 to 3,652 in 2022-23.
- Based on preliminary data, the 4-year graduation rate increased by 3 percentage points from 71% in 2021-22 to 74% in 2022-23.

Continued progress requires consistent investments.

The School District of Philadelphia sets the priorities, and The Fund aligns the investments of partners with those priorities. Together we work to improve student outcomes in every zip code, regardless of family income or circumstances.

The Fund for the School District of Philadelphia is the only organization of its kind in the city. It is a trusted steward of funds in support of quality public education in Philadelphia that has raised more than \$30 million in the last 5 years for our public schools.



The Fund is responsible for:

1. Managing Funds

The Fund ensures that privately-funded initiatives are managed with the accountability and oversight required to maximize impact on student achievement. The Fund also serves as the fiscal agent for designated funding which originates from donors and/or the school system itself.

Major donors include:

Comcast Corporation

The GIANT Company

GlaxoSmithKline

Independence Blue Cross and affiliates

Live Nation

The Neubauer Family Foundation

PECO

Wawa

The William Penn Foundation

The Vernon Family Foundation

2. Facilitating Partnerships

The Fund leverages public-private partnerships that open pathways to innovative and effective ways to support the District's priorities and propel our children to success.

Signature accomplishments include:

- Raising over \$7 million in two months to purchase 35,000 Chromebooks so that students could learn virtually
- Funding career and technical education opportunities of all kinds
- Supporting Read to Succeed early literacy programming, which recently expanded from summer to year-round instruction
- Providing innovative STEM educational opportunities, novel science equipment and instruction, and robotics clubs
- Funding fresh produce stands at 19 public schools
- Supporting playground construction and refurbishment at schools across the District
- Supporting library and classroom books projects
- Managing Philly FUNDamentals – our crowdfunding platform that raises money for school-based projects and enhancements

3. Championing Strategic Priorities

The Fund is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit that works closely with the District to ensure investments align with the overarching goals for Philadelphia's public schools.

With Accelerate Philly, the School District of Philadelphia and The Fund for the School District of Philadelphia have a shared mandate to improve student achievement by 2028.

Our 5-Year Charge to Accelerate Philly

Accelerate Philly means transforming outcomes for **ALL** students! As we become the fastest improving urban school district in the nation, we will put our children on the fast track to success.

- **What you'll find** is a plan that prioritizes student and staff safety, establishes deep partnerships with our community, and focuses resources on proven, research-based strategies to improve student achievement.
- **What you'll realize** is that each priority is intentional and based on research. Separately, each priority fulfills a need. Collectively, the priorities position our children for the futures they deserve.
- **What you'll feel** is a role for you and your institution in supporting the initiatives that shape each priority and ultimately bring Accelerate Philly to life.

An ambitious plan requires bold investments. For Accelerate Philly to be transformative, the District needs you.

The Fund for the School District of Philadelphia has a goal to raise **\$40 million** to Accelerate Philly. Here is what we are fundraising for.



Priority Area 1:

Improve Safety & Wellbeing

Safe environments are critical for our students and staff to learn and grow. This includes physical, social-emotional, and environmental safety.

THE FUND HAS BEEN... building playgrounds, libraries, outdoor classrooms, fitness centers, sensory rooms, and myriad other facilities improvement projects to enhance students' experience in schools throughout the district.

In addition, The Fund supports 19 healthy food distribution sites at public schools across the city to combat pervasive food insecurity that affects student outcomes.



And this is how we Accelerate Philly



Better Buildings, with updates and improvements made to our facilities.

Safer Schools, by developing innovative violence prevention and student wellness programs.



/// The GIANT Company is proud to partner with The Fund to feed the children in the district through the generosity of our customers and team members. Working to ensure all children in the district have access to fresh, nutritious food means that the children are able to focus on their studies rather than their bellies, and helps to create a stronger, thriving Philadelphia. ///

- The GIANT Company Impact Team

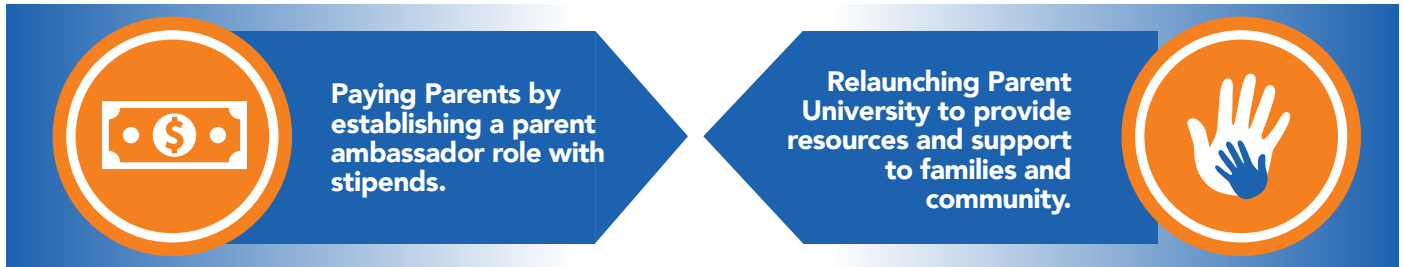
Priority Area 2:

