

What we value. What we will do. How we will do it.

Why us: For over two decades, the Foundation has invested in adolescent learning and development through a variety of grantmaking strategies, including youth development, college and career pathways in high school, and college access and success for transition-age foster youth.

Why now: First, research over the past decade on the science of learning and the brain reveals that the prime time to develop higher-order thinking is when students are in high school. Studies confirm what educators have long known: learning deepens and accelerates when students feel safe and supported at school, and are able to relate what they've learned to their real lives. Second, the current policy environment is conducive to systemic change. Increased investment to integrate academic and career technical education, recent efforts to revitalize civic learning, and the adoption of a new multiple-measure school accountability system present a window of opportunity to bring California's high schools into the 21st century.

GOAL: To increase the number and effectiveness of high schools that prepare students for college, career, and civic life.

How: In service of this goal, we will focus our investments in promising approaches and models, and codifying and communicating progress and results to practitioners and policy makers.

A. Performance assessment systems

1. We will support innovations in, and the utilization of, performance assessments such as portfolios and senior capstone projects, to guide and evaluate high school students' learning, as well as inform college and university admissions and placement processes.

B. Positive school structures and climate

1. We will advance the use of high school models and approaches that address both structural and cultural elements to facilitate more rigorous, hands-on, work-based learning situated in a safe and supportive environment.

C. Learning for democracy

1. We will support models and approaches, inside and outside of school, that amplify students' voices to effect and lead positive change on issues that they care about in their communities.
2. We will build the capacity of educators to provide high-quality civic learning opportunities to students.

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Why this is important: The Local Control Funding Formula recognizes that educating disadvantaged children requires more resources to compensate for the capital they may be lacking at home and in their community. An effective accountability system should drive continuous improvement and use multi-dimensional data to measure school quality and student success.

GOAL: To solidify the successful implementation and viability of two major California policy structures, the Local Control Funding Formula and the new accountability system, for their promise to set the conditions that will narrow opportunity and achievement gaps and support whole child education and development.

In order to meet this goal, we will focus our investments in promising models, research, networks, and policy reforms.

A. State vision for whole child education

1. We will support networks of education leaders to coalesce the field around a vision for whole child education.

B. Continuous improvement and accountability for the whole child

1. We will support a statewide system that increases the capacity of state agencies, county offices and school districts to drive continuous improvement.
2. We will support an accountability system that incorporates multiple measures of student learning and integrates school culture, social emotional learning, and student voice with college and career preparation.
3. We will support successful models of meaningful family and community engagement.
4. We will share information about programs and strategies effectively educating the Whole Child.

C. School finance

1. We will support advocacy to maintain the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), which provides additional resources for low-income students, English learners and foster youth.

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Why this is important: A coherent system of leadership that involves superintendents, district staff, principals, and teachers, drives effective and lasting educational outcomes for children, indeed it is the only approach that has.

GOAL: To increase the number of districts that intentionally measure and improve principal quality and teacher leadership.

In order to meet this goal, we will focus our investments in research, leadership development, policy, promising models, and learning networks.

A. State level support for leadership

1. We will advance research to highlight best practices in leadership development, including Whole Child principles and to attract other dollars.
2. We will identify data sources that will measure progress toward the goal.

B. Principal preparation, retention and development

1. We will work with a select set of school districts to identify, assess, and retain high-quality and high-potential principals.
2. We will support the practices of high-quality principal preparation programs which promote Whole Child education.
3. We will support networks to develop high-quality new principals and support veteran principals.
4. We will inform school district leaders of practices to develop and improve the retention rate of high-quality principals and principal candidates.

C. School district systems of leadership

1. We will support models and programs to prepare and support superintendents, principal supervisors, and teacher leaders.

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Why this is important: Research shows that providing students with an education in the arts increases literacy, math achievement, and school engagement, especially for low-income students of color. The arts, when integrated into the curriculum, transform the teaching and learning environment. Students find their voice, passion and willingness to engage in learning, while teachers are offered new ways to build relationships with their students.

GOAL: To increase student access to arts education, and integrate arts into the core curriculum.

In order to meet this goal, we will focus our investments in promising models and networks, research, and sharing success stories.

A. Accelerate countywide efforts

1. We will support networks in three counties to make arts education a core component of the curriculum, and amplify the educational outcomes-of arts education and the role of counties in supporting this process.
 - a. Alameda County: offer coaching for principals and teachers to integrate the arts throughout the curriculum
 - b. Los Angeles County: gather data by testing models, and researching efforts regarding the quality, quantity, access, and equity of arts education
 - c. San Diego County: provide training for educators, offer technical assistance to school districts, and support a public campaign on improving literacy through the arts
2. We will support building a data resource to measure student participation in arts education as well as student outcomes in the county sites compared to control groups.

B. Strengthen statewide efforts

1. We will support building the capacity of arts education leaders to advocate for an education model that promotes creativity and the arts for the 21st century workforce.
2. We will support technical assistance to county offices of education and school districts to incorporate arts education throughout the core curriculum.