Grantmakers for Education is philanthropy's knowledge source for improving achievement and opportunities for all students. Founded in 1995, we are a national association of over 200 philanthropies that builds knowledge and networks to improve the effectiveness of education philanthropy. www.edfunders.org

The Association of Small Foundations is a membership organization of nearly 3,000 foundations with few or no staff. ASF enhances the power of small foundation giving by providing donors, trustees and staff of member foundations with peer learning opportunities, targeted tools and resources, and a collective voice in and beyond the philanthropic community. www.smallfoundations.org

Social Venture Partners is a network of engaged donors that brings together nonprofits and philanthropists to learn from each other and build capacity for positive community impact. SVP welcomes partners from diverse backgrounds who want to pool financial contributions and skills to provide more resources to nonprofits and produce greater results. www.svpi.org and www.svpseattle.org

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RESOURCES

As part of our IMPROVING PUBLIC EDUCATION guide, Grantmakers for Education, the Association of Small Foundations and Social Venture Partners suggest the resources in this booklet as additional tools and information sources on public education and philanthropy.

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**EDUCATION WEBSITES TO EXPLORE**

These websites offer solid reviews of key issues in education and well-reasoned ideas about how to improve public schools. They are good places to start to go deeper in understanding issues, ideas and trends.

**Education Commission of the States:** [www.ecs.org](http://www.ecs.org), especially for its “Education Issues” area, which presents a variety of education issues in a format that provides quick facts, an overview of what each state is doing and links to the best publications on the topic.

**Education Sector:** [www.educationsector.org](http://www.educationsector.org), especially for provocative and insightful commentary on education issues (centrist to left-of-center point of view).

**Education Trust:** [www.edtrust.org](http://www.edtrust.org), especially for achievement data (including the “EdWatch” interactive state and national school database) and its prescriptions for closing achievement gaps in schools (see “Data Tools and Presentations” on the site and its “Thinking K-16” newsletters).

**Education Week newspaper:** [www.edweek.org](http://www.edweek.org), especially for its “Quality Counts” database and “Issues A to Z” section, which compiles brief background essays on education issues, including links to research citations.

**Thomas B. Fordham Foundation:** [www.edexcellence.net](http://www.edexcellence.net), especially for provocative and insightful commentary on education issues (centrist to right-of-center point of view).

**Grantmakers for Education:** [www.edfunders.org](http://www.edfunders.org).

**Just for the Kids:** [www.just4kids.org](http://www.just4kids.org), especially to learn about academic performance and best practices studies in most states.

**Kids Count:** [www.aecf.org/kidscount](http://www.aecf.org/kidscount) provides national and state-by-state data that annually tracks the status of children in the U.S.

Public Agenda: www.publicagenda.org, especially for its “Choicework” discussion guides, which offer a nonpartisan overview of different diagnoses and ideas for public education.

Public Education Network: www.publiceducation.org, especially for information and ideas on how to engage in school improvement as a member of the public.

School Matters: www.schoolmatters.com, especially for finding schools in your community that have greatest need for financial and volunteer support.


NATIONAL EDUCATION FUNDERS

These foundations’ websites offer excellent analysis and evaluation of education-related philanthropy. Specific areas of interest and investment are noted in parentheses.

Annie E. Casey Foundation: www.aecf.org (See “Publications” for school choice and new schools, English language learners, school readiness, community schools)

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation: www.gatesfoundation.org (Small schools, high schools, college access, school system reform)

Edna McConnell Clark Foundation: www.emcf.org (Youth development/youth outcomes, after-school programs, organizational capacity, evaluation)

Foundation for Child Development: www.ffcd.org (Early education, pre-kindergarten, early elementary school, children from immigrant families)

Goldman Sachs Foundation: www.goldmansachs.com/foundation (See “Knowledge Center” for developing high potential minority youth)

Lumina Foundation for Education: www.luminafoundation.org (College access)
What We Know About Access and Success in Postsecondary Education

The resources collected in this handbook are intended to suggest good starting places to learn more about making a difference in public education. While outside the scope of Improving Public Education, we know higher education also plays a key role in improving an individual’s quality of life and providing the nation long-term economic gains, better health and increased civic participation.

