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# **City Forward Collective grants \$302,000 to 14 Milwaukee schools and networks to support plans for fall reopening**

Philanthropic investments will help schools ensure safety and continuity of learning

MILWAUKEE – Education nonprofit City Forward Collective today announced that 14 Milwaukee schools and school networks will receive \$302,000 in planning grants from the organization's COVID-19 School Support Fund.

This is the first of several grant opportunities from the \$750,000 COVID-19 School Support Fund, which City Forward Collective announced last month.

In addition to the planning grant awards, City Forward Collective also published a [school reopening planning tool](#) and launched a [special series of nine workshops](#) in July open to all Milwaukee schools as they prepare for fall. Leadership teams representing 76 public and private schools are currently participating in the trainings.

Executive Director Dr. Patricia Hoben said schools need as much support as possible as they prepare for a range of possible scenarios.

"No one knows exactly what fall will bring," Hoben said. "To ensure students and educators can continue safely teaching and learning, schools must be ready for each of three scenarios: all remote learning, a hybrid of remote and in-school learning, and full in-school learning."

Fourteen of 50 applicants were funded based on schools' analyses of their successes and challenges this spring in responding to school disruptions related to COVID-19, and their strategy to plan for reopening. Grantees are now developing detailed reopening plans for fall education programming that ensure students and staff remain safe while they close learning gaps, and address trauma and mental health concerns caused by the pandemic. Plans will detail contingencies to ensure teaching and learning continues regardless of COVID-19 spread conditions, and will be shared publicly at [www.cityforwardcollective.org](http://www.cityforwardcollective.org) in mid-August so other schools can benefit.

Planning grant funds will be used to help schools with additional expenses related to the pandemic, such as computers, home internet access, personal protective equipment, and furnishings to facilitate social distancing. Grants were awarded to:

- Carmen Schools of Science and Technology - \$30,000

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- Dr. Howard Fuller Collegiate Academy - \$30,000
- Highland Community School - \$24,000
- Hmong American Peace Academy - \$18,000
- Messmer Catholic Schools - \$18,000
- Milwaukee Environmental Science Academy - \$15,000
- Milwaukee Excellence Charter School - \$20,000
- Penfield Montessori Academy - \$18,000
- St. Anthony School - \$21,000
- St. Augustine Preparatory Academy - \$24,000
- St. Marcus Lutheran School - \$30,000
- Seeds of Health - \$15,000
- Seton Catholic Schools - \$18,000
- United Community Center - \$21,000

“School closures this spring caused disproportionate harm to children of color and those from low-income households. That can’t happen again,” Hoben said. “Medical experts have made it clear that continued school closures are a strong possibility. Schools must be ready to offer a robust education program this fall, whether it is to support students in person, with remote teaching and learning, or a combination of the two – and be prepared to quickly transition as the situation changes.”

Future grant cycles will be open to schools and education support organizations to ensure successful remote instruction models are made available to more of the city’s students. The idea is to identify tools and strategies that might be useful to other schools on a bigger scale, or that might turn the challenges posed by COVID-19 into innovations that improve teaching and learning in the long-term.

The COVID-19 School Support Fund was made possible by generous donations from members of [the City Forward Collective board of directors](#), under the leadership of Mary and Ted Kellner. Additional contributions came from a range of other individuals, foundations and corporations. Donations for the COVID-19 School Support Fund are still being accepted. For more information, visit [www.cityforwardcollective.org](http://www.cityforwardcollective.org).

In addition to the COVID-19 School Support Fund, City Forward Collective executed a wide-ranging response to COVID-19 since March when schools closed. Demand for its School Leadership Collaboratives surged, so the organization launched virtual platforms to dramatically increase the scope and frequency of sessions. These Virtual Collaboratives brought together groups of school leaders or teachers from all types of Milwaukee schools to undertake training related to remote instruction and share best-in-class practices. More than 1,100 school leaders and educators have participated in the sessions.

**ABOUT CITY FORWARD COLLECTIVE:** City Forward Collective launched in June 2019 and works to secure Milwaukee’s economic future and quality of life by eliminating educational inequities and ensuring every child in the city has the opportunity to attend a high-quality school. The group works directly with Milwaukee school leaders, teachers, families and communities to build skills, knowledge and power to foster more high-quality schools for the children who need them most.

For more information, visit <http://cityforwardcollective.org> or contact Isral DeBruin by phone at (414) 459-1894 or by email at [isral.debruin@cityforwardcollective.org](mailto:isral.debruin@cityforwardcollective.org).

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