



# LEARNING TO COLLABORATE:

*A five-year report on a public-private partnership to improve the public school graduation rate in Duval County, Florida*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Over the last five years, Duval County's high school graduation rate increased by 11 percentage points. It was no coincidence: The improvement was, in part, a result of a strategic and coordinated effort by Duval County Public Schools and a partnership of community organizations dedicated to identifying and intervening on behalf of at-risk students. Through a multi-pronged approach, the partnership conducted research to fully understand the extent of the dropout crisis and learned about best practice solutions. Then, based on that learning, it set into motion two primary strategies: growing and aligning community-funded student supports and reforming district policies and practices that affected the student graduation rate. As a result, the community and district focused like never before on students at risk of not graduating. Today, the Learning to Finish partnership has brought about lasting systemic change and has set the stage for deeper collaboration to continue to improve public education in Duval County.*

## INTRODUCTION

In the 2005-2006 school year, approximately six in 10 Duval County high school students graduated within four years of entering ninth grade.

The number of college- and career-ready graduates was far too low to meet the growing demand for a more educated workforce, leaving thousands of young people — especially minority and low-income students — behind.

Public education was emerging in the Jacksonville community as a key priority, and increasing the high school graduation rate was seen as a primary issue. But the right solutions remained elusive. There were dozens of organizations working on behalf of children in Jacksonville, but too little alignment of initiatives. Duval County Public Schools had identified the graduation rate as a key indicator. However, more research was needed to develop a

deep understanding of the specific causes of the low graduation rate and identify effective programs to keep students on track for graduation.

In 2005, The Community Foundation in Jacksonville launched Quality Education for All, a 10-year major initiative to improve the quality of public education in Duval County. United Way of Northeast Florida declared education a major focus of its work and established initiatives such as Success By 6 and Achievers For Life. In 2007, Mayor John Peyton launched the Jacksonville Journey, an anti-crime initiative that strengthened the Jacksonville Children's Commission's efforts to focus on education and interventions for youth at risk.

Duval County Public Schools, under the leadership of new Superintendent Ed Pratt-Dannals, completed its first strategic plan in 2008 — one that focused on

increasing the graduation rate.

The conditions were right for change.

In 2007, the Pew Partnership for Civic Change saw potential in Jacksonville. The organization was working to catalyze cross-sector leadership to solve deep social issues in cities around the country. It had identified the graduation rate as something that citizens of Duval County could rally around — and recognized that strong collaborative leadership was already in place in Jacksonville.

Pew approached The Community Foundation, which brought together the four initial lead partners, and Learning to Finish was born. The Learning to Finish lead partners — Duval County Public Schools, The Community Foundation in Jacksonville, United Way of Northeast Florida and the Jacksonville Children's Commission — joined in the

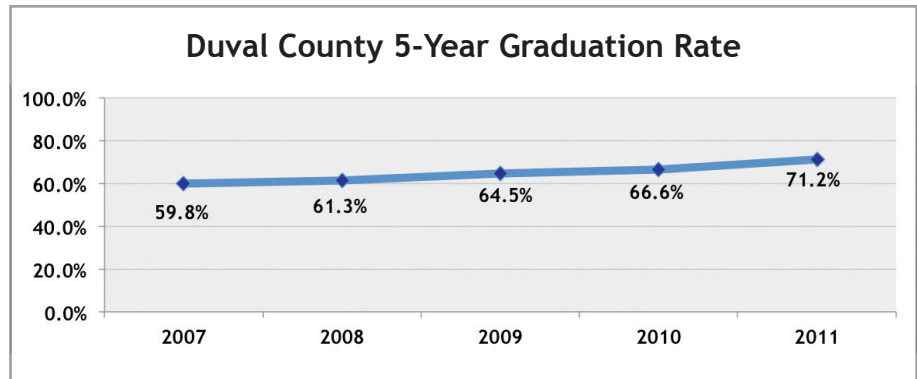
partnership with The Community Foundation as the lead convenor and funder. More than a dozen youth-serving agencies also joined in the collaborative.

