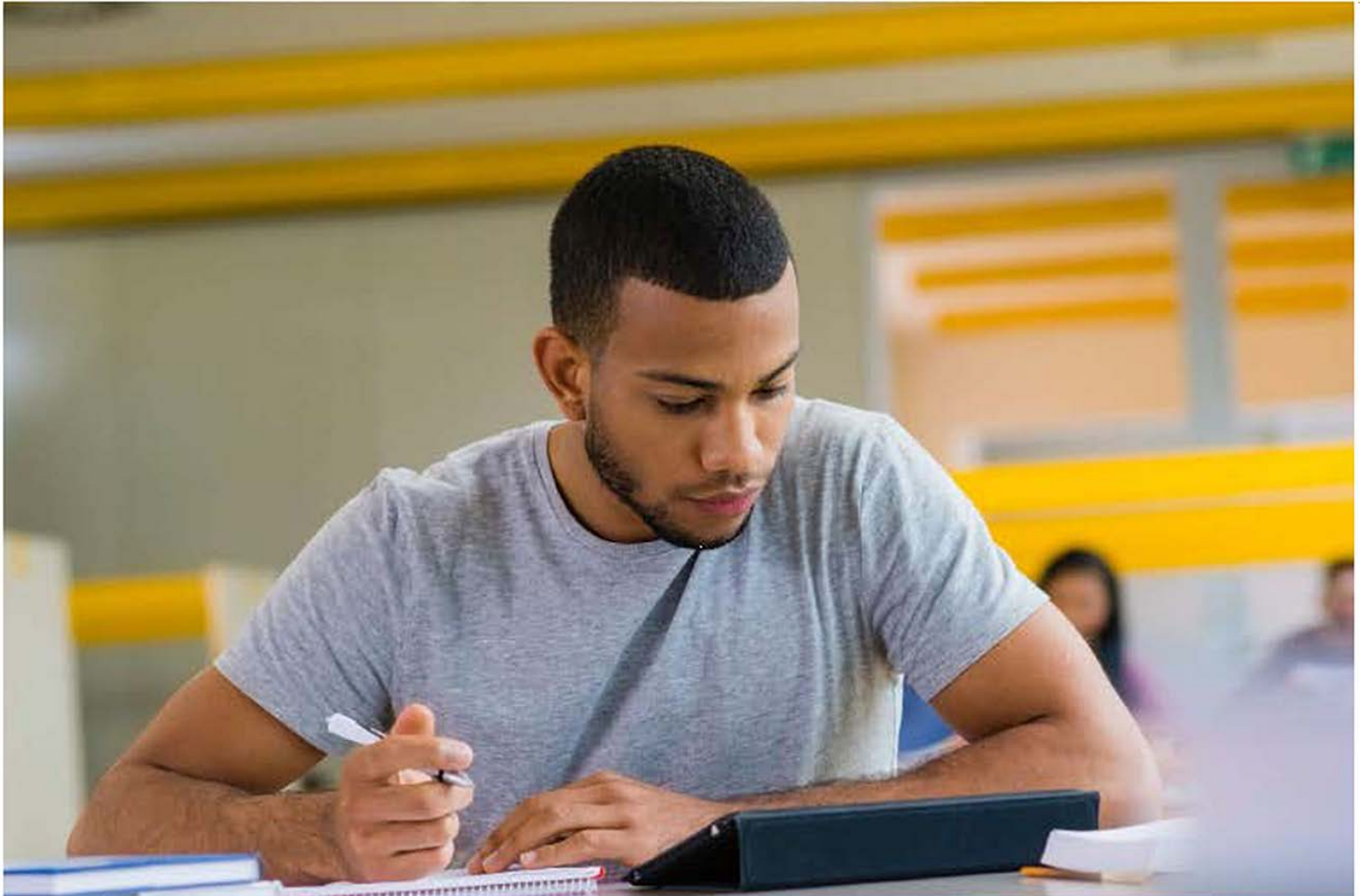




THE CHAD SCHOOL FOUNDATION



AN EXAMINATION OF NEWARK EDUCATION PHILANTHROPY: 2012-2015

A CHAD POLICY ROUNDTABLE REPORT
REGINALD LEWIS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE NEWARK FUNDERS' EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE, AN AFFINITY GROUP OF THE COUNCIL FOR NEW JERSEY GRANTMAKERS, conducted a review of Newark philanthropic efforts in support of systemic school reform in the city over the course of several recent fiscal years. Three specific objectives guided this review:

- Catalogue education grantmaking during fiscal years 2012-2015.
- Summarize lessons learned from individual and collective philanthropic strategies designed to strengthen public education in Newark.
- Identify reforms funders believe demonstrate promise and should be preserved and/or continued.

Newark funders invested \$75 million dollars in grants across 10 funding categories. Each area reflects the priorities where funders were most active, particularly major, systemic initiatives involving the collaboration of two or more foundations. Categories include Arts, Charter Development and Expansion, Early Childhood Education, Extended Learning and Out-of-School Time, Health, Independent and Parochial, Innovation, Post-Secondary Supports, Talent, and Vulnerable Populations.

Results of this assessment have been compiled in the pages that follow this summary and represents consensus among the participating foundations about emerging opportunities to improve Newark Public Schools.

ARTS

RTA and NAER represent two strategic philanthropic initiatives designed to increase access to high-quality arts education in the city. Without the leadership, multi-year support and guidance of the Dodge, Prudential, and Victoria Foundations, neither of these efforts would have come to fruition. More students are receiving greater access to high-quality arts programming. Nearly 16,000 students now benefit from arts programming taking place in 22 RTA district schools. An additional 4,000 students over the 2014 and 2015 summers benefited from the integration of arts in the Summer Plus program facilitated by NAER. Yet, the two programs operate on parallel tracks and would benefit from the greater coordination and sharing of resources.

CHARTER DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION

The Newark charter sector has experienced enormous growth in just a few short years. Much of this expansion during the period of review was largely fueled by demand from parents desperate for alternatives to traditional neighborhood schools. The Newark Charter School Fund (NCSF) has worked to build capacity to ensure the quality growth of charter schools. NCSF funding of technical assistance in the area of special education, in particular, has proven invaluable to charters grappling with an influx of classified students.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Several funders noted the improbability of leveraging significant federal dollars for New Jersey without the collective influence of the Early Learning Funders Group. Beyond the monetary value of multi-year commitments represented by Race to the Top and Head Start dollars, funders also noted the growing shift toward an infant and toddler agenda among state policymakers. Efforts to support objectives aligned to the Increased Quality, Expanded Access initiative (improving the Early Head Start workforce, strengthening center quality, and expanding access to services for families), will continue to receive priority support among early care funders.

EXTENDED LEARNING AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

An enormous amount of synergistic activities were funded to support the leveraging of time to improve student outcomes. Funder-initiated efforts resulted in progress made on several fronts, including the development of an infrastructure at NPS to coordinate, develop, implement, and promote quality before/after school and summer programs. Over 50 percent of NPS schools now offer some form of expanded learning.

HEALTH

Newark funders made a substantial investment in efforts to improve health outcomes among the city's school-age population. The funding of school-based health facilities in particular, has led to an increase in student access to a range of medical and dental services over the years. Yet, funders and local stakeholders have expressed some concern about the underutilization of these resources.

INDEPENDENT AND PAROCHIAL

Lessons and insights from Saint Benedict's Preparatory School and Saint Vincent Academy could inform the local discourse on teaching and learning in the City of Newark. The successful strategies employed by these schools suggest possible approaches for Newark's underperforming public schools. The use of interim assessments to support student growth, for example, has been successfully used to guide students' efforts toward continuous improvement across all subject areas.

INNOVATION

When measuring the collective impact of the Pooled Fund's ability to meet its overall goal to incubate, support, and sustain high-quality public school options, several funders concede that much work remains to be done. In the rush to support a major district strategy largely viewed unfavorably by the community, many questions around accountability measures and metrics required for assessing outcomes were not explored during the initial implementation of new school models. As the work of the Pooled Fund continues, funders will grapple with the justification of resources for Model Schools that on average perform on par with traditional neighborhood schools.

POST-SECONDARY SUPPORTS

In a few short years, the Newark City of Learning Collaborative (NCLC) has elevated the conversation in Newark pertaining to college completion. By engaging over 60 organizational stakeholders, the collaborative has created a great deal of momentum on a policy dialogue that compels a systematic assessment of all pathways leading to success at the post-secondary level. In so doing, NCLC has forged several initiatives to ensure supports are in place for students throughout their matriculation in local colleges and universities.

TALENT

For many years, NPS found itself at a disadvantage competing with suburban and other large urban districts that could offer a more efficient and expedited hiring process for talented teachers and administrators. The existence of a human capital management system did not exist prior to the infusion of philanthropic investments made during the 2012-2015 period, including support for the establishment of the NPS Talent Office. NPS now has a systematic process to recruit, hire, support, and evaluate teachers, principals and other administrators throughout the year.

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Targeted philanthropic support during the period of review resulted in a significant attempt to shift district policy on an extremely vulnerable population, which heretofore had been poorly served by NPS for many years. Major strides were made in the creation of a system of supports to expand successful pathways for over-age and under-credited students, and disconnected youth. These efforts will now continue under the newly-formed Opportunity Youth Network to ensure that vulnerable youth will find adequate supports to become contributing members of society.

OVERVIEW

THE NEWARK PHILANTHROPIC COMMUNITY HAS A RICH HISTORY of involvement with Newark schools. For decades, local foundations have supported an array of school improvement and reform efforts designed to strengthen public education in the city. Foundation grants have been used to support early childhood education, afterschool programs, professional development for teachers and principals, improving literacy and math instruction, parent training and advocacy, and art and music residencies. In more recent years, charter school development and expansion, as well as increasing college access have also become major priorities for Newark funders.

Nearly 50,000 students are enrolled in the Newark District and charter schools, New Jersey's largest school district. Nearly thirty-five thousand students (34,800) attend 66 district schools, and 14,500 attend 35 charter schools.¹ Chronic underachievement and longstanding operational and management deficiencies created the conditions for the New Jersey Department of Education to assume control of Newark Public Schools (NPS) in 1995. While the district has made progress in addressing organizational and management concerns since then, Newark students still lag behind their peers throughout the state in student performance, including literacy and math proficiency.

For the 2015 academic year, only 21 percent of NPS fourth graders met or exceeded expectations in English Language Arts, and 17 percent in Math. For the same year, only 24 percent of eighth grade students were reading on grade level, with 19 percent proficient in Math.² The high school graduation rate of 69.59 percent³ still falls approximately 20 points behind the state average of 89.67 percent.⁴

A confluence of several factors in 2010 resulted in a renewed philanthropic focus on NPS' persistent achievement gap. In addition to maintaining core support for many of the activities cited above, local foundations developed more strategic approaches to education grantmaking in the city. The Newark Funders Group (NFG), initiated by the leadership of the Victoria and Bank of America Foundations, under the auspices of the Council of New Jersey Grantmakers, formalized a mechanism for collaborative funding designed to enhance their collective impact on schools.

Funders also launched Newark's first local education fund that same year, the Newark Trust for Education (NTE). NTE was created to mirror the work of local education funds throughout the country, which seek to support, as well as challenge, local public school districts to improve educational outcomes for disadvantaged students. NTE would eventually house a multi-million dollar Funders' Pool to support the creation of high-quality district school models.

Members of NFG now seek to assess the impact of their grantmaking in the city over the course of fiscal years 2012-2015. What follows is a more detailed review of individual and collective grantmaking during this period. Ten foundations provide perspective on key lessons learned from this work, including successes and challenges seen in the work of grantees, as well as highlight areas where they see promise and potential in the future.⁵ These lessons inform several policy recommendations included herein and are designed to enhance the local public discourse.

¹ Newark Public Schools.

² New Jersey Department of Education.

³ Board of Education, Newark Public Schools. *Assessment Of District Progress. 1st ed. Newark: Newark Public Schools, 2015. Web. 28 Oct. 2015.*

⁴ Nj.gov. '2014 Graduation Rates.' N.p., 2015. Web. 29 Oct. 2015.

⁵ Foundation for Newark's Future
Prudential Foundation
The Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey
Victoria Foundation

GEM Foundation
Schumann Fund for New Jersey
The Nicholson Foundation

Newark Charter School Fund
The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation
The Turrell Fund

ONE NEWARK

Shortly after the arrival of State District Superintendent Cami Anderson in 2011, several districtwide reforms were announced, including the consolidation and/or closure of twelve underperforming schools, increasing charter school accountability, and expanding access to Newark's exclusive magnet schools. The superintendent's stated rationale for the proposed school closures involved two major factors, chronic underachievement (consecutive years of large percentages of students failing to meet proficiency requirements for literacy and math), and declining enrollment. Some schools had lost a third or more of their students in recent years, largely due to the expansion of the city's charter sector.

From the consolidation, several schools emerged with a designation as Renew. As stated in 2012 NPS documents, "The idea behind Renew Schools is to start over and create from the ground up a school with five key ingredients." The existence of all five components, regardless of a school's demographic (e.g., high poverty), could lead to a school's success: 1) Great School Leader; 2) Excellent Teachers; 3) Clear Mission and Vision; 4) Safe Building and Flexible Resources; and, 5) Engaged Students and Families. Eight schools were identified to undergo this form of restructuring for the 2012-2013 school year, affecting several thousand students across the city.

Anderson viewed increased charter school accountability as a viable way to expand access to charter seats for special-needs children (e.g., special education and English Language Learners), and increase the sharing of enrollment and performance data. And the opening up of the application and enrollment process for selective district schools (i.e., magnets) would, according to Ms. Anderson, "... foster diversity among students with different socioeconomic backgrounds and levels of achievement." Not since the 1995 state takeover of schools had the Newark community experienced such immense change within the school district (see Reform Time Line).

From the onset, the closures and consolidations were met with major resistance from a variety of stakeholders in the community: parents, students, teachers and administrators of the affected school communities; the teachers' union; local elected officials; and activists. During forums and community meetings throughout the city, many questions were raised about the process and data used to arrive at the selection of schools targeted for closure. Some parents voiced grave concerns about the impact of closings on their children, expressing angst about the uncertainty of the future. "I'm a parent of a child affected by these decisions and I don't have a full understanding of what will take place... I'm not sure what will happen to my son," stated a parent who attended one of the first large-scale community meetings at the Rutgers Robeson Center about the new district reforms.

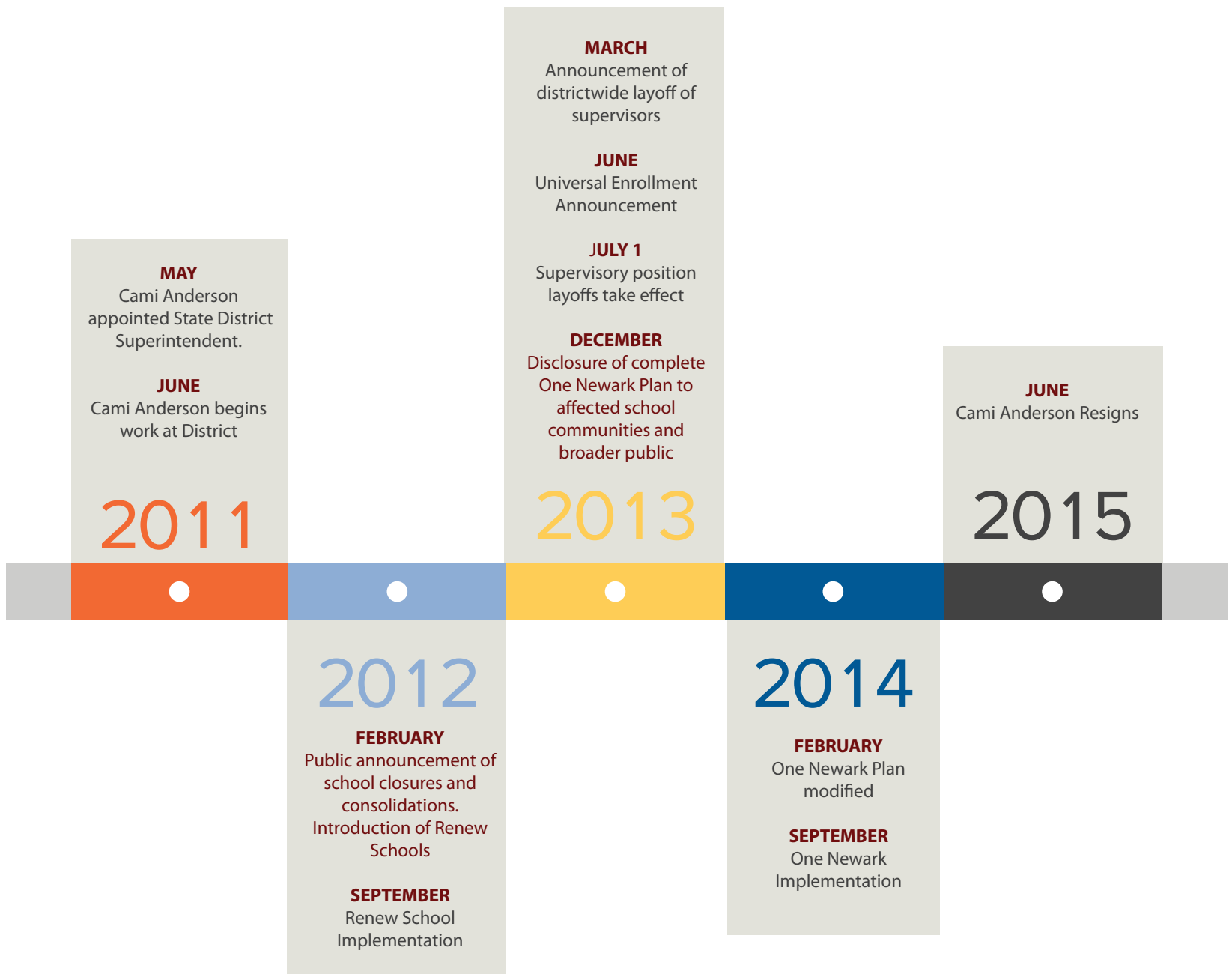
By December of 2013, The One Newark Plan was unveiled. As confirmed by district documents, One Newark would serve as the NPS' system wide reorganization plan to provide all students opportunities to attend excellent schools: "Out of 100 schools in Newark, only about 20 are good. One Newark's commitment is to ensure our children have 100 excellent schools." The Plan outlined three priority areas to accomplish this goal: Excellence, Equity, and Efficiency. Multiple components were incorporated in the One Newark Plan to bring these objectives to fruition:

- Additional Renew School Designations;
- Charter Launches enabling Charter Management Organizations the opportunity to assume control of several K-8 schools formerly operated by the district;
- Redesigned Schools to accelerate achievement;
- Re-siting involving moving schools to different facilities;
- Re-purposing to change the educational use of a facility; and,
- Universal Enrollment to allow parents to select from a menu of school options that include both district and charter schools.

