



September 24, 2018

Dear Partners, Friends and Supporters of the Detroit Children's Fund,

As we approach our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Dinner, I've been reflecting on the past year and taking stock of the incredible progress we've made. The usual thing to do is say that we're humbled and proud of the work we've done – and while we are – I'm also truly encouraged by what we and our partners have accomplished in just 12 short months. More importantly, while we acknowledge the mountain of work ahead of us, I am deeply hopeful about what the future holds for Detroit's children and know that if we stay the course, we can continue to build on this year's impact to dramatically improve the lives of Detroit's children.

Many of you know I've spent nearly my entire career in schools, from my start as a teacher in a South Bronx middle school to working for major school districts around the country, and now, Detroit. Throughout my career I've had the privilege to get to know thousands of Detroit teachers and hundreds of Detroit principals, assistant principals, and school staff members – so many people who believe in our children, want desperately for kids to be successful, and spend their precious time and money to do whatever they can for their students.

But our city didn't always appreciate or support its educators. We were worried about other things that we thought were "bigger" or "more important". Will our city survive bankruptcy? Will the state take over our schools? Will the district survive its financial crisis? Will our schools close? Through it all, our teachers, principals and students have trudged nobly forward in the face of exhaustion and hopelessness.

But now, in this moment, real and positive change is afoot: Detroit has new leadership and a renewed vision at Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD); we have stronger cooperation between charter school authorizers and operators to make coordinated decisions in the best interest of children; and we now have a mayor-supported Community Education Commission that's addressing some of our city's most nagging challenges. And, at the Detroit Children's Fund, our team is continuing our impact by immediately putting our funder's generosity to work.

In one year alone, here's some of what we've contributed:

**Investing in teachers** – We're funding initiatives like [#Teach313](#) and [Professional Innovators in Teaching](#), aimed at ensuring all students have a fantastic teacher in every classroom, every day.



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**Developing school leaders** - We're funding [New Leaders](#) to coach and mentor over 60 current and aspiring principals at DCPSD, and launched [DCF Team Fellows](#) and the [DCF Leaders Institute](#) to work with school leaders supporting hundreds of Detroit children. Through these programs we're making deep, long-term commitments to current and future leaders in their quest to create more great schools.

**Supporting some of Detroit's best schools** – by supporting [New Paradigm for Education](#) and their six schools, more students will have the opportunity to catch up, perform grade-level work, and graduate ready for college and successful careers.

**Providing critical information to parents** – through our support for the [Community Education Commission](#), parents will soon be able to use Detroit's first-ever comprehensive schools guide to choose the best school for their child and most importantly, parents will have more information to understand the quality of each public school in the city.

Through all this work, however, we have kept Detroit's children at the center of what we do. Make no mistake, while we are a non-profit we are *not* a charity. We believe that through great schools, we can ensure that the inherent genius of every Detroit child is met with the equitable opportunities they deserve. It is not charitable to educate our children—it is our duty.

Allow me to end this note with the gratitude that it requires. Below are a list of partners that we consider some of the best around. And while 2019 will surely bring more opportunities and challenges, we are eager to add to this long and growing list of fellow travelers who, like us, put educating Detroit students above all other priorities. The future is bright indeed.

Sincerely,

Jack J. Elsey Jr.,  
Executive Director  
Detroit Children's Fund



*We are thankful for our partner organizations and schools who do the real work that we support:*

*School Partners:*

*Detroit Public Schools Community District ♦ New Paradigm for Education ♦ Detroit Prep  
Detroit Achievement Academy ♦ Mumford Academy ♦ Cornerstone Schools ♦ University Prep  
Equity Education ♦ Promise Schools*

*Talent Partners:*

*School Empowerment Network ♦ New Leaders ♦ MAPSA*

*Supporting Partners:*

*The City of Detroit ♦ General Motors ♦ Quicken Loans  
Detroit Community Education Commission ♦ Skillman Foundation FleishmanHillard  
Crain Communications ♦ Strategic Community Partners ♦ EarlyWorks  
Grand Valley State University ♦ Central Michigan University ♦ IFF ♦ Ford Foundation  
Brightmoor Alliance ♦ Youth Policy Lab at University of Michigan ♦ Saga Marketing  
Education Cities*