

QUALITY EDUCATION

FOR

ALL

*PAVING A PATH
TO ECONOMIC
OPPORTUNITY
AND PROSPERITY*





INTRODUCTION	3
THE INITIATIVE	6
WHAT DO WE KNOW?	7
PERFORMANCE MEASURES	
INTRA-DISTRICT DISPARITIES	
THE STUDENT POPULATION	
HOPEFUL SIGNS	
COINCIDING WORK	
COMMUNITY CHALLENGES	14
QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL	15
COMMUNITY LEARNING	
DIRECT INVESTMENT	
ADVOCACY AND PUBLIC POLICY	
INVESTMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES	18
ADDENDA	19
DUVAL COUNTY EDUCATION AT A GLANCE	
ABOUT THE FCAT	
UNDERSTANDING DROPOUT RATES	
THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION / LEARNING AND LISTENING	
ABOUT THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION	
ENDNOTES	

INTRODUCTION

Imagine..... Jacksonville, fifteen years from now.

Not a long time, you say? Consider: Fifteen years ago, the year was 1990. Did you own a cell phone in 1990? Did you own a home computer? Did you know a shoe manufacturer named Wayne Weaver? Could you imagine New York without the World Trade Center? Had you ever heard of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City?

Worlds can change in 15 years. How might Jacksonville change in the next 15 years? Three critical trendlines reveal a possible scenario.

Economics: If Jacksonville's economy follows expected paths, job growth will continue to be steady but the new jobs will require different skills. Whereas today, about 29 percent of jobs require post-high school education, that level of education will be required by more than 40 percent of the jobs created in the next decade. Jobs requiring a high-school degree or less will grow at half the rate of jobs requiring some advanced education.¹

Demographics: Today, Jacksonville's working age population (those age 25 and older) is about 71 percent white and 29 percent non-white, and about 12 percent live in poverty. But the population who will be working age in 15 years – those young people now 14 years old and younger – is 59 percent white and 41 percent nonwhite; and more than 17 percent of the school-age population today lives in poverty.²

Education: Today, non-white students and low-income students in Jacksonville public schools are far less successful academically than their peers who are white and whose incomes are average or above. At the elementary, middle and high school levels, schools with student populations that are predominantly non-white or predominately low-income rank dramatically lower than schools with populations that are predominantly white or of higher income.³

In other words, in fifteen years, when the economy of Jacksonville requires a much better educated workforce, our economic potential will rest heavily upon the shoulders of the very people for whom, today, we are least successful at providing a quality education.

It is unlikely that we, as a community, will be able to alter the course of economic change. It is certain that we are unable to alter demographics. But it may be possible, as a community, to change the way we educate our children.

And change we must. A new, global economy places the premium on knowledge rather than labor. Of the 10 fastest growing occupations in Northeast Florida, seven are high-wage jobs (wages in excess of \$20 per hour) requiring strong post-secondary education.⁴ Yet, in Duval County, only 54 percent of the current adult population has more than a high school diploma.⁵ And current graduation rates for high school students in the county are among the lowest in the nation.⁶

How can we, as a community, hope to be economically successful if our citizens lack the intellectual resources that the job market demands?

Not only is Duval County's educational environment tepid, it is uneven. There exists a significant "achievement gap" between white and non-white schoolchildren, and it is not tied simply to economics. "Significant disparities in educational outcomes by race" are present,

reported the Jacksonville Community Council Inc., in their summer 2003 study on Public Education Reform. “Black students, on average, underperform other students within the same income categories.” (emphasis added)

In addition, there are achievement gaps driven by economics and geography in Duval County. Children from low-income families, or children who attend schools in the more rural North and West sections of Duval County, do not perform as well as students from middle- and upper- income families or children who attend schools in the more suburban South and East portions of the county.⁷

Jacksonville is not unique in this regard – indeed, ethnic and economic gaps in academic achievement are seen across the South.⁸ But prevalence should not breed acceptance. The shortcomings of other communities must not sanction our own shortcomings.

At The Community Foundation, we are deeply concerned about the ability of our educational system to provide a quality education to all students and, thereby, enable Jacksonville to remain competitive economically in the years ahead. We are deeply concerned that, as a community, we are not vigilant about expecting, and demanding, quality education for all children.

As a community institution, our investment in Jacksonville is substantial: in our first 40 years the Foundation and its donors have invested more than \$77 million to support the well-being of the community and its citizens. Today, we serve as stewards of more than \$100 million that citizens have given to improve this community. While the bulk of those funds rest in restricted endowments, the Foundation’s stake in the future of Jacksonville is large and we are committed to doing all that we can to assure that our future is healthy and prosperous.

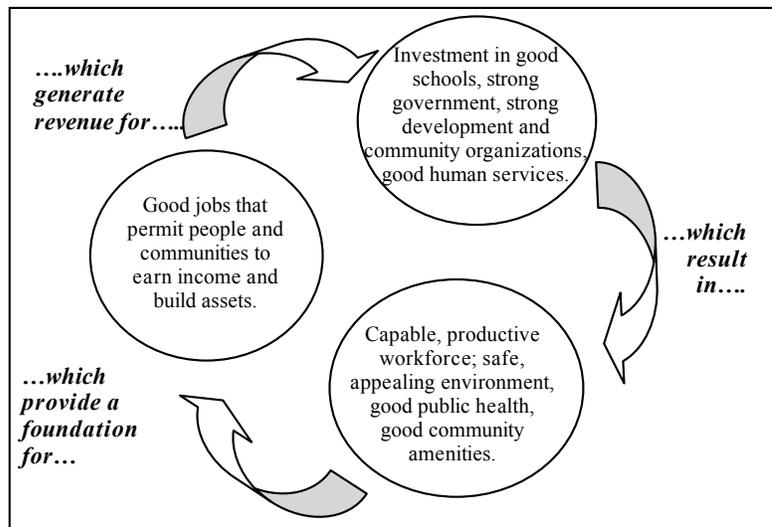
We believe that the primary key to a healthy and prosperous future is high-quality education. And we believe that Jacksonville has much to learn about how it educates – and how it might better educate – its young citizens.

