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DETROIT'S EDUCATION ECOSYSTEM

Enabling Justice by Reimagining Power
& Equitable Collaboration

Adrienne Ayers, Cornetta Lane Smith, Kenita Harris, Danielle Wilson

Detroit's Education Ecosystem

*Enabling Justice by Reimagining Power Dynamics
& Equitable Collaboration*

University of Detroit Mercy
Master of Community Development
Capstone Project 2019

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Source: Wally Aldeen Alhomaidi, 482Forward

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On behalf of the Capstone Team

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INTRODUCTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What does a healthy education ecosystem look like for Detroit?

What conditions are needed to shift power so those most impacted--Detroit's students, parents, and teachers--can co-create a healthier one where they can thrive?

Detroit's educational needs are great. Students, parents, and teachers depend on educational, as well as government officials at local, state, and national levels, to enact changes that create healthy conditions for quality education. However, these same groups have been adversely affected by disabling historical constraints like institutional racism, legal decisions that have disrupted school integration, episodes of white flight that destabilized many areas of the city, state oversight and ensuing unilateral control that forced even more neighborhood schools to close.

These and a chronic lack of long-term creative thinking and strategic planning all point to systems-level challenges that continue to plague Detroit's education landscape into 2020. While philanthropic organizations have stepped in to provide shorter-term solutions, reliance on philanthropy may have unintended consequences (e.g. shifting power away from students, families and teachers), and certainly cannot remedy the full range of issues facing all stakeholders. Questions about how all of the above influence policy and politics are ever present. These trends are systemic and structural in size and scale; therefore their impact extends beyond the public school system. Despite this, the Detroit community can lean on its strong legacy of coalition-building as a strategy to fortify collective power and voice.

This project explores/envision a Detroit education ecosystem--a complex, interconnected system made up of people, physical assets, organizations, industries, all work together to position students, teachers and families--as the primary drivers and influencers of Detroit's education agenda.

Central to the concept of an education ecosystem as a tool for local education reform is the principle and practice of honoring subjugated knowledge. A healthy education ecosystem cannot exist without centering those most impacted by the system, at the forefront of its creation, thereby securing its sustainability. This requires not only the acknowledgement of adversely-impacted groups, but 1) listening to and learning from their lived experiences, and (2) their active participation in shaping the future of education in Detroit. This Capstone aims to use the lens of public education to: (1) examine what a healthy or unhealthy education ecosystem looks like; (2) understand power dynamics within Detroit's current ecosystem, and whether power imbalances within the ecosystem contribute to unhealthiness (3) reimagine the education ecosystem by creating a common language and forging equitable community ties; and, (4) recommend steps to begin the work of building a healthy education ecosystem in Detroit.

CAPSTONE PROJECT & GOALS

The Capstone team developed an issue-based project that addresses a social justice topic germane to Detroit's current socio-political landscape. Through our initial research and due to feedback from the Capstone team's advisory committee, the group developed the central research question: What does a healthy education ecosystem look like for Detroit? From the team's various methods of research we have concluded that there are five primary groups who are most adversely impacted by decisions that influence the ethos of education within Detroit: students, parents, teachers, administrators and paraprofessionals (instructional assistants, counselors, health professionals, transportation aides, school culture facilitators and family case technicians).

Within the context of community meetings or personal interviews with ecosystem stakeholders, members of adversely-impacted groups consistently voiced their need for deep levels of change within the education system. Moreover, many of their concerns are directed at leadership that is nearest to them: the local school board. Parents are concerned about the lack of before- and after-school care programs; paraprofessionals are earning hourly wages as low as \$9.25/hr; there is a paradox between feeling schools are unsafe and also that students of color are disproportionately penalized by law enforcement; teachers are reporting physical abuse from students as young as kindergarten; and, many other challenges that remain unnamed (DPSCD School Board Meeting).

