



JACKSONVILLE
**PUBLIC
EDUCATION
FUND**

IMPACT REPORT

2023-2024



LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with immense gratitude for your steadfast partnership and deep belief in the power of public education. The Jacksonville Public Education Fund's work in fiscal year 2023-2024 was shaped by both remarkable progress and complex challenges, and through it all, our commitment remained clear: to ensure every child in every neighborhood has access to a high-quality public education.

This year brought significant change to our education landscape, including new leadership at Duval County Public Schools. We welcomed Dr. Christopher Bernier as Superintendent and worked diligently to foster strong, collaborative relationships that keep students at the center of every decision. We also expanded our partnerships with educators, families, and community stakeholders to address the pressing needs of our schools and accelerate student achievement.

Through strategic efforts such as our Teacher Leadership Initiatives and Fellowships and targeted Student Resiliency investments, we are building new capacity where it matters most - inside classrooms and communities where our students learn and grow. These efforts are already showing promising signs of impact, and we remain energized by the growing network of champions who are bridging gaps and expanding opportunity across our city.

As public discourse around education becomes increasingly polarized, JPEF continues to be a bridge - bringing people together across differences to advance student success. We are deeply proud of how our community has responded with resilience, creativity, and purpose, and we are committed to continuing this movement with humility and resolve.

We are grateful to each of you - our donors, educators, advocates, and partners - for standing with us. Together, we are shaping a future where every child, regardless of zip code, has the opportunity to thrive.

With hope and determination,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rachael Tutwiler Fortune".

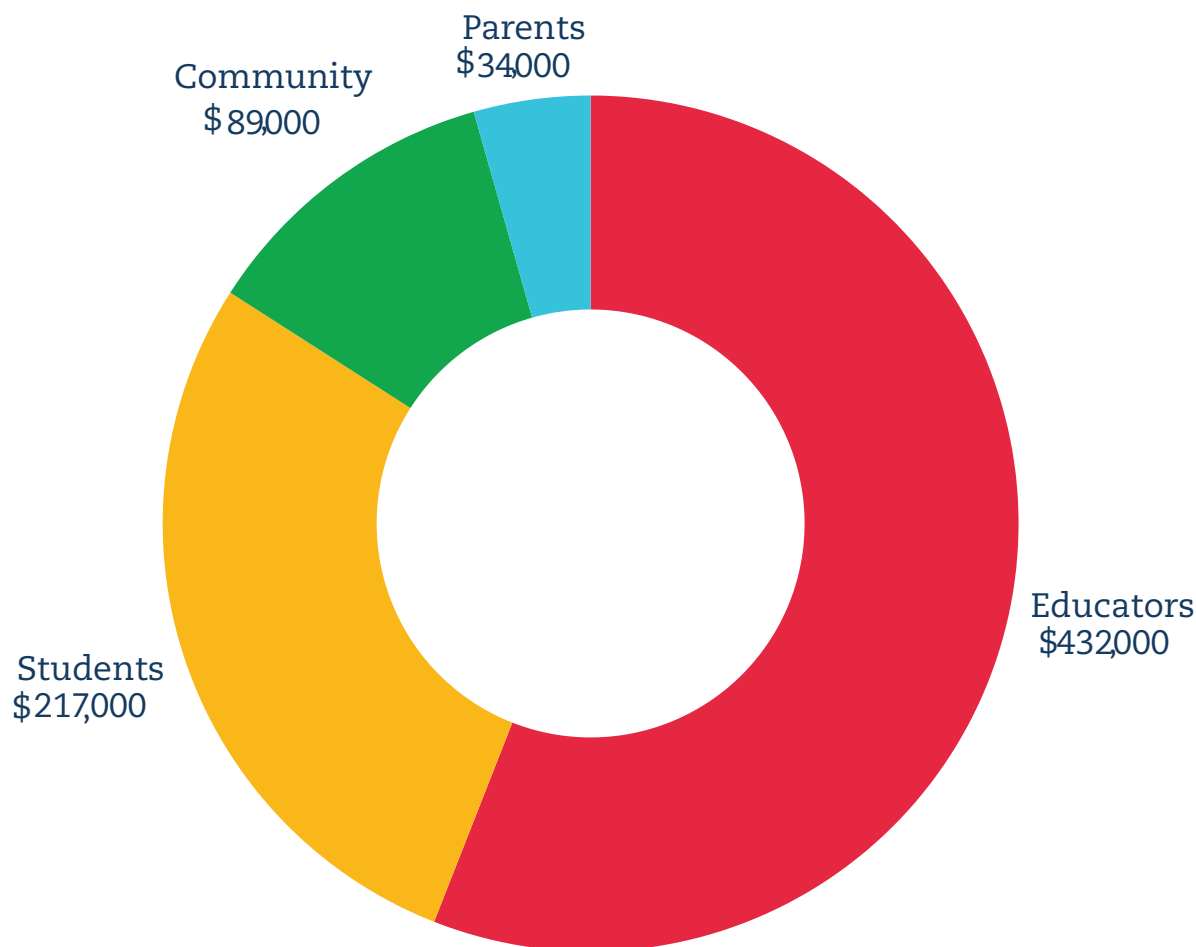
Rachael Tutwiler Fortune
President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Hyde".