The Lumina Foundation for Education has published one of the best sources to learn more about the difficulties facing students in pursuing higher education – and what philanthropy might do about it. What We Know about Access and Success in Postsecondary Education synthesizes the research in four areas: preparation, awareness, financial issues and institutional responsibility.

www.luminafoundation.org/research/what_we_know/index.html
ISSUES IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

These articles and sites offer more information and analysis of specific education issues and strategies. Most of the publications can be downloaded at no cost.

At-Risk Schools and Students


Charter Schools and School Choice


The Heritage Foundation’s “Choices in Education” research page: www.heritage.org/research/education/schoolchoice/schoolchoice.cfm.


Community and Public Involvement


Early Education and Pre-kindergarten


Leadership


These and other reports on leadership and other topics in education are available at The Wallace Foundation “Knowledge Center”: www.wallacefoundation.org.

Public Policy

Center on Education Policy: www.cep-dc.org, especially its work on national policy and the federal No Child Left Behind act.


The Education Trust: www.edtrust.org. Search for “No Child Left Behind” under Reports and Publications.

Peterson, Paul E., Editor. (2003). Our Schools and Our Future... Are We Still at Risk? Hoover Institution Koret Task Force on K-12 Education. Available at www.ourschoolsandourfuture.org.

Rural Schools


School Financing


School-Level Improvement Strategies


Teacher Quality


Urban Schools and School Districts

Center on Reinventing Public Education: www.crpe.org.


Cutting Through the Hype: A Taxpayer’s Guide to School Reforms

In this new book, researchers Jane David and Larry Cuban ask: What does it take to make school reforms actually work?

They examine the strategies and data driving 20 reform ideas – including school choice models, teacher pay-for-performance initiatives and converting large high schools into multiple smaller campuses – and point out the complexities and trade-offs that are a reality of any reform strategy. They urge, in particular, new reform leaders to consider the valuable lessons that can be gleaned from prior reform efforts.

“Each year, more and more well-intentioned reforms promise to make our schools better,” they reflect. “Meanwhile, researchers and educators have learned many important lessons from decades of ineffective reforms and their unintended side effects. Classroom teachers in particular have accumulated wisdom from trying to implement reforms designed by others. But those who propose reforms virtually never incorporate these important lessons into their mandates for improving schools.” This book is David and Cuban’s attempt to bridge that gap – and to do so with clear, common sense explanations.


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FINDING LOCAL RESOURCES

These organizations can connect you to regional and local resources to help you get started making change in your community or state.

Afterschool Alliance. Find information on youth and afterschool programs in your state at www.afterschoolalliance.org/states/states_main.cfm. Includes data, news, local contacts and resource links.


Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers. Regional Associations of Grantmakers are membership organizations that provide resources and networking opportunities for local foundations and donors. See map for locating your closest regional association at: www.givingforum.org/ralocator.html.

Public Education Network. Public Education Network is a national network of local education funds – nonprofit organizations that work with their local school systems to improve accountability and achievement, engage community stakeholders and generate new resources. Learn more about local education funds at www.publiceducation.org/lefs.asp. Find a local fund in your community at www.publiceducation.org/lefsearch.asp.

U.S. Charter Schools. This site offers information about charter school efforts and updates in each state, including support and advocacy organizations, at www.uscharterschools.org/pub/uscs_docs/sp/index.htm.

STRATEGIC PHILANTHROPY AND EVALUATION


**Grantcraft**: www.grantcraft.org. See in particular its series of workbooks on evaluation, including *Making Measures Work for You* and *Mapping Change*.


**Grantmakers for Effective Organizations**: www.geofunders.org.


**Innovation Network**: www.innonet.org.


**Theory of Change:** [www.theoryofchange.org](http://www.theoryofchange.org).

**Social Venture Partners International:** [www.svpi.org/Resources](http://www.svpi.org/Resources).


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