Over the next five years, these organizations individually and collectively focused on improving the graduation rate. Together, the partners collaborated through new forms of public-private partnership, jointly conducting extensive research, identifying best practice solutions, recommending policy and program changes and aligning resources and supports to best serve youth at risk of not graduating.

By the 2011-2012 school year, Duval County's graduation rate dramatically increased, an achievement that came at the same time as decreased funding for public schools and increased graduation requirements. In fact, Duval was one of the first to adopt the national Achieve standards for college readiness, and had among the state of Florida's most stringent diploma requirements.

## FIRST STEPS

Once the lead partners convened and committed to working together, identifying each organization's work to improve student success was an important step. Each agency had an existing



commitment to improving the education of children in the community and increasing the rate at which Duval County Public Schools students graduated ready for college and careers, yet each approach was unique.

**Duval County Public Schools (Duval Schools)** served approximately 125,000 students in public schools, making it one of the 25 largest school districts in the nation. In 2007, the district came under the new leadership of Ed Pratt-Dannals, who implemented its first strategic plan and increased the focus on students at risk of not graduating.

**The Jacksonville Children's Commission**, a government agency, funded early childhood initiatives and after school programs to low-income children. It refocused its funding allocations to emphasize improving the graduation rate. Meanwhile, the City of Jacksonville funded graduation improvement efforts through the Jacksonville Journey, an

*“Significant change does not happen overnight. We are fortunate to have community partners that stayed the course with us as we worked to help more students graduate.”*

**ED PRATT-DANNALS**  
SUPERINTENDENT, DUVAL  
COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

anti-crime initiative, including suspension alternatives and college counseling and scholarships.

**The Community Foundation in Jacksonville** worked to convene the philanthropic community around public education reform, researching issues and solutions, investing in promising strategies and working to bring more private donors to public education through its Quality Education for All (QEA) initiative. The Community Foundation served as the initial lead facilitator and funder of the Learning to Finish partnership.



**United Way of Northeast Florida (United Way)** offered high-quality, research-based initiatives for youth (in addition to funding other youth-serving organizations), such as the Achievers For Life dropout prevention strategy for sixth graders, Success By 6 early childhood education initiative, and serving as administrative leader of the Full Service Schools collaboration to remove the social barriers to academic success for students and communities.

**The Jacksonville Public Education Fund** was born in late 2008 as a result of The Community Foundation’s education work. Founded to conduct research about public education in Duval County, mobilize the community in support of better public schools and advocate for best practices, the Jacksonville Public Education Fund took over the role of lead facilitator for Learning to Finish in 2009.

The Jacksonville Public Education Fund and The Community Foundation, along with The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and the Consortium of Florida Education Foundations, provided funding for Learning to Finish activities. All partners provided in-kind support. The Pew Partnership for Civic Change provided technical assistance and access to national networks for



**Aligning education outside of the school day: TEAM UP**

For the past 17 years, the Jacksonville Children’s Commission has been a leader in creating and sustaining high quality afterschool and summer programming both in schools and in community-based sites. Through collaboration with youth nonprofits and Duval Schools, its TEAM UP after school program is available at 44 schools. Targeting low-income and academically struggling students, TEAM UP added 15 sites thanks to the Jacksonville Journey. The commission spends more than \$10 million annually and serves between 7,500 and 11,000 elementary and middle school students with an array of enrichment and academic supports. Promotion rates for both elementary and middle school students in TEAM UP have risen steadily over the past three years, to 94 percent and 97 percent respectively, and they have a higher attendance rate than students who don’t attend the program. Through a Learning to Finish grant, the Jacksonville Children’s Commission contracted national experts to conduct a scan of best practices and local focus groups with schools, non-profits and parents. As a result, TEAM UP program staff worked more closely with each school’s administration to target students who needed the most support and to better align the program with the school day.

funders working in the area of dropout prevention.

