





# **What's** possible

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## join the movement

# An Invitation from President & CEO Jennifer Blatz

CHANGE IS POSSIBLE



Jennifer Blatz

Every child in our country should have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

As a first-generation college graduate, I know firsthand how education opens the door to new possibilities and opportunities. Yet, systemic inequities in schools and communities limit what's possible for many children of color and children living in poverty.

The StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network exists for these children. We work across the country. We support local leaders frustrated by poor results and hungering for lasting change. We bring data into the discussion and provide tools to have tough conversations and bridge divides. We encourage partnership across adjacent sectors like health, which our E3 Alliance partnership is doing in Central Texas to improve outcomes. The result? Communities are tackling racial inequities, fixing broken systems and improving the future for children and their families.

We also share success in using data to build trust and equity through the leadership of Higher Expectations in Racine, Wis., another Cradle to Career network member. Higher Expectations is an example of how our StriveTogether Theory of Action™ provides a blueprint for building a community that serves every child.

You will also learn how StriveTogether is investing in change through our Cradle to Career Community Challenge. We have already committed nearly \$30 million over the next three years in 35 communities and we are seeing early investments lead to better results for children.

Last year, the Cradle to Career Network impacted the lives of 13.7 million children including 8.6 million children of color. With your support, we can achieve StriveTogether's vision of "every child, cradle to career." Our goal is to help communities across the country to permanently transform how the systems that surround youth and families better serve them by 2023. From education and housing to transportation and health, we can change what's possible for millions of children. We can eliminate inequities, remove roadblocks and set more children on the path to reach their full potential.

We believe change is possible. We witness change when communities collaborate around a shared vision and put children at the center. We transform communities and lives together. We invite you to join us.

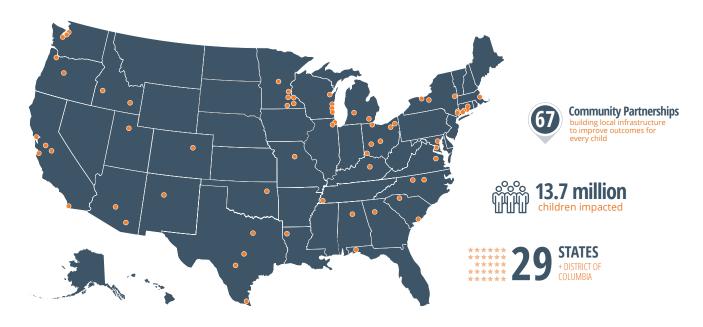
Learn more about StriveTogether in our first annual report. Join the cradle-to-career movement.

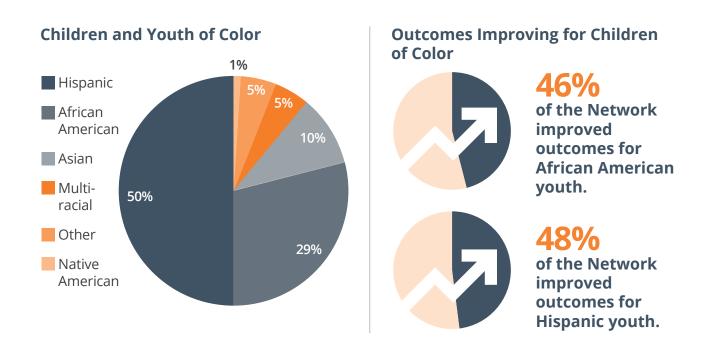
Sincerely,

## network impact

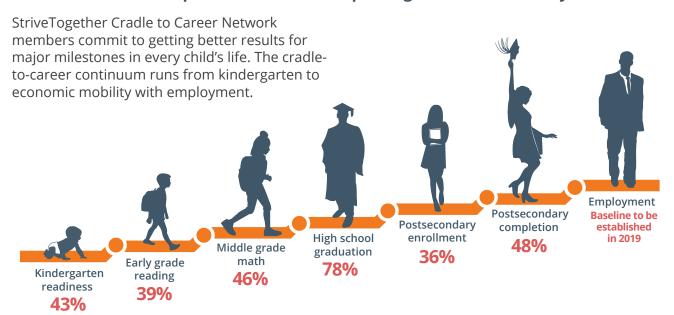
# Network at a Glance

The impact of StriveTogether's Cradle to Career Network is assessed annually. Last year, 66 of 67 partnerships participated and reported outcomes improving.



