



K-12

POSITION PAPER



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Florida Education Funders Guiding Statement

The funders will support a culture of high expectations for all students, in and out of school, from early childhood through postsecondary education, leading to career success.

Florida Education Funders Roles

- 1 Provide a learning agenda on Florida-specific issues aligned with group initiatives
- 2 Work on a shared advocacy agenda
- 3 Network, potentially leading to deeper programmatic learning & funding collaborations

FPN Florida Education Funders Initiatives



Advancement of Early Childhood Education

Support ready to learn initiatives (before K) and grade level reading



College and Career Ready High School Graduates

Support strategies during K-12 to prepare graduates for future success



Post-secondary Access, Persistence and Success

Increase equitable accessibility and affordability of post-secondary programs

INTRODUCTION

The **FPN Florida Education Funders** believe that Florida's future economic health is tied directly to an effective educational pipeline from birth through post-secondary achievement, i.e., cradle to career. The resulting skilled workforce is a critical outcome. Funder's support of this takes a two-fold approach; **1)** a Learning Agenda to increase members' knowledge on topics appropriate to its focus areas and **2)** Policy Engagement which is undertaken as opportunities present themselves and as FPN members determine. Policy work may be done collectively (as FPN) or individually by members.

FPN supports strategies during K-12 education which produce college and career ready high school graduates who are poised to be successful in post-secondary endeavors or begin a viable career. The Florida Dept. of Education states that to be college and career ready in addition to earning a standard diploma a student must earn an industry certification and/or complete college prep coursework such as Advanced Placement classes, dual enrollment classes, the International Baccalaureate (IB) program, or the Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) program. These all contribute to a student being prepared for post-secondary and career success, but even advanced coursework may not be enough.

Florida's high school graduation rates have been steadily growing to the recently reported 90.0%¹, However, there are two major issues with graduation rates. First, not all subgroups have this high a rate (e.g., Franklin county Black students' rate is 70%; Gadsen county's Hispanics' rate is 66.7%) and secondly, many graduates are not college and career ready (only 45% are ready in Reading, 56% in English, 33% in Math and 31% in Science).² Note that these rates are based on admissions tests and do not address all facets of college and career readiness which means readiness rates may be even lower.

David Conley, an expert in the field of college readiness, identifies four facets of college readiness: 1) key cognitive strategies that enable a student to learn content from a range of disciplines; 2) academic knowledge and skills whereas mastering key content knowledge is achieved through the exercise of broader cognitive skills embodied within the key cognitive strategies (#1), 3) academic behaviors that reflect greater student self-awareness, self-monitoring, and self-control of a series of processes and behaviors necessary for academic success; and 4) contextual skills and awareness such as the information necessary to understand how college operates as a system and culture;³. This means that students need to be academically prepared for college, have high academic and career expectations, and have college and career knowledge such as career planning and how to access college⁴. Florida's measurement of college and career readiness does not address all of these facets. While some districts in Florida address these facets, most do not address all areas and few have been successful across the board for all students, especially in subpopulations struggling in post-secondary environments.

POSITIONS

FPN supports an array of research backed strategies to prepare all K-12 students to graduate high school college and career ready. The blue “Positions” box summarizes FPN’s positions in support of the goal that 100% of K-12 students are prepared for post-secondary and career success. Rigorous K-12 standards are the lynchpin in a system which leads to better college and career readiness outcomes for the students of Florida. Standards must be continuously reevaluated and challenged to assure they provide the basis for continuing student success. The standards themselves are only the beginning. FPN supports world class teacher prep programs, appropriate professional development, grade level appropriate curricula and supports for teachers and administrators to cultivate a culture of high expectations for all students. Additionally, all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, background or socio-economic level must be provided access to the activities which have indicated improved college and career readiness (e.g., participation in career academies and college prep coursework).

As part of FPN’s stance in support of closing the racial and gender achievement gaps, it supports an elimination of the digital divide. The lack of access to quality high speed broadband was a major factor in thousands of students not having access to equitable distance learning. While numerous FPN members implemented and expanded programs to provide stopgap measures, more permanent solutions are needed to assure every Floridian has adequate internet access, devices, and the skills need to utilize both. Eliminating barriers to access to technology, broadband, and the skills to use them will continue to be important regardless of the prevalence of remote learning (e.g. in complete assignments, homework, etc.).