All told, 25 elementary schools representing nearly a third of the district's 38,000 students at the time would be affected by the new plan.

Regardless of the district's stated intentions, opposition to reforms took on momentum. Throughout much of this period, funders observed a growing mistrust between the community and the district. Perspectives gleaned from their grantees and a variety of community stakeholders, e.g., elected officials, non-profit leaders, and the clergy, suggest much of the distrust stemmed from limited and/or poor lines of communication between the district and affected-school communities. As one

TIMELINE FOR REFORMS AND MAJOR DISTRICT CHANGES



funder commented on the general climate of the city, "The pervasive view [from the community] is that reforms were done to us and not with us." As a result, protests became frequent. Several "votes of no confidence" were taken by the Local School Advisory Board and at least one from the Newark City Council. Moreover, there were frequent calls for the superintendent's resignation from various quarters of the city.

The June 21, 2015 announcement of the superintendent's departure, however, has not mitigated the acrimony that continues to exist in the community. Several pressing issues concerning the current and future state of NPS were identified by funders:

LOCAL CONTROL

Shortly after the appointment of former State Education Commissioner, Christopher Cerf, to replace Ms. Anderson, Governor Chris Christie and Mayor Ras Baraka issued a joint statement in support of the transition of the state-run district (NJDOE oversight) to local control:

“It is with great pride that we come together to establish a shared vision for empowering the people of Newark to make decisions over their schools, while sustaining and growing a culture of high expectations, accountability and results in the city. Together, we have created a Newark Education Success Board charged with developing a clear, specific pathway with appropriate timelines and benchmarks for the return of local control to the Newark community.”

The Newark Education Success Board (NESB) is a nine-member panel made up of educators, advocates, and corporate and clergy leaders jointly appointed by the mayor and governor. NESB has already begun soliciting feedback and input from the community as it seeks to meet the charge laid out by the governor and mayor to produce a new set of benchmarks to guide the transition to local authority. However, Newark, along with all other districts in the state, is currently required to adhere to a 2005 law outlining a district performance-monitoring and benchmark system known as the Quality Single Accountability Continuum (QSAC). QSAC requires every district in the state to obtain a score of 80 percent or more in five areas: Instruction and Program; Fiscal Management; Governance; Operations; and Personnel. A July 2015 correspondence from State Education Commissioner David Hespe notifying the District of its latest scores confirmed Newark’s failure to meet the 80 percent threshold in three of the five areas. Thus, while NESB is considered a welcome development, funders echoed a number of questions and concerns being expressed by the community regarding the process for transitioning to local control.

- Since NESB has no legal authority at this juncture, will the new panel be compelled to align its recommendations within the confines of existing QSAC provisions?
- What mechanisms are in place to ensure ample input from all segments of the community?
- How will NESB work with the Newark School Advisory Board?
- What does local control look like for Newark? How might NESB’s work be informed by the experience of other districts around the country (e.g., Chicago, Washington D.C.)?

DISTRICT-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Trust remains elusive between the community and NPS. Years of successive announcements about one reform plan after another have taken a cumulative toll on Newark citizens. Funders cited what appears to be a pattern of district and state officials over the years failing to properly inform parents and families about pending policy changes and adoption of new school-improvement strategies in affected school communities. The lack of effective engagement of parents at the school level has resulted in school board meetings becoming the forum for venting frustration. The prevailing view is that the overall lack of a transparent and democratic process prevents the community from holding district officials accountable for results. Thus, the absence of timely, accurate information, along with the inability to engage residents and other stakeholders in the decision making process, have led to enormous distrust, anger, and vast confusion.

DISTRICT-CHARTER TENSION

Funders acknowledge the demand for charters, as evidenced by current enrollment projections estimating that by the 2018 school year, 40% of the city’s children will attend school in a charter setting.⁶ However, the steady increase in charter enrollments is not without unintended consequences.

With the growth in the charter sector, district enrollment has sharply declined in recent years. The required “transfer payment” that follows every child to a charter has been a key factor in a major reduction in resources available for district schools, which often serve some of the city’s neediest students. The district’s fiscal reality fuels the perception among some parents that charters are “favored” over district schools and allowed to enjoy additional funds to meet a variety of student needs, including those that are non-instructional. This notion of inequity, perhaps, reflects more of local charters’ ability to apply flexibility in the use of funding than the actual receipt of more dollars over district schools. District schools face a number of constraints that charters can often avoid: civil service and other state regulations, compliance with Newark Teachers Union Contracts, and maintenance of aging facilities.

BUDGET

With the NPS grappling with another year of budget shortfalls, funders noted a great deal of angst among district principals, teachers, and parents who entered the 2016 school year understanding that each school was expected to make a five percent across-the-board reduction in their budgets. It is believed that the latest round of cuts will invariably result in the elimination of programs and services deemed vital to meeting the needs of students, especially those with social-emotional challenges.

Two major factors contribute to the district's structural deficits. First, state aid has remained flat for the past several years. NPS has not received full funding as determined by the School Funding Reform Act (SFRA) since the 2012 school year. The lack of multi-year SFRA increases is compounded by growth in the charter sector as noted above. With money following each student, the district is forced to continue to adjust for the loss of revenue reflected in annual increases of charter transfer payments -- \$218 million and \$225 million for the 2014 and 2015 school years, respectively.⁷

⁶ Newark Charter School Fund

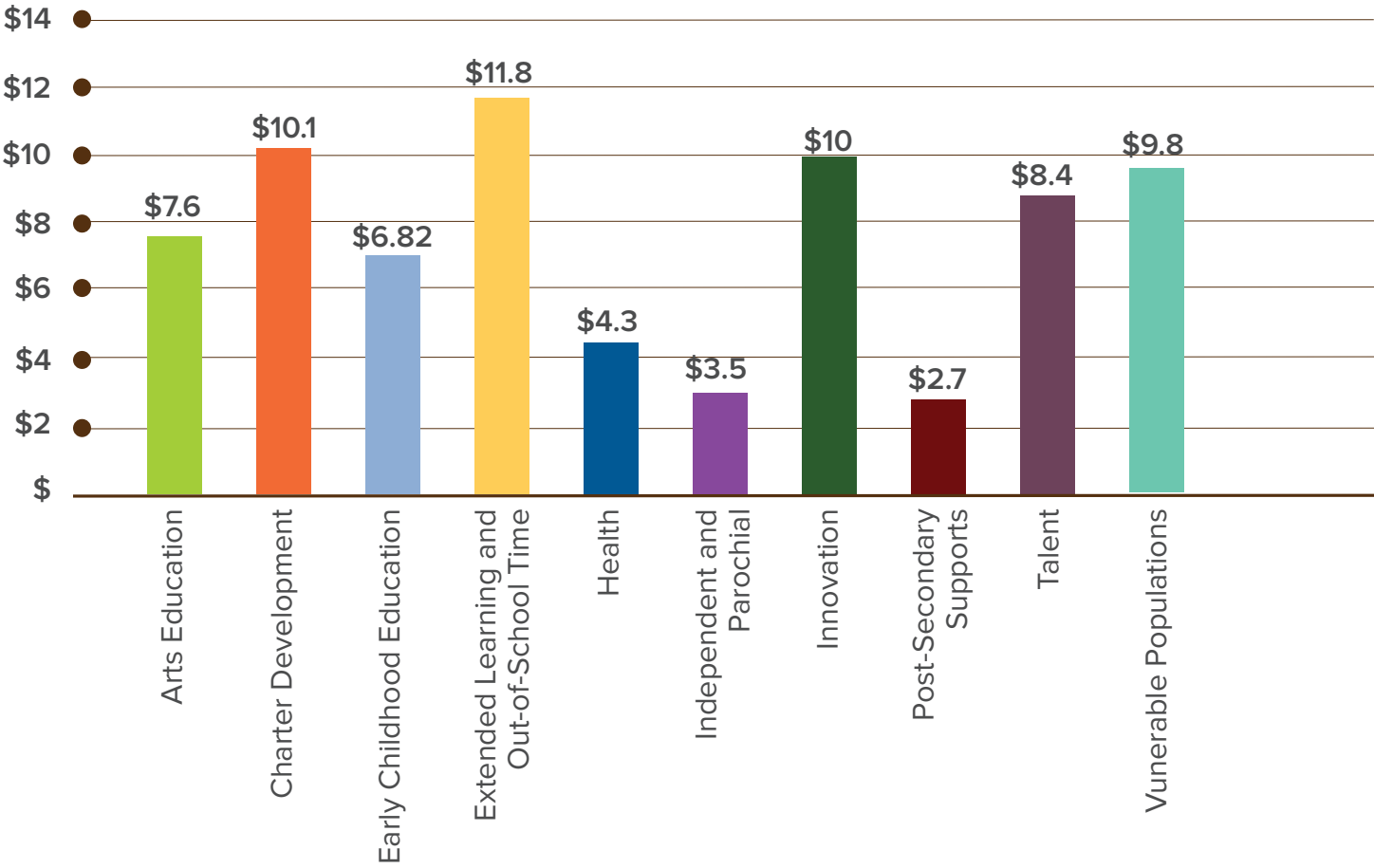
⁷ Newark Public Schools

FUNDING CATEGORIES

NEWARK FUNDERS INVESTED \$75 MILLION DOLLARS IN GRANTS ACROSS 10 FUNDING CATEGORIES during fiscal years 2012-2015. Each category reflects the priorities where funders were most active, particularly major, systemic initiatives involving the collaboration of two or more foundations. Categories include the following:

- **ARTS EDUCATION**
- **CHARTER DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION**
- **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**
- **EXTENDED LEARNING AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME**
- **HEALTH**
- **INDEPENDENT AND PAROCHIAL**
- **INNOVATION**
- **POST-SECONDARY SUPPORTS**
- **TALENT**
- **VULNERABLE POPULATIONS**

EDUCATION INVESTMENTS BY PARTICIPATING FUNDERS: 2012-2015



ARTS EDUCATION

IN RECOGNITION OF NEWARK STUDENTS' LIMITED ACCESS TO FORMAL ARTS INSTRUCTION, support for increasing opportunities to expand the availability of quality arts education and programming throughout the district constituted a major funding priority for funders during the period under review. Grantmaking in this area totaled approximately \$7,579,231 for fiscal years 2012 -2015. Funders continued operating support to sustain the nonprofit arts sector, including small community arts organizations, as well as such major cultural institutions as the Newark Museum, Newark Public Library, New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), and the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra. With lead support and direction from the Dodge, Prudential, and Victoria Foundations, funders engaged the arts sector and Newark Public Schools (NPS) in two major strategic initiatives designed to improve student access to quality arts education.

RENEW THE ARTS


Multiple years of arts programming cuts have resulted in the lack of an overall strategy for arts education across district schools. Renew the Arts (RTA) was created in 2013 in an effort to explore and pilot strategies that ensure all students are receiving rigorous sequential arts programming and exposure to high-quality community arts experiences. RTA was designed to inform the development of a strategic district-wide plan guiding the delivery of high-quality arts education for every school. Four objectives are pursued within this initiative:

1. Provide cohorts of students and schools with systemic, sequential arts education (developmentally appropriate instruction building on the knowledge students gain from each grade) that lead to proficiency in at least two of the five art disciplines – Visual Arts, Music, Dance, Theatre, and Media Arts.
2. Pilot ways of leveraging existing public and private resources in support of arts education.
3. Demonstrate effective practices that the district can implement to provide systematic arts programming.
4. Model a longer-term vision of innovation and robust arts education in NPS.

RTA began with an initial cohort of ten schools. By the close of the FY15 school year, a total of fourteen schools were participating in the initiative: Arts High School, BRICK Peshine, Camden Street, Cleveland, East Side High School, First Avenue, Harriet Tubman, Ivy Hill, Louise A. Spencer, Mount Vernon, Rafael Hernandez, Roberto Clemente, Speedway Academies, and Sussex Avenue. All schools are required to appoint an Arts Lead, assemble an arts team, complete an assessment and arts plan, collect data, and identify arts partners that can strengthen arts programming based on student needs. Matching grants are made available for each RTA school: \$5,000 for year one schools, and \$7,500 for returning schools this year. District matching grants are unrestricted, but are specifically designated to support goals and objectives outlined in school-based arts plans to strengthen school capacity and address gaps. Schools have used this money to purchase materials, supplies and equipment; improve arts facilities; develop curriculum; and support artists' residencies for gaps in programming for specific grades or across disciplines.

RTA SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

Every participating school has a designated lead arts person with operable arts planning teams. With strong support from administrators (principals and vice principals), the schools participate in shared learning and strategies to meet the challenges of delivering high-quality, sequential arts education. A formal professional learning community was established the first year



of the Initiative and continues to allow RTA schools to leverage resources and share ideas on the design and implementation of similar programs and activities: school-based planning and innovative scheduling strategies; strategic use of arts partners to strengthen capacity; integration of arts with literacy; early music education through Pre-K - 3 keyboarding; and, a recorder program for all third graders as a gateway to instrumental music.

Two RTA schools, Brick-Peshine and Sussex Avenue, were awarded competitive \$7,000 New Jersey State Council on the Arts Arts-In-Education grants in support of arts residencies for two consecutive years. The first year, both schools engaged visual artists as resident artists to implement mural projects with targeted grades. Peshine created a jazz mural engaging music, dance and visual arts, while Sussex created a mural on the exterior wall of its newly-renovated playground (a Trust for Public Land project funded by the Prudential and Victoria Foundations).

Arts High School engaged the Thelonious Monk Institute and the Alvin Ailey Dance company, as well as developed new curriculum. Ivy Hill Elementary exposed their students to their first NJPAC performance of the Dance Theatre of Harlem. Sussex Avenue, Harriet Tubman and Brick Peshine added early education keyboarding through the Music and the Brain Program.

“Amidst all the district changes, Michelle has been the one consistency throughout this process, making sure all the RTA schools feel supported, and keeping all stakeholders focused on the ultimate goal of achieving a district-wide arts strategy,” said one funder.

RTA ADVISOR & DISTRICT IMPACT

Dodge and Prudential funds were used to leverage NPS dollars to secure Michelle Butler, a nationally-recognized authority on arts programming in school and community-based settings, to serve as Senior Advisor and Consultant to RTA. Ms. Butler’s role has been deemed crucial to the Initiative’s ability to maintain momentum, particularly over a period of multiple leadership transitions at the district. (The lead NPS arts administrator position was filled in February of 2016 after a year-long vacancy.) Ms. Butler provides technical assistance and support to all RTA schools. Support includes assistance with school-based arts planning, data collection, resource development, and strategic partnerships. Baseline data is being collected on disciplines offered, facilities, staffing, and programming (e.g., students served, minutes per year, types of disciplines), and arts partners. Ms. Butler works very closely with the Newark arts Education Roundtable to connect RTA schools to community arts partners available to service schools (see below). She has also been instrumental in the District’s allocation of resources to RTA schools resulting in significant improvements to school-based assets, including repairs and upgrades to facilities and equipment needed to support quality arts education, e.g., kilns, dance studios, sound systems, lighting.

Several funders noted the invaluable contributions of Ms. Butler. “Amidst all the district changes, Michelle has been the one consistency throughout this process, making sure all the RTA schools feel supported, and keeping all stakeholders focused on the ultimate goal of achieving a district-wide arts strategy,” said one funder.