At the time Learning to Finish began, there was little to no alignment of programming between school administrations and external organizations that provided important supports such as after-school programs and mentoring. In addition, a true community-wide culture change was needed in order to transition

away from the philosophy that all students should be offered the same supports, and toward the model of segmenting students based on their need for extra assistance. This was reinforced by Florida’s accountability system, which required a focus on the lowest-performing students.

The group believed it was important that Learning to Finish coordinate out-of-school

resources and make substantial changes at Duval Schools. To do so, the partnership agreed on three central areas of work:

- Obtain a deeper understanding of the risk factors that caused students to drop out and identify research-based solutions.
- Leverage and coordinate privately funded youth-serving programs around research-based best practices to help struggling students.
- Support the school district’s strategic focus on students at risk of not graduating.

## BUILDING KNOWLEDGE AND SHARED LEADERSHIP

All of the partners agreed that organizations and the broader community needed a deeper understanding of the problem. In its first phase, the Learning to Finish partnership created a series of learning opportunities. These included five research reports, three briefing papers and six site visits to cities where effective dropout prevention strategies are showing results.

What was the true extent of the dropout crisis? The first briefing paper, issued in January 2008, conducted a ninth-grade cohort study between 2003 and 2006. It concluded that the greatest loss of students occurs between ninth

and tenth grade, and that most dropouts actually “slip away” from school rather than making a conscious decision to terminate enrollment.

A briefing released in July 2008 looked at the necessity of focusing on students at risk of dropping out, and examined best practices in other parts of the country from Portland, Oregon to Boston.

The partnership also conducted

*“Aligning supports for students at risk around the same philosophy gives our community the best return on its investment and expands the reach of the most effective strategies to increase our community’s graduation rate.”*

**CONNIE HODGES**  
PRESIDENT, UNITED WAY

## United Way increases strategic focus on education

United Way engaged hundreds of business and nonprofit leaders resulting in the decision in 2005 to focus on root causes of social issues. Increasing the high school graduation rate was the first priority. Following 11 months of studying national and local research including Dr. Robert Balfanz of Johns Hopkins University’s early warning signs of dropping out of school, United Way developed strategies to increase school readiness, Success By 6, and high school graduation, Achievers For Life. With partners Duval Schools, Communities in Schools, Jewish Family & Community Services and Big Brothers Big Sisters, Achievers For Life began in two middle schools in 2007 and is now in nine with results including 97 percent promotion and 98 percent attendance rates. Since 2005, United Way has invested \$40.5 million in improving educational outcomes for students, an investment trustees have committed to growing in the future. Initiatives include advocacy, access to high-quality early learning, volunteer mentors for students, research-based parent engagement, counseling for students and other student retention strategies. United Way also serves as the lead partner for Learning to Finish in coordinating the EWRS project in Andrew Jackson.



## Comprehensive investment: Andrew Jackson High School

Every Winner Reaches Success at Andrew Jackson is a Learning to Finish project to implement a comprehensive early warning and response system tailored to high school students. In 2012, 137 students were in the Early Warning and Response System (EWRS) at Andrew Jackson. The Bridge of Northeast Florida provided home visits, counseling, job training, tutoring and contact with each student on average three times per week. At the end of the 2011-12 school year, 87 percent of students had a grade of C or better in language arts, 70 percent had a GPA of 2.0 or above, 10 percent scored at or above Level 3 on FCAT Reading, and 34 percent were Level 3 or higher on the end of course math exam. A comprehensive evaluation team and program logic model will guide the ongoing work.

a predictive analysis of a sixth grade cohort to find out what factors were most significant in predicting whether a student was likely to leave school before graduating and assessed the available resources for overage students. The partnership held focus groups with students, parents and educators to obtain qualitative information about what could help students stay on the path to graduation.

*“Working in public-private partnerships is very different than working with nonprofits. It helped to be clear that we are not a political entity but we are operating in a political environment. Understanding what partners need in that environment is important.”*

**NINA WATERS  
PRESIDENT, THE  
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

Using technical assistance and advice from Jobs for the Future and The Youth Transitions Funders Group, Learning to Finish partners visited cities that had successfully used an approach called Multiple Pathways to Graduation.