The Capstone group agreed that exploration of our central question is a worthwhile academic exercise because we contend that (1) education is a human right, and everyone should have access regardless of residence, socio-economic status, racial-ethnic identity, or any factor related to one's human or social identification; (2) education is foundational to developing independent and civically minded people; (3) the team found strong evidence of a failing public education ecosystem; (4) and finally, an investment in a student is an investment in Detroit's collective present and future.

To conduct an initial assessment of the state of the education ecosystem, the research team relied on data that addresses social determinants of human health and well-being and their relationship to Detroit students. The team has engaged in the following research methods and tools to obtain relevant data: web research, attendance of community events related to aspects of the ecosystem, personal interviews with ecosystem stakeholders, focus groups, and an online community survey. Below is a brief description of how the above research tactics relate to major elements of the Capstone research framework:

- Historical survey that offers an understanding of historic conditions related to the topic
- Asset mapping (including production of an asset inventory, a physical map of the education ecosystem, and power mapping to conduct a power analysis)
- Grounding research in formal or informal case studies related to the education ecosystem, and
- A needs assessment (identifying gaps, creating a SWOT analysis through an integrative lens of the HOPE model—human, organizational, physical and economic development).

During Capstone I, the team explored the state of Detroit education, with a specific focus on K-12 schools within the newly established Detroit Public Schools Community Schools District (DPSCD). Foundational to this work was a historical survey of education policy (federal, state and local) and its direct, indirect, intentional as well as unintentional impacts on the quality of Detroit’s public education. The MCD H.O.P.E. model (human, organizational, physical and economic development) grounded our research in a holistic approach to exploring this topic. The team aimed to understand historical patterns and themes and how they influenced DPSCD’s current state. There were four critical trends the team identified as having significant impact on Detroit’s educational and political history:

CRITICAL TRENDS

- 1 Institutional racism
- 2 Chronic episodes of state oversight and unilateral control
- 3 Short-term or experimental solutions to education challenges reflected in philanthropy, policy, and politics
- 4 Coalition-building as a response to poor quality of education and lack of local control

The challenges present in Detroit's education ecosystem are daunting, and yet, there are glimpses of hope modelled by grassroots community action. Meaningful change within the ecosystem requires honoring the subjugated knowledge and everyday experiences of adversely impacted groups and their active participation in shaping the common preferred future of education in Detroit. For this reason, the Capstone team explored whether imbalances of power between groups in the ecosystem points to its unhealthiness. With this shift in the Capstone project, the central question is reframed in this way: *What conditions are needed to shift power so those most impacted--Detroit's students, parents, and teachers--can co-create a healthier one where they can thrive?* **A healthy education ecosystem cannot exist without those most impacted by the system acting at the forefront of its creation and securing its sustainability.**

Describing power and its relation to power dynamics is crucial to the identification of qualifiers and non-qualifiers of a healthy education ecosystem. Iris Marion Young's *enabling concept of justice* offers a foundation for understanding the faces of power and their institutional dynamics within complex systems such as Detroit's education ecosystem. An enabling concept of justice not only acknowledges distributive justice but further promotes justice as "the institutional conditions necessary for the development and exercise of individual capacities and collective communication and cooperation" (39). Young further identifies disabling constraints that prevent justice from existing--oppression and forms of social and cultural domination. The Capstone team listened widely and deeply across Detroit's education ecosystem so that, in partnership with those adversely impacted, it may offer an effective way to address power imbalance within the ecosystem. Further, by addressing these power imbalances through justice-centered language and power analysis tools, we might create pathways toward coalition-building.

In order to answer our main research question the **goals of this Capstone project** are to:

1. **Examine** what a healthy or unhealthy education ecosystem looks like.
2. **Understand** power dynamics and whether power imbalances within the ecosystem contributes to its unhealthiness.
3. **Reimagine** the education ecosystem through creation of common language and sourcing community ties.
4. **Make recommendations** on how to begin the work of building a healthy education ecosystem.