Kevin Hyde
Board Chair

JPEF BY THE NUMBERS

Our Investment and Impact in Duval County



Educators

- Cindy Edelman Excellence in Teaching Fellowship - funded innovative, cutting-edge professional development opportunities for educators to improve student outcomes.
- EDDY Awards - more than 800 people celebrated 180 teachers of the year
- Professional Learning Opportunities - 346 participating educators
- School Leadership Initiative - 19 Community of Practice participants
- 1,000 by 2025 - 59 mentees supported by 10 peer coaches

Community

- EDTalks + Action - 350+ community leaders and education advocates in attendance
- Supporting Grade Level Reading - 897,600 minutes read in Mayor Deegan's River City Readers Challenge; 75% increase of READJAX followers across social media platforms

Students

- Wolfburg Participatory Action Research Project - 5 student leaders, 2 teacher leaders trained and activated
- New Worlds Reading Initiative - 500 students received books
- Resiliency Through Community - 200+ students supported by JPEF funded partners

Parents

- Parents Who Lead Cohort - 14 participating parents
- Parents Who Lead Alumni Engagement - 52 alumni engaged with JPEF

ABOUT JPEF

The Jacksonville Public Education Fund (JPEF) is the third generation of Jacksonville's local education fund and was established in 2009 to begin its role as Duval County's high-performing local education fund. JPEF serves as a bridge in support of public school students, ensuring that all students can attain the successful future awaiting them on the other side of high school graduation.

MISSION

JPEF activates community support, connects partners, and advances effective ideas for the success of all students.

VISION

Every student is inspired and prepared for success in college or a career and life.



CHAMPIONING AND SUPPORTING STUDENT RESILIENCY

2023 EDTalks: Student Resiliency



JPEF hosted the fourth biennial EDTalks on September 27 at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront. More than 350 education leaders and supporters gathered together to reflect on innovative, healing centered opportunities to provide students support as they navigate school and community environments. Shawn Ginwright, PhD, one of the nation's leading innovators, provocateurs, and thought leaders on African American youth, youth activism, and youth development, served as our featured speaker. Additionally, Duval County students participated in a panel discussion to share and reflect on their experiences in the classroom.

School Leadership Initiative: Principal Book Club

Inspired by Dr. Shawn Ginwright's seminal work, "The Four Pivots," JPEF launched a Community of Practice in partnership with the Center of Children's Rights aimed at transforming school leadership and promoting positive youth development across Duval County. Nearly 20 school leaders participated in professional learning sessions and engaged in hands-on learning activities to facilitate relationship building and trust within school communities. When surveyed, 100% of respondents reported a high satisfaction with the quality of the program.



CHAMPIONING AND SUPPORTING STUDENT RESILIENCY

Partnership Spotlight: Educators Thriving

Research continues to demonstrate that teachers regularly experience high rates of stress and burnout, which contribute to high turnover and poorer academic outcomes and emotional development for students. However, when educators are presented with proper tools and support, both teachers and students are able to develop the skills to overcome challenges and thrive - inside and outside of the classroom. In collaboration with statewide efforts to assist students in fostering resiliency skills, JPEF partnered with Educators Thriving to provide Duval County educators with professional development sessions aimed at increasing their well-being.