The site visits included a look at Philadelphia’s Project U-Turn, a cross-sector collaborative that has increased the graduation rate by targeting off-track students, and New York City’s Office of Multiple Pathways to Graduation. Partners also joined in meetings of multiple cities to replicate best practices from around the country.

The partners also did an assessment of all of the district’s existing options at the time for students who were overage for their grade, finding that the need far outstripped available resources.

Based on the research and site visits, the Learning to Finish partnership decided on two evidence-based strategies, the Early Warning and Response System targeting students at risk of dropping out, and Multiple Pathways to Graduation schools for severely off-track students. During the 2009-2010 school year, Learning to Finish began an action agenda focused on these two reform strategies.

## EWRS: IDENTIFYING AND SUPPORTING STUDENTS AT RISK

Because research indicates that sixth and ninth grade transition years are so crucial, the Early Warning and Response System (EWRS) targets sixth and ninth grade students at risk of dropping out. It began in six schools in 2009, expanding to eight schools the following year. Learning to Finish provided grants to participating middle and high schools to identify students at risk and provide extra support. At the same time, in middle schools, Achievers For Life and TEAM UP worked with the school administration to coordinate identification and intervention with students identified through the EWRS. This dovetailed well, as United Way had been identifying and intervening with struggling students through Achievers For



Life since its inception in 2007.

The system engaged principals and their leadership teams in identifying high-need students based on criteria that research shows makes them more likely to drop out. These factors include being overage for grade, failing English or Math, poor attendance and low scores on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). Coordinators, case managers and tutors worked in partnership with the school team to identify, intervene with and monitor students. The system also encouraged district academic programs and community-based social supports to align around this framework.

While limited in resources for coordination and high school student supports, EWRS achieved significant results by 2010. At the high school level (participating schools were Terry Parker High and Forrest High), four out of five EWRS students earned six credits in ninth grade, and 93 percent were promoted to tenth grade. At middle schools (including

Arlington, Fort Caroline, Jefferson Davis and J.E.B. Stuart), 96 percent of EWRS students were promoted to the next grade level; 85 percent earned a grade point average of 2.0 or higher.

Principals and administrators saw improved student-teacher engagement and adopted a more strategic approach to targeting students who needed more support and allocating resources accordingly.

At the beginning of each year, the district began to provide each participating school with a list of incoming sixth and ninth graders who had early warning indicators. Simply having this information early in the school year created a culture change around identifying and building relationships with struggling students proactively. In addition to traditional academic supports, these activities included Summer Bridge programming, teacher mentoring of students and additional teacher tutoring time, which strengthened student engagement. In addition to changing the culture inside the

*“The resources and learning we received from Learning to Finish have accelerated the needed changes in how we help our district’s most struggling students.”*

**DANA KRIZNAR**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
DUVAL SCHOOLS OFFICE OF  
MULTIPLE PATHWAYS AND  
SUPPORT SERVICES

schools, the EWRS has been a vehicle to improve, expand and align work done by community-based organizations to support these students.

Over the five year period, Duval Schools spent \$33 million in Multiple Pathways initiatives to help struggling students. The community partners invested an additional \$46 million in Learning to Finish initiatives. Overall, community partners invested \$71 million in aligned funding around a common strategic goal of identifying and supporting students who needed

### Eliminating ineffective programs: Pre-Graduation Initiative

Duval Schools had a program known as the Pre-Graduation Initiative. A remnant of traditional “tracking,” this program essentially funneled students who were not performing well in school into a GED track as early as sixth grade, not placing them in credit-bearing classes and essentially preventing them from obtaining a full high school diploma. Although a well-intentioned program, it had the unintended consequences of leaving students without a GED and without a high school diploma. As a result of shared learning about effective programs through Learning to Finish, Duval Schools decided to eliminate the program and replace it with other pathways to graduation supported by national research.

the most help to stay on track.

During this time, the Jacksonville Children’s Commission completed a Learning to Finish-funded redesign of the TEAM UP after school program to strengthen the educational component and ensure alignment with EWRS.