Source: Annie E. Casey Foundation

ACADEMIC FRAMEWORK

Program Summary

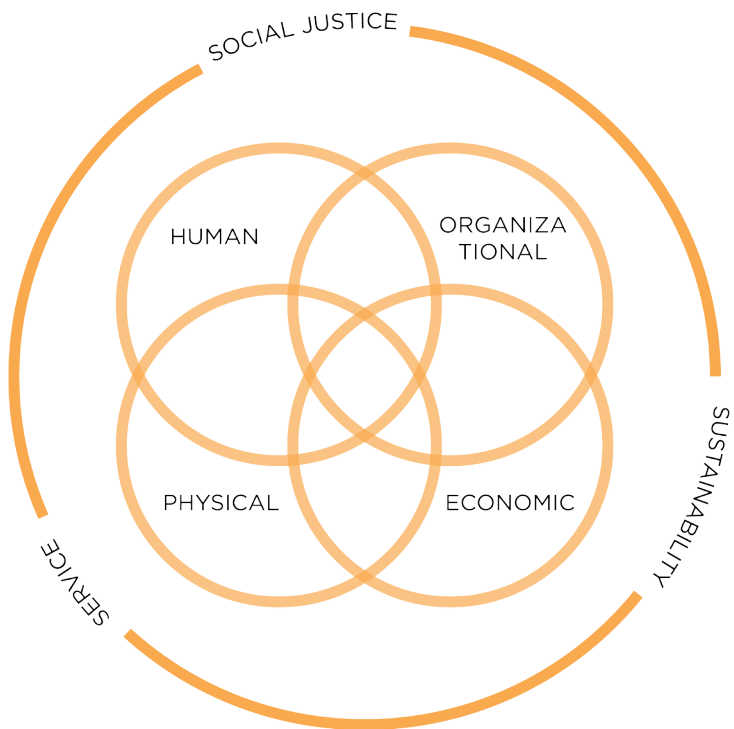
The research team for this Capstone project are University of Detroit Mercy students in the Master's of Community Development (MCD) Program. The MCD program provides a framework for how to build communities through human, organizational, physical, and economic (H.O.P.E.) lenses. Human development examines the relationship between people and their social and physical environment. Organizational development considers how healthy organizations, leaders and community groups work in partnership to create community change. Physical development focuses on the infrastructural and environmental elements that help create a sense of place and identity in the community. Finally, economic development explores how access to and distribution of capital and resources impacts community development.

HUMAN | examines the relationship between people and their social and physical environment

ORGANIZATIONAL | considers how organizations work in partnership with governmental agencies to create community

PHYSICAL | focuses on the physical elements that help create a sense of place and identity in the community

ECONOMIC | emphasizes the complex role of economics in community development



The program is rooted in the values of social justice, service, and sustainability. Social Justice is defined here as the ability to create communities whose institutions enable the full development and participation of each human being in society and civic life. Service recognizes the reciprocal nature of needs and creates equity in exchange, where both participants bring value and expertise to the interaction. In addition, true service takes time to understand the complex histories and structural influences that have led to the stark inequalities we see in our communities today. Sustainability is about living in harmony with earth's capacities as individuals in community and thinking about, not only our immediate needs, but the needs of generations to come (Albrecht). The final step of the Master of Community (MCD) program is the two-semester Capstone project. The MCD Capstone is the culmination of the MCD curriculum and an opportunity for students to apply lessons from their coursework to a real-world community development project.

