



Foundation 65



2020 Annual
Report



Foundation 65

Dear Friends:

When we started the last school year, we never could have predicted where we—Foundation 65, the District 65 community, and in fact the world—would be today. COVID-19 upended the 2019-20 school year, forcing us to rethink education entirely. The murders of George Floyd and others raised our consciousness, instilling an even stronger commitment to educational equity in the pursuit of justice.

As you will see in this Annual Report, this past year has been not only a chance for us to sharpen our focus on supporting educational equity through literacy and the arts within District 65, but it also has been a chance for us to share our resources, talents, and hard work in order to meet the urgent needs of our community as we face concurrent and intersecting crises.

We said goodbye to longtime Board member Dr. Keith Robinson, who ended his tenure with Foundation 65 as Board President. We are extremely thankful for Dr. Robinson's leadership and all he did to strengthen our ability to pursue our mission.

Especially during these times, we strongly believe that together we can build a more equitable educational system that ultimately leads to a different future for all our children. The past school year was like no other, and the current one has already proven to be profoundly different. At Foundation 65, we are prepared to work with District 65 and community partners to overcome hardship and create new beginnings so when we eventually return to "normal," the new normal is grounded in the commitment and belief that every one of our children can thrive.

In Evanston, we believe in public education and the promises it holds, and we can most certainly work together to move closer to the ideals for which we strive. Thank you for your continued support, commitment, and belief in our public education system and what it can provide for all of its students.

With gratitude,



Julie Cutter
Board President



Alecia Wartowski
Executive Director

Where We Reside

In 2019, we premiered our Foundation 65 video, *Where We Reside*. This anthem to District 65's students showcases four incredible Foundation 65-funded programs and some amazing students. This video was premiered at our My65 Benefit and serves as a tribute to public education, the Evanston community, and the children for whom we work every day. The following is an excerpt from that script, graciously created by Chuck Carra and the ETHS Slam Team for Foundation 65.

Where we reside
We speak love fluently

For you
For I
For Evanston pride

In free will, we reside

With a devotion to turn commotion into songs in the key of life
storms into a downpour of poems
Showing our might and our wisdom

Finding the rhythm of heartbeats and riding it when we speak, read, and write

We compel letters to words, words to sentences, sentences to ideas, ideas to beating wings

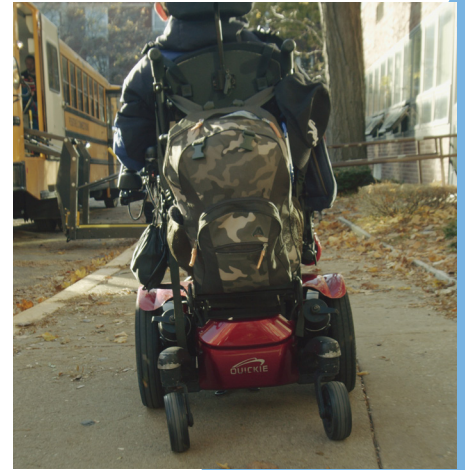
We help those in need
Because we all need help

Youth are the foundation
The pillars of the real social network
weaving a cultural fabric of all life's colors

Young sisters, young brothers
All identities, each other

Rise against systems that keep us below
Ready to grow, to learn,
to glow, to earn
To show concern and self worth
Put our neighborhood on the map of the earth

For you
For I
For Evanston pride
In free will, we reside



To view this video, please visit www.foundation65.org

COVID-19 Response

On March 13, 2020, our world changed forever as our children entered the last day of school in our District 65 buildings with a return date unknown. The COVID-19 pandemic forced students to begin remote learning, and Foundation 65 knew it needed to step up in new and creative ways. After deliberate consultation with District 65 and our partners, we developed a response to get resources into the hands of children, families, and educators when they needed it most.

Book Collection and Distribution

Our Summer Reading Program looked different this year. Instead of a spring book selection day for Reading Specialists to pick books for rising 2nd graders, those educators chose a packet of six books that were sent to students over the summer to keep them engaged in reading.