Because of the success of EWRS, Duval Schools began co-investing in Achievers For Life. And in 2011, Learning to Finish was awarded \$1 million in Race to the Top funding to implement a comprehensive EWRS system at Andrew Jackson High School with United Way as lead partner.

## **MULTIPLE PATHWAYS TO GRADUATION: ADVOCATING FOR DISTRICT REFORM**

The second part of the action agenda was to support Duval Schools in its work to redesign its approach to off-track students by increasing the effectiveness of existing options, as well as developing more pathways to graduation.

The Learning to Finish partnership worked closely with Duval Schools to support its new focus on struggling students. The former Alternative Education department was restructured into the Office of Multiple Pathways



### **Options for off-track students: Schools for the Future**

As part of the Learning to Finish learning, a need was identified to help students who were both significantly overage for their grade and significantly behind academically. Through a scan of national best practices, a model was identified that would serve high school-age students who were two years or more overage for their grade. In a unique partnership, Schools for the Future Academy (SFF), a Duval County public school, opened at The Bridge of Northeast Florida in Fall 2011 with funding support from local and national foundations. Blending remediation, acceleration, small class sizes and social/emotional supports and job skills, SFF students are showing more than a year’s worth of gains in reading, math and science.

and Support Services (MPSS) to ensure a greater focus on moving struggling students to graduation. Learning to Finish provided technical assistance to assist the district’s effort to reform the department. The partnership supported the leadership by providing learning opportunities, connecting them with national experts and engaging a consultant to work with the Office of Multiple Pathways to create its first strategic plan targeting students at risk of not graduating.

District leadership honed in on student segmentation, especially focusing on students who were

two years or more overage for their grade, a key indicator of risk. With the help of Learning to Finish, the district identified policy and program barriers that prevented the graduation rate from improving. Department leadership did an analysis of all programs. The department restructuring included new data analysis personnel to ensure that everyone was well informed about what was and was not working. Based on the data, Duval Schools made the decision to discontinue ineffective programs, increase the use of effective ones and introduce new pathways to graduation based on national best practices.



Through study and visits to other cities, there also emerged needed changes to policy that would ensure that all schools were doing what was best for students. For example, through a careful analysis of all of the reasons why students were leaving school before obtaining a diploma, it became clear that many were administratively withdrawn from school due to nonattendance, sometimes with very little intervention to re-engage the student on the part of the school or district.

The new policy stipulated that schools could not withdraw a student due to nonattendance without first making a home visit or having a conversation with the students' parent. Between the 2008-09 and 2009-10 school years, the number of students dropping out with all dropout codes was reduced by 46 percent. The Duval County School Board showed great leadership in making changes to policies and programs, many of which were long-standing.

While addressing policy barriers, Duval Schools worked with partners to improve and expand the menu of options for students who were significantly off track. Identifying school options was based on the differing needs of students — younger high school students versus older students,

*“This is not fast work. This is hard work. And it is not for the faint of heart.”*

**TERRI STAHLMAN**  
CHIEF TECHNOLOGY  
OFFICER, DUVAL COUNTY  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

and distance from graduation (just a few credits or a year behind versus two or more years off-track).

Today, Duval Schools has a formal process for evaluating academic programs and eliminating those that are ineffective. It continues to expand and enhance programs available to students at risk of not graduating based on their individual needs. For example, with the help of local private funders, the district has strengthened its STAR initiative to intervene earlier and more effectively with students at elementary and middle schools.

The MPSS department has created a culture of student advocacy, deploying more adults such as academic coaches, counselors and student advocates to help struggling students and meet their individual academic and social needs. These student advocates are crucial in ensuring that students are directed to the programs and services that can best help them get back on track.

### **Building philanthropic leadership and public will: The Quality Education for All initiative**

The Community Foundation's Quality Education for All (QEA) initiative began in 2005 with goals of promoting shared community learning about the challenges faced by Duval Schools, and building public will. The primary achievements of QEA have been the development of the Jacksonville Public Education Fund; the launch of Learning to Finish; increased community awareness; and more informed philanthropic involvement in public education reform.

