



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PUBLIC EDUCATION FOUNDATION 20TH ANNIVERSARY AND MAJOR CAMPAIGN ANNOUNCEMENT

(Charlottesville, VA) The Public Education Foundation of Charlottesville-Albemarle announced today its 20th anniversary campaign to fund innovation in our public schools, announced Penny Harrison, Executive Director. "The campaign goal is to help fund 35 schools in our two districts with at least one program each, even more, if possible," Ms. Harrison said, "We are calling on the business community to invest in innovation by investing in our students."

Harrison emphasized the urgency of the situation, stating that reading and math scores across the country have significantly declined following the pandemic, impacting our region. After the pandemic, truancy/absenteeism rates have soared—doubling since the start of the pandemic. In Charlottesville, 8.2% of students in CCS (Charlottesville City Public Schools) are described as "chronically absent," and the rates are even higher among students of color. This is a critical time for our students. We need businesses to participate and support schools to turn this situation around.

"I want us to excite and engage students with innovative learning experiences in ways that surpass the standard curricula. Field trips allow students to interact with other students, learn in a natural environment, and have first-hand experiences from primary resources, rather than from texts or video, real objects rather than photos," said Ms. Harrison.

The most recent grants funded by PEFCA have been a resounding success, positively impacting more than 5,000 students, 68-plus teachers, 10,000 parents, and the community through teacher innovation grants. PEFCA funded 18 projects in the last cycle that spanned classroom projects such as STEM, Art Fusion and Science, Checkbook Management, From the Mountains to the Sea (a tour for aspiring marine biologists to VIMS), Force & Motion Fair, Unlocking Learning & Well-being through Nature, Learning Through Listening, ST Math, social and emotional learning, and more (see our website for a complete list). These projects have not only enriched the learning experience but also fostered a sense of community and engagement.

The research is clear that investing in public schools improves student outcomes, graduation rates, and postsecondary enrollment. PEFCA can fund dozens of camps, special school events, and teacher innovation projects through community involvement and support. **Community support is an educator's most potent tool for helping students.**

PUBLIC EDUCATION FOUNDATION OF CHARLOTTESVILLE – ALBEMARLE

P.O. Box 175, Charlottesville, VA 22902

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We need corporate partners to realize our goal because we expect to have more teacher applicants than funds. If you or your company are interested in sponsoring a Teacher Innovative Grant or another project this year, please contact Penny Harrison or visit our website, click on "Become a Partner" to download our campaign materials. Your support is invaluable and will make a significant difference in the lives of our students.

*The Public Education Foundation of Charlottesville-Albemarle (PEFCA) has played a vital role in meeting the educational needs of Albemarle and Charlottesville's children since 2004. Through community involvement and support, PEFCA strives to ensure that **every child** in our two public school districts has access to educational experiences that prepare them for success, that **every teacher** has the resources to educate effectively, and that **every administrator** can provide exemplary support and leadership.*

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