A code for free books was sent to every child receiving free or reduced lunch to choose their own books through Young, Black and Lit.

1,580
books distributed

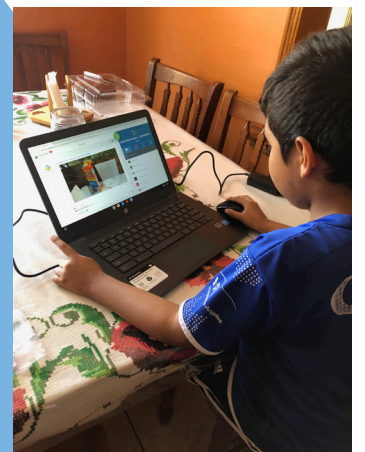


Community Collaborations

We collaborated with the Evanston Community Foundation and the PTA Equity Project to help students engage in remote learning:

200 students received computers to keep after spring break.

83% went to students on free/reduced lunch.



Honor a Teacher

This year's Honor a Teacher took on new meaning as our educators pivoted from in-person instruction to a new normal of remote teaching within days. As families began to support their children in remote learning, there was a newfound reverence and appreciation for the ways in which teachers change lives every day. Our Honor a Teacher program allowed us to send out more than 100 thank you notes to educators throughout the District.

"Best gift ever!
Thank you."

Paula Maldonado
Walker Elementary School

"Thanks so much!!!!!!"

Jasmine Sebaggala
Willard Elementary School



"Wow! Thanks for sending this, it made my day--week--quarantine....!"

Ms. Berger
Chute Middle School

"Wow, this made my day!
Thank you for all you and Foundation65 do to enrich the lives of students!"

Christine Vasilj
Haven Middle School



Grants Overview

Foundation 65 supports educator-led initiatives focused on literacy and the arts as we strive for educational equity. We work with District 65 and community partners to identify ways our grant making can have impact supporting educator innovation.

Strategic Impact Grants

These grants have been created to support District-level priorities and pilot innovation as it evolves into long-term change. Each year, we partner closely with District leadership to identify needs and opportunities so that the District can accelerate learning, especially for its most marginalized students.

2019-2020 was the fourth and final year of support for the REACH grant. This grant, created to build the skills of our K-3 educators to increase their effectiveness in teaching children to read, has had significant impacts. In the final year of this grant, the REACH literacy coach was able to have profound influence during the pandemic by creating instructional pathways, resources, and professional learning supports for teachers in a remote environment. Educators received the coaching they needed to make change, from implementing the new phonics curriculum to using data to help students building new literacy skills.

Engagement Grants

Engagement grants allow educators to grow ideas within and across the District.

As we wrapped up the 2019-2020 school year in a remote environment, educators at Washington Elementary School knew that they needed more for their students if those students were going to have the literacy skills they needed to move forward. Washington educators worked to get additional books into the hands of their students through creating book bags that were distributed during food pick up. They also created an academic mentoring program for the summer in a remote learning environment. Nineteen students were able to continue work with trusted teachers and gained a much needed bridge from spring to summer to this fall.

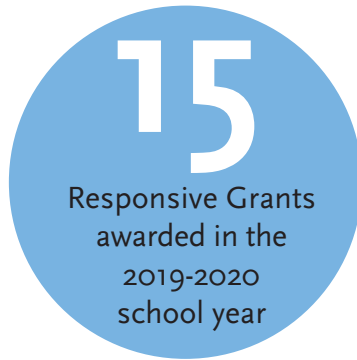


Grants Overview

Responsive Grants

Our Responsive Grant process has always allowed educator innovation to shine.

We funded a record 15 Responsive Grants this year across 14 different schools in District 65. Educators shared stories of the resources they provided to families, like Send Home Centers to build stamina and self-directed play. They supported children with disabilities with a drama class collaboration with typically developing children and children on the autism spectrum. They empowered children to express themselves through working with local artists like Verzell James. These programs are models for the future, and they will continue to shine in the coming year.