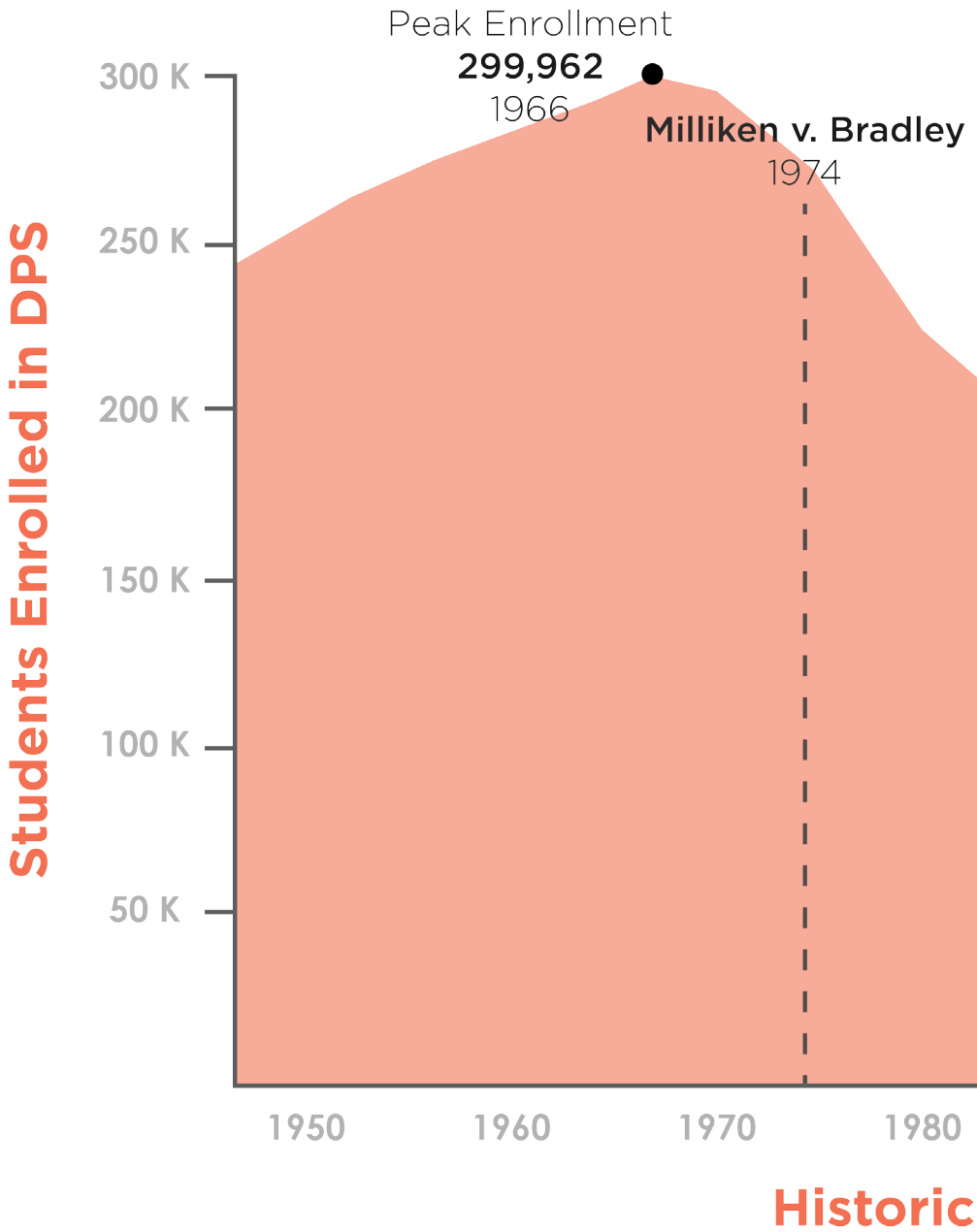
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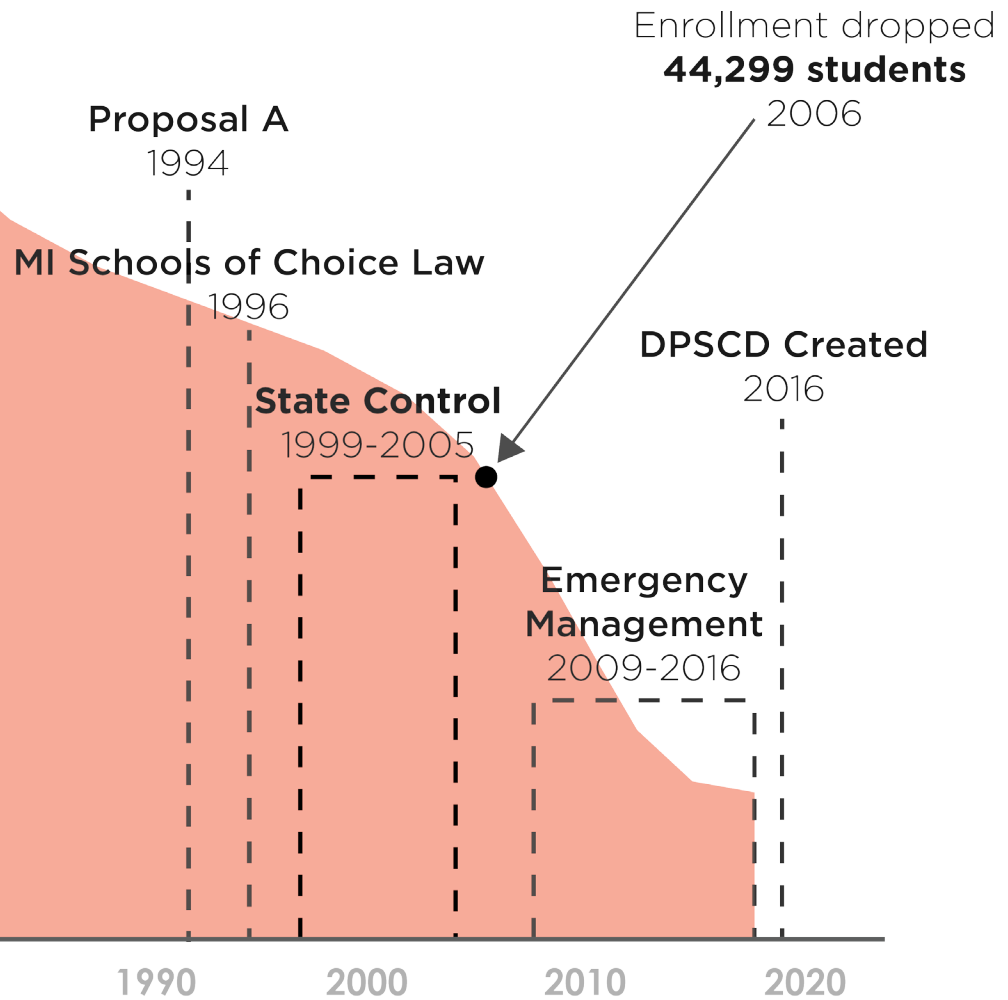
HISTORIC CONDITIONS