With that in mind, the trustees of The Community Foundation have chosen to make Quality Education for All a major focus of our philanthropic work for the next 10 years.

This decision grows out of two years of study and reflection by The Community Foundation staff and trustees, much of which focused on the core components of healthy communities:

- ✓ Family-supporting jobs
- ✓ Educated, skilled people
- ✓ Civic infrastructure and leadership.

After much consideration, the Foundation determined that its best opportunity to advance the health of Jacksonville lay in working to improve the quality of education, specifically, K-12 public education.



Staff and trustees visited other communities, learned from experts in the field, conducted interviews and convened focus groups in order to learn about the current education landscape in Jacksonville and understand it through many different perspectives. (For a detailed look at our learning journey, see Addenda).

In the pages that follow, we will share with you what we know about education in Duval County today. You will find details on the components of the new initiative, as well as information that will enable you to become involved in this important work. We invite you to join us – as a learner, as a funder, as a participant. All of us will share this future. You can share in shaping it.

THE INITIATIVE

Quality Education for *All* is **an initiative to improve the performance of all public school students in Duval County, with particular attention to the gaps in achievement** between poor and non-poor students, and minority and majority students.

The goal is to achieve marked improvement in test scores, graduation rates, dropout rates and college readiness of all students over a 10-year period and to minimize the gap in performance between schools with high proportions of lower-income or minority students and those with high proportions of wealthier or majority students. A companion goal is to cultivate citizen demand for quality public education, build citizen understanding of and involvement in public education, and encourage parents to expect higher education for their children. The Foundation will achieve these goals through a combination of work with community leaders, collaboration with the public school system, strategic investments, and advocacy.

How Is This Initiative Different?

In the past, a number of groups have examined public education in Duval County, producing a series of reports that identify challenges and offer recommendations for change. These reports have been good-faith efforts and have led to some changes, including creation of the Alliance for World-Class Education, an advocacy group that has invested in training and support for school administrators, teachers and principals. But these efforts have not engaged diverse segments of the community in actions to improve education and they have not led to meaningful, sustained reform across the district.

Quality Education for *All* will build on what has been learned in these prior efforts, but it will differ from them in four key ways:

Using knowledge to stimulate action – Earlier efforts provided the community with facts about education. Quality Education for *All* will begin by updating and interpreting data and, in collaboration with community members, providing thoughtful action plans for concerted community involvement and investment in education. These plans will be based on best practices – what educators, citizens, teachers and students from across the country have learned works to improve education.

Promoting significant and sustained “public” involvement in public education – Earlier efforts sought input from many different sources, but not did engage citizens in any lasting way. Quality Education for *All* will foster sustained and knowledgeable public involvement in public education.

Serving as an “engine for change” – Previous efforts were challenged in facilitating or monitoring implementation of recommendations for change. The study groups either disbanded or shifted attention to other matters. Effective implementation of the reports’ recommendations depended primarily on the interest and capacity of the school district’s leadership. Quality Education for *All* will stimulate the active involvement of individuals and organizations in long-term, comprehensive change efforts, and the Foundation will work with others to ensure citizen input and follow-up.

Staying the course – Previous efforts have been short-lived. In Quality Education for *All*, The Community Foundation has made a 10-year commitment to work toward measurable increases in student performance and community support for public education.

Our commitment already has begun, with intensive study of the current state of public education in Duval County. On the pages that follow, we review what we have learned.

WHAT DO WE KNOW?

Approximately 159,000 students in Duval County are enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade classes. The vast majority – 129,000 students – is enrolled in Duval County Public Schools, a system of 148 traditional schools and 10 specialty schools spread across 840 square miles. The remainder is enrolled in a variety of non-public educational systems: private schools, parochial schools, specialty schools or home-based schools.

Performance Measures

The overall performance of Duval County schools can be measured in a number of ways. Three critical measures are:

- ✓ What proportion of students graduate from high school?
- ✓ What proportion of students drop out of school before graduating?
- ✓ How do students perform on standardized tests?

Graduation Rate

One out of three Duval County high school students will not graduate in four years.

Duval County's 2004 graduation rate was 67.2%. While that represents a healthy increase over the 63.7% rate posted in 2003⁹, consider: of the 34,000 young people attending high school in Duval County in August 2004, 10,000 will not graduate in May 2009.

Duval County's graduation rate is the lowest on the First Coast and, in general, below the rate of other urban areas in the state.

("Graduation Rate" represents the proportion of students who graduate from high school within four years. While there are varying ways of calculating graduation rates, this method is used by the State of Florida to compare graduation rates among all high schools.)

While graduation rates in Duval County are low by Florida standards, overall graduation rates in Florida are low by national standards. A February 2005 study by The Manhattan Institute for Policy Research examined graduation rates by state, using similar methodology, and ranked Florida 45th out of the 50 states, tied with Alaska and ahead of Alabama, Tennessee, Georgia and South Carolina.¹⁰

GRADUATION RATES		
	2003-04	2002-03
Baker County	68.20%	67.30%
Clay County	73.80%	75.40%
Duval County	67.20%	63.70%
Florida (state avg)	71.60 %	69.0%
Hillsborough County (Tampa)	79.30 %	75.80%
Nassau County	81.10%	79.50%
Orange County (Orlando)	72.70 %	68.50%
St. Johns County	78.30%	78.20%
<small>Source: Florida Department of Education; Jacksonville Community Council Inc.</small>		

Graduation alone is not an indicator of readiness for college. In fact, in 2003-2004, 27% of Duval County high school graduates who attended a Florida public university or college could not pass the college placement test in reading, and 44% could not pass the placement test in math.¹¹

Dropout Rate

Every four years, more than 1,500 Duval County teens abandon high school.

Duval County's 2004 dropout rate was 5.1%, higher than the state average of 2.9% and the highest on the First Coast, where all counties are below 3 % except Baker, with a dropout rate of 4.0%.¹²

("Dropout Rate" is the proportion of students who abandon high school between the 9th and 12th grades. For more details on calculating dropout rates, see Addenda.)

While the percentages may seem small, the human impact is significant. In Duval County, a 5% drop out rate means more than 1,500 high school students abandon their education between 9th and 12th grades. That is equivalent to the entire student body at Stanton High School quitting school and trying to earn a living and raise families without a high school education.