Spotlight: Latinx Kindergarten Literacy

In 2019, Washington Elementary TWI (Two-Way Immersion) teachers launched a series of workshops to support native Spanish speaking families in fostering literacy skills for their Kindergarten and 1st grade students. Invitations were focused on students who scored at or below the 25th percentile in reading in the fall of 2019. Educators aspired to establish a trusting and fruitful relationship with the families of this group of students and provide them with the tools and knowledge to be able to support the academic needs of their children at home. Because of this program, educators believe that parents and guardians of kindergarten and first grade students have more tools to help their children develop strong literacy skills. In addition, new Washington Latinx families perceive their school as a welcoming place that cares about them as well as the success of their children.





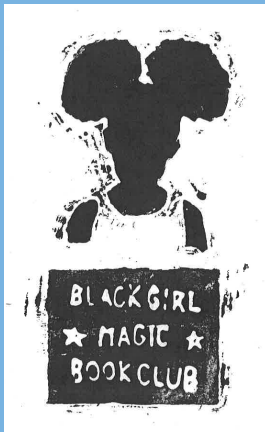
Spotlight: Black Girl Magic Book Club

During the fall of 2019, the Black Girl Magic Book Club was piloted at Walker Elementary School. Created and led by District 65 alumni and educators Jenevieve Arceneaux and Jennifer Tertulien, the club aspires to affirm, empower and humanize Black girls in District 65 schools. District 65 educator Pat Anderson joined as a co-facilitator to build capacity and expand to other schools.

This book club used the guiding principles of the Black Lives Matter movement to connect to themes presented in the 14 books that the students read. Participants were encouraged to reflect on their own stories to help build positive self-esteem, self-image, and self-worth. The students were 3rd-5th graders and represented diverse racial and gender identities. Black girls could see themselves in the literature, and children of other identities could look through different windows to help understand experiences and perspectives unlike their own. At the culmination of the program, participants created a Magic Mirror Mural with pictures, symbols, words, and artifacts to reflect their identity development throughout this book club.

This club sits in a moment when our country increasingly realizes the need to combat anti-Blackness and to humanize Black girls and women. By allowing this multi-racial and multi-gendered group of young people to learn with one another, all children are left with an increased ability to have courageous conversations with one another, a confidence in who they are, and a thirst to learn more about Black girls and women.

With the success, interest, and urgency of this work, Foundation 65 is proud to support a significant expansion of the program for the 2020-2021 academic year. The Black Girl Magic Book Club will serve students at Walker, Oakton, and Lincolnwood in 2020-2021. The co-founders are also spearheading the creation of a Black Boy Joy Book Club at Lincolnwood. This group will be led by Black men in the community as there are no Black male educators at Lincolnwood.



"I was sad to see that Black girls in our schools, like me at their age in District 65, still struggled with finding representation within literature. When we concluded this spring, with the help of a Foundation 65 grant, students read 14 books with Black girls as the main character."

- Jennifer Tertulien, Black Girl Magic Book Club co-creator and Lincolnwood Teacher

Spotlight: *Concerning Foster*

Mudlark Theater partnered with 12 community members who are alumni of Foster School and King Lab, District 65 students, the Shorefront Legacy Center, Art of Evolution Theatre, and Fleetwood-Jourdain Theatre, to create and produce an original play about desegregation in Evanston schools and the closing of Foster School. Told through the eyes of District 65 youth of the past and the present, the 2020 premiere of the play, *Concerning Foster*, was performed for a plethora of District 65 students and community members. *Concerning Foster* was written by Kenya Ann Hall and Dru Smith, and directed by Sonita L. Surratt and Dru Smith.