Partner with Families and Communities

To live its core values of trust and collaboration, the District must foster trusting relationships with students, families, staff, and the entire Philadelphia community through transparent communication and frequent opportunities for partnership. Forging strong partnerships and creating clear collaborative structures between the District and our broader community will enable us all to collectively support accelerated student achievement.

THE FUND SUPPORTS... PBIS incentives, academic awards, student stipends, and post-secondary scholarships that help engage students and their families in the value and promise of public education.

And this is how we Accelerate Philly



Priority Area 3:

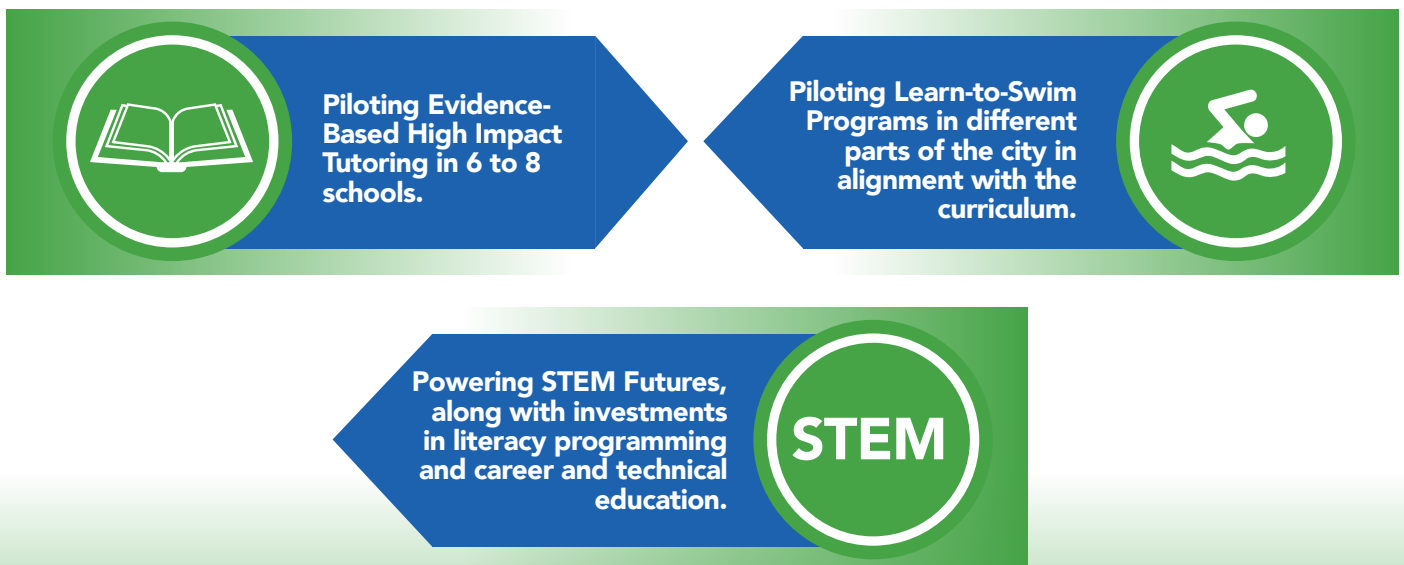
Accelerate Academic Achievement

The District's primary goal is to provide the learning environments and supports necessary for all students to develop foundational academic skills and graduate college and career ready.

THE FUND HAS SUPPORTED... Read to Succeed early literacy programming, which provides year-round literacy instruction and materials to children throughout the District.

In addition, we fund innovative STEM initiatives and career and technical education opportunities that would otherwise be out of reach.