It is important to understand Detroit's education history and the social, political and cultural context that gave rise to Detroit's current education ecosystem. The Capstone team identified historical themes and patterns in connection to recent social, political and cultural concerns that intersect with the life of the ecosystem.

First, the timeline (Figure 1) highlights historic milestones in both education policy and student enrollment in public education. Second, overall demographics in Detroit and education statistics humanize the reality of social determinants and their impact on the well-being of Detroit students. Third, we will examine case studies that provide local and national examples of community members and ecosystem stakeholders addressing challenges they see in their respective education systems. Lastly, the Capstone team's community partner, Urban Neighborhood Initiatives (UNI), grounds this education topic in a special way. Through the organization's grassroots, bottom-up approach to community development, UNI demonstrates the importance of the education ecosystem and how stakeholders in Springwells work in partnership with adversely impacted groups to address systemic level issues that plague their schools and overall community.

EDUCATION IN DETROIT





Milestones

Figure 1: Timeline from 1950-2020 highlighting DPS enrollment and key historical moments

DETROIT SCHOOLS

Early Education

After colonization of the region, the first education law that passed in then Michigan Territory was in 1827, which required all communities with more than 50 residents to have a school. However, without set quality standards or oversight, these early “common” or “free” schools were run by a variety of individuals and religious organizations who determined curriculum (Loveland Technologies). Multiple grades may be packed into single room schoolhouses or churches that often doubled as school.