Now in its third year, RTA represents a paradigm shift in the delivery of arts instruction in Newark schools in two areas: 1) the relationship between the central office and schools, and 2) the relationship between schools and community-based arts organizations. Unlike previous years, when the direction of artistic programming was solely determined by central administration with limited input from schools, capacity is being built at the schools and resource allocations are being used to support a range of requests identified in school plans: materials and supplies; Special Needs Inclusion supports for classroom teachers; cultural and college-related field trips; residencies and workshops targeted for grades where gaps in programming exists; professional development for arts and general education teachers; supplemental time and sub-coverage for sequential arts planning; and, equipment. Schools are now identifying appropriate arts partners and programming to meet specific needs identified through their planning processes.

NEWARK ARTS COUNCIL: NEWARK ARTS EDUCATION ROUNDTABLE

The Newark Arts Education Roundtable (NAER) is a strategic alliance of arts education stakeholders, including public, charter, and private schools; artists; arts and cultural organizations; youth and community development entities; businesses; funders; and state and local government agencies. Established in 2010, under the umbrella of the Newark Arts Council, the NAER's mission is to forge collaborations to ensure that all young people in grades Pre-K-12 in the City of Newark have equitable access to high-quality, arts education opportunities both in- and out-of-school. Nearly forty organizations comprise the membership of NAER (see appendix). NAER helps to build community and cross sector partnerships; promotes quality arts education; works to build capacities of the organizations with thorough evaluation; and provides advocacy that gets parents, educators, funders and community-wide stakeholders intentionally involved in the fight for arts education.

In the summer of 2013, the Victoria, Prudential, and FNF Foundations supported the district's piloting of Project Plus at Camden Street School for approximately 250 students in grades six thru eight. Several NAER member organizations, including Playwrights Theatre of New Jersey and NJPAC, partnered with the district in designing a summer school experience that incorporates a balance of academic supports and cultural enrichment activities. District, arts, and philanthropic leaders, had hoped to revamp the NPS Summer School to create a more engaging experience for students, thereby providing incentives to attend and ultimately benefit from tailored supports addressing skill deficiency in literacy and math. With the bulk of the cohort completing the Camden Street pilot providing a strong indication of program satisfaction, funders agreed to support the full launching of the program designed in 2014, now known as Summer Plus.

Targeted support from Victoria was provided to NAER to manage a streamlined Request for Application to create a less-onerous process for arts organizations to fulfill state and district requirements for working with summer school sites. (Additional information on Summer Plus can be found in the ELT/OST Section of this report.) NAER groups provided an estimated 158 sessions serving approximately 2,300 students in 10 locations in 2015. Participating arts organizations included Playwrights Theatre of New Jersey, Yendor Productions, GlassRoots, Music Ascension, NJPAC, and Arts Horizons. Students were provided opportunities to take part in creating mosaics, acting classes, drumming, as well as writing their own songs.

FINDINGS

RTA and NAER represent two strategic philanthropic initiatives designed to increase access to high-quality arts education in the city. Without the leadership, multi-year support and guidance of the Dodge, Prudential, and Victoria Foundations, neither of these efforts would have come to fruition. However, several lessons and key questions merit consideration.

More students are receiving greater access to high-quality arts programming. RTA in particular represents a paradigm shift in the way the district now plans and delivers arts education. In essence, schools determine the needs of their students and the ways in which arts instruction can meet those needs. Nearly 16,000 students now benefit from arts programming taking place in 22 RTA district schools. An additional 4,000 students over the 2014 and 2015 summers benefited from the integration of arts in the Summer Plus program facilitated by NAER. Yet, the two programs operate on parallel tracks.

Because RTA and Summer Plus are not linear programs, there are currently limited opportunities to align and better coordinate school year and summer arts resources. Summer Plus "sites" often have different leadership and staffs during summer months,

serving students citywide who come to the program with a wide-range of arts abilities before returning to their respective schools, which may or may not offer the art discipline studied during the summer. However, opportunities do exist to provide a continuum of arts learning, most notably with RTA students. Prior to the last transition in arts leadership at the district, planning was underway to develop intensive summer camps focused on more in-depth arts experiences. The summer arts camp concept developed by Rich Burrows, former NPS Arts Lead, would have maximized the investments made in student learning and human capital in both initiatives. However, the camps never materialized due to the transition in leadership and budget constraints.

When considering student performance, several funders expressed reservations about linking RTA and NAER to evidence of gains in achievement, citing the absence of a specific directive to do so and lack of an evaluation component aligned to each initiative. Opportunities, however, do exist to assess the impact of evidence-based programs operating in multiple RTA sites. For example, the Music and the Brain Program serves students in four RTA schools. The Program was essential in enabling such schools as Louis A. Spencer and Sussex Avenue in establishing sequential music programming after both sites struggled to address this need for several years. What would a review of Music and the Brain reveal? Beyond any direct relationship to literacy or math proficiency, what would an assessment of such critical factors as engagement in learning, average daily attendance, and social-emotional outcomes produce? The development of common metrics for all RTA schools would strengthen opportunities to gauge program quality and assess overall impact.

NAER has spent the past year working to address the assessment challenge. In partnership with the Dodge and Victoria Foundations, and with funding from the National Endowment of the Arts, NAER has developed multiple common survey tools to measure student academic and social emotional achievement, teacher efficacy, classroom and school culture, and other indicators like parent and community engagement. Several of the common evaluation tools are currently being piloted by member arts organizations partnering with the Newark schools. NAER anticipates receipt of another NEA grant to further this effort.

Finally, the sustainability of RTA and the NAER partnership with Summer Plus was deemed critical by many interviewees. A long-term commitment supported by adequate resources will be difficult to secure in a climate of competing priorities and severe budget cuts affecting NPS. Yet without such a commitment, RTA would likely struggle to expand beyond a third of district schools, and the continuation of many summer enrichment activities provided by NAER organizations would be in jeopardy of elimination.

CHARTER DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION

NEWARK HAS ONE OF THE FASTEST-GROWING CHARTER SECTORS IN THE COUNTRY. Since the opening of the first charter school in 1997, charter school enrollment has grown steadily over the years. From 10 schools in 2004, the city now has 36 schools managed by 20 charter operators across 40 campuses. Nearly 40 percent of all school-age children in the city are expected to attend charters by the 2017-18 school year, up from 6 percent in 2004.⁸

The growth of charters in the city is largely fueled by enormous parent demand for alternatives within the public system of schools, particularly African-American parents. During the 2014-2015 school year, charters enrolled 42 percent of the city's African-American students and are on pace to enroll half of the city's African-American population.⁹ The philanthropic community has responded with a stable commitment of funding for the quality growth and expansion of charters. Participating foundations in this report have provided funding in two crucial areas: 1) direct operating support to both independent charters and the city's two national networks of charters, also known as charter management organizations (CMOs) – North Star /Uncommon Schools, KIPP NJ/Team Academy; and 2) tailored technical assistance to charters addressing a range of issues that impact the effectiveness of charters (e.g., supports for strengthening teaching and learning, operational challenges). During the 2012 – 2015 period, participating funders in this report provided approximately \$10.1 million in grants supporting these areas. The Newark Charter School Fund (NCSF) in particular, has been instrumental in supporting the growth of the charter sector.

Founded in 2008, NCSF directs its resources toward the growth of high-performing charter schools in Newark. Since that time, the Fund has worked to increase the number of quality charter seats, turn around low-performing charters, and increase the placement of highly effective teachers and leaders in charters throughout the city. In an effort to reduce tensions in the city surrounding the expansion of charters, NCSF forged a historic charter-district partnership in the form of the Compact for Newark Charter Schools (detailed below). NCSF has provided considerable technical assistance to independent, non-CMO affiliated charters that lack the resources of NJ KIPP and Uncommon Schools. NCSF technical assistance was developed in response to needs communicated directly from the local sector, including requested assistance in working with special needs populations, use of innovative techniques to enhance teaching and learning, board development, and development of human capital.

SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANCE

Recognizing the continual growth in the number of classified students enrolled in charters (10 percent of total charter population in FY15), NCSF began discussions with the National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools (the Center) in 2013 to secure supports for the Newark charter sector grappling with academic and non-academic challenges commonly associated with this population. This issue became of particular concern during NPS' adoption of the Universal Enrollment system. As charters expanded to welcome new students, the range of supports required for their populations also evolved.

Many charter leaders expressed concern about their limited knowledge and expertise to organize and develop effective supports for special education students, particularly those who were not well served in district schools. Working with the

⁸ *Public Impact: Kim, J., Hassel, B. C., Hargrave, E., Boast, L., Holly, C., & Ellison, S. (2015). Early Lessons from Newark's experience with charter schools. Menlo Park, CA.*

⁹ *Martin, A. (2015). "The Prize": The Unwritten Appendix, By Those Inside Newark's Improving Schools. The74.*



Center, NCSF designed a series of modules and professional development opportunities for charter leaders, administrators, special education managers, and classroom teachers.

The “Special Education Boot Camp 101” is one of several examples of the Center’s tailored supports and assistance provided to the Newark charter sector. Participants were exposed to sessions addressing content and topics that include, but are not limited to the following:

- Keys to successful programs and frontline practices that are closing the achievement gap in successful charter schools;
- Reviews on kinds of data requirements necessary to keep abreast of academic and behavior performance and compliance benchmarks;
- Examination of a comprehensive range of inclusion interventions; and,
- Review of common negative classroom behaviors and graduated behavior intervention strategies, including the basic steps required for the collaborative assessment of functional behavior and development of simple, effective Behavior Intervention Plans.

INNOVATION

NCSF support for technical assistance in the area of Innovation has largely involved collaboration with the Redbird Advanced Learning group, a national resource organization providing assistance around the integration of technology to enhance teaching and learning in schools. Several charters have implemented a variety of approaches for professional development through Redbird’s “Professional Learning Platform” (PLP), including the establishment of professional development committees for different topics and devoting a portion of a professional development day to the platform. Approximately 580 Newark charter school teachers are using the PLP to learn about topics such as Blended Learning, Google Apps for Education, Digital Citizenship, and How to Analyze Student Data. Principals can track teacher progress and are participating in virtual monthly leadership support meetings.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

NCSF has worked to strengthen the boards and governing bodies of the Newark sector through grants to Leadership Newark (LN) and Volunteer Consulting Group (VCG). NCSF grant dollars to Leadership Newark (LN), the city’s long-serving leadership development organization, has enabled LN to conduct a series of trainings and related activities designed to match prospective charter trustees with schools seeking to fill gaps in expertise on charter boards. LN has trained nearly 50 people who live and/or work in Newark in charter school board governance. The majority of these candidates completed a profile to be provided to schools to facilitate the matching process. Additional board candidates are being considered from LN’s 63-member cohort. A recent board matching event hosted by LN was attended by 10 charter schools and 25 potential board members.

Through VCG’s Good Governance Initiative, individuals have been recruited, trained and placed on Newark charter school boards. To date, VCG has produced 30 candidates, with nine that have been presented for placement.

HUMAN CAPITAL

NCSF has made several grants to Teach for America (TFA) to place and support corps members both in network and independent charter schools. TFA is a national corps of outstanding recent college graduates who commit to two years teaching in urban and rural public schools. To date, TFA has placed 125 teachers in charter schools, including 10 qualified special education teachers. In addition, NCSF has supported the work of New Leaders toward the development of a pipeline of individuals equipped to assume greater levels of responsibility within Newark's charters. Nearly ten participants from several charter schools enrolled in New Leaders' Emerging Leaders Program, which is designed to attract and train leaders earlier in their careers and prepare them to be Aspiring Principals – the next level of leadership preparation.

CHARTER COMPACT

NCSF has also worked to organize the charter sector to adopt a uniform set of principles concerning quality, equity, and access. Given the continued vacuum of accurate information and growing hostility between advocates of district and charter schools, NCSF organized the development of the Compact for Newark Students.

The following excerpt is language taken from the Compact:

Our primary objective is to ensure that every child in Newark is enrolled in a great school, regardless of whether it is operated by the district or under a charter. Newark charter schools provide meaningful educational options for thousands of high-need students and families. Although there is a range of performance within Newark's charter sector, some of the city's highest performing schools are charter schools. To ensure that all students and families have great schools to choose from, we are committed to increasing the number of high-quality charter schools in Newark through the continuous improvement of all charter schools... We the undersigned, commit to the following:

- *Serving all students in the city, especially the highest need students requiring special education services, students who are English Language Learners, students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, and other underserved or at-risk populations;*
- *Posting transparent data in full compliance with NJDOE policies on our websites in one place regarding the number and percentage of students served who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, students with special education needs, students who are English Language Learners, mobility rates currently reported to the State and reporting year-over-year attrition rates using Oct. 15th enrollment counts for the year-to-year comparison, suspension and expulsion rates; and,*
- *Collaborating as a charter sector and with Newark Public Schools to be a part of the solution for improving educational options and outcomes for all students, in both charter and district schools*

17 COMPACT SIGNATORIES

Discovery Charter School

Lady Liberty Academy Charter School

Marion P. Thomas Charter School

Newark Educators Community Charter School

Newark Preparatory Charter School

Paulo Freire Charter School

Philip's Academy Charter School

Roseville Community Charter School

University Heights Charter School

Great Oaks Charter School

Link Community Charter School

Merit Preparatory Charter School

Newark Legacy Charter School

North Star Academy Charter School

People's Preparatory School

Robert Treat Academy Charter School

TEAM Academy Charter School

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

On a variety of measures, Newark charters on average have consistently outperformed district schools. A 2015 study released by the Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) cites Newark as having the second-highest performing charter sector across 41 regions studied.¹⁰ NJ Department of Education data further substantiates this achievement trend:

NJ ASK GRADES 3-8 PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS PROFICIENT AND ADVANCED¹¹

LITERACY

	NPS	NCS	COMBINED
2011	40%	60%	43%
2014	36%	63%	43%
	-4%	+3%	0

MATH

	NPS	NCS	COMBINED
2011	52%	75%	56%
2014	46%	75%	53%
	-6%	0	-3%

FINDINGS

The Newark charter sector has experienced enormous growth in just a few short years. Much of this expansion during the period of review was largely fueled by demand from parents desperate for alternatives to traditional neighborhood schools. NCSF has worked to build capacity to ensure the quality growth of charter schools. Its funding of technical assistance in the area of special education, in particular, has proven invaluable to charters grappling with an influx of classified students. Many district schools could benefit from national best practices provided by the NCSF-supported National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools. Such shared learning opportunities could greatly enhance the teaching and learning experience for special education students throughout Newark district and charter schools.

¹⁰Center for Research on Education Outcomes. (2015). *Urban charter school study report on 41 regions*. Stanford, CA: Author.

¹¹NJDOE, 'New Jersey Statewide Assessment Reports.' *State.nj.us*. N.p., 2015. Web. 2 Nov. 2015.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

THE AVAILABILITY OF HIGH-QUALITY PRE-SCHOOL AND EARLY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES has been a major priority for Newark funders for some time. Between 2012 and 2015, participating funders awarded approximately \$6,824,600 in grants supporting the early care needs of children and families. Within this same period, several foundations developed a historic partnership in formalizing the Newark Early Learning Funders Group to explore opportunities to better align funding to achieve greater impact.

With the Turrell Fund acting as lead convener, other Early Learning Funders included the Schumann Fund for New Jersey, the Foundation for Newark's Future (FNF), and the Nicholson Foundation. Additional participants included businessmen Brian Maher and Sam Crane of the Pre-K Our Way Campaign, a non-partisan effort working to expand high-quality pre-school throughout New Jersey. Ceil Zalkind, Executive Director of Advocates for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ), the state's premier child advocacy organization, facilitated meetings, as well as advised on key policy issues relevant to the Group's work. Three core principles aimed at guiding the planning of this effort were quickly agreed upon:


- Developmental needs of children from infancy to age three must be a priority given that this is a critical time in a child's life for brain development;
- Parents must be supported as their children's first teachers; and,
- Approaches must be comprehensive and systemic to foster greater coordination and alignment of early care and education services.

During its first two years of existence, this partnership led to enhanced communication and coordination of grants focused on improving the quality of early care and education for young children. Despite research indicating children's earliest experiences have a profound impact on child outcomes, the system serving infants and toddlers is deemed the weakest aspect of the early education system relative to quality and access.

The collective influence of Early Learning Funders also resulted in a significant infusion of state and federal resources. Funding from the Nicholson Foundation and the Schumann Fund for New Jersey enabled Newark child care centers to participate in the state's piloting of Grow NJ Kids, the child care quality rating and improvement system (QRIS). Nearly forty-eight states now have a QRIS. These systems establish quality rating standards, assess or rate early childhood centers and family child care homes on the basis of the standards, and help the centers and homes achieve improvements to reach higher ratings. Ratings are made available to parents to help them choose high-quality care. The early QRIS pilots in Newark helped inform the statewide development of Grow NJ Kids. Feedback from the pilots also helped to frame New Jersey's successful application for a \$44 million US Department of Education Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant (RTT-ELC) in 2013. (The Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey also provided support for the QRIS pilots.)

RTT-ELC is a competitive grant opportunity for states providing incentives to focus on improving early learning and development programs for low income and disadvantaged infants and toddlers. Early Learning Funders directly engaged New Jersey Department of Education officials during the state's application round to ensure that the Newark child care community would be included in this process. State education officials believe New Jersey's RTT-ELC allocation will impact approximately 83,000 infants and toddlers statewide, of which a large percentage are enrolled in Newark programs and centers. Infants and toddlers are also benefiting from \$2.3 million in federal funds for Early Head Start/Child Care Partnership grants approved for The Leaguers, a Newark-based Early Head Start organization.