And this is how we Accelerate Philly



Priority Area 4:

Recruit & Retain Diverse Highly Effective Teachers (and Talent)

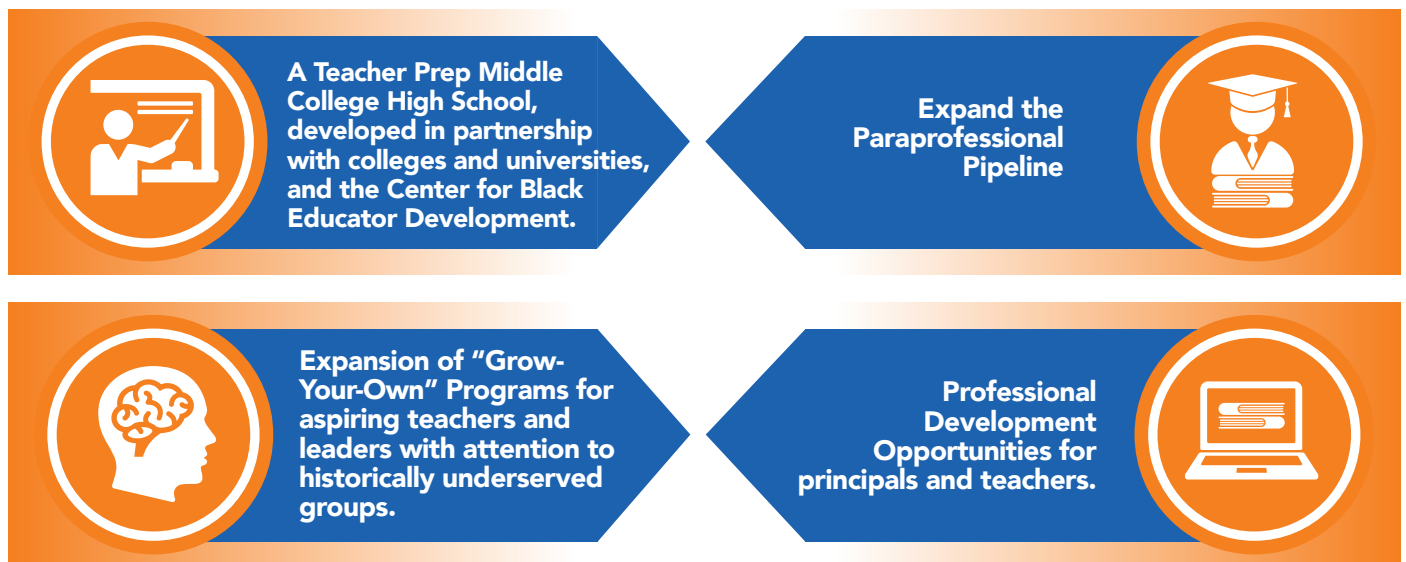
Teachers and school leaders are the most important factor when it comes to student learning and academic growth. Ensuring that all school staff members are well-trained and prepared for their roles allows our schools to prioritize high-quality teaching and learning, and cultivate environments that are supportive and nurturing to both students and staff.

THE FUND PROVIDED... seed dollars to launch a paraprofessional teacher pipeline program that helps elevate district support staff to full-time teaching positions.

We fund annual principal and teacher awards that provide inspiration and incentives to top talent.

And The Fund has supported signing and retention bonuses to help recruit and retain dedicated educators.

And this is how we Accelerate Philly



Priority Area 5:

Deliver Efficient, High Quality, Cost Effective Operations

To drive progress toward accelerated student achievement, the District must have productive and equitable operations supported by high-functioning systems, clear prioritization, and strong accountability. It is essential that the District cultivates a high-performing, collaborative, and results-oriented culture that supports school leadership teams as the unit of change.

THE FUND IS... exploring launching new initiatives focused on capacity building for the Fire & Life Safety Division.

And this is how we Accelerate Philly





PECO greatly appreciates the partnership it has built with the Fund for the School District of Philadelphia. This has extended to support of the Frankford High School Solar Installer Technical Program, part of PEA's Bright Solar Futures program. We proudly look forward to seeing the 'bright' futures ahead for these students who will have access to learn skills allowing them to enter one of the fastest-growing energy careers.

**- Romona Riscoe Benson,
Director, Corporate and Community Impact, PECO**

No institution is more important to the future for city residents, businesses, and the overall economy than the School District of Philadelphia.

With Accelerate Philly, The School District of Philadelphia has put forth an ambitious plan that has the potential to set our children on a path where their futures are truly limitless; where every single child educated in our city's public schools will have the support, the resources, and the education needed to compete in a global economy. This future, however, is not possible without the monetary investments required to propel the actions and evidenced-based models outlined in Accelerate Philly forward.

The School District of Philadelphia has one mission: to prepare each one of its students to imagine and realize any future they desire. The introduction of Accelerate Philly provides every individual and institution that cares about public education with a blueprint for how we - together - create better futures for our children. Our plan, Funding Accelerate Philly, also explicitly outlines the opportunities and programs for direct investment into our schools and for our children.

Now is the time to position our children to take their place as leaders in this city, and the world.

Join us in our \$40 million commitment to Fund Accelerate Philly.



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