DROPOUT RATES		
	2004	2003
Baker County	4.00%	3.70%
Clay County	1.90%	2.20%
Duval County	5.10%	4.60%
Nassau County	2.50%	2.70%
St. Johns County	2.30%	2.00%
Source: Florida Department of Education; Jacksonville Community Council Inc.		

Standardized Test Scores

Two out of three high school students cannot read at grade level. One out of four elementary students cannot.

The FCAT is Florida's standardized test for measuring students' academic performance in grades 3 through 11. The student's raw score places him or her at one of five "performance levels," with Level 1 being the lowest, and Level 5 the highest. Students at Level 3 or higher are considered to be performing "at grade level." (See Addenda for additional information).

One way of evaluating FCAT scores is to consider the percent of students who are performing "at grade level."

In 2005, student performance on the FCAT improved almost across the board. As a result, the percent of students performing at grade level in Duval County hovers at or slightly below the state average. (Tenth graders are above the state average in Math.)

FCAT SCORES – OOUR-YEAR TRENDLINES					
PERCENT OF STUDENTS ACHIEVING LEVEL 3 OR HIGHER					
	Duval County Public Schools				Florida Average
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2005
Grade 4					
Reading	57	60	67	71	71
Math	42	47	55	60	64
Grade 8					
Reading	43	45	40	42	44
Math	48	49	50	54	59
Grade 10					
Reading	33	34	33	32	32
Math	55	58	62	66	63
Source: Florida Department of Education					

It is useful, however, to consider what these scores mean.

- ✓ In the 10th grade, two out of three students cannot read at grade level.
- ✓ In the 8th grade, fewer than half of the students can read at grade level.
- ✓ In 4th grade, where performance is strongest, more than one-quarter of the students cannot read at grade level.
- ✓ In all grades, at least one out of three students cannot perform at grade level in math.

And this assessment is somewhat deceptive.

Students who achieve Level 3 on the FCAT exhibit only partial success with the material taught at that grade level. The FCAT guidelines state:

Level 3 – *This student has partial success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards, but performance is inconsistent. A student scoring in Level 3 answers many of the test questions correctly but is generally less successful with questions that are most challenging. (emphasis added).*

It is not until Level 4 that students are considered to have true success with the material being taught. Students achieving Level 3 on the FCAT may be considered “performing at grade level” but they have not, by the state’s own admission, mastered the required content.

In Duval County, three out of five elementary students, four out of five middle school students and four out of five high school students fail to achieve Level 4 or higher on the FCAT.

While the performance of Duval County students may mirror state averages, it is noticeably lower than that of students in neighboring counties. Only students in Baker County demonstrate poorer performance than those in Duval.

2005 FCAT SCORES – FLORIDA’S FIRST COAST						
PERCENT OF STUDENTS SCORING 3 OR HIGHER						
	Baker	Clay	Duval	Nassau	St. Johns	Florida
Grade 4						
Reading	68	80	71	80	83	71
Math	52	72	60	69	78	64
Grade 8						
Reading	37	48	42	49	62	44
Math	59	64	54	65	76	59
Grade 10						
Reading	29	38	32	34	46	32
Math	63	69	66	74	75	63
Source: Florida Department of Education						

Intra-District Disparities

Within the Duval County school system, significant disparities exist. Specifically, there are disparities in the performance of schools along lines of wealth, race and geography.

Each Duval County public school receives an annual grade based on its performance (and the performance of its students) against state-established measures and standards. While overall grades improved in 2005, disturbing patterns in educational quality continue to emerge at the school level. Across all grade levels, students who are non-white, or who are from low-income families, or who live in the North or West portions of the county are far more likely to attend low-performing schools than students who are white, or from average or upper-income families or who live in the East and South portions of the county.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE BY ECONOMIC INDICATOR								
DUVAL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS – HOOL								
Fewer Than 30% of Students Eligible for Free & Reduced Lunch					More Than 70% of Students Eligible for Free & Reduced Lunch			
A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D
14	0	0	0	Elementary Schools	11	8	19	5
6	0	0	0	Middle Schools	0	0	0	5
5	0	3	0	High Schools*	0	0	0	0
25	0	3	0	Total	11	8	19	10

*Free & Reduced Lunch statistics vary widely among grade levels. As students grow older, they and their parents grow less attentive to proper nutrition and more sensitive to the social stigma that may be attached to social service programs. Among Duval County elementary schools, an average of 60 % of students qualify for Free & Reduced Lunch. By high school, that average drops to 30 %. Source: Duval County Public Schools...

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE BY RACIAL MAKEUP								
DUVAL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS – HOOL								
More Than 70% White Students					Fewer Than 30% White Students			
A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D
10	1	1	0	Elementary Schools	7	10	13	4
2	0	1	0	Middle Schools	0	1	1	5
3	1	0	0	High Schools	0	0	3	2
15	2	2	0	Total	7	11	16	11

Source: Duval County Public Schools

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE BY GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION								
DUVAL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS – HOOL								
Located in South and East Duval County					Located in North and West Duval County			
A	B	C	D		A	B	C	D
33	4	4	0	Elementary Schools	26	13	18	5
7	1	4	0	Middle Schools	2	1	6	5
3	0	4	0	High Schools	2	1	7	2
43	5	12	0	Total	30	15	31	12

Source: Duval County Public Schools

The disparities among schools are most evident when comparing the county's top magnet schools with other schools, particularly at the high school level.

COMPARING HIGH SCHOOLS						
	Magnet Schools			Other Schools		
	Douglas Anderson	Paxon	Stanton	Nathan B. Forrest	Robert E. Lee*	Terry Parker
Enrollment	1,075	1,537	1,536	1,703	1,970	2,099
% Minority Students ¹³	27%	43%	38%	59%	71%	56%
% Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	11%	13%	9%	35%	46%	31%
Percent of 10 th graders reading at grade level 2005	63%	53%	86%	22%	19%	24%
2005 School Grade	A	A	A	C	C	C
Graduation Rate (2003-2004)	84.4%	75.8%	93.6%	49.0%	44.2%	58.8%
Drop-Out Rate (2003-2004)	0.6%	0.7%	0.0%	8.0%	6.3%	7.6%
SAT Scores (2003-2004)	1038	1078	1187	892	932	916
% Taking SAT (2003-2004)	85%	95%	99%	38%	22%	46%
*Robert E. Lee High School is home to two magnet programs – the Math, Science and Pre-Engineering Program and the Jacksonville Early College High School Program. Not all Lee students participate in these programs, unlike Douglas Anderson, Paxon and Stanton high schools, where the magnet curriculum encompasses the entire school.						