By 2014, the focus of the Early Learning Funders Group evolved to incorporate a shared investment strategy known as



“Together, we have achieved a remarkable milestone – an aligned strategy of multiple stakeholders that will have a demonstrable impact on early learning in Newark” *Curtland Fields, President of the Turrell Fund.*

“Increased Quality, Expanded Access.” In responding to an ACNJ Newark Kids Count Report detailing the enormous poverty faced by more than half of Newark’s children¹², FNF announced a \$250,000 challenge grant to support action steps to address poverty-related issues identified in the Report. The Turrell Fund responded with a \$500,000 grant – a 2-to-1 match. With a combined \$250,000 in additional matching funds from the Schumann Fund and the Nicholson Foundation, a total of \$1 million was raised. Funds were designated to support three priority objectives: 1) enhance supports for the Early Head Start workforce, particularly teachers; 2) improve the quality of child care centers across the city; and, 3) increase access to services for parents and families.

Major funding in support of this strategy was provided to Programs for Parents (PFP), the Essex County Child Care Resource and Referral Agency. PFP supports children, families, and child care providers through advocacy, education and training, resource referrals, and connections to financial assistance. While this joint effort remains in the early stages of development, several Early Learning Funders cited significant highlights associated with all three priority areas.

IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF EARLY HEAD START WORKFORCE

Unlike credentialing and certification requirements for the state’s pre-school program for children ages three and four, the federal government does not require a bachelor’s degree or a teaching certificate for Early Head Start (a federally-supported program providing services for children ages zero to three) teachers. Early Head Start teachers are only required to have a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential and additional training in early childhood education. However, due to high turnover rates largely resulting from the profession’s relatively low pay and higher needs of younger children, Early Head Start programs struggle to find qualified candidates and are forced to hire staff without CDAs on a temporary basis at the risk of being out of compliance. PFP recognized this need and began offering a cohort-model for CDA training to increase the number of Early Head Start teachers credentialed in Newark. The cohort approach is intended to help professionalize the field by encouraging Early Head Start teachers to share what works and participate in ongoing professional development.

PFP expanded its trainings for Early Head Start teachers to incorporate a focus on addressing social-emotional issues, including the high rates of trauma that can contribute to early developmental delays experienced by young children. PFP recruited 89 Early Head Start professionals from programs across Newark to participate in a seven-part training series on social emotional learning and mental health. The series was facilitated by Montclair State University’s Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health. Participants who completed the series received an Infant and Toddlers Mental Health endorsement.

IMPROVING CENTER QUALITY

PFP focused its quality improvement efforts on advanced credentialing and job-embedded professional development (training connected to actual work of teachers in the classroom) for childcare center directors and lead teachers in Newark. A major goal included increasing the number of directors who have earned a New Jersey Administrators’ Credential, a leading industry standard for demonstrating knowledge for effective child care program management. A second goal involved creating support for lead teachers to pursue the CDA credential.

¹² *Advocates Children of New Jersey (2015). 2015 Newark Kids Count; A City Profile of Child Well-Being*

Ten directors recruited for the first cohort are on track to receive the Administrators' Credential. In addition to receiving leadership development training in the areas of human resource development and child assessment, all directors are in the process of assessing the quality of their programs and creating program improvement plans that include evaluating staff and providing ongoing professional development.

PFP used the first year of the initiative to develop a year-long course and related trainings for lead teachers serving under directors in cohort one. CDA training is now set to begin during 2016.

INCREASING ACCESS TO SERVICES THROUGH FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

The Newark Family Engagement Network (NFEN) was established by PFP to reshape how local family-serving organizations engage and empower families to improve the educational outcomes of their children. The NFEN kick-off brought together more than 100 early education providers, schools, community-based organizations, and state and local policymakers for a summit on Defining Family Engagement with Harvard University's Family Research Project. The summit proved catalytic in the creation of two major initiatives: (1) improving the practice of twenty-five frontline family engagement practitioners from family-serving organizations throughout Newark; and, (2) increasing the access to information for families through the use of a new mobile phone resource directory.

Practitioners formed their own professional learning community, which met monthly to share best practices related to child development, school readiness, and family literacy. Each participant was eligible to receive a \$1,000 mini-grant after assessing their organization's family engagement practices and identifying an action research project that either took to scale something that was working in their organization or piloted an innovative program to address an area for growth. Projects ranged from a parenting program for Spanish-speaking families to using a new social media platform called Parent Square to help families network with each other and increase family participation in educational activities. An app, AXcess Newark, was designed by a committee of Newark parents who called for its creation after participating in a series of focus groups where families frequently expressed frustration about the difficulty of accessing social services with printed directories that are often outdated.

Together with parent outreach workers, PFP kicked off the Tap the App Campaign by visiting schools, faith-based organizations, and community groups to promote the use of the app by Newark families. AXcess Newark features a local resource directory with up-to-date listings for job training programs, childcare, housing assistance, and health resources. Families can now click a button to call social service organizations or get directions, both driving and public transportation, to providers. The app has had more than 2,500 downloads. PFP is working with its partners on plans for added functionality to attract more users in its 2.0 release, featuring tools to help families keep track of important documents, as well as send notifications to families about events and activities taking place around the city.

FINDINGS

Several funders noted the improbability of leveraging significant federal dollars for New Jersey without the collective influence of the Early Learning Funders Group. "The outcome of getting more public funds for high-quality early care and education is perhaps the most significant outcome we could have hoped for. Clearly, private foundations cannot provide the funds needed to supply high-quality early childhood education to all vulnerable children in New Jersey," stated Barbara Reisman, former Executive Director of the Schumann Fund. Beyond the enormous monetary value of multi-year commitments represented by RTT-ELC and Head Start dollars, funders also noted the growing shift toward an infant and toddler agenda among state policymakers. ACNJ has played a pivotal role in this process. In addition to facilitating funder strategy sessions, ACNJ monitors ongoing activities in support of all three objectives aligned to the Group's shared investment strategy. Key lessons are utilized to inform a broader infant/toddler policy and advocacy agenda at the local, state, and federal levels.

PFP's role in this initiative was deemed critical as well. Much of the work led by PFP in support of objectives aligned to Increased Quality, Expanded Access (improving the Early Head Start workforce, strengthening center quality, and expanding access to services for families), will continue to receive priority support among early care funders. In a very short period, PFP has made significant inroads toward goals across all three priority areas. "Together, we have achieved a remarkable milestone – an aligned strategy of multiple stakeholders that will have a demonstrable impact on early learning in Newark," said Curtland Fields, President of the Turrell Fund.

EXTENDED LEARNING AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

RESEARCH SUGGESTS THAT IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL TIME IS AS SIGNIFICANT as increasing the quantity; that poor and/or students of color are more likely to benefit from an increase in school time since they are less likely than their more affluent peers to have educational resources within the home environment.¹³ The literature also notes the negative impact of summer learning loss that typically occurs during the annual vacation break in July and August, when the average student loses up to a third of learning from the prior school year by the end of the break.¹⁴ Thus, foundation support for this category is in recognition of the correlation between time and learning. Several participating funders in this report directed considerable resources toward efforts to improve the use of time, both in-school and out-of-school during the 2012-2015 school years. Approximately \$11,759,440 in grants was awarded during this time frame. Funds fell into two categories: 1) support for extending the school day and/or calendar year for district and charter schools; and, 2) funding to strengthen public and private program offerings beyond normal school hours, including afterschool and summer enrichment.

EXTENDED LEARNING TIME

Extended Learning Time (ELT) is usually defined as an expansion of the school day by a minimum of three hours, with the additional hours devoted to more academic time, as well as enrichment activities designed to promote social-developmental growth. Three of the participating funders in this report -- Prudential, Victoria, and the Foundation for Newark's Future (FNF) -- provided crucial support to the now defunct New Jersey After 3 (NJ3) to establish an infrastructure for expanded learning time throughout the Newark Public Schools (NPS). (The Ford Foundation also contributed significant funding to expand ELT in Newark schools.)

In operation from 2004 to 2013, NJ3 was dedicated to expanding and improving high-quality afterschool or ELT opportunities for New Jersey's children in grades K-8. It functioned as an intermediary, partnering with community-based agencies that operated programs in their neighborhood public schools following NJ3's model -- extending the school day by three hours and offering a menu of both academic and enrichment activities aligned with learning that occurs during the school day. At its height, NJ3 served 4,000 students in Newark. NJ3 partnered with NPS and FNF in 2012-2013 to assess conditions in Newark for additional expanded learning and to recommend actions for support and sustainability. This body of work resulted in a district-wide redesign of ELT implementation to improve quality and focus on student achievement. Although NJ3 ceased operations in August of 2013, its work with the district established an infrastructure for ELT in Newark. Nearly 50 percent of district schools, many of which have been designated as low-performing schools, now offer some form of expanded learning.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME NETWORK CAPACITY BUILDING

According to a 2014 report by the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) commissioned by the Victoria and Prudential Foundations, ***Investments and Opportunities in Summer Learning: A Community Assessment of Newark, NJ***, less than 35 percent of Newark students were being served by the city and all of its partners during the summer.¹⁵ During 2012-2015,

¹³ *The Wallace Foundation, (2013). Expanding Learning, Enriching Learning (pp. 4-19). New York City: The Wallace Foundation.*

¹⁴ *The Wallace Foundation, (2013). Getting to Work on Summer Learning; Recommended Practices for Success. Washington DC: RAND Corporation.*

¹⁵ *National Summer Learning Association, Investments and Opportunities In Summer Learning: A Community Assessment Of Newark, NJ. 1st ed. NSLA, 2014. Web. 5 Nov. 2015.*

Victoria and Prudential acted as lead funders in building capacity for a coordinated and citywide system to provide high-quality opportunities to more children and youth. Their work has led to a better understanding of the three major sectors providing services: 1) NPS; 2) the City of Newark (Summer Youth Employment and Department of Recreation); and, 3) community-based organizations. All three sectors operated independently of each other for many years, without a shared understanding of quality and/or outcome measurements. The two funders devised a series of steps building toward an ultimate goal of creating an Out-of-School Time Network (OST), representing a coordinated, cross-sector approach that aligns all the city's resources in support of children and youth.

Beginning with summer programs, grants were provided to NLSA, an independent organization that equips schools and community organizations to deliver quality summer learning programs. NLSA's core activities and services include professional development, quality assessments, best practices dissemination, and evaluation and strategic planning for states, school districts, foundations, and non-profits. Multi-year support enabled NLSA to provide technical assistance to a 25-member Summer Learning Work Group to increase the capacity of Newark providers to deliver high-quality summer programs to low-income youth. Among major highlights from this work include:

- The publication of Newark's first resource scan of private and government investments in summer learning. The document notes the availability of programs, gaps in service, and opportunities for stronger collaboration among the city's stakeholders.
- Creation of a new data-collection tool that can be used by all summer organizations.
- Development of a summer learning action plan that calls for data systems, continuous quality improvement, a summer meals strategy, and a shared vision.

The early accomplishments of the capacity-building work enabled the Victoria Foundation to secure district support to create a 2013 pilot summer school program, Project Plus, at Camden Street School for 250 students in grades K-8. With Victoria, Prudential, and FNF funding, Project Plus extended the regular half-day summer school to a full day by partnering with community-based organizations and incorporating enrichment activities provided by local arts organizations. Project Plus' success in year one, resulted in NPS reallocating district funds in 2014 to finance what is now known as Summer Plus at ten sites serving approximately 2,000 students in partnership with several community-based organizations.

After convening summer programs, Victoria and Prudential sought to bring together all of the city's providers that serve youth outside of the school day. More recently, funders managed to involve municipal government in discussions with the district and local non-profits to build momentum toward the establishment of a formal, staffed Out-of-School Time Network. Over 30 organizations, including the Mayor's Office, the NPS, and charter schools, engaged in a six-month strategic planning process led by Cross and Joftus in 2015 (a national technical assistance organization with expertise in systemic school reform and systems design). The new network officially launched in early 2016 as Newark Thrives! with the goal of improving access and participation in high-quality out-of-school time opportunities for Newark youth. The network has been fully endorsed by the Mayor, the Newark Youth Policy Board, and NPS. Among future joint projects under consideration by the network include: developing an online mechanism for parents to locate programs; improving early literacy levels; and, sponsoring a citywide campaign to reduce chronic-absenteeism. A Summer Learning Action Plan has been folded into the new larger OST strategic plan.

FINDINGS

During the period under review, an enormous amount of synergistic activities were conducted to support the leveraging of time to improve student outcomes. Funder-initiated efforts in 2014 and 2015 in particular, resulted in progress made on several fronts. Work done by NJA3 led to the development of an infrastructure at NPS, including a new office for Expanded Learning Time charged with the responsibility to coordinate, develop, implement, and promote quality before/after school and summer programs. Over 50 percent of NPS schools now offer some form of expanded learning.

The Victoria-initiated summer school pilot at the Camden Street School in 2013 proved catalytic in the district's decision to revamp its summer school to incorporate a longer day and an array of artistic and other enrichment activities to better engage students in the teaching and learning process. Summer Plus has now operated two consecutive summers. However, the

opportunity to assess the progress of 2015 Summer Plus students was missed. Unlike the 2014 session, the district did not administer a pre- and post-assessment to determine gains in 2015.

The existence of Newark Thrives! has created additional momentum around out-of-school and summer efforts across the city. All stakeholders involved in the initial 2015 planning of a new out-of-school network are now working in tandem to operationalize the Newark Thrive! strategic plan. If Newark is successful, several benefits realized in other cities with similar networks could potentially come to fruition, including: the creation of a unified vision for how the community can best support young people; the development of a uniform standard for quality for all programs in the network to adhere to; and, a designated entity to collect, manage, and analyze data on student outcomes.

HEALTH

FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS, FUNDERS HAVE ATTEMPTED TO ADDRESS THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS of students in Newark schools. Common indicators of child well-being confirm ongoing health concerns facing Newark children. According to the Center for Collaborative Change, 44 percent of the city's children have a Body Mass Index/BMI percentile of 85 percent or higher (a calculation that uses height and weight to estimate amount of body fat; a high amount can lead to obesity and other weight-related diseases).¹⁶ A recent ACNJ Newark Kids Count Report substantiates a slight increase in 2013 (latest year available) in the number of Newark children under the age of 18 without health insurance: a two-percent increase over the prior year, totaling 5,436 children.¹⁷ For the same year, Newark students made up nearly half of all Essex County asthma admissions of children to local hospitals.¹⁸ And a 2014 annual report on lead poisoning issued by the state's Health Department found that Newark led every other large municipality in the number of children under the age of six with elevated levels of lead in their blood.¹⁹

Participating funders awarded \$4,312,596 in grants addressing health issues during the 2012 – 2015 period of review. The Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey (HFNJ) has served as the lead funder in this area, providing support for school-based health clinics, social-emotional and other supports addressing non-academic needs totaling \$2,599,000.

SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CLINICS

HFNJ has provided major support to the Jewish Renaissance Medical Center (JRMC) to operate school-based health clinics in multiple locations around the city. Medical services are made available to Newark students and their families at seven locations. Some sites, as noted below, are open to the broader community (i.e., not restricted to the immediate school population):

- Barringer High School campus – serves students only;
- Central High School – serves students and entire local community;
- George Washington Carver Elementary School – serves entire local community;
- Malcolm X Shabazz High School – serves students only;
- Park Elementary School – serves entire local community;
- Quitman Street School – serves its students, as well as students from Louis A. Spencer, and the Bruce Street School for the Deaf; and,
- Thirteenth Avenue Elementary School -- serves entire local community, as well as West Side High School.

Clinics are generally open five days a week and operate during the hours of 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., with some designated days for evening and weekend hours. Clinic services fall within three categories: Medical, Dental, and Behavioral Health. Medical services include annual physicals, sports physicals, treatment for asthma, sick visits, and immunizations. Options for dental care include screenings, cleanings, fillings, x-rays, and simple extractions. Currently, behavioral health services are only offered at the Quitman site, which includes teen counseling, youth mental wellness, and crisis intervention. For FY15, JRMC handled a total of

¹⁶ *The Center for Collaborative Change (2013). Newark New Jersey 2012-2013 Community Needs Assessment (p. 5).*

¹⁷ *Advocates Children of New Jersey (2015). 2015 Newark Kids Count; A City Profile of Child Well-Being (p. 25)*

¹⁸ *Advocates Children of New Jersey (2015). 2015 Newark Kids Count; A City Profile of Child Well-Being (p. 24)*

¹⁹ *New Jersey Department of Health (2014). CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING IN NEW JERSEY (1st ed., p. 27).*



7,000 visits, representing 3,992 unduplicated visits – 85 percent of which were Newark students.