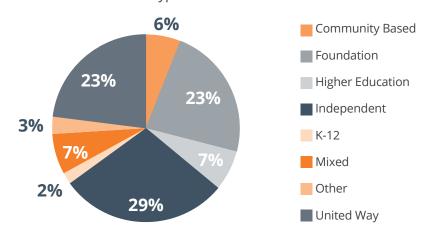


#### Percent of Partnerships with Outcomes Improving Across the Country



#### **Anchor Entity**

Each Cradle to Career Network member identifies with an anchor entity — the organization that commits to acting as the fiscal agent and ensuring the partnership's long-term sustainability. There are seven common anchor types within the network.



**Cradle to Career Network** members' budgets ranged from

\$40,000

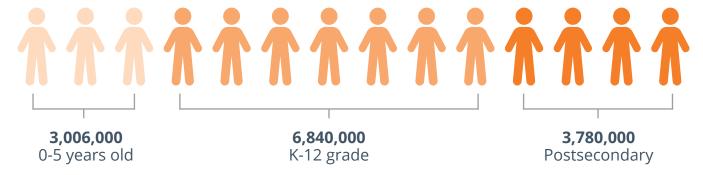
to

\$8.6 million

The average operating **budget** was

\$1.12 million

#### **Total Children and Youth Served**





# Doctors Provide Prescription for Success

PARTNERS
AND DATA
MAKE AN
IMPACT

E3 Alliance is helping close gaps for youth from preschool through college and career across Central Texas by using data and partnering with other organizations like medical professionals. Their goal? An educational pipeline that drives prosperity.

StriveTogether is supporting one of this network member's newest initiatives: Early Childhood Results Count. This initiative focuses on getting services quickly to children 5 years old and younger, especially those with developmental delays. A data work group is creating the infrastructure to share information across health, social service and education providers to better serve children.

"Our community needs an easier way to follow up on referrals for services such as early childhood intervention, transportation assistance and other benefits. Providers and case managers want to know if families followed through with a referral and if services were received," said Laura Koenig, senior director for Community Solutions of E3 Alliance. "Families who move around a lot may be served by multiple clinics, pediatricians, service providers and school districts. Sharing data across organizations allows for better, more proactive services and readiness for school."

#### Photo top

Free flu immunization at 136 schools is keeping tens of thousands of students in school, able to learn. This is just the latest example of E3 Alliance collaborating around data to improve outcomes for youth. Working with their community, education and business leaders, E3 Alliance developed Ready, Set, K! 10 years ago to prepare children for kindergarten. They started by looking at factors associated with school readiness, learned that about 2,000 eligible children were not enrolled in pre-K and that this could cost the region \$30 million over the lifetimes of children not attending pre-K. School district partners interviewed parents who did not send their children to pre-K and discovered many parents were unaware that pre-K was free and could prepare their children for school. Parents shared that they prefer to receive information on what is best for their children from trusted sources like a doctor, minister or friend.

This insight led E3 Alliance to work with dozens of health professionals, social service agencies and nonprofits to encourage parents to register their children for pre-K. They developed helpful tools such as a "prescription" doctors share with parents during routine visits to help eligible students access pre-K. The prescription is written in English and Spanish and includes school contact information.

"We are building stronger relationships with health care and social service providers to get the word out that pre-K builds better brains," Susan Dawson, president of E3 Alliance said. "All of our area federally qualified health clinics and Carousel Pediatrics have joined the effort."

Glenn G. Wood, M.D., is the medical director of Carousel Pediatrics, a private medical practice that serves 30,000 children across Central Texas. He said "Pediatrics is no longer just about taking care of ear infections and asthma. The most important issues the children face are often the social and educational issues that lower income children experience. Getting them to pre-school is one of the most important actions we can take to help kids, their families and the community."

Since this work began, pre-K enrollment increased an average of seven percent per year across participating school districts and the enrollment campaign is now part of the state's toolkit for pre-K enrollment.