The impact of offering meaningful support has on retaining high-quality educators is clear: 100% of participants shared that these professional development opportunities made their job feel more sustainable. Impactfully, 92% shared that, following this program, they planned to stay a preK-12 educator for at least five years. Following their participation, more than 90% of educators used at least one resiliency building strategy in their work, while 86% shared that these strategies helped to improve their well-being.



100% of participants felt that this work made their job more sustainable

93% of educators have used at least one resiliency-building strategy in their work

92% of participating educators plan to remain in their profession for at least five years

86% of participants felt the skills they explored helped to improve their well-being



ADVOCATING FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

DCPS Superintendent Search and School Board Elections

The 2023-2024 year proved to be a pivotal moment of leadership transition for public education in Duval County. The selection process of a new superintendent, coupled with electoral races for 4 out of 7 seats on the School Board, served as an opportunity for JPEF to amplify our independence as a data-driven, community-centered resource for leaders and advocates as the community navigated these consequential leadership changes.

With the ultimate goal of activating robust, informed community engagement in public education, JPEF leveraged digital and in-person channels to share important developments throughout the superintendent selection and election processes. In conjunction with information sharing, we hosted five advocacy events centered around the Duval County School Board. Four of the events were candidate forums, and one was a town hall discussion with School Board Chairman Darryl Willie. Each event dedicated a portion of the program to audience questions, inviting education advocates to share their visions, dreams, and concerns about public education in our community. In total, these events reached more than 360 community members, with over 70% attending in-person.

Audience members who completed a post-event survey shared:

- 🌟 **97% planned to vote in the August 2024 school board election**
- 🌟 **96% felt better informed to vote in the election after attending a forum**
- 🌟 **60% said JPEF school board forums inspired or supported their decision to register to vote**





ADVOCATING FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION



PNC Bank Business Panel Securing Our Future: The Impact of High-Quality Early Childhood Education and Literacy

Literacy, especially third grade reading scores, is one of the best predictors of success in school and life. Yet data shows we are failing too many children, especially children of color, in Duval County, consistent with national trends. Taking research into action, PNC Bank and JPEF brought together community partners and experts in September 2023 to discuss early education, literacy, and boosting 3rd grade reading outcomes directly impacts economic development. More than 40 business leaders and nonprofit executives were in attendance as the panel shared the “why” and the “how” of early education and literacy in Northeast Florida. Regional President of PNC Bank in North Florida Chris Kalin served as the moderator of the discussion. Community leaders who participated in the panel include Dr. Kelli Tice, Chief Health Equity Officer for Guidewell, Kyle Baltuch, Senior Vice President of Equality of Opportunity for the Florida Chamber Foundation, Sonya McSwain, Director of Early Childhood Education at John Love Elementary, and Tabitha Furyk, President of the Jim and Tabitha Furyk Foundation.



ADVOCATING FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

Supporting Literacy

Research continues to underscore the importance of literacy as a key indicator of student well-being, achievement, and success in school and life. In order to meaningfully address literacy gaps in Duval County, JPEF continued its role as a leading partner in READ JAX to promote school readiness and quality teaching, tackle chronic absences, improve summer learning, and engage parents as their children's first teachers. Our efforts in 2024 were centered around survey data that revealed overall gaps between parents' beliefs that children should read every day outside of school (75%) and how often they read with their children every day (35%), and specific gaps in community resource access near the 8 targeted READ JAX schools. This data was used to create profiles of intervention with parents and action plans at each target school.



New Worlds Reading Initiative

In 2021, the Florida Legislature created the New Worlds Reading Initiative, the first statewide book distribution program. Through a partnership with the Consortium of Florida Education Foundations, University of Florida Lastinger Center and key partners throughout the state, eligible students receive high-quality books and their families are provided engaging resources and materials to best support their child's reading journey. JPEF serves as a Northeast Regional Partner, hosting Parent Family Literacy Workshops and Community Literacy Events that promote grade level reading throughout Duval County schools.