JRMC reports that a large percentage of children and teens served in the clinics are diagnosed with mental and/or developmental disorders. With many of these students facing enormous social-emotional needs attributed to family turmoil and various forms of trauma, JRMC is currently working to expand the availability of counseling and therapeutic services across all seven locations. The Quitman site will soon include a new health and wellness wing to increase behavioral health supports for students, including designating space for in-school suspension to provide an alternative to the more punitive out-of-school suspension protocol that leads to learning loss. The Quitman Wellness Center will also enable JRMC to offer an array of health and wellness activities in an effort to attract greater participation from parents and residents of the Quitman, Louis A. Spencer, and Bruce Street school communities, e.g., Weight Watchers, book clubs, aerobics, and self-help groups. JRMC believes that the restructuring of Quitman could serve as a model for all sites and ultimately lead to higher utilization rates for students and families (see more about the issue of utilization in the Findings).

HFNJ, Turrell and other participating funders have also sought to augment social-emotional supports through grants supporting the mental health activities of the Main Street Counseling Center and the Ironbound Community Corporation.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORTS

MAIN STREET COUNSELING CENTER

Main Street Counseling Center offers culturally-competent therapeutic and counseling services to children, adolescents, adults, and seniors. Foundation support has enabled Main Street to operate a school-based counseling program at five schools: Barringer Academy of Arts and Humanities, Barringer S.T.E.A.M, Newark Educators' Community Charter, North Star Academy Middle and High Schools, and the West Side High School campus. Nearly three hundred students are served across these schools; the majority is economically-disadvantaged.

Main Street services are tailored to meet student needs in individual (one-on-one) and /or theme-based group sessions. Both types of services are often utilized in schools located in challenging neighborhoods where students experience a great deal of emotional turmoil attributed to violence, loss, parental conflict, abuse and neglect. Such circumstances have been exacerbated at West Side High School where students experienced four new principals in as many years and more recently, the doubling of the student body from 575 to 1,100 due to district restructuring that led to the addition of two smaller schools being housed on the campus. Main Street responded by increasing the number of clinical hours available for individual therapy sessions, as well as creating and/or expanding several groups, e.g., girls' anger management, boys' anti-violence, teenage moms, and LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, and Transgender). All of the theme-based therapy groups located at West Side are also provided at the two Barringer Schools.

Every student in the Main Street program is provided a treatment plan that is monitored daily and modified with updates every three months to ensure that service goals are met. Main Street staff also attempt to align treatment plans with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) required for special education students. Nearly 75 percent of students served in the five schools have met short-term goals established with their therapists. Main Street staff has also observed an increase in average daily attendance and student engagement.

While the majority of Main Street’s student case load consists of middle grade and secondary students, the Center also provides therapeutic services and interventions for younger populations, including children in K-3 classrooms. Targeted support from the Turrell Fund is allowing the Center to expand services for children under the age of six.

IRONBOUND COMMUNITY CORPORATION: EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES PROGRAM

Since 1969, the Ironbound Community Corporation (ICC) has provided an array of child and family support services in the city’s East Ward. Funding from HFNJ enabled the ICC to operate its Early Childhood Mental Health Services Program, an early intervention support that targets ICC at-risk Early Head Start children, ages zero to three. Many of these children are from immigrant and undocumented families residing in high-poverty neighborhoods. ICC’s overall goal is to “ensure appropriate and effective strategies, practices, and systems are in place to support the emotional well-being and mental health needs of infants, toddlers, and their families.”

All children who enter Ironbound’s Early Head Start Program (EHS) are screened within 45 days of beginning the program. ICC employs a collaborative team approach involving the parent, teachers and its Mental Health & Disabilities Coordinator in the observation of each EHS child. ICC utilizes a sophisticated screening tool (Battelle Developmental Inventory) to examine for developmental delays and social-emotional challenges. When a child is found eligible for services, an Individualized Family Service Plan is designed with specific goals and targeted outcomes within a given timeframe.

Core services are tailored to address the individual needs of each child. Treatment plans often consist of service referrals for occupational, physical and speech therapists. Where appropriate, parents are also included in the ICC service plan. For example, when a child is residing in a home of known domestic abuse, ICC will engage the services of the state child welfare agency.

ICC works with a number of external partners to support the execution of treatment plans. Health and family service providers include the Partnership for Maternal and Child Health, Essex Pregnancy and Parenting Connection, Catholic Charities, Newark Beth Israel Hospital, and Children’s Specialized Hospital. For domestic violence, referrals are made to Main Street Counseling. Since November 2014, ICC’s Early Childhood Mental Health program has increased intervention services to its EHS population two-fold: 6.9 percent to 16.7 percent.

FINDINGS

Newark funders have made a substantial investment in efforts to improve health outcomes among the city’s school-age population. The funding of school-based health facilities in particular, has led to an increase in student access to a range of medical and dental services over the years. Yet, funders and local stakeholders have expressed some concern about the underutilization of these resources.

JRMC has recently crafted a marketing and outreach plan to double the number of unduplicated patient visits over the next year to 8,000 from the current 3,992. JRMC is eager to raise awareness about the availability of school-based services. However, JRMC staff also shared candid lessons and insights from their experiences over the years about several interrelated factors that impact participation levels.

Invariably, across all sites, clinic staff has discovered the adverse impact of inconvenient office hours on some parents who are unwilling to allow their children to be seen by physicians in their absence. JRMC staff and others have observed that many parents in impoverished neighborhoods are no different than those in middle-class communities who prefer to have the opportunity to engage their children’s pediatricians during medical appointments. The convenience of the clinic being located at the school only matters if appointment times and operation hours are conducive for parents’ work schedules. Late evening hours are currently offered just once a week, with only one Saturday a month made available at a select number of clinics. JRMC is now working to adjust operating hours at all sites to include evening appointments that extend beyond 5 p.m., and a limited number of hours every Saturday.

JRMC is also addressing the strong possibility of stigmatization associated with the word “clinic” being in the name of each school site. Anecdotal evidence suggests the reluctance of parents and residents in clinic zones to utilize “services for the poor.” JRMC staff is now working to change the signage at every site, replacing the word “clinic” with “center.” In addition to this symbolic change, JRMC is working to shift the culture and operating principles at every site. “We are shifting to a medical practice model – something that you’d find in medical offices in any other locale,” according to Brooke Tippens, Managing Director for JRMC. Under a medical practice approach, a parent would be afforded the opportunity to select a pediatrician in order to establish a relationship with their child’s primary physician. Further, activities aligned to the Quitman wellness center cited above will be expanded to all locations to offer a menu of services that a greater number of students, parents and residents might find appealing.

JRMC is also working to respond to multiple requests from principals, teachers, social workers, and parents at each site to expand social-emotional supports, including counseling, therapeutic and behavioral health services. The agency’s ability to do so, however, hinges on something that has eluded many working to improve child and family outcomes in the city for a number of years – greater coordination of existing resources. JRMC has expressed interest in working with Main Street Counseling and other providers to increase the availability of supports in this area. Moreover, the recently announced South Ward Community Schools Initiative could potentially serve as an opportunity to involve JRMC and Shabazz High School Clinic staff in building on work underway at the School’s clinic. Shabazz is one of five schools designated to receive additional resources to address the non-academic needs of students.

INDEPENDENT AND PAROCHIAL

WHILE NOT CONSIDERED A SCHOOL REFORM STRATEGY, FUNDERS HAVE MADE A CONCERTED EFFORT to create high-quality non-district seats in the parochial and independent sector, which has experienced a sharp decline in enrollment over a number of years. Several high performing schools in this category have benefited from consistent, multi-year support, including funding for tuition assistance and financial aid for needy students, and general operating support. Grants have also been utilized for capital needs and program expansion. For the period of 2012-2015, schools in this category have received approximately \$3,465,000 in awards from participating funders. Two institutions in particular are highlighted for their accomplishments.

SAINT BENEDICT'S PREPARATORY SCHOOL


With an enrollment of 540, Saint Benedict's Preparatory School (SBP) provides a rigorous college-preparatory curriculum to an all-male student body in grades 7 through 12 on an 11-month calendar. SBP's stated mission is to prepare its students "... to fulfill their potential as emotionally mature, morally responsible and well-educated young men." Founded in 1868 by Benedictine monks to provide an education for the sons of Irish and German Catholic immigrants, nearly 90 percent of its enrollment today is African American and Latino. More than half of SBP students come from low-income families. Eighty percent of SBP students receive partial or full scholarships in the form of tuition aid grants largely supported by several of this report's participating funders. Philanthropic dollars directed to general operating support allows SBP to heavily subsidize every student. The actual cost per-pupil is \$17,000, yet the tuition charged for middle school is \$10,000, and for high school, \$12,500.

A number of funders called attention to SBP's enormous success at educating young men of color over the years. Saint Benedict's Prep students are not required to take state tests. The School uses the NWEA MAP testing suite (reading, language usage, and math) as an internal measure for literacy and math proficiency. School officials noted the MAP test was chosen because it was linked as a predictor to performance on the ACT test (widely regarded as a close predictor of college success). School officials have also stated that on average, students perform higher than the national norm on all three areas tested. Formative and summative assessments are consistent practices, utilized in all classes to support a culture of continuous improvement. Assessments usually take the form of class discussions, laboratory experiments, in-class activities, student-based teaching, and many other forms.

The School's graduation and college placement rates have remained around 98 percent for the past decade. SBP SAT scores have consistently ranked among the highest in the city (competitive with Science High, Team and North Star Academies). According to the School's tracking data, 87 percent of SBP graduates earned a college degree within six years, or remained on track to complete college requirements. In 2013, graduates were enrolled at such institutions as the Citadel, Cornell University, Drew University, College of the Holy Cross, New York University, and Syracuse University.

When asked to reflect on the culture, structure and programmatic components that enable SBP to achieve its results, Headmaster, Father Edwin Leahy, stated that the longer a student studies at Saint Benedict's Prep, the larger his growth percentile increases. Father Edwin and alumni cited several other key factors:

- Personalization; seeing and treating the student as an individual;
- Addressing students' non-academic issues, particularly social-emotional challenges; and,
- Fostering of leadership and responsibility.



**“We see every child as an individual...
There is no one size fits all” *Father Edwin***

“We see every child as an individual,” stated Father Edwin. He further emphasized, “There is no one size fits all.” Faculty and staff make every attempt to understand the needs of each SBP student and respond accordingly. With many SBP young men hailing from environments with challenging circumstances, the school attempts to be vigilant to any sign or indication that a child may be facing difficulty, e.g., observing the usually effervescent student take on a withdrawn demeanor.

Thus, personalization is very much a part of SBP’s culture. The School has created a system and environment in which every student can be known. Class sizes average twenty-two. Upon entering as a freshman, students are assigned to one of eighteen groups made up of a cross-section of the student body. Two members of faculty are assigned to each group to ensure that every student is known by an adult and receives personal attention. Seniors and juniors are connected to freshman and sophomores. Everyone is encouraged to see themselves as part of a community – “The Community.” The young men refer to each other as brothers, and frequently chant their motto “What hurts my brother hurts me.”

By addressing social-emotional and non-academic needs, SBP attempts to provide an array of supports that enhance students’ ability to meet high academic expectations. One school official stated, “We have found that poor grades have little to do with cognition, but more to do with emotional distress.” Recognizing that many of its students have faced significant challenges related to living in underserved, impoverished and violent communities with underperforming schools, SBP makes available a campus-based counseling center that provides individual and group counseling. Several self-help groups are conducted by the center, including those addressing depression, anger management, and managing relationships with family members affected by substance abuse. Forty percent of SBP students participate in at least one group weekly. Father Edwin noted that the center’s staffing relies heavy on interns from doctoral and masters programs in counseling psychology and social work, which enables the school to maintain services at a level it can afford. The center is led by a clinical director. Interns do not provide individual therapy sessions.

For those young men who require an alternative to extremely challenging home environments, SBP provides a campus dormitory. Sixty-five students currently reside at the school. Non-residents also benefit from the opportunity to participate with study groups held at the dormitory during evening hours. “In many ways,” stated one school official, “... there really is no real end of the day at Saint Benedict. Because we live at the monastery, we are always available for our young men. We are essentially open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.”

Finally, the groups cited above are student-led, and thus used as an opportunity to foster leadership and responsibility. Each group has a senior who acts as Group Leader. A junior serves as Assistant Group Leader. The morning convocation (a daily assembly that sets a positive tone for the day) is led by a student, while other students take attendance and follow-up with absentees. Such roles provide young men direct experiences with team building, and the responsibility of caring for others.

SAINT VINCENT ACADEMY

In existence for over 140 years, Saint Vincent Academy (SVA) is Newark’s only Catholic, college preparatory school, serving approximately 300 young women (grades 9 -12). SVA combines a rigorous academic program with high expectations and

supports from a nurturing environment. The school's diverse student body is approximately 63 percent African American, 27 percent Hispanic, 6 percent White, and 4 percent Asian/multi-ethnic. Sixty-six percent of SVA students are eligible for free or reduced lunch based on incomes as a percentage of federal poverty guidelines. Forty-one percent of these young ladies come from single parent homes.

Yet despite the barriers faced by many of these students, SVA can boast of an average daily attendance of 98 percent. Similar to Saint Benedict, Saint Vincent students are not required to take state tests. Throughout the academic year, Saint Vincent Academy students are given interim assessments to determine areas where improvement is needed. End-of-year assessments designed by faculty serve as final examinations for all students. Over the past several years, nearly 100 percent of SVA graduating seniors have enrolled in an institution of higher education – 90 percent of which go on to four-year colleges/universities. Every member of the Class of 2015 went on to college. Graduates in the last three years have been accepted and admitted into such institutions as, Georgetown, Dartmouth, NYU, Rutgers University, and Penn State.

“Every adult, from the maintenance staff, to the cooks in the kitchen, to classroom teachers...everyone exhibits tremendous care and support for students” *Sister June Favata.*

Sister June Favata, Headmistress, shared several insights regarding SVA's culture and environment that has enabled the institution to produce strong results for decades. The entire school community is oriented to support SVA's young ladies. “The total adult community has deep concern for student well-being,” stated Sister June. “Every adult, from the maintenance staff, to the cooks in the kitchen, to classroom teachers...everyone exhibits tremendous care and support for students. Here at Saint Vincent, we communicate to students -- I know you, I see you, I care about you.”

New students enter SVA as members of the Freshman Program, which provides every student with skills and techniques to build self-confidence and discipline to succeed in high school. The Program is considered “a bridge” to help students adjust to the rigors of the first year at the Academy: assisting the young ladies in understanding expectations; developing habits and skills to successfully manage the course load; and identifying how and where to access supports when needed. A trained guidance counselor is assigned to the first-year group to begin conversations about the process for selecting a college. The Freshman Program also connects the young ladies to each other. SVA's small class sizes support its tradition of building a “sisterhood” and a sense of belonging to a community. A service education program, Students-in-Community (SIC), reinforces the significance and value for community, civic responsibility, and serving others.

Each year, every student is required to participate in the service program. Through SIC, students give back to local organizations through hours of community volunteer service. Freshmen and sophomores annually plan and execute a one-day service project. Recent projects have included volunteering and fundraising at the Community Food Bank of New Jersey, organizing and running a day-long on-site fair for disabled children, and a post-Hurricane Sandy beach clean-up. Juniors spend a full school week in the spring working as volunteers at more than 40 different local nonprofits, including daycare and senior citizen centers, hospitals, elementary schools, and shelters. Every senior spends one morning a week throughout the school year in a similar placement. Faculty members visit the student volunteers throughout their placements, providing support and direction. These service learning experiences foster a sense of social responsibility, as well as expand students' knowledge of services available in the Greater Newark community. SIC also provides an invaluable introduction to possible future career options.

SVA utilizes local philanthropic dollars to heavily subsidize every student. The School's tuition of \$5,300 represents about half of the actual per-pupil cost of \$11,000.

FINDINGS

How might the lessons and insights from these two venerable institutions inform the local discourse on teaching and learning in the City of Newark? Arguably, much of what is taking place at both Saint Benedict's and Saint Vincent can be succinctly

summed up in two words used by Sister June, “old fashioned.” The principles of love and high expectations are embedded in the cultures of both schools.

Sister June and Father Edwin candidly discussed advantages of managing a smaller environment and the flexibility of being able to operate outside the constraints of large bureaucratic systems. For example, faculty at both Schools work within an ethos that calls for adults to often exceed duties and responsibilities prescribed to their roles in order to respond to the academic and non-academic needs of students. Financial incentives (e.g., stipends) are not provided to teachers who perform duties such as moderating extracurricular activities, and/or staying after school to tutor a student struggling in a subject.

The successful strategies employed by Saint Benedict’s and Saint Vincent suggest possible approaches for Newark’s underperforming public schools. Both SBP and SVA have demonstrated the significance of the use of interim assessments to support student growth. The results from such periodic assessments are used to guide students’ efforts toward continuous improvement across all subject areas.

Saint Benedict’s counseling center and its creative staffing structure could serve as an affordable model for addressing social-emotional needs that are pervasive throughout district schools. Moreover, in the wake of current enrollment trends projecting a dramatic reduction in the population of district schools by the 2018 school year, NPS might have increasing opportunities to create more personalized learning environments. In light of these and other major concerns that adversely impact the viability of the Newark district, solutions to vexing challenges might be found in two parochial schools that have served Newark’s young men and women for over a century.