Now QEA, in concert with THE PLAYERS, The Chartrand Foundation and David Stein, has begun an effort to assemble an unprecedented level of philanthropic investment in public schools to help more students graduate college and career ready, focusing primarily on effective teachers and principals, governance and policy reform, and re-imagined central administration.



## ACHIEVEMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Over the past five years, Duval County has made a giant leap forward in converting thousands of at-risk students from high school dropouts to high school graduates.

In 2010-2011, the National Governors Association — the standard currently used in Florida — graduation rate was 71.2 percent, representing an 11 percentage point increase from 2005-2006 and bringing Duval County closer to higher-performing urban districts in Florida.

The reduction of overage students — a key indicator of how many students are at risk of not graduating — was added to the district’s strategic plan. The number of students who are more than a year overage for their grade has been reduced significantly, from 7.4 percent in 2007 to 5.7 percent in 2012, representing an increase of 3,000 students back on track to graduation.

Significant resources for off-track students now exist, from district programs to special schools to mentoring and social supports. Youth-serving agencies and funders are more aligned and have benefited from a shared learning table, leading to agreement on a common goal and

strategies to get there.

Learning to Finish partners have learned key lessons from this collaborative, which was the first modern initiative that penetrated deeply into Duval Schools. First was the importance of having the leadership of key pivotal institutions ready and willing to work together for greater impact. The success of Learning to Finish was due in part to having the right CEOs and directors of the partner organizations. Second was the importance of

*“There’s no limit to what we can achieve when we work together with shared goals.”*

**TREY CSAR**  
PRESIDENT, JACKSONVILLE  
PUBLIC EDUCATION FUND

communicating the work of each partner and determining which efforts were collective and which were individual on the part of the organization. Third, the partnership came about at a



### Mobilizing the community: ONE by ONE

Through Learning to Finish, partners became aware that significant community engagement would be required for lasting change in public education. As an emerging role to facilitate understanding in the community about the issues, the Jacksonville Public Education Fund is currently rallying the community around the need to ensure more students graduate through a community mobilization effort called ONE by ONE. Sparking interest through an art exhibit featuring students who have faced barriers to graduation, ONE by ONE is wrapping up more than 160 small conversations about public education. Modeled after an initiative in Mobile, Alabama — which was identified by Learning to Finish — ONE by ONE will lead to a community agreement with clearly identified priorities for improving public schools in Duval County.

time of significant public funding shortfalls. Making change in an institution as large as Duval Schools — the 22nd largest district in the nation — is already difficult, and a challenging funding climate made it even more so.

The long-term commitment on the part of the Learning to Finish partners has been instrumental in these improvements. It takes three to five years for any strategy to show substantial results in public education, and a willingness to stay the course is one of the reasons why Learning to Finish has been so successful.

The work has set the stage for future collaboration and, more importantly, better outcomes for the children of Duval County. This work created an environment where everyone agreed on the goals, drawing the community and other organizations into alignment over time.

## SETTING THE STAGE FOR THE FUTURE

The partners in Learning to Finish set out on a mission to collaborate around improving the high school graduation rate in Duval County.

Today, though, the learning and strategies achieved through Learning to Finish have

done more than just raise the graduation rate. The work has also set the stage for the district and partner agencies to expand efforts for struggling students through collective and individual actions that go far beyond the original scope of work:

- Duval County Public Schools has continued to improve and expand its options for students who have been retained and are overage for their grade. Independently but informed by Learning to Finish, the district has undertaken new

and innovative projects to help struggling students, such as a redesign of the STAR program to serve as an early warning and response system for elementary school students and the opening of Schools for the Future Academy, a new school for significantly overage students.

