

POLICY IMPACT GROUP: *Affecting Systemic Change*

Impact Groups: Engaging Deeply, Acting Purposefully

Grantmakers for Education (GFE) impact groups leverage the network of education philanthropists within GFE to bring people together for meaningful dialog and action on the most critical challenges in public education today and into the future.

The Policy Impact Group provides unique opportunities for grantmakers to increase cooperation among foundations and to become more prepared and proactive around policy issues.

The mission of the Policy Impact Group is to expand funders' engagement with policy and advance their understanding of how to best inform and leverage policy in order to improve educational outcomes and increase opportunities for all learners.



How does education policy impact education outcomes?

Policy is important for systemic change. Achieving deep, broad changes in teaching and learning requires a systemic approach, using several strategies to move the system in an integrated way. Policy can play a key role – to incentivize action, provide resources, remove barriers, promote scale and more.

This is a critical moment of opportunity in education. We are at a potential inflection point in education reform in early learning, K-12, and higher education. This includes big shifts in systems, reform frames and more. In particular, the Every Student Succeeds Act sets the goals of college and career readiness and equity, and devolves authority to states and districts; these changes serve as drivers to define the next generation of reform.

Why does education policy matter to philanthropy?

Foundations play a unique role. Foundations have a key opportunity (within the law and healthy political capital) to inform and leverage policy. This includes informing federal law through nonbiased research, regulations and guidance, jointly funded programs, etc. This also includes building state and local capacity and supporting advocacy and stakeholder engagement for innovation, implementation and continuous improvement.

How can the Policy Impact Group empower and support philanthropy?

The GFE Policy Impact Group can strengthen philanthropic work. The Policy Impact Group strives to support the larger field of education philanthropy through activities that support GFE members in understanding, informing and leveraging policy as part of their systemic strategy.

Possible activities include:

- A toolkit for regional and local funders on what investments look like in the policy arena.
- Webinars on topics such as legal training around policy for board and staff, local, state and federal policy, higher education accreditation, early childhood education, and workforce development.
- A publication on transition points or forcing events.
- Other activities such as regional convenings, foundation strategy development and more.

The Policy Impact Group commits to the following impact measures:

- Increase the number of foundations that understand the role of policy in advancing the mission, goals and work of education philanthropy.
- Increase the number of foundations that leverage policy to improve educational outcomes for all learners.
- Increase the number of foundations that are able to identify forcing events and opportunities.
- Increase the number of foundations that invest in public-private partnerships.

Join Us to Increase Your Grantmaking Impact

We welcome your participation. Joining the Policy Impact Group will give you access to resources and a committed group of practitioners that can help you:

- Be prepared to take on public policy issues in education.
- Target high impact strategic opportunities and core areas of influence.
- Educate and mobilize partners to shape public policy.

All GFE members are invited to join the Policy Impact Group with a minimum contribution of \$500 in 2016. Additional financial support is encouraged to help fulfill our impact measures. Visit www.edfunders.org/policy to join. For more information, contact Janella Franklin, Director of Impact Groups, at jfranklin@edfunders.org.