Formalization and Growth

The first Detroit Board of Education as established in 1842 by the State of Michigan to manage the city’s publicly funded schools. Early on and for much of the next century, physically accommodating Detroit’s student body was a challenge for the new district. Schools could not be built fast enough for the rapidly growing city and student body, and, in those early decades, it was not uncommon for students to be turned away due to the lack of space.



Figure 2: Detroit students in an overflow “classroom” in a local church
Source: Detroit Public Library Burton Historical Collection

88 schools were built for a student population that ballooned from roughly 2,000 to 39,000 students between 1842 and 1900 (Loveland Technologies).

The introduction of the automobile and the industrial boom that followed forever changed the landscape of the city. As workers and their families followed the economic promise, the already-burdened school district felt the weight of these new children. Between 1910 and 1930, another 180 schools were built and 42 schools annexed from surrounding communities (Loveland Technologies).

Peak and Early Decline

Following trends of the broader population of Detroit, which peaked in 1950 with 1.85 M people, Detroit public schools saw their apex in 1966 with nearly 300,000 students enrolled (Loveland Technologies). However, as factories and jobs moved outside of the city and into surrounding suburbs, families followed suit. As new schools were constructed or rehabilitated, the student body, and in particular white students, left the city and its district, taking with them their tax dollars. This white flight was propelled by community changes coming out of the Civil Rights era, including court-mandated busing programs aimed at desegregating Detroit's neighborhood schools.

The first significant wave of school closings came in 1976, with 14 schools, followed by another 15 in 1982, as part of a district reorganization (Loveland Technologies). While population loss and aging infrastructure contributed to these school closings, a series of public scandals and reports of misappropriations by school board members began to erode community trust in the public school system. The teachers union responded to the tightened financial situation, which was reflected in teacher pay among the lowest in the state, with a series of six strikes between 1967 and 1992 (Loveland Technologies).

Introduction of Charter Schools

The tumult of the previous two decades left education leaders and politicians eager to forge a new path forward for Detroit Public Schools and Michigan education, more broadly. Public School Academies, also known as privately run, but publicly funded charter schools, were authorized by the State of Michigan in 1994. These schools were created to compete with public schools, with the hope of providing better educational outcomes and more choices for families. However, they had the effect of further draining the public school system of students and per pupil funding (Morehouse). The growth of charters proved a roughly inverse effect on public school enrollment with the number of students enrolled in charter schools surpassing those in public schools in 2013 (Loveland Technologies).

State Control and Emergency Management

Though the first emergency manager of Detroit Public School District was not appointed until 2009, the State of Michigan effectively controlled the District between 1999 and 2005. In this first era of undemocratic control, the DPS school board was replaced by an individual appointed by the Mayor. This strategy, which has been used in several Michigan cities and school districts facing severe economic recession and financial trouble, is intended to stabilize these districts and make them financially soluble. However, in the case of Detroit Public Schools, the budget deficit actually increased during these periods of time, growing from in spite of waves of school closures and financial austerity measures.

Creation of DPSCD

In 2016, Gov. Rick Snyder signed a bill authorizing the division of Detroit Public Schools into two entities. The restructuring plan maintained Detroit Public Schools as a revenue-collecting entity that will pay down the district's debts by 2025. The second district, Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD) initially started with \$617 million in state funding. Finances remain to be reviewed by a state-appointed commission, though this point has been hotly contested by Detroit's Mayor and elected officials (Cwiek). Although it faces financial challenges it has been able to maintain a balanced budget over the last 3 years (DPSCD Finance Committee Meeting). Today, DPSCD has 101 schools and serves 50,000 students (Vaughn).