Another example of E3 Alliance partnering with health care resulted in the largest flu immunization campaign in Texas. Based on a ground-breaking

research study by E3 Alliance that showed that 48 percent of student absences are related to acute illnesses like a cold or the flu, E3 Alliance mapped student absence data to county flu reports and found that peaks in student absenteeism exactly aligned with flu outbreaks. E3 Alliance also found that high school students who missed 10 or more days of school on average were three times more likely to drop out as those who missed five or fewer days of school.

Student absences are not just a problem because they are so closely linked with student achievement and health. Texas schools receive revenue from the state based on student attendance, so every student absence costs a school nearly \$40 per day. This adds up quickly. For example, the average high school in the region loses \$20,000 every week due to student absences. Across the entire region, E3 Alliance has calculated that increasing student attendance by just two percentage points, an average of three days per student per year, would increase revenue to Central Texas school districts by \$34 million annually.

So E3 Alliance, school districts and partners are providing no-cost, on-site flu immunization programs at 136 schools. This program along with other interventions to address chronic absenteeism are making an impact. Student absences decreased overall for the first time in two decades as enrollment increased. These efforts have returned over \$37 million in revenue to Central Texas schools and kept tens of thousands of students in school, able to learn.

Roxi Heiser, a freshman counselor at one of the schools participating in an attendance peer learning network led by E3 Alliance, was skeptical in the beginning. Attendance had always been an issue and she was unsure how participation in the learning network would lead to improved results. "We focused on the ninth grade and saw an incredible change in behavior, buy-in and culture," Heiser said. "At the end of our year working with E3 Alliance, we were asked to give one word to describe how we were feeling. Mine was 'believer." This high school learned about the flu immunization program through the peer learning network, implemented multiple focused efforts to improve absenteeism and saw a 3 percent increase in ninth grade attendance in one year.

## story of impact

Higher Expectations for Racine County

# **Build a Blueprint** for Better Outcomes

STRIVETOGETHER IS HELPING COMMUNITIES CREATE A CRADLE-TO-CAREER INFRASTRUCTURE.

The StriveTogether Theory of Action™ guides the StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network. Built on lessons from network members, the theory of action serves as a blueprint for building and sustaining a cradle-to-career community infrastructure.

Like many communities across the United States, Racine County recognized racial disparities affecting outcomes for children. Community leaders from this Wisconsin community turned to StriveTogether for guidance to create lasting, meaningful change.

"The disparities were so clear; the differences for black and white children were shocking," said Chelsea Powell, deputy director of Higher Expectations for Racine County. StriveTogether shared its data-driven approach with community leaders. According to Powell, this resulted in some tough conversations that built trust as Higher Expectations posted disaggregated data on its website for the community to see. She said, "If you want a community to succeed, if you want a fully capable and employed work force, it can't just be the white kids. We have to make a difference for every student and every family."

Prospective partners explore their readiness to join the network by organizing around a shared vision, selecting desired outcomes and identifying indicators of success. They hold themselves accountable for delivering results. They commit to using continuous improvement to drive better results and to supporting





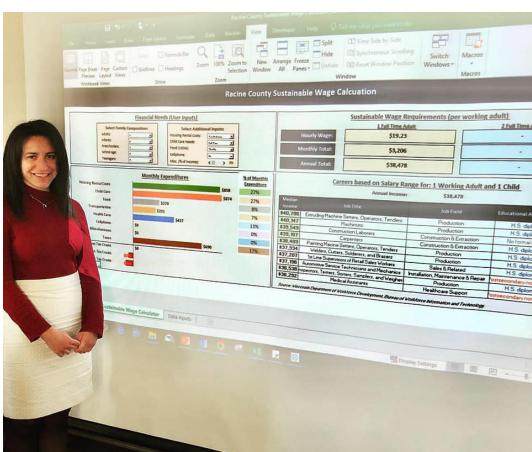




#### Photos

Network members like Higher Expectations put children at the center of their work to change systems and improve outcomes.





#### **Photos**

StriveTogether provides technical assistance, training and support to its network members. an organization dedicated to managing the partnership. Higher Expectations provides this backbone support in Racine County and joined the StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network in 2014.