INNOVATION

IN 2011, LOCAL FOUNDATIONS LAUNCHED THE FUNDERS' COLLABORATIVE, Newark's first joint-philanthropic effort aimed at increasing the quantity and quality of public school options in the city. For the 2012-2015 period under review, funders invested \$10 million in support of innovation in Newark Schools – new ideas, options, methods and/or approaches, designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The Collaborative – also known as the Pooled Fund – coalesces around the commitment to ensure that all Newark students have access to high-quality public schools. The overarching goal of the Pooled Fund is to incubate, support, and sustain new schools that model promising alternative approaches to traditional public schools that have chronically underperformed. During this same period, the Collaborative allocated \$2.5 million in support of a range of innovative school models across the district. Funds have largely been directed toward two categories: Model Schools and more recently, the Fostering Schools of Excellence initiative.

MODEL SCHOOLS

By late 2010, building on the work of former Superintendent Clifford Janey's citywide strategic planning effort calling for "...a system of themed, college-and career-oriented schools,"²⁰ the Newark Public Schools, had already adopted a strategy allowing for the creation of new school designs to meet this objective. Global Village Zone, Newark Early College High School, Big Picture STEAM, and BRICK-Avon Academy were among the first models introduced in the city. As this strategy gained momentum, several new school models emerged for consideration just months before the start of the 2011-12 school year. However, a significant budget gap projected for FY12 left six new district-approved schools with insufficient funds to launch a first year of operation. By the time this funding shortfall became evident, the proposed schools were highly invested in a process of planning and preparation in anticipation of opening doors in September 2011.

One overriding concern expressed by funders was the strong possibility of key Newark reforms being delayed by a year. Out of a sense of urgency, the philanthropic community quickly mobilized to respond to the funding shortfall. Nine local and national foundations gathered in May of 2011 – an unprecedented gathering – to conduct a joint review of the new school designs proposed for Newark. The May gathering effectively led to the birth of the Funders Collaborative, with ultimately four of the proposed new models funded to open in September: Bard Early College High School, Newark Bridges High School, Hybrid High, and Newark Leadership Academy. These four, along with three existing models – BRICK-Avon, Global Village Zone (Central High School and six feeder schools), and Big Picture Learning -- comprised the Collaborative's first round of grants totaling \$1.3 million, offering seats to approximately 4,250 students. Additional models were added during successive rounds of funding from the Collaborative, including BRICK-Peshine, the all-male Eagle Academy, and the All Girls Academy. In addition to grant awards, each model received technical assistance provided by the Newark Trust for Education (the designated Pooled Fund administrator), including professional and leadership development, program design, and community engagement.

While the majority of model schools have existed for less than five years, funders and staff at the Newark Trust provided several highlights regarding student outcomes ranging from gains in student achievement and improved school climate, to the development of a college-going culture.

- Between 2010 and 2013, BRICK-Avon had the 3rd highest increase of all NPS schools on the NJASK test. Between 2010 and 2014, the number of students scoring Proficient or Advanced Proficient on the NJASK ELA Assessment at BRICK-Avon increased by 8.2 percent. Between 2010 and 2014, those scoring Proficient or Advanced Proficient on the NJASK Math Assessment increased by 20.4 percent.

²⁰ *Newark Public Schools, Great Expectations, 2009-2013 Strategic Plan. 1st ed. Newark: NPS, 2009.*

- After three years of operation, Bard High School ranked second (only to the magnet Science Park High School) on state standardized tests. Bard's Class of 2015 achieved several significant milestones: approximately 91 percent earned a high school diploma; and 72 percent attained the full associate in arts degree from Bard College, tuition-free. The remaining graduates earned transferrable college credits, which will afford them advanced standing in a BA/BS program, potentially saving students and their families thousands of dollars in tuition and removing the need for remediation.
- Newark Leadership Academy's graduation rate rose to 89 percent in the 2013-14 academic year, up from 64 percent in the previous year.
- Parent Satisfaction: Several of the schools have been able to maintain high levels of parent satisfaction as community engagement continues to remain a priority for the Collaborative. For example, in June 2015, Eagle Academy reported that 97 percent of parents surveyed responded that they would "absolutely" recommend Eagle Academy to others, and 90 percent stated that the education provided by Eagle Academy is exceptional.

Yet several funders also expressed concern about the limited overall progress vis-à-vis student performance across the city's portfolio of model schools. As noted in the table below, among the four schools that have received funding and technical assistance for three or more years from the Newark Trust, only Bard has consistently performed well, often exceeding district averages with high rates of proficiency in literacy and math.

SAMPLE ACADEMIC DATA FOR SELECT MODEL SCHOOLS

MODEL SCHOOL	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
	ELA MATH		
Bard High School Early College		100% 81%	100% 78%
Newark Leadership Academy		52% 16%	67% 14%

MODEL SCHOOL	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
	ELA MATH		
BRICK - Avon Academy	21% 37%	23% 36%	29% 40%
Eagle Academy for Young Men		7% 43%	25% 44%

Source: Newark Trust for Education and New Jersey Department of Education

FOSTERING SCHOOLS OF EXCELLENCE

As cited in the overview section above, Newark residents experienced an enormous amount of change in the city's schools in a period of less than two years. In response to a number of implementation challenges associated with the One Newark Plan, the Collaborative expanded its reach beyond the Model Schools to prioritize and support a second cohort of schools (many designated as Renew Schools) most affected by reforms. While each school possessed unique needs, funding was targeted toward five major priorities:

1. Professional Development for New Teachers:

- Several schools reported having completely new staff with some reporting percentages as high as 90 percent staff turnover.
- Several schools expressed a strong desire to find better ways to reinvigorate and motivate teachers, particularly those who suffered from low morale and confidence.

2. Transportation Barriers:

- Schools reported transportation as a significant barrier, for students attending schools outside their neighborhood boundaries.

3. Social Support and Wellness:

- Many schools experienced a large influx of new students, resulting in the need to help many of them acclimate to their new environment.

4. Parent/Community Engagement:

- Several schools identified community engagement as a priority, particularly those that moved to different neighborhoods as a result of restructuring under the One Newark Plan.

5. School Climate:

- Issues related to creating a new school culture and positive climate for students and families adapting to new school communities.

THE FIVE PRIORITIES WERE ORGANIZED INTO FOUR FOCUS AREAS:



A total of 13 schools received funding from the new initiative. Principals were encouraged to develop detailed action plans tailored to meet specific needs and concerns presented by their school community across each focus area. A preliminary analysis and review by funders and staff of the Newark Trust indicates several beneficial outcomes from the 2014-15 initiative funding:

- Several schools reported first day openings with limited confusion;
- An increase in average daily attendance;
- The Louise A. Spencer School experienced a 75 percent decrease in suspensions by the end of the academic year; and,
- Luis Munoz Marin, a pre-K-8 school, created the Therapeutic Learning Center to address a variety of social-emotional needs among students, particularly the nearly 250 who transferred to Marin as a result of One Newark. Many of the transfers were entering an unfamiliar space and suffered from adjustment issues. The Center serves as a multi-sensory and nurturing space where students learn to self-initiate and self-regulate their behaviors and habits. Teachers utilize restorative practices to address behavior challenges -- techniques that allow for an emphasis on talking to students to understand why an incident occurred and how it might be prevented in the future. Marin reports that 88 percent of the students who participated in Center activities demonstrated improved behavior and progress with Lexile levels (measurement of student reading ability).

“It’s amazing how quickly the entire Newark philanthropic community came together to respond to the budget shortfall of the new Model Schools in 2011,”

Dale Anglin, Associate Director, Victoria Foundation.

FINDINGS

When measuring the overall value of the Collaborative, funders interviewed for this report were asked to provide their assessment of the Pooled Fund, using a scale of one-to-ten (with one constituting the lowest possible score and ten being the highest possible ranking). Funders responded with generally positive ratings within a range of six–nine. Insight was provided on the ways in which the Collaborative benefited both the grantees (e.g., Model Schools and/or school design organizations) and the foundations that contributed. “It’s amazing how quickly the entire Newark philanthropic community came together to respond to the budget shortfall of the new Model Schools in 2011,” stated Dale Anglin, Associate Director, Victoria Foundation. A total of \$1.3 million was awarded in the first round of grants. “In coming together – for the first time – the way we did, we effectively streamlined the process for all the schools. Instead of nine or ten different applications, they only had to produce one funding request,” stated another funder.

When measuring the collective impact of the Pooled Fund’s ability to meet its overall goal “to incubate, support, and sustain high-quality public school options...,” several funders concede that much work remains to be done. In the rush to support a major district strategy largely viewed unfavorably by the community, many questions around accountability measures and metrics required for assessing outcomes were not explored during the Collaborative’s first year of operation. For example, when factoring in multiple years of financial supports and technical assistance, what is a reasonable amount of time for Model Schools to produce positive results? When should literacy and math proficiency rates exceed the district average? What should the minimum threshold for average daily attendance consist of? What are feasible expectations on school climate issues relative to student behavior and safety? Working through the Trust, the Collaborative might consider the development of a uniform set of measures encompassing achievement and other benchmarks applicable to all models, while recognizing the necessity to tailor measures to the circumstances of each school. Thus, as the work of the Collaborative continues, funders will face questions about the justification of resources for Model Schools that on average perform on par with traditional neighborhood schools.

POST-SECONDARY SUPPORTS

NEWARK CITY OF LEARNING COLLABORATIVE

According to the Rutgers-Newark Cornwall Center for Metropolitan Studies, only 13 percent of the City of Newark's residents over the age of 25 hold a bachelor's degree, and just 4 percent possess an associate's degree. (The state average for those holding a B.A. is 41 percent; for neighboring Jersey City, 47.6%.) The bulk of education philanthropy in Newark has historically focused primarily on improving the quality of the Pre-K-12 system and support for non-profit college readiness organizations. Within the past five years, however, several funders and local stakeholders have increasingly called attention to Newark's relatively low number of residents holding bachelor's and/or associate's degrees, and have sought to increase investments targeting post-secondary enrollment and completion. Approximately \$2,740,000 in grants was awarded between 2012 and 2015 to increase college access and completion. A significant portion of this amount – \$2.0 million – was targeted to the Newark City of Learning Collaborative (NCLC), a new citywide network committed to increasing the percentage of Newark residents with post-secondary degrees, certificates, and quality credentials from the current 17 percent to 25 percent by the year 2025.


Housed at the Cornwall Center, NCLC is comprised of over 60 organizations, including institutions of higher education, college access programs, the Newark Workforce Investment Board, the City of Newark, the private sector, and philanthropic and community based organizations. This broad cross-section of stakeholders represents one of Newark's most ambitious collective impact efforts to date whereby multiple sectors form an alliance in support of a common agenda. NCLC's steering committee has organized its work around five working committees known as Learning Teams:

- Data, Research Methodology, and Evaluation
- College Readiness and Success Programs
- Internships, Scholarships, and Student Support Services
- Post-secondary Degrees, Certificates, and High-Quality Credentials
- Workforce and Adult Learners

NCLC has identified three target populations: 1) Newark Students transitioning from high school to college – beginning in the 10th grade; 2) opportunity youth who are disconnected from school and/or career; and 3) adult learners without college degrees or credentials. Despite the short time in which the collaborative has been in existence, several major milestones in the City can be directly attributed to the work of NCLC.

2012 CREATION OF NEWARK COLLEGE INSTITUTE

The Newark College Institute (NCI) was established "...to prepare participants to meet the demand for highly educated professional employees by providing real world professional and personal development skills and exposure to various career opportunities and industry leaders." NCI is comprised of three components: the Newark College Freshman Institute (NCFI); the NCI Summer Internships (NSI); and the Newark College Senior Institute (NCSI). Though designed with a heavy emphasis on career exploration and exposure to the world of work, NCI also serves as a major strategy for college retention and persistence. Approximately 500 students have benefited from NCI program components.



NCFI is a four-day annual event held in August (with the first day of each year held at the Prudential Corporation), featuring seminars, guest speakers, and activities to prepare incoming college freshman with the skills and motivation to be successful in their academic and professional careers. Seminars include time management, navigating the college campus, stress management, social media etiquette, financial literacy, resume writing, and interviewing. Any Newark resident who is entering his or freshman year of a four-year college or university is eligible to participate in the NCFI. Approximately 130 students participated in the NCFI in 2015.

NSI provides a paid summer internship with private, public, and non-profit NCLC partners throughout the city. Examples of placements include: Panasonic; The City of Newark (various departments); Rutgers-Newark; Newark Workforce Development Board; Newark Housing Authority; District 1199J; Newark Public Library; Newark Beth Israel; United Way of Essex & West Hudson; Glass Roots; and, Big Brothers/Big Sisters. NSI is available to any student who successfully completes the NCFI. Approximately 109 students have benefited from internships since the program's inception. Internships last a minimum of eight weeks.

NCSI is designed to begin the transition from college senior to college graduate. The two-day institute provides participants with supports with credit completion, managing student debt, and identifying career opportunities. The first day involves students learning about final preparation required for graduation, loan forgiveness opportunities, managing credit and finances, and the process for engaging an alumni network. The second day involves students discussing personal branding, living and working in Newark, and how to successfully secure the first job upon graduation.

2013 MASTER AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN ADOPTION

Among the first significant developments achieved by the collaborative's stakeholders involved the 2013 formal adoption and incorporation of the 2025 goal within the Newark Municipal Master Plan, as well as the city's five-year Workforce Investment Board strategic plan. Newark has effectively tied its future economic growth to a major human capital development strategy.

2014 GRAD NATION CONVENING

During the fall of 2014, the Cornwall Center and NCLC organized Newark's first Grad Nation Summit, a two-day event that brought together 130 local, regional, and national stakeholders to create a multi-year strategy to reverse the City's large number of students leaving school prior to graduation. Summit participants engaged in discussions related to the theme, "Expanding Educational Pathways for Disconnected Youth." The approximately 4,000 disconnected young people in Newark ages 16-24 will remain a priority focus of the City's Grad Nation strategic plan for the next several years. Currently the Cornwall Center is looking to embark on work to collect relevant data to understand the barriers faced by the city's opportunity youth population. The Center will conduct a quantitative analysis to: (1) quantify rates of high school and non-high school completion for the city's opportunity youth; (2) quantify rates of workforce participation; and (3) summarize demographic classifications (e.g., race/ethnicity and gender).

2015 LAUNCH OF COLLEGE SUCCESS CENTERS

The Abbott Leadership Institute, an NCLC partner, launched eight College Success Centers across the city to support its College Readiness Initiative. The Centers provide free tutoring, peer support, college application assistance, support in completing the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), post-secondary planning courses, computer access, and college tours. Current sites include Rutgers University-Newark, Leaders for Life, Malcolm X. Shabazz High School, Ironbound Community Center, Marion Bolden Student Center, East Side High School, Center of Hope Clubhouse, and Newark Leadership Academy. To date, 200 students from Newark high schools have utilized services from the Centers since the creation of the initiative, representing over 500 hours of direct service.

2015 LAUNCH OF HIGHER EDUCATION COHORT: NEWARK ACHIEVES

NCLC has also developed partnerships with five two- and four-year institutions to pilot programs to recruit cohorts of high school students to build a pipeline of scholars prepared to succeed at the college level. NCLC partner institutions include Bloomfield College, Essex County Community College (ECC), the New Jersey Institute of Technology, Pillar College, and Rutgers University-Newark. All five institutions are providing evidence-based programs incorporating practices that have been shown to positively impact student success and progression toward college readiness, enrollment, retention, and ultimately, completion.

- Bloomfield College sponsors its Summer Forensic Science Camp, focused on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) topics and careers.
- ECC allows students to choose from one of three college-level courses and a developmental English or math course. The college's summer cohort of students is allowed to continue coursework during the fall where feasible.
- New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) recruits from four NJIT pre-college programs to engage students in mathematics, STEM, English/language arts, and coding classes, in addition to helping prepare their college applications.
- Pillar College provides a four-week academic "boot camp" for recent Newark high school graduates. The curriculum includes writing coursework, soft skills training, mental and physical exercises, and critical thinking assignments, for which students earn college credit.
- Rutgers University – Newark (RU-N): Modeled after the Rutgers Future Scholars program, RU-NEXT NCLC Scholars receive one-on-one academic advisement, tutoring, and social development support in preparation for academic seminars beginning in the spring of their junior year.

Approximately 150 students from the Greater Newark community benefited from programs sponsored by these institutions last year.

"We are here to create opportunities that support Newark residents to not only access institutions of higher education, but also successfully obtain a post-secondary degree,"

Mahako Etta, NCLC Program Manager at the Cornwall Center.

FINDINGS

The significance of NCLC cannot be understated. In a few short years, NCLC has elevated the conversation in Newark pertaining to college completion. By engaging over 60 organizational stakeholders, the collaborative has created a great deal of momentum on a policy dialogue that compels a systematic assessment of all pathways leading to success at the post-secondary level. In so doing, NCLC has forged several initiatives as cited above, with a particular focus on the development of the Newark College Institute structure to ensure supports are in place for students throughout their matriculation in colleges and universities. "We are here to create opportunities that support Newark residents to not only access institutions of higher education, but also successfully obtain a post-secondary degree, certification, or quality credential. Last year alone,

NCLC partners provided over 1,300 Newark students with workshops on access, leadership, and skill-development in areas deemed critical to succeeding at the college-level (e.g., time-management, interpersonal skills). No one program could have supported this number of students. This was all made possible through the collective," stated Mahako Etta, NCLC Program Manager at the Cornwall Center. However, as NCLC continues to grow and mature, the collaborative will need to confront several interrelated issues.