Clearly, as a community, Duval County has not yet learned how to generate good student performance across differing student populations. **Moreover, Duval County schools rank near the bottom of all Florida school systems, meaning those students in poor performing Duval County schools are attending some of the poorest performing schools in the State of Florida.** And Florida schools rank 45th out of the 50 states in terms of overall graduation rate and 31st out of 50 states in student readiness for college.¹⁴

Student Population

Duval County public schools face some particular challenges stemming from the characteristics of the county and the student population.

Duval County is the central county in a rapidly growing metropolitan area. It is bounded on the north and south by counties that are home to extensive suburbs housing residents who work in Jacksonville but choose to live outside of Duval County. In Duval County, the average earnings per job is \$41,463 but the per capita income is \$30,212. That disparity far exceeds that in any other Northeast Florida county or the State of Florida.¹⁵

Many upper-income, high-performing students exit the public school system to attend one of the county's numerous private schools. Duval County has about 30 private schools with enrollments of 250 or more students each, and dozens of other smaller private schools. More than 25,000 Duval County students – 16 percent of the county's student population – are enrolled in private schools¹⁶, where tuition ranges from roughly \$3,500 to \$14,000 a year. (Estimates indicate about 4,500 Duval County students are home schooled.¹⁷)

Duval County public school students are more economically disadvantaged than their peers on the First Coast or throughout the state. Almost half of Duval County public school students participate in the Free & Reduced Lunch program¹⁸, the highest proportion of any county on the First Coast. It is worth noting, however, that Hillsborough County schools have roughly the same percentage of Free & Reduced Lunch students, but perform at a significantly higher level than Duval County schools.

Public school performance is the result of many factors, not just the quality of teaching. Societal and economic factors influence students' ability to perform well even in the best of schools. Jacksonville Community Council Inc., noted in the report, *Public Education Reform – Assessing Progress*:

“The primary challenge facing the public education system is the deplorable achievement gap between its lowest and highest achieving students. This achievement gap has been attributed often to low family income, racial prejudice, insufficient parental involvement, high mobility rates, lack of household literacy, lack of a love of learning, or family crises, all of which may attribute to student failure. ... The social and economic issues that interfere with a child's ability to learn represent the failure of a community, not the school system. **At the same time, student achievement will not improve if schools wait for the community to provide them with only well-adjusted, middle-class children to teach.**” (emphasis added)

STUDENTS RECEIVING FREE & REDUCED LUNCH	
Duval County	48.8%
Hillsborough County (Tampa)	47.7%
Florida (State Avg)	44.8%
Orange County (Orlando)	40.6%
Baker County	39.7%
Nassau County	32.1%
Clay County	25.4%
St. Johns County	18.5%
Source: Florida Department of Education, Fall 2003 survey	

Hopeful Signs

There are hopeful signs for Duval County schools. Among them:

- ✓ Duval County is home to some of the best high schools in the nation. A 2004 study by Newsweek magazine ranked Stanton College Prep High School and Paxon School for Advanced Studies – both magnet schools with about 40% minority enrollment each – the third and seventh best high schools in the nation, respectively.
- ✓ Duval County elementary schools, in general, perform better than the county's middle and high schools. In 2005, 55 percent of the county's elementary schools received a grade of A, up from 44 percent in 2004.
- ✓ Grades for schools at all levels have improved over the past two years. The percentage of middle schools receiving a grade of "A" increased from 16 to 40; and the percentage of high schools graded "A" increased from 15 to 26. For school year 2004-2005, the district-wide grade improved from C to B as the district posted the largest point gain in scores of any district in the state.
- ✓ Graduation rates for Duval County have improved since 2000, after a decade of declines.

These trends suggest that Duval County *can* deliver excellent education and that schools and students *can* reverse years of negative performance.

The challenge lies in turning hopeful "signs" into "trends." Rather than experiencing "pockets" of excellence, Duval County schools must achieve "patterns" of excellence, across all schools, all neighborhoods, all races and all levels of education. And as a community, we must have a sense of urgency about creating change so that we become competitive with our peers in a timely fashion.

Coinciding Work

In addition to encouraging signs within the school system, there are encouraging activities under way within the community.

RALLY Jacksonville is a \$10 million, three-year initiative of the City of Jacksonville and various corporate and nonprofit partners to improve early childhood literacy and school readiness among Jacksonville's pre-school population. The program, launched in August 2004 by Mayor John Peyton, seeks to make literacy and reading a core community value; enhance the quality of school readiness programs and create neighborhood early literacy zones. In short, RALLY Jacksonville addresses the community's education challenges from the pre-school perspective.

Blueprint for Prosperity is an initiative of the City of Jacksonville and the Jacksonville Regional Chamber of Commerce to raise per capita income for Jacksonville residents. Education is among the six key components of the initiative, with attention focused on quality K-12 education as well as post-secondary education.

These initiatives clearly complement one another and offer opportunities for synergy that could have significant long-term effects on the community.

COMMUNITY CHALLENGES

Duval County, like other communities across America, faces challenges to improving student performance and many of those challenges begin in the home. Teachers and principals cite the difficulties of teaching students who come from dysfunctional families, who move and change schools two and three times during a school year, who live in a home where no parent is present and care is provided by an adult sibling or other family member, or who are not encouraged to learn. These social challenges are often compounded by economic or cultural challenges that serve as deterrents to good student performance. Conversely, education experts quickly acknowledge the positive role that parents and family can play in supporting a child's education and being an ally in community efforts to improve schools.

Beyond the circumstances of family, however, community leaders, parents, educators and others who are stakeholders in Duval County schools indicated there are additional obstacles to improving public education in Jacksonville that may be specific to our community.

