

**FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE**
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Indianapolis E-Learning Fund Launches With More Than \$2.6 Million

*Fund to be administered by the Indianapolis Mayor's Office of Education
Innovation and will support strategies for transition to e-learning*

INDIANAPOLIS (April 8, 2020) - A collaborative of local stakeholders has established the Indianapolis E-Learning Fund with an initial investment of more than \$2.6 million to support Indianapolis educators, students, and families during the transition to e-learning in response to the recent COVID-19 public health emergency. The Fund will support immediate and long-term solutions for student access to technology, county-wide social-emotional learning strategies, as well as the launch of an e-learning lab open to all schools in Indiana.

Founding funding partners include the Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation, Eli Lilly and Company Foundation, the Cummins Foundation, EdChoice, Emmis Communications, Glick Philanthropies, The Heritage Group, The Indianapolis Foundation, The Indianapolis Foundation Library Fund, The Indianapolis Motor Speedway, the Indiana Charter School Network, the Institute for Quality Education, Lilly Endowment Inc., the Lumina Foundation, The Mind Trust, The OneAmerica Foundation Inc., Salesforce, the Telamon Foundation, and United Way of Central Indiana.

Mayor Joe Hogsett's Office of Education Innovation will administer the fund, and the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee will serve as the fiscal agent. A committee of Marion County education and community leaders will advise the Mayor's Office of Education Innovation on funding allocations.

"Already, students, teachers and parents have worked miracles to ensure that education remains a top priority during this difficult time. Solutions for e-learning are on the horizon for all schools in Marion County," said Mayor Joe Hogsett. "It is my hope that this fund will give every family, school, and teacher the tools they need to educate all students in Indianapolis."

Extended stay-at-home requirements and school building closures ordered by state and city officials that aim to limit the spread of COVID-19 are requiring students, families, teachers, and administrators to rapidly implement plans for full-scale remote learning. Funding will be geared toward helping to ensure that schools and districts implement effective solutions to this challenge.



The Indianapolis E-Learning Fund will address four focus areas:

Technology access: Support for Marion County traditional public, public charter, and innovation network schools to address short-term needs for accessing devices and internet connectivity for students from low-income families and for students who live in communities with unreliable access to the internet and/or limited broadband capacity.

County-wide e-learning strategy: Support for the development of a county-wide strategy for e-learning that will identify supports needed and address both immediate and long-term needs.

County-wide social-emotional learning strategy: Support for the development of a county-wide strategy for social-emotional learning needs for students, both while at home and upon their transition back to the school building.

Statewide e-learning lab: Support for the launch of an e-learning lab for all schools in the state. The lab will provide early e-learning adopters a platform for sharing best practices with all schools, as well as professional development opportunities to support teachers and administrators. The lab will also equip students and families with the necessary tools for the successful implementation of remote learning.

“Not all students have access to devices or reliable internet connectivity. The Indianapolis E-Learning Fund will help address acute short-term needs not covered by federal stimulus funds and will also support the development of a longer-term e-learning strategy,” said Claire Fiddian-Green, President and CEO of the Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation. “The Fairbanks Foundation is pleased to join with other philanthropic, corporate and civic leaders in support of this very important effort, and we are grateful for Mayor Hogsett’s leadership in coordinating a strategic, citywide approach.”

“The Lilly Foundation and Lilly are actively engaged with community partners to address new and complex challenges arising from the coronavirus – including the need for meaningful access to e-learning for students across Indianapolis,” said Tiffany Benjamin, president of the Eli Lilly and Company Foundation. “We are pleased to see so much engagement from the corporate community on this issue and privileged to join others to support the Indianapolis E-Learning Fund to ensure kids in Indianapolis – regardless of income – have access to the e-learning tools and support they need to succeed.”

A committee representing Indianapolis school district leadership and respected community organizations will advise on funding decisions. The seven committee members are:

- Miriam Acevedo Davis, President and CEO, La Plaza
- Brandon Brown, CEO, The Mind Trust

- Aleesia Johnson, Superintendent, Indianapolis Public Schools
- Jeffrey A. Johnson Sr., Senior Pastor, Eastern Star Church
- Pat Mapes, Superintendent, Perry Township Schools
- Patrick McAlister, Director, Indianapolis Mayor's Office of Education Innovation (committee chair)
- Shawn Smith, Superintendent, Lawrence Township

Individuals or organizations who wish to contribute to the fund can visit indy.gov/elearning to make a donation and learn more.

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