Higher Expectations followed the StriveTogether Theory of Action™ to create a shared vision for a fully capable and employed Racine County workforce. The local United Way, one of the community partners, now aligns its funding decisions to building an educated workforce. The Racine Unified School District supports the vision through its "North Star" initiative to ensure all students graduate prepared for college or a career. Finally, more than 90 employers are engaged in the Academies of Racine to provide students with the skills needed for the 21st century workforce.

### "They galvanized interest around true career and college readiness. It was just a buzzword when we got here, but now it's our reality."

"I have never seen a community as well aligned," said Chad Severson, InSinkErator's former chief executive officer. "We started to hear and observe movement afoot in the community with the purpose of preparing young people for careers. This resonated strongly with me as we develop our workforce and continue to hire locally."

As network members progress along a path of continuous improvement and better outcomes for children, the stakes rise across four pillars of work: shared community vision, evidence-based decision making, collaborative action, and investment and sustainability.

"The four pillars are embodied in our community now," Powell said. "It works. Our partners are collaborating, looking at data in a new way. You can see it in meetings that go beyond the scope of Higher Expectations' work."

StriveTogether Senior Director of Learning and Activation Ritika Kurup explains, "Our theory of action consists of a series of gateways, or milestones, network members pass as they improve systems and eliminate disparities. Each gateway has a series of quality benchmarks that are key to creating real change and improving economic mobility for children and their families."

Higher Expectations is one of 11 network members to reach the Proof Point gateway and is now working toward the Systems Transformation gateway. Partners meet this milestone when:

- Four of the seven cradle-to-career outcomes are met.
- Four disparity gaps are reduced or eliminated.
- One adjacent sector outcome for children, families or community residents improves.

Higher Expectations is progressing along five of the seven cradle-to-career outcomes. One example is kindergarten readiness. Higher Expectations provides student-level data to school districts and nonprofit partners. Local data and national research led Higher Expectations to ask former Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker for funds to expand kindergarten to a full day for 4-year-old students. In Racine, the school district invested \$1 million to improve early learning programs and increase access to full-day, 4-year-old kindergarten in schools serving low-income students beginning in the 2017-2018 school year. Now, 5 percent more kindergartners are meeting or exceeding literacy development targets.

Higher Expectations is also working to reduce racial inequities. In partnership with StriveTogether, Higher Expectations introduced Race, Equity and Inclusion: A Leadership Program to Accelerate Results. This led the district's elementary reading team to work with three low-income, racially diverse schools to help educators identify factors contributing to disparate student results. They discussed implicit bias and tested interventions to close gaps. These targeted interventions are now embedded in several elementary schools, resulting in reading improvements.

Racine Unified School District Deputy Superintendent Eric Gallien said, "Higher Expectations makes sure everyone knows what everyone else is doing and works together collectively. Off the bat with early childhood learning, Higher Expectations got everyone laser focused. They galvanized interest around true career and college readiness. It was just a buzzword when we got here, but now it's our reality. Everyone in the community understands the vision, and Higher Expectations is the glue for that work."



STRIVETOGETHER HELPS COMMUNITIES BUILD CRADLE-TO-CAREER INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THE SUCCESS OF EVERY CHILD. WE COACH, CONVENE AND CODIFY LEARNING FOR BETTER OUTCOMES.

#### Photo opposite page

Staff and partners from Cradle to Career Network member KConnect engage in a workshop.

#### COACH

#### StriveTogether builds capability through customized technical assistance and training.

- Collaborative Improvement methodology created by StriveTogether supports communities improving outcomes for youth and families. This unique approach blends thinking from across the field as well as the health care sector. It starts with the premise that change can only begin with action and focuses on youth and families facing the greatest barriers.
- District Continuous Improvement teaches school staff how to use continuous improvement principles in the classroom, across a school and across an entire district. Participants identify effective practices and collaborate on complex problems.
- Equitable Results provides communities with skills and tools needed to create real, lasting change. Network members and their local partners learn how to develop and implement plans to tackle their most complex community challenges. This includes identifying and analyzing root causes of racial inequities along the cradle-to-career continuum.
- Impact and Improvement Networks bring communities together into a cohort using collaborative improvement to change specific outcomes. The goal is to help partners align efforts around improving quality of life for children in their community while building capability in StriveTogether's collaborative improvement approach. Teams focus on a single cradle-to-career outcome.
- Results Based Facilitation is one of the foundational skills of Results Count™. Participants practice skills for getting better results by moving groups from talk to action and holding meeting participants accountable for advancing the work.

