



**Philadelphia Education Fund**  
*Champions for Quality Public Education*

Seven Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Suite 700  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
Tel: 215-665-1400  
Fax: 215-864-2494  
[www.philaedfund.org](http://www.philaedfund.org)

## **Philadelphia Education Fund**

### **Mission**

The mission of the Philadelphia Education Fund is to improve the quality of public education for underserved youth throughout the Philadelphia region.

### **History**

The roots of the Philadelphia Education Fund can be traced to 1985, when the city's business, foundation and university communities created Philadelphia Alliance for Teaching Humanities in the Schools (PATHS)/Philadelphia Renaissance in Science and Mathematics (PRISM). PATHS/PRISM worked in collaboration with the School District of Philadelphia to increase access and rigor to humanities and science/math education for K-12 students. During the same period, the Philadelphia Schools Collaborative (the Collaborative) was created by the District to focus on high school reform. In a strategic decision to unify two organizations working toward similar goals, PATHS/PRISM and the Collaborative merged in 1995 to form the Philadelphia Education Fund, resulting in a stronger entity that joined the national Public Education Network (PEN), and came to occupy a significant role in Philadelphia schools and later in the surrounding region.

### **Primary Goals**

Three primary goals guide the work of the Philadelphia Education Fund. Working closely with school districts, schools, businesses, universities, non-profit organizations, community stakeholders and other partners, the Ed Fund aims to:

- Create high-performing secondary schools (grades 6 – 12) where public school diplomas are synonymous with rigorous and high quality education that leads to post-secondary success.
- Provide all students with access to postsecondary education opportunities and the assurance that they can complete appropriate and rigorous classes to allow them to succeed in college and career.
- Create strategic alliances to support student success from Pre-K through college.

### **Initiatives**

In collaboration with schools, school districts, and other partners, the Philadelphia Education Fund enhances teaching and learning; conducts research studies that fuel its work and that of others; directly assists students to access and succeed in postsecondary education; convenes public education stakeholders in support of school reform policy and practice; and informs and engages citizens as public school advocates in the greater Philadelphia region.

*Enhances teaching and learning:*

- Enhancing the student teacher experience by partnering with colleges and the School District of Philadelphia on the **Student Teacher Pipeline to the Future** to create a reservoir of excellent future teachers.
- Preparing new teachers through its new **Teacher Residency Program**.
- Co-convening, a **secondary education planning process with the School District of Philadelphia** to address key issues to ensure student success in grades 6 – 12.
- Conducting dropout prevention programs through its **Keeping Middle Grades Students on Track to Graduation** initiative.

*Conducts research that fuels its work and that of others:*

- Preparing the **Early Warning Indicators Study**, with Johns Hopkins University, which identifies four dropout risk factors seen as early as 6th grade and is regularly cited locally, regionally and nationally.
- Managing the **Philadelphia Educational Longitudinal Study (PELS)**, a quantitative survey that longitudinally tracked a sample of eighth graders in the School District of Philadelphia; conducting and facilitating research based on PELS.

*Assists students to access and succeed in postsecondary education:*

- The **College Access Program** which provides support to 11,000 students and adults annually to make college an achievable goal.
- The **Philadelphia Scholars Program** “Last Dollar” scholarships for College Access participants in good standing at accredited colleges and universities across the country.
- A partnership with **Graduate! Philadelphia** whose work complements the College Access Program by focusing on adults who have started but not finished college.
- A partnership with **Core Philly** which offers scholarships to Philadelphia high school seniors to help pay first-year expenses at select Pennsylvania colleges and universities.

*Convenes public education stakeholders:*

- **The Education First Compact**, a monthly forum of education stakeholders that explores school reform issues and lends a critical perspective to the School District of Philadelphia;
- **The Philadelphia Math & Science Coalition**, a partnership of businesses, universities, the School District, the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers, and other non-profits that brings resources and expertise to improve locally what is a national crisis – the quality of math and science instruction in public schools.

*Engages and Informs public school advocates through its civic engagement efforts:*

- **The Small Schools Project** which partners with youth-led organizations to provide advocacy and leadership skills to support the development of high performing small neighborhood high schools.
- **Community Learning Briefs** to better-inform public education advocates;
- Advocating with other statewide organizations for equitable and **adequate school funding**;
- Serving as a founding partner of the **Greater Philadelphia compact for STEM [science, technology, engineering, and math] Education**, which is helping the Commonwealth to plan and establish STEM centers that will improve STEM instruction across the state.