

# Education Innovation Fund



In May 2020 a coalition of partners launched the Education Innovation Fund to address COVID-19's dramatic impact on Colorado's schools and students. To support innovative approaches to learning, the Fund's \$325,000 is distributed on a rolling basis to actively promote resilient education systems and stimulate new approaches to meeting learners' needs.

In June, the Fund's Selection Committee awarded \$149,700 to 15 innovative projects. An additional \$15,000 was dedicated to RESCHOOL's family learning dollars, which encouraged families disproportionately affected by COVID-19 to apply for funding. Below is a detailed description of the Fund's grantees, as well as an overview of RESCHOOL's learning dollars.

## Overview of June 2020 Grantees

1. **E Movement** is a collaboration of more than 20 organizations that created the nation's first whole-child environmental literacy guidelines in 2016. Funding will support the development and dissemination of a bilingual database of virtual programming designed to facilitate whole-child learning for grades K-8. \$5,000 award
2. **Edgewater Collective** will provide summertime pop-up lunch and literacy lessons for grade K-3 students as well as create opportunities for student/teacher connections to bridge the remote learning divide. The Collective will evaluate this pilot program and plans to adapt it as a viable model in the fall if remote learning continues. \$4,000 award
3. **Fremont Multi-District Initiative** is a collaboration between three local Fremont County districts and Pueblo Community College (PCC). The partnering organizations recognized that resources are often inequitably distributed across school districts in the area, and are working to reinvent the way a region can cooperatively utilize resources and sustainably provide an outstanding educational experience for rural students. Funding will support this joint effort. \$15,000 award
4. **Grand Mesa Arts & Events Center (GMAEC)** is a nonprofit located in the rural community of Cedaredge. GMAEC leads 30+ art-based classes to community youth each year to supplement offerings at local elementary and middle schools. Funding will support three art programs to engage students both virtually and in-person during the summer. \$2,700 award
5. **Greater Than One Collective (GTO)** is a collaborative of organizations working to create a community-, home-, and school-connected learning network with students and families at three Park Hill schools. Funding will support GTO to adapt its model so that the organization can continue to provide wraparound support to 40+ families and partner with schools on community-centered redesign. \$15,000 award
6. **The Hustle Collective** is a group of educators and students that will pilot a new model of virtual, student-led learning with 75+ students (ages 13-18) in the Denver metropolitan area. Students will work with mentors and peers to set a goal and develop and execute self-directed learning plans. The project was initiated at Empower Community High School in Aurora. Funding will support this pilot. \$15,000 award



“ Then there is the individual level. We've exposed about 290 students and families to the power of student-led learning... and it's about learning the mindsets, the skills, the values it takes to hustle and how you can apply those in a myriad of contexts. ”

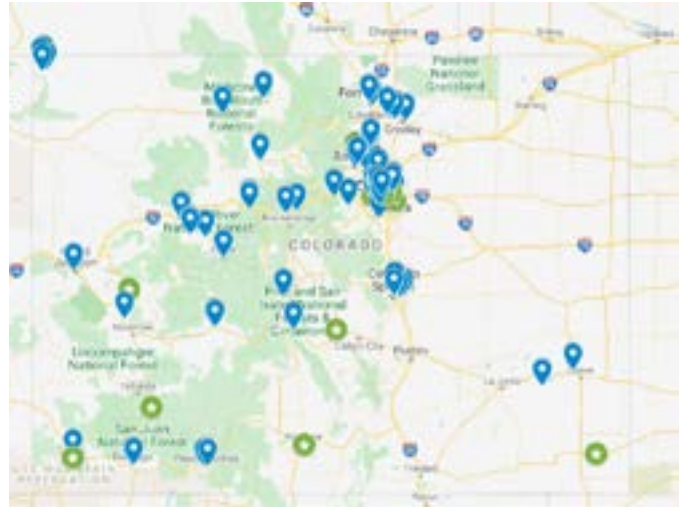
- **Wisdom Amouzou, Co-Founder & Executive Director of Empower Community High School**

7. **Logan Learning Lab** addresses the barriers that prevent gifted students from underrepresented backgrounds from accessing educational experiences that maximize their full potential. The Lab works with educators across Denver Public Schools to identify and engage these students and their families, and develop teachers' student-centered instructional practices to transform learning. Funding will support the Lab's work this fall. \$10,000 award

8. **Montezuma School to Farm Project (MSTFP)** supports Southwest Colorado students with educational programs on nutrition, gardening, and environmental stewardship. Funding will support MSTFP to adapt 7 school-based gardens and launch 3 hybrid summertime programs with a strong focus on the environment, math, science, and art. \$3,500 award