## **WHAT'S COLLABORATIVE IMPROVEMENT?**

StriveTogether's Collaborative Improvement methodology includes learning from nearly 70 network members who apply this approach as they advance through the StriveTogether Theory of Action™ toward systemic community change. Collaborative Improvement includes four elements:

#### 1. EQUITY

Changing systems to improve outcomes for every child drives the work. We focus explicitly on race equity and equity for youth and families living in poverty.

#### 2. RESULTS COUNT™

Pioneered by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, this leadership development approach helps individuals and groups move from intention to action.

#### 3. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Centered around Plan, Do, Study, Act continuous improvement cycles, we use the simplest of tools and protocols that support communities.

#### 4. HUMAN-CENTERED DESIGN

This user-centric, creative, problem-solving approach helps groups engage authentically with those they are trying to serve.

#### **CONVENE**

#### StriveTogether fosters connections across the Cradle to Career Network to create peer-to-peer learning opportunities.

- Annual Convening connects hundreds of community leaders and experts with thought leaders and more than 50 interactive sessions and how-to workshops.
- Communities of Practice serve network members trying to change systems by tackling similar issues. Communities of practice create a virtual space for partnerships to solve problems together.
- **Grantee Convenings** bring together network members receiving strategic investments from StriveTogether to accelerate progress against specific goals.
- **Network Navigators** serve as the primary point of contact with the network member. Bimonthly calls highlight successes, challenges and opportunities to learn from peers.
- Role Alike groups bring individuals in similar roles together to share effective practices and
- Topic-based Convenings bring communities tackling specific challenges together to learn from experts in the field.

#### CODIFY

#### StriveTogether shares learning and tools to accelerate progress.

- Civic Infrastructure Assessment is an annual process to gauge progress and capture learning as communities advance along the StriveTogether Theory of Action™ toward systems transformation.
- Partner Portal is a digital platform that enables our Cradle to Career Network to collaborate around knowledge and data to achieve results.
- **Resources** are developed to share successes and fail forwards to further learning. We synthesize and distill information to make it usable across the Network.

- StriveTogether Theory of Action™ provides a proven framework for building and sustaining a cradle-to-career civic infrastructure.
- Webinars feature experts, partners and network members who share knowledge and lessons relevant to advancing through the theory of action, transforming systems and improving outcomes for every child.



# Make it Possible

IF YOU REFUSE TO SETTLE FOR A WORLD WHERE A CHILD'S POTENTIAL IS DICTATED BY THE CONDITIONS INTO WHICH A CHILD IS BORN, JOIN THE STRIVETOGETHER MOVEMENT.

> Help us break down barriers, change systems and improve life for as many children as possible. Let's make sure that race, ethnicity and poverty do not limit opportunity or outcome for any child.

> Together, we can ensure every child has every opportunity to succeed from cradle to career.

#### Consider:

- 1. Mobilizing a partnership in your community and joining the StriveTogether Network so you can have a greater, more lasting impact on the lives of children and their families locally.
- 2. Supporting StriveTogether. See your generosity transform what's possible in communities across the nation.

Learn more at StriveTogether.org.

#### Photo top

StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network member Milwaukee Succeeds supports the Leading Men Fellowship that prepares men of color to teach young children. Research shows that children of color are more successful in school when at least one of their teachers is also of color.

## **funding**

# Invest in Change

## COMMUNITY CHALLENGE INVESTMENTS FUEL POSITIVE RESULTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

StriveTogether's Cradle to Career Community Challenge invests in network members' efforts to improve equity and economic mobility for children and their families. The four distinct funds that make up the Community Challenge are the Accelerator, Promising Practices, Opportunity and Strategic Initiatives funds.

#### THE ACCELERATOR FUND established in 2015

The Accelerator Fund, established in 2015, precedes the Community Challenge. The first six communities to receive Accelerator investments in 2015 became Proof Point communities in 2018 after achieving better results for children using StriveTogether's data-driven approach. StriveTogether has invested \$6.5 million in direct financial assistance along with technical assistance and leadership development to help Accelerator Fund communities improve outcomes.