Communication: While there is an abundance of data about school and student performance, it is overwhelming, confusing and not easily accessible. Some data is suspect because of the interests of those providing it. As a community, we have not identified the three to five key measures of success and made them a part of the ongoing conversation. "There's no common 'state of knowledge,'" said one observer. "[There is a] lack of understanding in the community of what is being measured – [data] needs to be presented in a way that can be understood by the general public."

Coordination: There are more than 200 organizations interacting with the school system, from church and parent groups to research universities and major corporations. "Help is not always helpful," said one observer. "Some [groups] make a difference and some are a huge distraction." The community lacks a comprehensive view of who's doing what. "We need a 'head coach,'" said one. "We need to assess who's doing what," said another. "Don't add to the noise."

Cultural Issues: Several observers questioned whether Jacksonville, as a community, values education. "Florida suffers from too much competition for play," said one. "Jacksonville is a low-wage, low-education town," said another. "We must believe that every child can learn. We must develop ways to take what we are given and make the best of it." Teachers and educators noted alarmingly low rates of parental involvement and interest in their children's education. "Our PTA has about 6 members," said one middle-school teacher. Teachers report that parents don't return telephone calls or respond to attempts at communication, and that many children come from no-parent households, living with siblings, or non-parent relatives.

Advocacy: As in all communities, there are financial challenges. Duval County receives slightly less than \$6,000 per student from the State of Florida, a contribution that is determined by a complex funding formula. But state funding is not constant or consistent. In 2004, aggressive lobbying on behalf of Duval County and other affected counties resulted in an increase of about \$13 million in overall state funding to Duval County public schools. Diligence by local legislators and advocates resulted in the Legislature leaving intact those changes in 2005, but further challenges are expected in coming years.

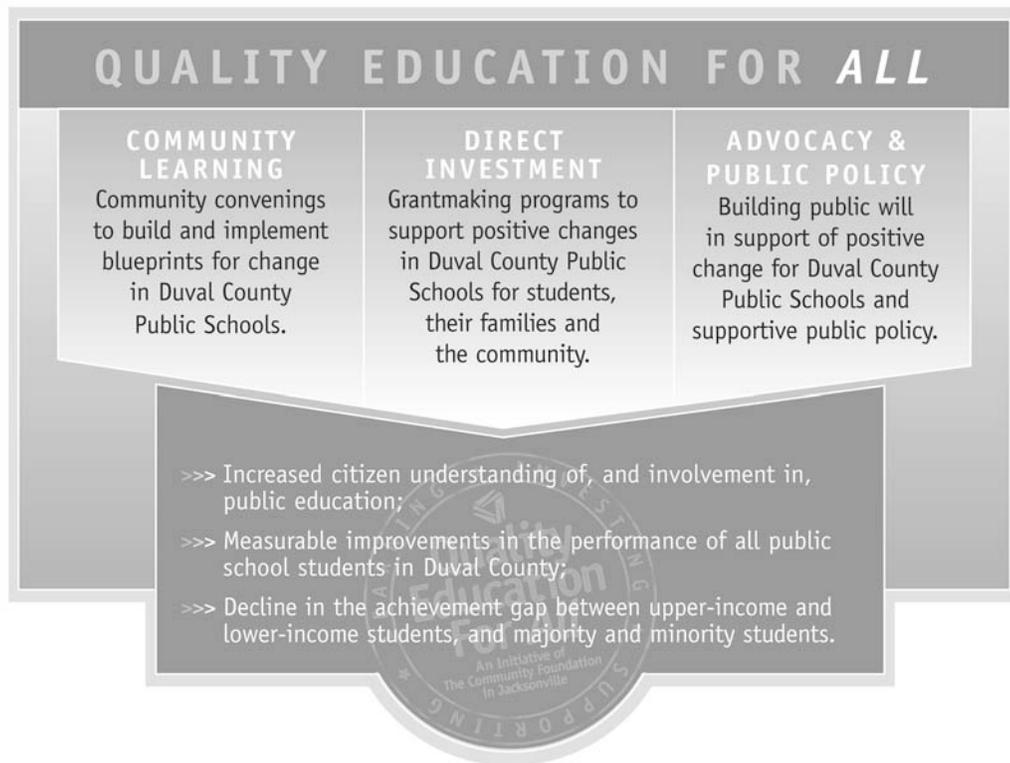
QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL

Fueling Economic Opportunity and Prosperity for Jacksonville

Quality Education for All seeks to support the citizens of Jacksonville in meeting key educational challenges:

- Educating a workforce of sufficient quality to assure future economic prosperity for the entire community,
- Creating a culture that values lifelong learning and encourages academic achievement,
- Growing a community of citizens with the knowledge and skills to participate responsibly in a democratic society.

At the outset, the initiative includes three components. Additional components may be added as the initiative matures over time. The three initial components are Community Learning, Direct Investment, and Advocacy and Public Policy.



Community Learning

A leading element of Quality Education for *All* is a series of convenings, through which The Community Foundation will bring together key stakeholders from across Duval County who have demonstrated leadership and genuine interest in fostering the economic and social well-being of their community. The first of these convenings – The Forum on Quality Education: *Embracing Our Future* -- not only will be an opportunity for participants to become well-versed in the current and emerging challenges confronting Duval County public schools but also to explore the community's role in improving public education.

The Forum on Quality Education will begin in the 2005-2006 school year. Participants will consider a variety of questions including:

- ✓ How does the quality of education in Duval County compare with that in other communities?
- ✓ What does the quality of our education say about our future?
- ✓ What should our goals be for public education?
- ✓ How should our progress be measured?
- ✓ What improvements are priorities?
- ✓ What are the best ways to promote these improvements?
- ✓ What should we expect from these efforts?
- ✓ What are additional strategies the community could use to both push and pull change in public schools?
- ✓ What are existing community resources that could contribute to those efforts?
- ✓ What community resources need to be developed?
- ✓ Who will develop them?

In answering these and similar questions, Forum participants will craft a blueprint for the community – a guiding vision of how the community, including but not limited to the participants themselves, will foster meaningful improvements in public education and take the steps needed to fulfill that vision.