Foundation 65's grant supported a pre- and post-show discussion about the play for Kingsley's 4th and 5th grade students. The pre-show workshops reinforced the students' classroom learning about the civil rights movement as it relates to school desegregation. Each class participated in discussions about Brown v. Board of Education, as well as the history of District 65's decision to desegregate. The students also learned of the existence of Foster School and its importance and relevance to Evanston's African American community, past and present. The post-show workshops allowed students to share their reactions to the play and ask questions of the play's creators. They also played theater games and devised small group skits to express their reactions to the play and its content.

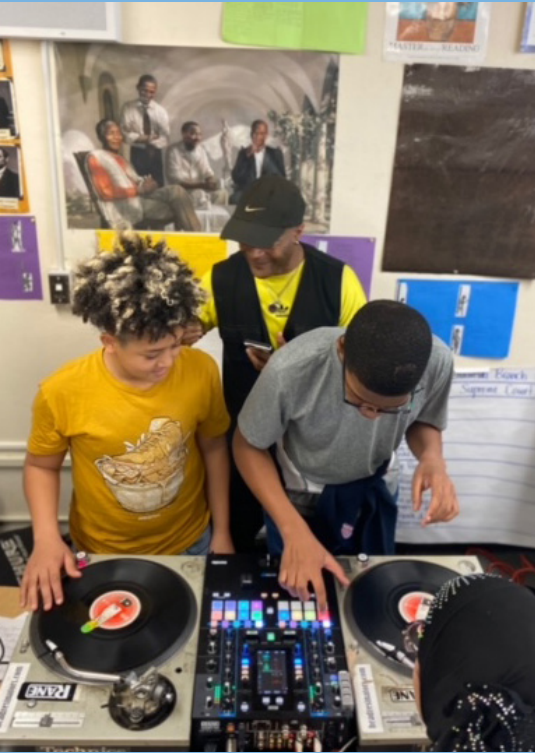
At the final performance of *Concerning Foster's* 12-show, sold-out run, an African American elder rose from her seat to share her reaction with the cast and fellow audience members during the post-show talk back. "I have waited decades for this story to be told... Thank you," she said. Her reaction is indicative of the need to center the narrative of historically marginalized communities. This project ensured that more than 140 current District 65 students learned this part of Evanston's history.

Written by Daisy Copeland

"Concerning Foster told the story of Foster School that not many Evanstonians know. It showed how decade's old decisions not only changed the landscape of the Black community, but also how those decisions are still impacting and informing the structure of Evanston schools today."

- Tasha Triplett, Kingsley Books & Breakfast Director; Kingsley parent





Spotlight: Learn-a-Bration

Bessie Rhodes celebrated Black History Month this year through their month-long “Learn-a-Bration” program, which included a kick off assembly highlighting the history of hip-hop and artists in residence who worked with students throughout the month. Bessie Rhodes students dug deeply into their literacy and arts learnings, celebrating and elevating the achievements and teachings of Black and Latinx artists.

Many of the students took to having some autonomy with the free style of dance for the performance and collaborated during their free time and lunch periods to ensure they had it just right.

Students learned the history of music, the message behind the music, and how the movements were related to telling a story about an African village.

The students also engaged in music theory and sound engineering classes and experienced a new-found interest in composing beats and layering sounds they thought would never have paired together.

Composers were birthed through the experience. One of them was featured in the final performance. His sounds captivated the audience. This was a very proud moment for the student to know all his hard work paid off.

Learn-a-Bration’s impact will continue in 2020-2021 as its creators, Sha-Rita Alexander and Tracy Hubbard, use Foundation 65’s support to further increase this year’s impact.



“This year’s Learn-a-Bration was an outstanding success! The students and parents who attended the event had an enjoyable and an educational experience. We were extremely fortunate to have both Dr. Gilo Logan leading an 8th grade drum circle, as well as DJ Marcus Prince teaching our 6th graders about the history of hip hop. They joined our classes weekly throughout the month of February and for the final performance. Their expertise and enthusiasm made the event so special for all of the students, staff and parents involved.”