The goals of New Worlds Reading Initiative are to:

- **Partner with organizations across the state to increase awareness and support children and families**
- **Create at-home libraries for Florida VPK through 5th grade students who are not yet reading on grade level**
- **Build caregivers' confidence and capacity to support their child's reading development by providing strategies, tips, and tools to encourage meaningful engagement**
- **Develop teacher experts in the science of reading through educator professional development**

SUPPORTING TEACHERS AND LEADERS

Cindy Edelman Excellence in Teaching Fellowship

The Cindy Edelman Excellence in Teaching Fellowship, an unprecedented opportunity for K-12 public school teachers in Duval County to elevate their teaching careers through a professional development activity of their choosing. Launched in 2019, the Fellowship identifies and rewards excellent educators who go above and beyond for their students. This year, seven teachers were selected from a pool of high-quality applicants to embark on a one-of-a-kind learning experience of their choice. Following their learning experience, these teachers bring back innovative knowledge that has a transformational impact throughout their school.

Debbie Scarbrough, a 39-year veteran teacher who teaches K-5 Art at Mandarin Oaks Elementary, was able to participate in a cutting-edge professional development session on providing inclusive, quality adaptive art materials and tools for exceptional education students as part of her Fellowship. She utilized her stipend to attend a Zot Artz art experience workshop. The workshop gave her the opportunity to identify, experiment with, and implement innovative artistic experiences that empower students to fully participate and impact their ability to "...need less hand over hand assistance and take ownership of their creativity."

Following her participation in the Zot Artz workshop, Debbie created an art show for her students work during the annual Andrew Turner track meet at Mandarin Oaks Elementary. Through her participation in The Cindy Edelman Excellence in Teaching Fellowship, Debbie was able to further her mission of ensuring that all students achieve meaningful creative independence and can experience the transformational power of art.



SUPPORTING TEACHERS AND LEADERS

Wolfburg Fund for Social Justice Fellowship Youth Participatory Action Research Project

In partnership with the Wolfburg Fund for Social Justice in Education, JPEF's research team piloted a year-long youth participatory action research (YPAR) project focused on advancing social justice in Duval County and addressing the most critical social needs identified by teachers, students, and families. Together with our staff, youth and teacher researchers aimed to answer the question: In our community, how can we use social justice to promote equitable outcomes for all students?

Youth and teacher researchers participated in multiple training sessions to collect robust interview and survey qualitative data. Supported by JPEF staff, participants worked to create reports of their findings, while learning practical skills such as data collection, interview techniques, and data analysis. The project culminated in a final showcase where students and teachers were able to present their findings, reflect on their experience, and participate in a question and answer session.



Anthony Aiuppy
Englewood
Elementary School





SUPPORTING TEACHERS AND LEADERS

33rd Annual EDDY Awards



The EDDY Awards, a time-honored tradition in our community, is an opportunity for education advocates and the families of teachers to recognize the outstanding educators in Duval County. On January 20, more than 800 attendees gathered together to celebrate the more than 180 exceptional Duval County teachers of the year.

Recognizing and elevating the excellence within public schools in Duval County is at the heart of all JPEF initiatives. When surveyed, event attendees shared that:

-  **85% of respondents were highly satisfied or satisfied with the following aspects: event location, purchasing tickets, checking in, event flow, videos shown, and speakers**
-  **The majority of EDDYs sponsors reported that the most important benefit they received from sponsoring the event was the opportunity to support teachers directly**

"...thank you for ensuring teachers are appreciated. This event is always top of the line excellence."

"It was amazing, and everything went flawlessly. I enjoyed by a part of this event."



LOOKING AHEAD

Be the Bridge

Since our founding in 2009, the Jacksonville Public Education Fund (JPEF) has built a strong track record of driving meaningful improvement in Duval County's public schools. Our mission is to ensure every student can succeed—and we do this by bridging gaps in education and expanding access to opportunity.

We know that lasting student success requires collective action. That's why we work to connect students' needs with the resources they deserve. Together, we can ensure every child in every public school is supported with the tools and opportunities they need to thrive.

When passionate advocates unite around improving outcomes for students and educators, we create a powerful pipeline of future-ready leaders who are equipped and inspired to contribute to their communities. JPEF is committed to activating community support, connecting partners, and advancing effective ideas that move education forward.

Our work is guided by our FY2024–2026 Strategic Framework, focused on three mission goals and one operational goal. As the education landscape continues to evolve, we remain focused on driving impact where it matters most.

We invite you to be part of this bridge-building work—supporting teachers, empowering students, and strengthening public education for generations to come.

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Teacher of the Year

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