The Cornwall Center, NCLC's backbone organization, has increased its capacity for data collection and management since the inception of the collaborative. The city's ability to meet its 25 percent by 2025 goal will clearly hinge on Cornwall's ability to build full capacity to serve as a strong data clearinghouse akin to a local repository on K-12 performance data, college retention and completion rates, as well as key data indices aligned to NCLC partners, particularly institutions of higher education. Several data capacity building efforts are underway, including the development of common metrics and benchmarks for NCLC initiatives. For example, NCLC will soon collect student-level data that tracks progress of students participating in college readiness programs. In partnership with ECC, RU-N, NJIT, Bloomfield College, and Pillar College, the NCLC developed a postsecondary snapshot report. All five institutions have agreed on common metrics that include the following: SAT; GPA; FAFSA completion; enrollment; retention; four-year graduation rate; two-year graduation rate; and, transfer rate.

Governance and accountability issues are also under serious review. Managed by a Steering Committee representing a cross-section of NCLC members, the collaborative is working toward the development of greater clarity on how to hold individual partners accountable for supporting the collective goal. Still to be determined are the establishment of expectations across and within collaborative organizations and institutions necessary for meeting NCLC objectives. Strong consideration is now being given to revisiting the current partnership agreement forms, as well as standardizing the intake process for all participating organizations to require the collection of data necessary for tracking student success.

TALENT


SEVERAL PARTICIPATING FUNDERS SHARE A COMMON INTEREST IN THE CREATION AND SUSTAINABILITY of a comprehensive human capital management system for Newark Public Schools (NPS). Grant makers such as Prudential Foundation, the Victoria Foundation, the Foundation for Newark's Future (FNF), the Turrell Fund, and the GEM Foundation, have sought out strategic opportunities to strengthen the recruitment, retention, and support of high-quality teachers and administrators for district and charter schools. Between 2012 and 2015, local funders invested approximately \$8,384,692 across several leading nonprofit organizations working to attract talented individuals available for all public schools serving Newark children, including TNTP, New Leaders, Teach for America (TFA), and Montclair State University.

TNTP (FORMERLY THE NEW TEACHER PROJECT)

Prior to 2012, NPS handled the hiring of new teachers and principals through its office of Human Resources (HR). The HR office has also traditionally supported such functions as the processing of civil service paperwork, health benefits, leaves of absence, promotions, and pensions. However, HR has not always kept pace with the evolving personnel needs of the district. Major funding from FNF enabled NPS to build capacity to restructure all employee-related services into a set of integrated organizational processes managed under the umbrella of a new Talent Office: recruitment; retention; evaluation; and professional development of teachers, principals, and district leaders; as well as the core components of HR cited above. TNTP, a national organization with expertise in assisting school systems with building effective teams of talented educators, received several grants to assist NPS in designing a comprehensive talent management system. As one district official stated, "The consolidation of human resource functions into one central office was an attempt to support the life cycle of an employee – from walking in the door as an initial hire through promotions and development, and ultimately retirement."

Among TNTP's initial areas of focus involved support provided to the Talent Office in the development of a district-wide strategy to attract and support highly qualified personnel. A new teacher and school leader website, **www.teachnewark.com**, was designed and launched to enable NPS to expand its pool of teacher and principal candidates. The website coincided with a revamped application process to monitor teacher vacancies and ensure early and flexible hiring. Past hiring practices were closely tied to the District's annual budget cycle and limited NPS' ability to compete with surrounding suburban school districts for highly qualified teacher candidates. Principals and schools would typically receive their budgets during February and/or March, forcing many hiring decisions to be delayed until the spring. NPS now hires year-round, allowing applicants to use the teachnewark site to submit online applications at any time during the school year. Vacancies are also now posted for shorter periods: 10 days, in lieu of the previous policy requiring a minimum of 20 days.

Shortly after the passage of the district's new teachers contract in 2012, TNTP deepened its work with NPS by providing technical assistance to the Talent Office in the design and implementation of a new teacher evaluation system, Framework for Effective Teaching. For the first time in NPS history, the teacher contract links annual pay increases to teacher performance. Teachers who receive an annual evaluation rating of effective or highly effective move up a step on the salary schedule. Teachers who earn an "ineffective" rating are not allowed to advance on the salary schedule. In addition to salary increases, top performing teachers can earn up to an additional \$12,500: \$5,000 bonus for "highly effective" teachers, an additional \$5,000 stipend for working in a low-performing school, and an additional \$2,500 for working in a hard-to-staff subject area (e.g., math, bilingual education, special education).



The Framework incorporates multiple evaluation measures of teacher effectiveness, including lesson plans, classroom observations, and student performance. The Framework is aligned to the new Common Core learning standards, enabling the District to assess the quality of instruction taking place in each classroom based on evidence of student mastery of the new standards. The new Framework also places an emphasis on quality feedback to teachers, enabling coaching and professional development supports to be incorporated in an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP). All Newark teachers now have IPDPs that utilize observation and evaluation data from the Framework, along with student performance data to inform areas of improvement.

District officials report the new hiring, evaluation and professional development protocols have resulted in an increase in the retention of high-performing teachers. According to the NPS Talent Office, 97 percent of teachers rated highly effective during the 2014-15 school year have chosen to remain with the district, compared to 67 percent of teachers rated partially effective or ineffective for the same period.

NEW LEADERS

Funders supported the New Leaders' partnership with NPS to cultivate and develop a strong "in-house" pipeline of leaders to address leadership needs across the District. New Leaders is a leadership development organization seeking to strengthen the quality of instructional leadership in urban school districts around the country. Foundation support enabled New Leaders to launch the Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) to enhance the skill sets of teachers and other school-based staff demonstrating potential to assume roles with greater responsibility.

ELP participants commit to a one-year, job-embedded professional development program (training and supports connected to actual work of teachers in classrooms), working 15 hours per month to fulfill program requirements in addition to their regular teaching and staffing assignments. ELP exposes participants to virtual and in-person sessions, as well as school-based projects where they apply the skills and knowledge learned at their schools. School-based projects entail coaching a team of teachers to improve student achievement by the end of the academic year. ELP participants lead teams to use data to identify student baselines, diagnose areas of weakness, and set growth goals. Participants are introduced to professional development in five major skill areas that must eventually be applied in school-based projects:

- Instructional Leadership - Setting the expectation that college success is the target; guiding teams of teachers through a full data analysis cycle; and observing and coaching teachers to improve instruction;
- Personal Leadership - Receiving feedback and self-reflecting to continuously improve;
- Adult leadership - Motivating teachers to believe in college success for all students and in their ability to realize this goal; building trusting relationships; giving constructive feedback; and leading effective meetings;
- Culture Leadership - Building a learning orientation among teachers and students who are focused on hard work and personal responsibility for their own development; and,
- Operational Leadership - Utilizing a set of systems that support strategic planning toward goals through the use of data sources and tracking.

Since 2012, 82 NPS staffers have completed ELP. As of the beginning of the last school year, over 85 percent of participants that went through ELP in Newark Public Schools during the first three cohorts remained in the district and were placed and promoted to such positions as Assistant Principal, Vice Principal, and Chief School Innovation Officer. “The program really helped me prepare for my first principalship five years ago,” stated a current district principal now in his second principalship.

TEACH FOR AMERICA

Teach for America (TFA) is a national corps of outstanding recent college graduates of all academic majors who commit to two years teaching in urban and rural public schools. Several funders have provided multi-year support to TFA toward the development of a quality pipeline of new teachers for low-performing and high-need schools. There are currently 118 corps members teaching in 41 Newark district and charter schools.

Several components comprise the TFA approach.

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING Top graduates are recruited from around the country to work in Newark schools. Only one in ten candidates is invited to join TFA. In light of the national shortage of teachers of color, TFA places a particular emphasis on the recruitment of strong candidates from historically black colleges and universities. Sixty-seven percent of New Jersey corps members identify as a person of color, with a large percentage placed in Newark. Upon selection, corps members undergo a rigorous pre-service summer training program. The training consists of shadowing experienced teachers, supervised clinical practice, seminars, workshops, and independent study.

PLACEMENT Corps members are placed based on subject expertise, often in areas where teaching shortages exist. TFA has received targeted support from funders to address high-need areas, including such hard-to-staff vacancies as special education, bilingual education, and STEM. For example, support from the Newark Charter School Fund resulted in ten new full time special education teachers hired in 2015 to support the influx of special needs students enrolling in Newark charter schools. Multi-year support from the Turrell Fund has contributed to a 255% growth in early elementary teacher placements since the 2010-2011 school years.

ONGOING SUPPORT All corps members receive intensive, on-going support over their two-year commitment. A range of alumni resources are made available for each corps member to encourage continuation with the Newark Schools beyond the initial two year commitment, including such tailored professional development opportunities as differentiated instruction to meet individual student needs, peer networks, and exposure to the latest education policy trends.

According to TFA-New Jersey, approximately 78-79% of Newark corps members continue to work in the education sector for a third year. Fifty-nine TFA alumni are working in Newark district schools, including 13 principals and assistant principals, as well as a district assistant superintendent. Approximately 235 TFA alumni are working in Newark charter schools, including 24 principals and assistant principals, and several leadership roles (e.g., Chief Learning Officer).

A 2015 Rand survey of principals who have hired TFA corps members found 80 percent of Newark principals stating that corps members make a positive difference in their students’ achievement; 86 percent believe they made a positive difference on school culture; and, 91 percent said they would hire another Teach For America corps member.²¹

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY: NEWARK-MONTCLAIR URBAN TEACHER RESIDENCY

In Newark and in districts around the country, retention of new teachers remains a pressing concern. Nationally, 48 percent of teachers in urban districts leave their positions within five years.²² New teachers often cite the lack of professional supports, isolation and the difficulty adjusting to challenging environments among the reasons leading to a short tenure. Local funders

²¹ Rudnick, M., Edelman, A., Kharel, U., Lewis, M. (2015). *Results from the Teach For America 2015 National Principal Survey*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

²² Ingersoll, R. (2003). *Is There Really a Teacher Shortage?*. Seattle: Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy.

have sought to confront this issue with support to the Montclair State University Newark-Montclair Urban Teacher Residency (NMUTR). The primary goal of NMUTR is to develop and support effective urban educators to teach in Newark schools.

Selected teacher candidates (Residents) participate in full-time residencies with Mentor Teachers on-site in Newark schools while continuing to meet their coursework requirements at Montclair State University. Upon graduation, NMUTR Residents are eligible to be hired as classroom teachers and receive three years of ongoing induction support through the NMUTR. Induction entails coaching, mentoring, feedback, and professional development.

Available 2014 data for program participants since 2010 demonstrate the enormous value of pre-service and induction services for recent Montclair graduates. An assessment of NMUTR's last four cohorts of Residents yields the following results:

- 70 Residents admitted and enrolled;
- 62 graduates (86 percent) completed the program by earning a degree and teacher certification;
- All 62 graduates (100 percent) were hired as teachers; and,
- 57 (92 percent) are still teaching in the district.

Moreover, for the 2014 school year, 93 percent of NMUTR graduates received evaluation ratings of effective or highly effective.

NMUTR is well regarded by principals throughout the city who have hired new teachers from the program. One NPS district official stated, "Montclair State University teachers come to us strong instructionally. Unfortunately, it's a small program. I wish the program was bigger."

FINDINGS

For many years, NPS found itself at a disadvantage competing with suburban and other large urban districts that could offer a more efficient and expedited hiring process for talented teachers and administrators. The existence of a human capital management system did not exist prior to the infusion of philanthropic investments made during the 2012-2015 period, including support for the establishment of the NPS Talent Office. NPS now has a systematic process to recruit, hire, support, and evaluate teachers, principals and other administrators throughout the year. In this regard, funding for TNTP has proven to be invaluable.

Of equal significance was the concerted effort to grow an in-house pipeline of school leaders equipped to improve instructional outcomes. Grants to the New Leaders' Emerging Leaders Program enabled the district to identify and nurture a cadre of prospective leaders to receive professional development opportunities tailored to their specific needs and skill sets. Eighty-two NPS staffers were able to leverage training in data-driven instruction and team building, among other areas, to become eligible for such roles as principal and vice principal. Several program participants, however, expressed disappointment with what was perceived as the slow pace at which the district promoted and placed individuals who completed the program. Conversely, district officials cited the "unavoidable delays" when attempting to promote individuals into principalships and other leadership roles that remained vacant due to budget constraints.

Funders appear to harbor mixed views when factoring in the most effective ways to develop a high-quality pipeline for new teachers. Both TFA and NMUTR were recognized for having a long presence in the district. Yet several critical questions were raised about where philanthropic resources in this area are best invested when taking into account the issues of teacher retention and student achievement.

What are appropriate expectations for the dual approaches? TFA is largely viewed as an alternative route program for recruiting and placing new teachers. NMUTR is a traditional pre-service teacher training program with several layers of support embedded in its process to ensure continuous follow-up with its graduates. What are feasible teacher retention goals beyond TFA's required two-year service commitment? Given NMUTR's current retention rate, should the program be expanded to more district schools? How should both programs be evaluated relative to measurable impact on student performance?

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS REPORT, VULNERABLE POPULATIONS CONSISTS OF students who face multiple systemic challenges and barriers to school success and their overall well-being. Among those included in this category are over-aged and under-credited students (those not on track for four-year graduation by one year or more), foster care and other children under the supervision of the child welfare system, juvenile justice and/or adjudicated youth, students who are classified special education, homeless students, and “disconnected” young people who are neither in school nor employed. Many of these students reside in impoverished neighborhoods with high rates of crime and unemployment, and often experience frequent disruptions in their home lives – all factors that contribute to high rates of absenteeism, low academic performance, frequent disciplinary actions, and eventually total disengagement from learning. During the 2012 and 2015 period of review, participating funders awarded \$9,848,585 in grants addressing challenges affecting these populations.

With significant funding from the Victoria and Prudential Foundations, Newark Public Schools (NPS) received support to expand its capacity to address the needs of vulnerable students, particularly those who are over-aged and under-credited (OA-UC). The Office of College and Career Readiness (OCCR) was established in 2012 with the mission “... to improve the post-secondary education and employment outcomes for students who fail to progress in the traditional school setting.” While OCCR no longer exists, a number of significant developments concerning the increase in supports for OA-UC and disconnected youth have transpired over the past several years.

Prior to NPS’ establishment of OCCR, Newark, like many districts across the country, sought to address the needs of its OA-UC students by removing these students from the traditional classroom environment and placing them in alternative education spaces. “Alt Ed” was often referred to as the option for “bad kids.” This premise appeared to have been formalized in the district structure with the creation of the NPS Office of Alternative Education in the year 2000, which saw its objective as one to “... alleviate the disruption and downward spiral of student performance by creating separate spaces where the most disengaged students can be reengaged.” In so doing, district officials sought to prioritize the social and emotional needs of these students over those of academic remediation and enrichment.

OCCR was created to shift the district’s approach away from a primary focus on discipline and credit recovery necessary to graduate to one of academic enrichment and development of life skills. Three major objectives guided the work of OCCR:

- Early intervention – development and execution of school-based interventions aimed at supporting the needs of highly-at-risk middle and secondary students;
- Direct service – recruitment and re-engagement of disconnected youth; and,
- Network management – creation of new school and program options.

Several major accomplishments correspond with each objective, including the development of school-based interventions in the form of integrated student support services made available at each school, the creation of new procedures and protocols to re-engage students and facilitate enrollment/transfers, and development of school options for OA-UC students. In addition, attention to discipline matters and school climate concerns resulted in a proposed Code of Conduct. The cumulative impact of these efforts resulted in the formation of the Newark Opportunity Youth Network.



INTEGRATED STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

A new Student Support Team Case Management System was introduced during the 2012 school year to enable all schools to proactively respond to the social emotional learning needs of students. Every Newark school now has persons designated to serve on Student Support Teams (SSTs), a proactive multi-disciplinary team that works to improve school safety and culture, as well as ensure the delivery of integrated student support services. SST's consist of social workers, guidance counselors, community relations specialists, and assistant principals; these teams have three main responsibilities:

- School safety and culture planning and implementation;
- Development of recommendations for addressing trends in student performance data; and,
- Pupil Action Planning to encompass academic, attendance, behavioral health, and disability accommodations as necessary (e.g., students with a 504 designation to support needs attributed to a medical issue).

ENROLLMENT, TRANSFERS, TRANSITIONS

Recognizing that a large number of NPS students and families experience multiple transitions and high mobility rates throughout the school year, OCCR determined that new district systems and protocols should be established with the goal to create a “seamless transition” when necessary, particularly for the district’s most vulnerable young people (e.g., dropouts, students with multiple suspensions, and those who are homeless). In the fall of 2012, OCCR partnered with the City of Newark’s Youth Education and Employment Success Center (YES) to create the Reengagement Center (REC), a centralized re-enrollment and transfer service providing academic and social emotional supports for vulnerable and disconnected students. YES was designed to serve as a one-stop service and referral center for disengaged youth. The REC worked to build on the dropout recruitment strategies employed by the YES Center by adding academic and support services. Students served by the REC Center participated in a three-phase process of assessment, academic and social emotional development, and transition. The REC was recently folded into NPS’ restructured Family Support Center.