9. **R.O.G.U.E** is a youth-led multi-media effort that aims to strengthen relationships amongst young people and build bridges with older generations by discussing impactful topics that span multiple communities. Funding will support the team to develop content for Youtube, a newsletter, and a podcast focused on supporting students to navigate the post-COVID-19 education landscape and the transition from high school to college. \$5,000 award

10. **San Luis Valley Innovation Hub** is a collaboration between the Boys and Girls Club of the San Luis Valley (BGCSLV), Action-Lab360, Alamosa School District, neighboring districts, and community partners. Funding will support the collaborative to launch a new model of online learning that is easily customizable and will be available to more than 1,000 students in the valley. \$15,000 award



Illustrated in the map above, the Education Innovation Fund received an incredible number of requests. In total, 156 letters of interest were received from organizations across the State.

11. **Silverton Public Schools** is a small rural district in Southwest Colorado with a whole-child approach to teaching and learning. Funding will support the district to engage students and families one-on-one to redesign and rethink the school schedule and develop and formalize structures to build relationships and provide student and family coaching through the fall. The effort will work in partnership with the local early childhood education center, and inform the approach of the district into the future. \$20,000 award

12. **Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning** provides intercultural learning programs and services to Coloradans. In response to COVID-19, the Spring Institute plans to launch a new summer learning program at two apartment complexes in Denver and Aurora that are home to a diverse group of multicultural students. The organization plans to project virtual classes in outdoor spaces so that residents can build community while remaining physically distanced. Funding will support the launch and implementation of this program. \$5,000 award

13. **Vilas School District** is a small rural district in Southeast Colorado with a focus on project-based learning and developing students' technological skills. Vilas piloted a homeschool options program in the 2019-20 school year, and funding will support planning, communications, and partner building so that the district can accommodate anticipated growth of the program in the 2020-21 school year. \$6,500 award

14. **Wyatt Academy** is a K-5 community-centered elementary school serving children and families in the Cole and Whittier neighborhoods of Denver. Funding will support Wyatt to deeply engage families during the summer months to develop a hybrid learning plan with robust online content, and continue to support families with its on-site resource center. \$8,000 award

“ I think it is important that we are building an innovative learning plan - yes. But it is innovative not just because it may be hybrid or remote, but because it will truly be built on community voice. ”

- Kate Mishara, Co-Executive Director of Wyatt Academy

15. **Young Aspiring Americans for Social & Political Activism's** work has long been rooted in giving Black youth and youth of color the civic tools and knowledge to understand and resist racism while they navigate their school experience and advocate for systemic change. Funding will support a summertime pilot of a five-week Social Sciences and Policy Institute that will lead students in small cohorts through experiential learning projects. \$20,000 award

# RESCHOOL Learning Dollars

A portion of the Education Innovation Fund was used to create a Learning Dollar Fund, managed by RESCHOOL. Families disproportionately affected by COVID-19, and facing economic hardship, were invited to apply for funding to pay for resources and experiences their children needed this summer in order to stay engaged in fun, interesting and important learning.

**RESCHOOL Received over 400 applications in a 2-week span** and had to temporarily stop accepting applications because demand exceeded the supply of funding on hand. We are actively fundraising and hope to offer more learning dollars to support families this Summer and into the Fall.

As of June 30th, we've distributed **\$24,000 in learning dollars for 160 youth across 71 families statewide**. We leveraged our collective networks to ensure word about the learning

dollars fund was received by people across the state and that funding was distributed across geographic regions. This map shows where applications came from and where learning dollars were distributed. We will provide further information later this summer about people's experiences with this fund and how families used their learning dollars.

## Overview of Learning Dollars Applicants and the Distribution of Funds (as of June 30, 2020):

- The majority of applications (78%) were from families with multiple children and with household incomes below \$50,000.
- Given our inability to fund all those who applied, we prioritized available funding for those with household incomes below \$35,000 and from communities disproportionately affected by COVID-19.
- 73% of applications received were in English, 28% were in Spanish.
  - 56% indicated English as their primary language
  - 35% indicated Spanish as their primary language
  - 3% indicated Other (Arabic, Amharic, Burmese, Somali, Oromo, Vietnamese)

### Funded

3% Asian/Pacific Islander  
18% Black/African American  
28% Latinx  
7% Indigenous/American Indian/Alaskan Native  
32% White  
6% Multiracial  
6% Did not identify

### All Applicants

2% Asian/Pacific Islander  
11% Black/African American  
15% Latinx  
4% Indigenous/American Indian/Alaskan Native  
51% White  
4% Multiracial  
13% Did not identify

## Education Innovation Fund Partners