In 2018, StriveTogether selected the communities shown on the map (following page) to receive up to \$550,000 over three years through Accelerator Fund investments.

#### THE PROMISING PRACTICES FUND established in 2018

Second, Promising Practices invests in bold new strategies, innovation and collaboration among network members to speed progress across the Theory of Action™, StriveTogether's validated blueprint for improving cradle-to-career outcomes. The communities shown on the map (following page) received up to \$150,000 each in 2018.

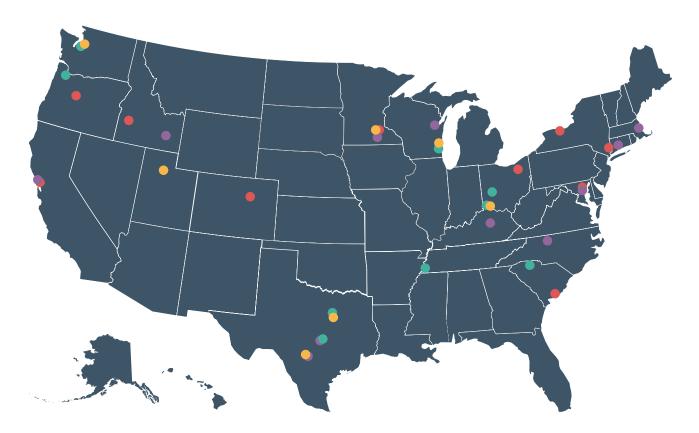
#### THE OPPORTUNITY FUND established in 2018

Next, the Opportunity Fund extends the work in communities that reached Proof Point by focusing on deeper systems change aimed at more equitable and sustainable systems and advancing economic mobility by engaging additional sectors. Nine communities shown on the map (following page) earned grants in 2018 of up to \$500,000 per year for three years.

#### THE STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FUND established in 2018

Finally, the Strategic Initiatives Fund supports efforts to test and spread strategies across StriveTogether's seven critical capacities such as advancing cradle-to-career policies. In Texas, the Commit Partnership advocated for school finance reform after the November 2018 elections. In Washington, Graduate Tacoma secured support for a new levy that provides about \$5 million per year to provide underserved youth more access to arts programs, festivals and cultural experiences.

StriveTogether's Cradle to Career Network is making a positive impact on the lives of more than 13 million children across the country — most of whom are children of color and children living in poverty. The generosity of investors enables these results.





#### THE ACCELERATOR **FUND**

**Baltimore's Promise** Baltimore, Maryland

**Better Together Central** Oregon

Central Oregon

**Generation Next** Twin Cities, Minnesota

**Marin Promise Partnership** Marin County, California

**RISE: Treasure Valley's Education Partnership** Boise, Idaho

**ROC the Future** SUNY Rochester, New York

**South Bronx Rising Together** 

SUNY Morissania, New York

**Summit Education Initiative** 

Summit County, Ohio

**Tri-County Cradle to Career** Collaborative

Charleston, South Carolina

**Youth Initiative of Adams County** Adams County, Colorado



#### THE PROMISING **PRACTICES FUND**

**Achieve Brown County** Green Bay, Wisconsin

**Baltimore's Promise** Baltimore, Maryland

**Boston Opportunity Agenda** Boston, Massachusetts

**Bridgeport Prospers** Bridgeport, Connecticut

E3 Alliance Central Texas, Texas

The Forsyth Promise Winston-Salem, North Carolina

imPACT East Idaho Pocatello, Idaho

**Marin Promise Partnership** Marin County, California

**Northfield Promise** Northfield, Minnesota

**UP Partnership** Bexar County, Texas

**Partners for Education** Berea, Kentucky



#### THE OPPORTUNITY **FUND**

**All Hands Raised** Multnomah County, Oregon

The Commit Partnership Dallas County, Texas

E3 Alliance Central Texas, Texas

**Graduate Tacoma** Tacoma, Washington

**Higher Expectations, Racine County** Racine, Wisconsin

**Learn to Earn Dayton** Dayton, Ohio

**Seeding Success** Shelby County, Tennessee

**Spartanburg Academic** Movement

Spartanburg County, South Carolina

StrivePartnership Cincinnati, Ohio, and Northern Kentucky



#### THE STRATEGIC **INITIATIVES FUND**

**Generation Next** Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota

**Graduate Tacoma** Tacoma, Washington

Milwaukee Succeeds Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**UP Partnership** Bexar County, Texas