- Bessie Rhodes educator

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Our Principal's Circle is composed of donors who have made an investment in supporting public education by making a gift of \$1,000 or more within the fiscal year 2019-2020. These donors have allowed us the nimbleness and flexibility to respond in times of crisis and for that we are forever grateful.

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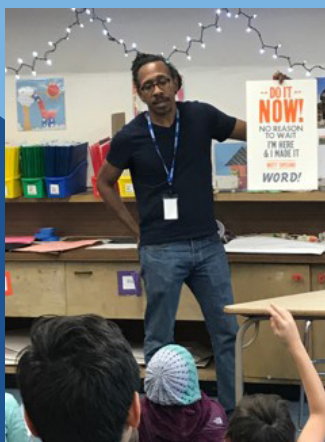
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Thank You!

A special thank you also goes out to all of the educators who have worked with Foundation 65 over the last year. Through a global pandemic and racial reckoning, they have shown time and again why Evanston is so fortunate to have such dedicated and relentless advocates for children.

A special thank you to Emily and Marc Zarefsky for creating this Annual Report. As native Evanstonians raising children within District 65, they have shown us their Evanston pride.

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The Wartowski Children
Washington Elementary
Sarah Wasson
Max Weinberg
Max Weinberg
Jana Willman
Laurel Wolf
Julia Woodard
Imily Wool
Steve Yasukawa
Mary Young
Mrs. Zelonis

Generously Donated By:

Gini Ohlson
Anna Guillemin & Patrick Formann
Douglas Reifler
Ian & Sheau-ming Ross
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Holly Benz
Anonymous
Ian & Sheau-ming Ross
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Michael & Jill Corr
Julie & Nate Merseith Cook
Rebecca Cacayuran
Anonymous

Board Members and Advisory Board

Board Members:

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Nicole Brownlee *
Franz Calixte #
Julie Cutter, President
Kalen Daniels
Sarah Darnton #
Alison Finkel *
Andrea Ford
Katie Gillies
Aimee King #
Beth McDonald
Kim Laude
Erin Rams #
Keith Robinson #
Sheau-ming Ross
Saralyn Sacks
Alicia Salinas
Mita Sanghavi Goel
Diana Sheehan *
Courtney Viamille
Steve Zehr

* New Board Member

Retiring Board Member

Executive Director:

Alecia Wartowski

Office Manager:

Nancy Marshall

Advisory Board Members:

Patty Barbato
Pete Bavis
Lee A. Cabot
Walter Carlson
Dave Davis
David Figlio
Steve Hagerty
Barbara Hiller
Diane Lequar
Charles A. Lewis
Elizabeth Tisdahl
Corrie Wallace

My65 Breaks New Ground

Each year, Foundation 65 hosts its My65 Benefit to bring people together to celebrate our educators and raise money to support Foundation 65 going forward. This year's My65 Benefit broke new ground, having raised a record of over \$150,000 while holding our event in the new space of Etown Fitness along with the sounds of Suite Mollie and DJ Marcus Brown and the premier of our Foundation 65 video. The 2021 Benefit will likely look different because of COVID-19, but our mission remains to bring together our community in support of public education. Now, more than ever, we have the opportunity to change the lives of children in our community. We hope you will join us.



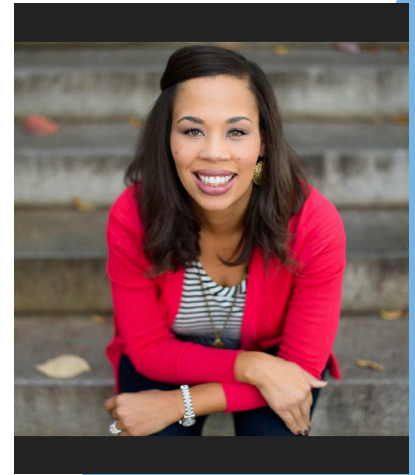
To learn more about My65, or to sign-up for the My65 Planning Committee, visit www.foundation65.org.