- Education work in Jacksonville has attracted attention and hundreds of thousands of dollars in funding from major national foundations. The Jacksonville Children’s Commission received a grant from The Wallace

### LEAD PARTNERS

The Community Foundation in Jacksonville  
 Duval County Public Schools  
 Jacksonville Children’s Commission  
 Jacksonville Public Education Fund  
 United Way of Northeast Florida

### COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Boys & Girls Clubs of Northeast Florida  
 Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northeast Florida  
 The Bridge of Northeast Florida  
 City of Jacksonville  
 Communities In Schools of Jacksonville  
 Community Connections  
 Community Engagement Group  
 Duval County Public Schools District School Advisory Committee  
 Early Learning Coalition of Duval  
 Episcopal Children’s Services  
 Florida State College at Jacksonville

Florida Department of Children and Families  
 Florida Department of Juvenile Justice  
 Full Service Schools  
 Girl Scouts of Gateway Council  
 Hope Haven  
 JCCI  
 Jacksonville Public Library  
 Jacksonville Regional Chamber of Commerce  
 Jewish Family & Community Services  
 MaliVai Washington Kids Foundation  
 NAACP  
 PACE Center for Girls  
 Police Athletic League  
 Team Gaia  
 Wayman Community Development Corporation  
 Women’s Giving Alliance  
 WorkSource  
 YMCA of Florida’s First Coast

### NATIONAL ADVISORS

Jobs for the Future  
 Collaborative Communications  
 Youth Transitions Funders Group



*“National funders are looking to see how well community partners align to serve vulnerable youth. Jacksonville is attracting more attention because of its collaboration.”*

**JILL DAME**  
 INTERIM EXECUTIVE  
 DIRECTOR, JACKSONVILLE  
 CHILDREN’S COMMISSION

Foundation to improve the quality of out-of-school learning time that includes summer learning and after-school programs. Wallace has also invested in Duval Schools summer programs for struggling students.

- As The Community Foundation’s Quality Education for *All* initiative enters its seventh year, philanthropists involved in it have announced a bold next step in a proposed \$100 million Fund for Quality Education to fund systemic improvements in public education in Duval County, focused on human capital and governance.
- United Way expanded Achievers for Life with plans for an additional seven schools within three years. United Way’s Trustees are committed to raising an additional \$23 million over the next three years to expand Achievers For Life and Success By 6. It is working with the

district on a new data sharing system to ensure that community organizations can better support students. It is building on the Early Warning and Response System at Andrew Jackson High School to provide the school with comprehensive and aligned district and community intervention and to help turn the school around. United Way’s Empowering Effective Teachers initiative, funded by the Gates Foundation, released an advocacy plan for improving teaching quality in Duval County.

- The Jacksonville Public Education Fund has scaled up to a high-capacity local education fund. It conducts data and policy research and mobilizes the Jacksonville community to support better public schools. Through the ONE by ONE campaign, it has engaged more than 1,600 people in deep conversation about issues and solutions for public schools that will lead to priorities for education and a work plan

that is co-created by grassroots leaders, community members and agencies, and the school district.

- Many other youth-serving agencies have expanded their work to serve children at risk of dropping out and have aligned their work with the Learning to Finish framework.

## MOVING FORWARD

Today, lead partners are concluding this phase of their work in Learning to Finish. Armed with lessons learned from Learning to Finish, and newly aware of the powerful change that it can bring about, partners are now exploring the possibility of entering into an even deeper collaborative process called collective impact. Through substantial improvements to the graduation rate through Learning to Finish, it is clear that collaboration and alignment between the community, nonprofits and Duval County Public Schools have the power to move the needle for students.

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report was prepared by the Jacksonville Public Education Fund in collaboration with the lead partners of Learning to Finish: Duval County Public Schools, The Community Foundation in Jacksonville, United Way of Northeast Florida and the Jacksonville Children’s Commission. It may be found online at [www.jaxpef.org](http://www.jaxpef.org). This work is licensed under the Creative Commons License. Photos are courtesy of the MaliVai Washington Kids Foundation, Communities in Schools, Jacksonville Children’s Commission, Jacksonville Public Education Fund, The Community Foundation and United Way. To find out more, contact Pam Paul at (904) 356-7757 or [pam@jaxpef.org](mailto:pam@jaxpef.org).