**Promise Partnership of** Salt Lake

Salt Lake City, Utah

StrivePartnership Cincinnati, Ohio, and Northern Kentucky

The Commit Partnership Dallas County, TX

\*Six of the seven grants in this fund are supporting statewide initiatives. The work in each region is being led by the listed network member.

### cradle to career network

# The Power of the Network

The StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network improved the lives of 13.7 million children last year including 8.6 million students of color. Together, we are transforming systems to ensure every child has every opportunity to succeed.









More than 400 leaders, educators and experts shared insights and peer-to-peer learning at the 2018 Cradle to Career **Network Convening.** 

Top: Network members gather for a group photo. Middle left: Danae Davis, Milwaukee Succeeds executive director. Middle right: Network members and partners joined StriveTogether President and CEO Jennifer Blatz onstage for the opening plenary. Bottom left: The convening kicked off with a welcome reception held at the Seattle Art Museum.

## financials

# Operating Highlights

StriveTogether's auditors have expressed an unmodified opinion on our financial statements for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2018. Those financial statements are available on StriveTogether's website.

OPERATING REVENUE (MILLIONS)	2018	2017
Grants	\$4,548,626	\$4,765,963
In-kind donations	769,432	
Contract service	228,075	376,242
Membership fees	166,458	134,585
Other	410,946	481,551
Total operating revenue	\$6,123,537	\$5,758,341
EXPENSES		
Personnel	\$3,126,874	\$1,344,227
Grants paid to partnerships	927,433	1,390,787
Consulting and professional	997,557	943,341
Conferences, conventions, meetings	798,854	481,218
Travel	531,348	378,215
Information technology	275,715	160,993
Occupancy	155,700	98,908
Communications	210,701	61,832
General and administration	163,820	41,387
Staff development	234,110	29,118
Depreciation	177,793	7,099
Total operating expenses	\$7,599,905	\$4,937,125
COMMUNITY CHALLENGE		
Grant revenue	\$6,395,119	-
Grants paid to partnerships	\$6,395,119	-
TOTAL REVENUE	\$12,518,656	\$5,758,341
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$13,995,024	\$4,937,125
TOTAL ASSETS	\$6,909,757	\$8,211,153
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$829,856	\$654,884
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$6,079,901	\$7,556,269

## investors and partners

# Create What's Possible

Our work and results are made possible by the following foundations and partners. We appreciate their support. Together, we're fueling a national movement to ensure the success of every child from cradle to career.

#### **INVESTORS**

**Annie E. Casey Foundation** 

**Ballmer Group** 

Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, **Silicon Valley Community Foundation** 

Communities In Schools

**Einhorn Charitable Trust** 

**Ford Foundation** 

**Kresge Foundation** 

J.B. and M.K. Pritzker Family **Foundation** 

Robert Wood Johnson **Foundation** 

**Tableau Foundation** 

#### **PARTNERS**

**Annie E. Casey Foundation** 

**Brookings Institution** 

**Coalition for Community Schools** 

Communities In Schools

**Enterprise Community Partners** 

**Equal Measure** 

My Brother's Keeper Alliance

**National Collaborative for** Infants and Toddlers

National Institute for Children's **Health Quality** 

**PolicyLink** 

Save the Children

## leadership

# **Board of** Directors

Board members provide strategic oversight and strong leadership to guide StriveTogether in supporting the success of every child, cradle to career



Nancy L. Zimpher State University of New York



**Connie Ballmer** Ballmer Group



**James Bell** W. Haywood Burns Institute



**Dr. Russell Booker** Spartanburg County School District Seven



Danae D. Davis Milwaukee Succeeds



**Tom Fry** Philanthropic Advisor



Lisa Hamilton The Annie E. Casev Foundation



**Sue Lehmann** Student Success Network



**Tony Pipa** Brookings Institution



**Jennifer Blatz** StriveTogether



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