New Board Members

Nicole Brownlee

Nicole Brownlee has a background in educational public policy and community organizing. She has served as the Director of External Affairs for the Atlanta Public Schools and previously served as Legislative Advisor for United States Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA). She is a passionate advocate for racial justice and co-founded a parent group at Lincolnwood Elementary School that leads participants through a year-long journey into strengthening their racial consciousness and dismantling systemic racism. Nicole is also a founding member of the Haven Feeder Schools for Equity and serves on the Lincolnwood PTA Executive Board as the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair. She graduated with Honors from Howard University with a Bachelor's of Communications.

She and her husband live in Evanston with their two sons who attend Lincolnwood elementary and The Cove School.



Alison Finkel

Alison Finkel is a senior non-profit professional with vast expertise managing multi-faceted and complex fundraising programs. Through her work with Northwestern University and Susan G. Komen, she has raised nearly one billion dollars for non-profit organizations. Her leadership style has led to formal organizational recognition and peer awards - and it underlies her proven record of success. She is passionate about photography, food and her hometown of Evanston.

She and her husband, Eli, have two children who attend Dewey School.



Diana Sheehan

Diana Leza Sheehan has nearly twenty years of diverse industry experience, serving in account leadership, category management, syndicated product and marketing strategy, and shopper and consumer insights roles at ConAgra Foods, General Mills, Mintel, and Kantar. Throughout her career, she has worked across retail channels and categories, developing strategic recommendations for in-store execution and brand development for many Fortune 500 companies. Diana has been cited in national and trade press, including The Wall Street Journal, Chicago Tribune, CNN, and NPR, and spoken at many industry events including ShopTalk and GroceryShop. Diana earned an MBA from the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business and a B.A. from the University of Notre Dame.

In her spare time, she also serves as the Secretary of the Board of Directors for the Instituto del Progreso Latino, and was recently appointed to the Illinois Lottery Control Board. She enjoys jogging, watching her favorite sports teams, and spending time with her husband and three children who attend Walker and Chute.



Financial Summary

as of June 30, 2020

Revenue	
<i>Restricted</i>	
Donations and Grants	\$44,277
<i>Unrestricted</i>	
Donations and Grants	\$256,734
Event Income	\$152,159
Investment Income	\$884
Miscellaneous Income	\$635
Total	\$454,689
Expenses	
Programs	\$234,025
General and Administrative	\$55,393
Development and Fundraising	\$77,516
Total	\$366,934
Fund Balances	
Assets Without Donor Restrictions	\$313,079
Assets With Donor Restrictions	\$115,119
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$428,198
Change in Net Assets	\$87,755

On June 4, 2020, the PTA Equity Fund moved to the Evanston Community Foundation

What's Ahead?

While we sit in one of the most challenging times in U.S. history, the work of Foundation 65 is more important than ever. Our work has been in meeting the challenges of the day and building the foundation for our children to thrive once this crisis has passed.

We completed the first ever city-wide children's book drive shortly before school began. This community donated more than 8000 books! In collaboration with Bernie's Book Bank, we have been able to get books back out to the kids who need them the most and have built a new partnership for future book drives.

Our Critical Response Grant program will provide grants with a rapid turnaround so that educators can identify challenges that can be addressed through literacy and the arts and create solutions during urgent times.

Our new literacy initiative is supporting 12 talented District 65 educators in obtaining their master's in reading or literacy endorsement. These educators are building a pathway to tomorrow and gaining new skills to support each of their students in getting the reading skills they need.

Our road ahead no doubt includes more challenges, making our continued support of educators' work toward educational equity more important than ever.

Every day we push ourselves to better support the children of the community. To stay connected to our work, please visit our new website at www.foundation65.org and sign up for our newsletter.





Foundation 65

PO Box 750
Evanston, IL 60204

We believe in public education.

By empowering Evanston/Skokie educators to create educational equity through literacy and arts, we provide support where it is most urgently needed so that all children can thrive.