As TNTP’s Opportunity Myth points out, students have high expectations of themselves and will rise to the levels of expectations. However, in many cases students spend most of their time in school without access to four key resources: grade-appropriate assignments, strong instruction, deep engagement, and teachers who hold high expectations. Greater access to the four resources can and does improve student achievement—particularly for students who start the school year behind.⁵

FPN Positions

- ✓ All high school graduates are college and career ready
- ✓ Rigorous K-12 standards
- ✓ Equitable opportunities and outcomes for all students
- ✓ Elimination of the Digital Divide
- ✓ Student assessments to support continuous improvement
- ✓ High student expectations from all teachers
- ✓ Grade level appropriate curricular materials
- ✓ World class teacher prep programs

PHILANTHROPY'S ROLE

Philanthropy has found many ways to fulfil its roles related to supporting K-12 education. In addition to traditional roles of assisting with resources, supporting research and piloting programs, funders are valuable brokers of accurate information, serve as thought leaders and connectors between schools and their communities. FPN members play the roles of collaborators, funders, and critical friends.

Using data and research FPN members have the ability to work with schools and districts to assure resources, programs, and practices support all the components needed for K-12 students to graduate high school college and career ready. For example, funders should be part of conversations around the delivery of the four key resources TNTP identified in the Opportunity Myth as well as test district funding requests against support of rigorous standards and effective implementation including, those advanced components that support college and career readiness.

On a policy level, philanthropy is a knowledgeable, neutral voice in support of student success and provide policy makers unique perspectives. Funders' access to research and program results, connections in the community, and sector experience make them powerful voices for advancement of K-12 education in Florida.

Pinellas Education Foundation

Project	Elevating Excellence: College and Career Centers
Area Served	Pinellas County, Florida
Collaborating Organizations	Pinellas County Schools; LEAP Tampa Bay, an initiative of the Community Foundation of Tampa Bay; Consortium of Florida Education Foundations; Helios Education Foundation; Richard O. Jacobson Foundation
Goal	Support high achieving student with increased attention, outreach and support targeting low-income and minority students accessing and achieving success in selective colleges and universities
Description	Elevating Excellence assists high-achieving students, particularly those subpopulations under-represented in postsecondary education, and their families with personalized college and career counseling and additional college preparation supports.
Funder's Role	Thought-partner for design and implementation, funder and fundraiser
Planned Timeframe	Six (6) years.
More Information	https://pinellaseducation.org/initiatives/multiple-pathways/#elevating-excellence

Manatee Community Foundation

Project	Manatee Elementary School, a Community Partnership School
Area Served	Communities surrounding Manatee Elementary School; Bradenton, Florida
Collaborating Organizations	Childrens Home Society of Florida, Manatee County Rural Health Services, School District of Manatee County, University of South Florida
Goal	Ensure the success of students by partnering directly with the families and community to focus on consistent attendance, appropriate behavior, academic competencies, whole-child development, engaging enrichment, and comprehensive health
Description	To remove barriers to student learning and access, a network of community partners and stakeholders continuously participate in the identification, development, and coordination of applicable programs and services for the students.
Funder's Role	Funder and representative on leadership group
Planned Timeframe	Through 2045
More Information	http://www.theelevationscholars.org/

ABOUT FPN

The Florida Philanthropic Network is a statewide association of grantmakers working to build philanthropy for a better Florida. FPN's members are private independent, corporate and family foundations, community foundations, public charity grantmakers and corporate giving programs - from Miami to Jacksonville; Naples to Pensacola - who hold over \$8 billion in assets and invest over \$500 million annually in Florida to improve the quality of life for our citizens. Our members share a commitment to promoting philanthropy, fostering collaboration and advancing public policy by Florida, in Florida.

FPN's Florida Education Funders are FPN members who share an interest in supporting education issues, organizations and needs in Florida. Convenings of the Florida Education Funders offer a space to learn and share together on improving the state's education outcomes, and to be a voice for Florida philanthropy on key education policy issues.

REFERENCES

- 1 Based on statistics from the FL Dept. of Education, PK-12 Public School Data Publications and Reports. <https://www.fldoe.org/accountability/data-sys/edu-info-accountability-services/pk-12-public-school-data-pubs-reports/students.stml>
- 2 The Condition of College & Career Readiness, 2019. <https://www.act.org/content/act/en/research/reports/act-publications/condition-of-college-and-career-readiness-2019.html>
- 3 Conley, D. (2007). Redefining college readiness. Eugene, OR, Educational Policy Improvement Center.
- 4 Mueller, D., & Gozali-Lee, E. (April 2013). College and career readiness: A review and analysis conducted for Generation Next. St. Paul, MN. https://www.wilder.org/sites/default/files/imports/GenerationNext_CollegeCareerReadiness_4-13.pdf
- 5 The Opportunity Myth, TNTP, 2018. https://tntp.org/assets/documents/TNTP_The-Opportunity-Myth_Web.pdf