Direct Investment

The Community Foundation represents many donors who wish to make strategic investments to improve public education in Duval County. The Foundation will develop grantmaking programs that align with Foundation and community goals and provides an opportunity for investors to learn about successful grantmaking strategies in a public education environment.

Initially, The Community Foundation will partner with middle school teachers and administrators to develop a grants program aimed at middle schools. The Foundation selected middle schools for this phase of work because of the relative lack of community investment in this phase of education and the widely recognized challenges students and families face in the transition from elementary to middle grades. The Foundation will work with teachers and administrators to identify opportunities to support this transition from the family perspective (increasing parental involvement), the student perspective (supporting academics and learning), the community perspective (making connections to community support systems) and the teacher perspective (learning best practices for the classroom).

The Foundation hopes to work in partnership with teachers and administrators to develop details of the initial grantmaking program during the 2005-2006 school year, with the first grants being awarded in the spring of 2006.

Additional grant programs may be implemented in the future, in coordination with strategies developed through other components of the initiative.

Advocacy and Public Policy

The Community Foundation recognizes that long-term gains in public education are not possible without a strong public will. Therefore, the Foundation has committed to serving as the “engine for change” for the next 10 years, supporting the advocacy work needed to build public will and shape public policy in support of improved public education for all students in Duval County.

Many of the specifics of this work will be shaped by the Community Learning and Direct Investment components of the initiative. As a beginning point, however, the Foundation is undertaking a scientific assessment of community attitudes and beliefs regarding public education. This data will serve as a baseline against which to measure changes over time.

Beyond that, The Community Foundation has committed to serve as a continuing convener, fostering relationships among stakeholders and assisting them in developing specific action steps to promote change. The Foundation also will serve as a resource for information and ideas about best practices in fostering community ownership of and involvement in public education. And, the Foundation will monitor progress – that of the district and of the community.

THE EDUCATION CHALLENGE



Educating a workforce of sufficient quality to assure future economic prosperity for the entire community.

Creating a culture that values lifelong learning and encourages academic achievement.

Growing a community of citizens with the knowledge and skills to participate responsibly in a democratic society.

INVESTMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES

Quality Education for *All* represents a 10-year commitment on the part of The Community Foundation. The estimated cost of the first three years of the initiative exceeds \$1 million and the Foundation's trustees have approved covering \$600,000 of those costs.

The trustees and staff of The Community Foundation invite you to join us in Quality Education for *All*.

How might you participate?

As an Investor

The Community Foundation invites others to invest in Quality Education for *All*. If you are interested in joining us in this worthwhile endeavor, a representative of the Foundation will be happy to meet with you to discuss investment opportunities.

As an investor, you will receive regular, personal updates from Foundation staff on the progress of the initiative and the lessons learned. You will have the opportunity to meet with key personnel involved in the initiative and ask questions of them. And you will be recognized as a supporter in all printed materials about the initiative.

As a Stakeholder

The Community Foundation will invite groups of citizens to participate in the various Community Learning components of the initiative. If you are invited, we urge you to accept the invitation.

As a Potential Grantee

If you are a teacher or administrator in the Duval County School System and think you may be interested in participating in the Direct Investment component, we encourage you to contact the Foundation staff.

As a Policymaker

The Community Foundation invites state and local policymakers to learn along with us, so that they might be better informed about the challenges and opportunities facing our educational system and community. Please contact the Foundation staff.

As an Interested Party

The Community Foundation will produce regular reports on Quality Education for *All* – what we have learned and what we are doing. If you would like to receive these reports and continue to learn more about the initiative, please e-mail the Foundation staff.

Quality Education for *All* – Staff Contact
Cheryl Riddick
904-356-4483
CRiddick@jaxcf.org

ADDENDA

DUVAL COUNTY K-12 EDUCATION AT A GLANCE

DUVAL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

129,000 students

46.8% White
 42.6% African American
 4.7% Hispanic
 3.1% Asian

158 Schools

105 Elementary schools
 26 Middle Schools
 17 High Schools
 10 other schools

% students eligible for Free & Reduced Lunch (2004-2005):

Elementary 59.7%
 Middle 52.8%
 High 30.2%

State of Florida funding per student (2003-2004) – \$5,672

12,125 Full-Time Staff

64% White
 33% African American
 2% Hispanic
 1% Asian

Average Teacher Salaries

Bachelor's \$37,814
 Master's \$45,275
 Specialist \$50,896
 Doctorate \$49,245

Graduation Rate (2003-2004) – 67.2%

Drop-Out Rate (2003-2004) – 5.1%

NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS

25,000 students attend private schools in Duval County
 108 Private Schools in Duval County
 30 schools with student enrollment greater than 250
 10 schools accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
 6 schools accredited by the National Association of Independent Schools
 Tuition range: \$3,500 -- \$14,000 per year.

RACIAL MAKEUP OF PRIVATE SCHOOL POPULATIONS <i>Duval County private K-12 schools with more than 100 students</i>						
School	American Indian / Alaskan	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Total # of Students
The Bolles School	0.33%	4.16%	1.55%	1.61%	92.34%	1,802
Arlington Country Day School	0.00%	0.00%	7.88%	1.92%	90.19%	520
First Coast Christian School	0.00%	4.74%	12.45%	3.56%	79.25%	506
Providence School	0.00%	3.12%	6.24%	3.12%	87.53%	898
Seacoast Christian Academy	0.00%	0.69%	25.00%	5.21%	69.10%	208
The Foundation Academy	0.00%	2.79%	8.38%	13.97%	74.86%	179
The Little Country School	0.00%	0.00%	2.33%	0.00%	97.67%	129
Trinity Christian Academy	0.08%	3.24%	3.84%	1.81%	91.03%	1,327
University Christian School	0.00%	3.10%	16.44%	2.41%	78.05%	870
Source: National Center for Education Statistics						

Sources: Florida Department of Education, Duval County Public Schools, National Center for Education Statistics, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, National Association of Independent Schools, Jacksonville Community Council, Inc.

ABOUT THE FCAT

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) is administered to all Florida public school students in grades 3 through 11 to measure what they know and what they are able to accomplish. The tests are the primary tool used to implement Florida's standards-based education program.

