# Just and Fair Schools Fund



The Just and Fair Schools Fund (JFSF) supports grassroots organizing initiatives that work to eliminate harsh school discipline policies and practices – and that uphold the right to education for all youth. This fund aims to spark change on the local, state and national levels. JFSF is housed at Public Interest Projects (PIP), a 501(c)(3) public charity, and is made possible with the generous support of Atlantic Philanthropies.

#### Need

Zero-tolerance policies, aggressive policing in schools, and other extreme school discipline practices lead to high rates of suspensions, expulsions, and arrests of students. As a result, large numbers of youth are pushed out of school and into the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

The school-to-prison pipeline widens the opportunity/ achievement gap and denies young people their human right to education — particularly low-income youth, students of color, LGBTQ youth, English language learners, homeless youth, youth in foster care, and students with disabilities.

### Solution

Over the past decade, grassroots organizations have gained momentum in organizing communities and championing human rights to win fair discipline policies in schools. In concert with local and national advocates, youth and parent activists have propelled sustainable changes that keep classrooms orderly and treat students fairly.

The JFSF will support youth and parent leadership to break the school-to-prison pipeline and achieve equitable school discipline in public schools across the country.

#### **Activities**

- Award 21 two-year grants to groups across the U.S. that pursue rights-focused school discipline reform.
- Invest in capacity-building and technical assistance to increase grantees' individual and collective impacts.
- Facilitate grantee access to peer networks and learning.
- Integrate grantees and their work within education reform, human rights, and other advocacy communities.
- Educate funders about the school-to-prison pipeline and community-led strategies and successes in breaking it.

#### Goals

- With targeted support and broader collaboration, organized communities shift the national discourse from "zero tolerance" to keeping all children learning in school.
- Youth and parents convince schools, school districts, and states to adopt prevention-oriented and evidencebased school discipline that respects students' right to education and fosters engaging learning climates.
- Organizing victories reduce suspensions, expulsions, school-based arrests, push-outs, and drop-outs.
- Funder interest and support increase for community organizing on school discipline reform.

#### Grantees

- Alliance for Quality Education (NY)
- Building Responsibility, Equality and Dignity (OH)
- Citizens of Louisville Organized and United Together (KY)
- Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth (CA)
- Community Asset Development Re-defining Education (CA)
- Community Organizing and Family Issues (IL)
- Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children
- Gwinnett STOPP (GA)
- Interfaith Coalition for Action, Reconciliation and Empowerment (FL)
- Labor/Community Strategy Center (CA)
- Oakland Community Organizations (CA)
- Padres Unidos (CO)
- Philadelphia Student Union (PA)
- Power U Center for Social Change (FL)
- Southern Echo (MS)
- Texas Organizing Project Education Fund

- Urban Youth Collaborative (NY)
- VOYCE (IL)
- Youth Justice Coalition (CA)
- Youth Together (CA)
- Youth United for Change (PA)



For more information about JFSF, please contact:

# irantees

#### **AQE** (Alliance for Quality Education)

Albany, NY

Enforce the Buffalo Public School District's new "no out-of-school suspension" policy, rewrite its Code of Conduct, and build a related statewide reform campaign.

#### **CADRE** (Community Asset Development Re-defining Education)

Los Angeles, CA

Win broadened support across the LA Unified School District's major stakeholder institutions to end school pushout, harsh discipline, and zero tolerance, through an engaged teachers' union playing an active and effective role in the success of School-Wide Positive Behavior Support at the classroom level and in teachers' professional development.

#### **COFI (Community Organizing and Family Issues)**

Chicago, IL

Persuade at least 25 Chicago Public Schools (CPS) elementary schools to implement restorative justice, return recess to all CPS elementary schools, ban the use of "silent lunches," make school discipline data publicly accessible, and amend the Student Code of Conduct.

#### **Coleman Advocates** for Children and Youth

San Francisco, CA

Eliminate the use of undocumented/"unofficial" suspensions, create a San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) Task Force to monitor district-wide Restorative Justice implementation, and institutionalize school discipline data collection and reporting.

# **DART** joint proposal (Direct Action and Research Training Center):

Lawrence, KS

Expand restorative justice and related programs across Duval County (FL), Franklin County (OH), and Jefferson County (KY) from 10 schools to over 80.

### **BREAD** (Building Responsibility, Equality and Dignity)

**CLOUT** (Citizens of Louisville Organized and United Together)

Columbus, OH Louisville, KY

ICARE (Interfaith Coalition for Action, Reconciliation and Empowerment) FFLIC (Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children)

Jacksonville, FL New Orleans, LA

Create parent leadership behind Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports in 4 pilot New Orleans schools, and advance a statewide campaign to reduce suspensions and expulsions.

#### **Gwinnett STOPP** (Gwinnett Parent Coalition to Dismantle the School to Prison Pipeline)

Snellville, GA

Develop coordinated parent project teams across Gwinnett County to drive school discipline reform.

# **Labor/Community Strategy Center**

Los Angeles, CA

Expand moratorium on "truancy sweeps," create support for a Civilian Police Review Board, and advocate for a pilot school discipline diversion program.

### **OCO** (Oakland Community Organizations)

Oakland, CA

Implement Restorative Justice and related pilot programs in 6 Oakland high schools, and develop and advance community-supported school discipline reform policies.

**Padres Unidos** Denver, CO

Develop a state-level position paper and recommendations, create a statewide network for school discipline reform, and secure annual progress reporting by Denver Public Schools.

# **Power U** Center for Social Change

Miami, FL

Create pilot Restorative Justice programs in Miami-Dade high schools, and develop an alliance of organizations advocating for discipline reform at all School Board meetings.

#### **PSU** (Philadelphia Student Union)

Philadelphia, PA

Eliminate 10-day suspensions for nonviolent offenses, develop a Nonviolent School Vision and policy platform for district-wide reform, and monitor implementation of restorative justice programs in 46 focus schools.

**Southern Echo** Jackson, MS

Conduct statewide training on school-based interventions and other approaches to keep students in school, and win creation of Citizens Advisory Councils in all school districts statewide ranked below "successful."

# **TOPEF** (Texas Organizing Project Education Fund)

Houston, TX

Secure semiannual Dallas Independent School District discipline data reports, and implementation of School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports in 1-5 schools.

# **UYC** (Urban Youth Collaborative)

Brooklyn, NY

Working with Dignity in Schools New York, develop a guide to positive strategies under the current NY Department of Education Discipline Code, amend the Code to limit infractions subject to suspension, and increase Restorative Justice and/or Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports in New York City high schools.

# **VOYCE** (Voices of Youth in Chicago Education)

Chicago, IL

Organize to end the overuse of harsh discipline policies in Chicago Public Schools through major changes to the student code of conduct and increased transparency in district reporting of disciplinary actions. VOYCE will also organize at the school level to support strong implementation of practices that emphasize prevention and restoration.

#### **YJC** (Youth Justice Coalition)

Los Angeles, CA

Develop innovative restorative justice and discipline approaches at FREE L.A. High School, document school discipline experiences of students and families at 5 high schools, and pilot school safety plans in 2 schools.

**Youth Together** Oakland, CA

Lead pilot Restorative Justice programs at 4 Oakland Unified School District high schools, and increase district support and resources for programs district-wide.

#### **YUC** (Youth United for Change)

Philadelphia, PA

Rewrite the Philadelphia School District zero tolerance policy and a Memorandum of Understanding between the School District and the Philadelphia Police Department limiting its involvement in school discipline.