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL MODELS

In 2011 and 2013, respectively, the district partnered with YouthBuild Newark (YBN) to provide education management services to two alternative schools serving the OA/UC population (ages 16-20) - Newark Leadership Academy (NLA) and Fast Track Success Academy (FTSA). NLA and FTSA were designed to incorporate YBN’s successful model of alternative and/or career and technical education services, social emotional supports, tailored assistance toward securing a high school diploma, and, post-secondary preparation and transition planning. By the close of the 2015 school year, a combined total of approximately 300 students were served by both schools. NLA’s 2015 graduation rate was 75 percent.

DISCIPLINE AND POSITIVE CULTURE AND CLIMATE

Recognizing NPS’ past practice of meting out harsh disciplinary measures resulting in many students disengaging from school and ultimately failing to complete high school, OCCR established recommended policies and procedures to align with the adoption of “restorative justice” practices. Restorative techniques allow for an emphasis on talking to students to

understand why an incident occurred and how it might be prevented in the future. OCCR's efforts have led to a 37 percent reduction in high school suspensions districtwide. NPS is now poised to introduce a new district-wide policy to guide all schools on disciplinary matters. At this writing, six policy recommendations are being prepared for review and approval by the Newark School Advisory Board:

- Adoption of districtwide Restorative Justice Philosophy;
- Development of Progressive Discipline Ladder (infractions that correspond to steps leading to disciplinary action);
- Reduction in maximum number of days a student can be suspended (to 25 from the current 45);
- Guidance on use of in-school suspension protocol;
- Codifying of procedures for engaging law enforcement; and,
- Implementation of Data and Accountability structure (e.g., effective use of Power School student data tracking system).

OPPORTUNITY YOUTH NETWORK

Despite the progress made by OCCR across the aforementioned areas, the recent elimination of the Office, coupled with ongoing concerns about the district's capacity (e.g., revenue constraints, securing talented staff with significant youth development experience) to address the needs of vulnerable students and disconnected youth, necessitated the formation of a new citywide network to align systems and resources from the NPS and nonprofit/community-based organizations to address the gaps in services critical to meeting the needs of vulnerable youth. Under the direction of Robert Clark, former OCCR Director, and Founding Executive Director of YouthBuild Newark, the new Newark Opportunity Youth Network (NOYN) will build upon the work of OCCR to address several systemic challenges faced by vulnerable students:

- The lack of district-wide high-quality academic remediation and social emotional interventions;
- Limited ability to meet the needs of students with significant behavioral needs;
- Ineffective student assessments and related data systems to track progress of highly-at-risk students; and,
- Limited post-secondary transition planning (particularly for vulnerable students without a clear path to college).

NOYN will serve as an intermediary (a backbone organization and/or hub) that culls together supports and resources throughout the City of Newark to reengage disconnected and disengaged youth, while providing continued support to NPS' efforts to institutionalize early interventions and school-based strategies to prevent vulnerable students from disengaging in learning and ultimately dropping out of school. Many of Newark's disconnected young people are served by youth development agencies that provide education programming that lacks academic rigor (often limited to GED certification). Drawing from OCCR and YouthBuild Newark efforts, NOYN will work to build the capacity of three to five community organizations to offer high school diplomas, career and technical education, as well as address social and emotional challenges that interfere with their success.

To be housed at the Rutgers-Newark Cornwall Center, NOYN will provide a high level of expertise and technical assistance to the Network, establish rigorous accountability goals, set performance standards and benchmarks, and manage data collection on student and Network outcomes. The ultimate aim is to dramatically increase the availability of high-quality seats for disconnected youth that can benefit from academic and social supports provided in a community setting.

FINDINGS

Targeted philanthropic support during the period of review resulted in a significant attempt to shift district policy on an extremely vulnerable population, which heretofore had been poorly served by NPS for many years. Prior to its dissolution, OCCR made major strides in creating a system of supports to expand successful pathways for OA/UC and disconnected students. And while these efforts will now continue under the newly-formed Opportunity Youth Network, a number of

stakeholders have expressed concerns about NPS' capacity to continue the operation of the district's alternative programs housed at NLA and FTSA. A recent report on chronic absenteeism published by Advocates for Children of New Jersey, found that NLA and FTSA had chronic absenteeism rates of 82 percent and 92 percent, respectively.²³ The very basis of the YBN model calls for direct engagement of troubled young people faced with multiple challenges. With large percentages of students missing over 10 percent or more of school days during an academic year, it is difficult to imagine that the YBN model is being implemented with fidelity.

Newark has an estimated 4,000 young people who are disconnected from school or work. Yet the work done by OCCR demonstrates the possibilities of developing early interventions to prevent students from disengaging, and to reclaim those who have already separated from the education system. Several funders contend that the promise of building on lessons learned from OCCR's work will be found in the Youth Network. Many funders believe the city now finds itself in a rare policy moment that provides an opportunity to create a viable system to ensure that vulnerable youth will always find adequate supports to fulfill their potential and ultimately become contributing members of society.

²³ *Advocates for Children of New Jersey, (2016). Showing Up Matters: The State of Chronic Absenteeism in the Early Years. Newark: ACNJ.*

CONCLUSION



OVER THE COURSE OF 2012-2015, NEWARK FUNDERS INVESTED SEVENTY-FIVE MILLION DOLLARS IN GRANTS ADDRESSING A WIDE RANGE OF AREAS deemed critical to the quality of education in the city. As demonstrated in several findings of this report, many worthwhile efforts supporting improvements in district and charter schools are taking place across Newark. Nearly 16,000 students now have greater access to high-quality arts programming. Over 50 percent of Newark Public Schools (NPS) offer some form of expanded learning. NPS now has a more timely and efficient process to recruit and retain teachers, principals and other administrators. And the charter sector experienced enormous growth due to philanthropic support to build capacity to expand with an emphasis on quality. However, despite the funding of many valuable and useful projects, foundations acknowledge that with the exception of the charter sector, there is an inability to demonstrate how their grantmaking may have led to significant academic progress.

During the four-year period of review, little funding was devoted to data-collection, evaluation and assessment of programs. Foundations have historically not always awarded grants tied to specific, measurable objectives for student performance. Participating funders acknowledge the need for a robust conversation about how best to measure success of programs and initiatives with an emphasis on student achievement and outcomes. As noted in the Policy Recommendation section that follows, all ten foundations support the development of a common framework within the philanthropic community to better gauge academic and social outcomes related to their grantmaking. Funders also call for greater accountability and transparency at NPS, including the timely release of student achievement data and outcomes analyses that enable the broader community to develop a shared understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing the city's public system of district and charter schools.

The absence of a shared understanding continues to shape a coarse discourse on education in Newark. Parents desperate for quality school options often find themselves forced to choose between those advocating for district schools and strong proponents of charters. Suspicions about the future of the district run high among many in the community, partly due to the lack of information about the nature and efficacy of reforms that have occurred to date. Promising strategies identified in this review are largely unknown in the community. Yet without analytical data to make informed decisions, the imminent return of the district to local control could result in a missed opportunity to collectively determine a direction for public education that builds on what is working well, jettisons efforts that have yielded poor results, and begins to establish a coherent strategy for creating and sustaining quality schools throughout the city.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



Two overarching recommendations concerning the access and use of data are detailed below.

ACCESS TO DATA

There is consensus among all participating foundations about the need for the Newark Public Schools to make available a much greater amount of academic, fiscal, and demographic data regarding the progress of schools and students. Funders believe the availability of such data will have the potential to create a shared understanding across stakeholders on the needs and challenges of Newark students and help inform an assessment of efforts to improve schools to date.

FRAMEWORK FOR DATA COLLECTION AND EVALUATION

Building on the Newark Arts Education Roundtable's efforts to develop uniform measures to assess the impact of art programs on academic and social emotional achievement and other indicators, funders are calling for the adoption of an evaluation framework for education grantmaking encompassing all ten categories reviewed in this report. The framework would include requirements for the use of outcome data to assess the extent of change, and multiple methods and techniques to gauge impact.

More specific recommendations associated with report findings in several categories include:

ARTS EDUCATION

- Ensure resources remain available to sustain Renew the Arts in existing schools, including the first and second cohorts.
- Support opportunities to leverage resources of the Renew the Arts and Summer Plus programs, e.g., creation of summer arts camps.

CHARTERS

- Support opportunities to foster district-charter sharing of best practices, particularly in the area of technical assistance tailored to support teachers and administrators grappling with the needs of special education students.



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

- Sustain funding for the Increased Quality, Expanded Access initiative.

EXTENDED LEARNING TIME

- Require renewed funding for the 2016 Summer Plus Program to be conditional on NPS' use of a pre-and post-test instrument to gauge the Program's impact on student proficiency in literacy and math.

HEALTH

- Designate a senior-level NPS official with the responsibility to oversee the administration of all seven school-based health centers.
- Support the expansion of social-emotional supports available for all schools.

INDEPENDENT AND PAROCHIAL

- Support opportunities for NPS leaders to be exposed to best practices and effective strategies utilized at Saint Benedict's Preparatory School and Saint Vincent Academy. Examples include the use of interim assessments, fostering of greater personalization, and the creation of supports to meet the non-academic needs of students.

INNOVATION

- Develop metrics and measures that can be used to hold both model schools and the Funders' Collaborative accountable for improved student outcomes.

POST-SECONDARY SUPPORTS

- Maintain and strengthen the NCLC with continued emphasis on data collection and analysis, and the development of student tracking mechanisms.
- Develop benchmarks for each partner organization and higher education institution serving Newark youth to track progress toward the 25% by 2025 goal for post-secondary credentials.
- Strengthen corporate involvement in the NCLC.

TALENT

- Provide continued support to the NPS Talent Office and related efforts to strengthen the district's Human Capital Management System.
- Resume efforts to build and support an in-house pipeline for the development of principals and other district leaders.
- Expand Montclair Urban Teacher Residency Program.

METHODOLOGY & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

METHODOLOGY

Research and materials for this report were compiled from the following sources:

- **FUNDER INTERVIEWS**
- **GRANTEE INTERVIEWS**
- **STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS**
- **FOUNDATION DOCKET MATERIALS**
- **SUPPLEMENTAL REPORTS**

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Finally, special thanks are in order for members of the Chad School Foundation Policy Committee for their review of select sections and encouragement over the last ten months -- Dr. Shirley Smith, Policy Chair and Trustee; Ms. Joyce Eldridge-Howard, Trustee and Chair of the Scholarship Committee; and Mr. Lawrence A. Munroe, Senior Administrator, Chad School Foundation.

Many thanks all.

APPENDIX A

PARTICIPATING FOUNDATIONS

Foundation for Newark's Future

GEM Foundation

Newark Charter School Fund

Prudential Foundation

Schumann Fund for New Jersey

The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation

The Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey

The Nicholson Foundation

The Turrell Fund

Victoria Foundation

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEWEES

Dale Anglin, Associate Director, Victoria Foundation

Mashea Ashton, CEO, Newark Charter School Fund

Marsha Atkind, Executive Director, Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey

Natalie Brathwaite, Director of Programs and Community Engagement, Newark Trust for Education

Michelle Butler, Renew the Arts Consultant, Newark Public Schools

Kevin Callaghan, Program Officer, Foundation for Newark's Future

Renaissance Medical Center

Robert Clark, Newark Opportunity Youth Network (NOYN)

Chuck Crafts, Founder, GEM Foundation

Sarah Cruz, Special Assistant, Office of Expanded Learning Time, Newark Public Schools

Chris Daggett, President & CEO, Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation

Khaatim Sherrer El, Chief Innovation Officer, BRICK Academy

Sis. June Favata, Administrative Director, Saint Vincent Academy

Nicole Fields, Newark Opportunity Youth Network (NOYN)

Curt Fields, CEO; The Turrell Fund

Kay Hendon, The Nicholson Foundation

Sanaz Hojreh, Director, Newark Arts Education Roundtable (NAER)

Sarah Keh, Program Officer, Prudential Foundation

Kate Kennedy, External Relations Manager, East, New Leaders

Fr. Edwin Leahy, Head Master, Saint Benedict's Prep

Wendy Liscow, Program Director, Education, Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation

Chrishana Lloyd, Early Childhood Program Officer, The Nicholson Foundation

Beverly Lynn, Programs for Parents

Steve Margeotes, Executive Director, Main St. Counseling Center

Kimberly McLain, CEO, Foundation for Newark's Future

Lauren Meehan, Program Associate, Victoria Foundation

Aileen Philbrick, Vice President, Quality Schools and Operations, Newark Charter School Fund

Barbara Reisman, Executive Director, The Schumann Fund for New Jersey

Vanessa Rodriguez, Executive Director, Office of Talent, Newark Public Schools

Deborah Smith-Gregory, President, NAACP-Newark

Annette Strickland, Program and Administrative Officer, The Schumann Fund for New Jersey

Joshua Thompson, Executive Director, External Relations - East, New Leaders

Brooke Tippens, Managing Director, Newark Community Engagement & Development, JRMC

Charlie Venti, Executive Director, The Nicholson Foundation

Several individuals interviewed from the following categories chose to remain anonymous:

Community Stakeholders

District Officials

Parents

APPENDIX C

CURRENT LIST OF NEWARK ARTS EDUCATION ROUNDTABLE (NAER) MEMBERS

- Alvin Ailey Dance
- Anne Jacobson
- Central NJ Social Services - Lincoln Park
- City of Newark
- East Side High School
- Educational Arts Team
- Gadget Software
- GlassRoots
- Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation
- Harlem Chamber Players
- Hetrick Martin Institute
- Institute of Music for Children
- Jazz House Kids
- Margaret El, VP Arts High School
- Marion P. Thomas Charter School
- Middlesex County Vo-Tech School
- Montclair Art Museum
- Music Ascension
- New Jersey Arts Education Partnership
- Newark Arts Council
- Newark Museum
- Newark School of the Arts
- Newark Symphony Hall
- Newark Trust for Education
- NJPAC
- NJSO
- People's Prep Charter School
- Playwrights Theatre of New Jersey
- Prudential Foundation Pushcart Players
- Rutgers Clement Price Institute of Ethnicity, Culture and the Modern Experience
- Rutgers University Robeson Galleries
- Schools That Can
- Sharron Miller Studios
- University Heights Charter School
- Victoria Foundation
- WBGO
- Yendor Productions
- YMCA



Message from the Executive Director

The Chad School Foundation believes that investments by funders are a significant complement to the work of local nonprofits and community – based organizations. It is vitally important that members of the Newark community know how philanthropic dollars are spent and the resulting outcomes that are achieved. The Chad School Foundation’s Policy Roundtable Report, [An Examination of Newark Education Philanthropy: 2012 – 2015](#) is an informative guide that summarizes how philanthropic money focused on education was invested during a recent and relevant period. As a trusted community advocate, The Chad School Foundation is determined to improve education outcomes in the city of Newark and throughout the state of New Jersey. Public education is a forefront public policy issue, and Chad will work within the philanthropic community of funders to ensure an increased level of accountability and transparency that continues to strengthen evaluation, assessment, and measurable outcomes in student performance, so students can realize their individual aspirations to the fullest.



About the Author

Reginald Lewis is the Executive Director of the Newark City Learning Collaborative (NCLC) and Assistant Professor of Professional Practice at the School of Public Affairs and Administration at Rutgers University – Newark. Prior to this appointment, Reginald Lewis served as Executive Director of The Chad School Foundation, a Newark-based education policy and advocacy organization that seeks to improve conditions in public school systems serving disadvantaged and at-risk youths. Lewis possesses than 15 years of senior management experience from the philanthropic, non-profit, state, and municipal government sectors. He has held positions with the Ford Foundation in New York, New York; Joyce Foundation in Chicago, Illinois; Victoria Foundation in Newark, New Jersey; and The Fund for New Jersey in New Brunswick, New Jersey. While at The Fund for New Jersey, he co-edited *Better Schools*, an issue report that outlined strategies for improving New Jersey’s K-12 public schools. He also has served as City Administrator for the City of East Orange and was appointed by President Obama as a Member of the U.S. Commission on Presidential Scholars. Reginald Lewis is a Cum Laude graduate of Morehouse College and also holds a Masters in Social Service Administration from the University of Chicago.

About The Chad School Foundation

The Chad School Foundation, established in 1991, is a Newark, New Jersey based education policy and advocacy organization that works to uphold excellence in education by improving student outcomes for historically disadvantaged children attending public schools.

Through commissioning research, convening key stakeholders and decision makers, and awarding scholarships, the Foundation leads efforts to support the academic success of students of color and to raise the expectations for student achievement in the Newark community.



THE CHAD SCHOOL FOUNDATION
BUILDING COMMUNITY WEALTH THROUGH EDUCATION

The Chad School Foundation, Inc.

24 Commerce Street, Suite 1430

Newark, New Jersey 07102

(973) 622-1061

www.thechadschoolfoundation.org