The tests measure a student's performance against benchmarks called the Sunshine State Standards, adopted in 1996. These are broad statements that describe what a child should know and be able to do at each grade level. These standards cover the specific content, knowledge, and skills that students are expected to learn in school in seven content areas: social studies, science, language arts, health/physical education, the arts, foreign language, and mathematics. The student's performance on FCAT tests indicates his or her progress in reaching these benchmarks.

There are four separate FCATs, but not all are administered to each grade level. The Writing test is administered only in grades 4, 8 and 10; the Science test only in grades 5, 8 and 11. Because the Reading and Math tests are administered in grades 3-10, these two tests are the most commonly used to compare student performance over time and venue.

FCAT TESTING SCHEDULE				
Grade	Tests Given			
3	Reading		Math	
4	Reading	Writing	Math	
5	Reading		Math	Science
6	Reading		Math	
7	Reading		Math	
8	Reading	Writing	Math	Science
9	Reading		Math	
10	Reading	Writing	Math	
11				Science

What the Scores Mean

Students taking the Reading and Math FCAT are awarded a score between 100 and 500 for each test. The numeric score places the student in one of five achievement levels, Level 1 being the lowest and Level 5 being the highest.

Students achieving Level 3 or higher are considered to be performing "at grade level." It is important to note, however, that Level 3 performance reflects only "partial success" with the content, suggesting that performance "at grade level" is not synonymous with "mastery of content."

FCAT Achievement Levels

- Level 1** – This student has little success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards.
- Level 2** – This student has limited success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State standards.
- Level 3** – This student has partial success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards, but performance is inconsistent. A student scoring in Level 3 answers many of the test questions correctly but is generally less successful with questions that are most challenging.
- Level 4** – This student has success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards. A student scoring in Level 4 answers most of the test questions correctly, but may have only some success with questions that reflect the most challenging content.
- Level 5** – This student has success with the most challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards. A student scoring in Level 5 answers most of the test questions correctly, including the most challenging questions.

UNDERSTANDING DROPOUT RATES

According to the Florida Department of Education (January 2005):

“In Florida, a dropout is defined as a student who withdraws from school for any of several reasons cited in statute without transferring to another school, home education program or adult education program. Dropout withdrawal reasons include voluntary withdrawal from school prior to graduation (e.g. after passing the age of compulsory school attendance); failure to meet attendance requirements due to excessive absenteeism; discontinuance of attendance with whereabouts unknown; failure to enter/attend school as expected after having previously registered; and certain other reasons.”

According to the Southern Regional Education Board, Florida is unique among southern states in having and implementing a system that can track students as they move from grade to grade and school to school. (SREB, “Reducing Dropout Rates”, Educational Benchmarks 2000 Series.)

Twice each year (in February and October) school districts submit records of those PK-12 students who have been identified as dropouts to Educational Data Systems, which matches those records with student enrollments statewide and reports back to the originating school district. For more details on the reporting process, see Identifying and Reporting Dropouts for Grades PK-12, Florida Department of Education.

LEARNING AND LISTENING

2002-2003

The Community Foundation staff and trustees worked with MDC, Inc., a nonprofit organization that promotes economic and community development in the Southeast, to analyze issues confronting Jacksonville and comparable communities elsewhere in the United States. Staff and trustees ultimately focused on education as the “field of maximum opportunity” for Foundation investment and community benefit.

2004-2005

Staff and trustees engaged Performance Consulting, Inc., Jacksonville, to conduct more than a dozen focus groups with different sectors of the community, including:

- Elected officials
- Philanthropists
- Parents
- Students
- Media
- Clergy
- Business leaders
- Nonprofit leaders
- Civic leaders
- General public

Staff and trustees conducted a literature review of all studies of the Duval County School System in recent years, including:

- ✓ *Public Education: The Cost of Quality*, Jacksonville Community Council Inc. 1993
- ✓ *Audit of Educational Effectiveness*, SchoolMatch, sponsored by The Florida Times-Union, 1997
- ✓ *New Century Commission Report on Education*, New Century Commission, 1998
- ✓ *Council of Great City Schools Report*, Council of Great City Schools, 2002
- ✓ *Public Education Reform – Assessing Progress*, Jacksonville Community Council Inc., 2003
- ✓ *Public Education Reform – Eliminating the Achievement Gap*, Jacksonville Community Council Inc., 2004

Staff and trustees also:

Visited Chattanooga, Tennessee, to learn about that community’s education initiative and local education foundation.

Visited Project GRAD in Atlanta, a school-community collaborative to improve the instructional quality and culture of at-risk feeder patterns in school systems.

Visited the Living Classrooms, an alternative high school in Baltimore, Md.

Attended Grantmakers in Education conference, Atlanta.

Attended the Aspen Institute’s Roundtable on Community Change: Racial Equity and Society Seminar.

Received a presentation from MDC, Inc., on the *State of the South 2004: Fifty Years After Brown V. Board of Education*.

Received a presentation from the Southern Education Foundation.

Staff and trustees convened a focus group of teachers and counselors at JEB Stuart Middle School.

Staff and trustees conducted individual interviews with:

Martha Barrett, Duval County School Board

Greg Bostic, vice principal, J.E.B. Stuart Middle School

Terrie Brady, president, Duval Teachers United
 Nancy Broner, Duval County School Board
 J.F. Bryan, chair, Jacksonville Community Council Inc. study committee: *Public Education Reform – Assessing Progress*
 Travis Bye, ICARE
 Paula Chaon, senior director, Cornerstone Regional Development Partnership, Jacksonville Regional Chamber of Commerce
 Jane Condon, former principal, LaVilla Middle School of the Arts and Douglas Anderson School of the Arts
 Larry Daniel, dean, College of Education and Human Services, University of North Florida
 Bruce Ferguson Jr., president and CEO, WorkSource
 Cheryl Fountain, executive director, Florida Institute of Education at the University of North Florida
 John Fryer, former superintendent, Duval County Public Schools
 Sharon Greene, senior program officer, Jessie Ball duPont Fund
 Cheryl Grymes, executive director, Alliance for World Class Education
 Frances Gupton, the Don Brewer Early Learning and Professional Development Center
 Preston Haskell, chairman, The Haskell Company
 Margaret Janz, interim director, School of Education, Jacksonville University
 Joy Korman, former teacher
 Bill Mason, chair, Jacksonville Community Council Inc. study committee: *Public Education Reform – Eliminating the Achievement Gap*
 Leila Mousa, Region II superintendent, Duval County Public Schools
 NAACP (Jacksonville) Education Committee
 Lynn Pappas, chair, Alliance for World Class Education
 Sally Patch, vice president, Cornerstone Regional Development Partnership, Jacksonville Regional Chamber of Commerce
 Ed Pratt-Dannals, associate superintendent, Duval County Public Schools
 Bryant Rollins, president, MountainTop Ventures
 Peter Rummell, immediate past chair, Alliance for World Class Education
 Fred Schultz, chair, Schultz Center for Teaching and Leadership
 Nancy Snyder, interim superintendent, Duval County Public Schools
 Carol Spaulding, president, Open Campus, Florida Community College at Jacksonville
 Kevin Twomey, board of directors, Schultz Center for Teaching and Leadership
 Quinton White, dean, College of Arts & Sciences, Jacksonville University
 Susan Wilkinson, president, Schultz Center for Teaching and Leadership

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

The Community Foundation in Jacksonville is the oldest community foundation in Florida. Founded in 1964 by Thomas R. McGehee and a group of community leaders, the foundation today has assets of more than \$100 million held in more than 275 different funds. This variety of funds coupled with a mission of service to the community gives The Community Foundation its unique character.

Donors come to the foundation with a variety of passions and interests. The foundation staff offers donors philanthropic expertise, a deep understanding of the community and an awareness of diverse opportunities for philanthropic investment. Thus, The Community Foundation becomes the bridge that connects donors and their philanthropic interests with community enterprises and resources that can benefit from philanthropic support.

The Community Foundation seeks to help the citizens of Jacksonville and the surrounding region to be good stewards – taking care of our people, old and young, our environment, our communities and our talents. Through its competitive grantmaking initiatives, The Community Foundation encourages philanthropic investment in areas it considers vital to the well-being of Northeast Florida.

The Community Foundation recognizes the important role philanthropy plays in any healthy society. Knowing that, the Foundation works to grow and encourage philanthropy in our region, through educational programs, advocacy, research and outreach. Ultimately, The Community Foundation works ***to stimulate philanthropy in order to build a better community.***

Some donors establish a fund at The Community Foundation with a predetermined philanthropic plan – that is, they have decided with some specificity how they wish those dollars to be charitably invested. Perhaps it is to support a beloved church, or establish scholarships for a specific class of students, or simply to establish a charitable fund that the donor will advise over time. The grants made by funds of these donors are non-competitive; that is to say, the donor or fund advisor determines the purpose of those funds. The grant recipients do not apply for grants.

Other donors, however, seek to establish a more open-ended fund. Perhaps they have a field of interest they wish to support – the arts or education – but no predetermined ideas about specific giving. Or, perhaps they wish to provide funds to meet the broadest possible range of community needs. These funds are then used by the foundation for competitive grantmaking. The foundation establishes a specific set of criteria and invites community organizations to submit proposals for funding.

Working with a multitude of donors and hundreds of separate funds, while managing expansive grantmaking that is both competitive and noncompetitive, and seeking to meet the needs of a community as diverse as Northeast Florida – this is challenging work. But it is work that energizes the trustees and staff of The Community Foundation. And it is work that has created a strong philanthropic fabric that has served Jacksonville and Northeast Florida well for four decades.

ENDNOTES

¹ The State of the South, 2004; MDC Inc., Chapel Hill, North Carolina; www.mdcinc.org

² U.S. Census, 2000 and Dr. Raymond K. Oldakowski, professor of geography, Jacksonville University. “Non-whites” include those persons who identify themselves as Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, multi-racial or of “some other race.” “Whites” includes those white persons of Hispanic or Latino heritage.

³ Duval County Public School Data – 2004-2005

⁴ Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation, 2003 data for Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns counties.

⁵ U.S. Census, 2000

⁶ Duval County Public School Data, 2004-2005, and *Public High School Graduation and College-Readiness Rates: 1991-2002*; Center for Civic Innovation at The Manhattan Institute for Policy Research; Education Working Paper No. 8, February 2005, the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, www.gatesfoundation.org

⁷ Based on school-by-school grades provided by Duval County School System, 2004.

⁸ The State of the South, 2004; MDC Inc., Chapel Hill, North Carolina; www.mdcinc.org

⁹ Florida Department of Education; 2004-2005 data not yet available.

¹⁰ *Public High School Graduation and College-Readiness Rates: 1991-2002*; Center for Civic Innovation at The Manhattan Institute for Policy Research; Education Working Paper No. 8, February 2005, the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, www.gatesfoundation.org

¹¹ Florida Department of Education data reported by Jacksonville Community Council, Inc. Florida colleges and universities, including The University of Florida and the University of North Florida, require incoming students to take placement tests prior to enrolling in certain classes, most commonly English, math, some sciences and foreign languages.

¹² Florida Department of Education. 2005 data not yet available.

¹³ Specific racial breakdowns for each school, according to the Duval County Public Schools:

	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Mixed	White
D. Anderson	3 %	18 %	4 %	2 %	73 %
Paxon	11 %	25 %	4 %	2 %	57 %
Stanton	12 %	20 %	4 %	1 %	62 %
N. B. Forrest	4 %	48 %	5 %	2 %	41 %
Robert E. Lee	4 %	62 %	4 %	1 %	29 %
Terry Parker	2 %	47 %	6 %	1 %	44 %

¹⁴ *Public High School Graduation and College-Readiness Rates: 1991-2002*; Center for Civic Innovation at The Manhattan Institute for Policy Research; Education Working Paper No. 8, February 2005, the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, www.gatesfoundation.org

¹⁵ Blueprint for Prosperity, 2003 data.

¹⁶ National Center for Education Statistics

¹⁷ National Center for Education Statistics

¹⁸ Free and Reduced Lunches are provided to those students whose family income is at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty Level. For School Year 2004-2005, that income level is:

\$28,990 for a family of three

\$34,873 for a family of four

42.5 percent of Duval County households have incomes below \$35,000