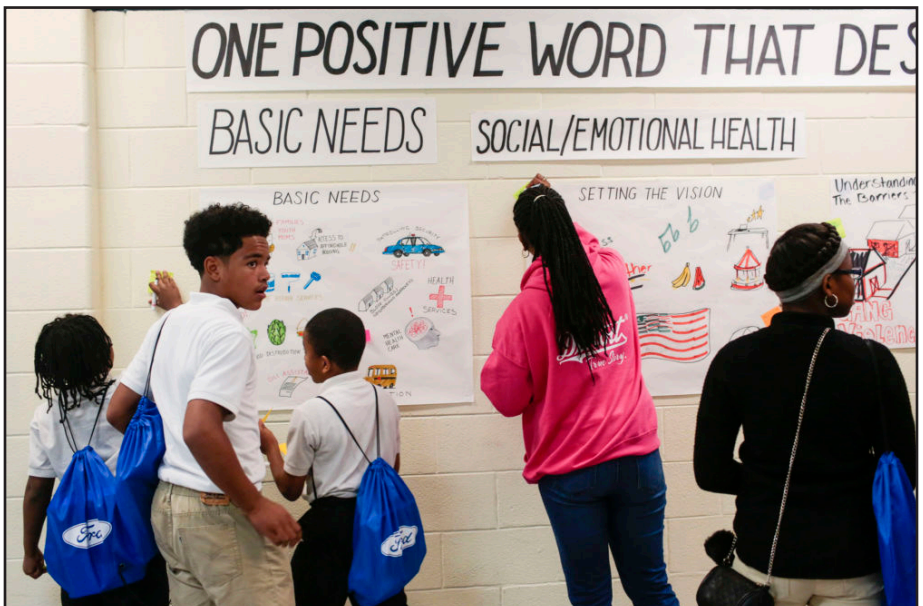


Figure 3: Students at Fisher Magnet Upper Academy (2017)
Source: Detroit Free Press

DEMOGRAPHICS

Examining key demographics and education statistics humanizes the reality of social determinants and their impact on the well-being of an average Detroit public school student. Social determinants of health are the conditions in which people are born, work, grow, live, work and age. They include factors such as socioeconomic status, educational opportunity, neighborhood and physical environment, employment, as well as access to quality social support services and health care. The research team provides demographics and education statistics for Detroit and the region (Detroit, Warren, Dearborn).

The side-by-side comparison gave the team a clearer sense of the everyday life challenges that impact a Detroit student's well-being. Quality of life impacts the ability to achieve educational success. This is why the education ecosystem must be centered on the whole being of Detroit schoolchildren and exists in service to creating better conditions for success in life.

	Detroit	Region (Det. Warren, Dearborn)
Race	79% Black, 11% White, 8% Hispanic	22% Black, 66% White, 5% Hispanic
Median Income	\$30,344	\$58,411
Poverty Rate	34.5%	14.6%
Unemployment Rate	19.8%	4.5%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	15.5%	31.8%

Figure 4: Key demographics in Detroit and the region
Source: U.S. Census Bureau - 2017 American Community Survey

State of the Detroit Child

2018 State of the Detroit Child - Data Driven Detroit + Skillman Foundation

Population under 18: **171,070**

10%

Children with elevated
blood lead level
Michigan = 5.6%

54%

Children living
below poverty line
Michigan = 21%

41%

Households with
food/SNAP assistance in
the past 12 months
Michigan = 15%

88%

Students eligible for free
or reduced lunch
Michigan = 50%

Figure 5: Key statistics about Detroit youth (under 18)
Source: Data Driven Detroit - 2018 State of the Detroit Child

According to the 2017 American Community Survey:

- In comparison to a majority 66% white population in the region, Detroit has a higher population of people of color. Detroit's residents are 76% Black and 8% Hispanic.
- The regional median income is nearly twice as high than Detroit's.
- Detroit's poverty rate is more than twice the poverty rate in the region.
- The regional unemployment rate is 4.5%. In comparison, Detroit's unemployment rate is nearly four times higher than the regional rate.
- In the region, 31% of the population have earned a Bachelor's degree or higher while Detroit's population comes in at nearly half (15.9%).

The above demographics point to an all too familiar reality in urban communities: the likelihood that people of color have lower median incomes and educational attainment and higher poverty and unemployment rates when compared to their white counterparts across the region.

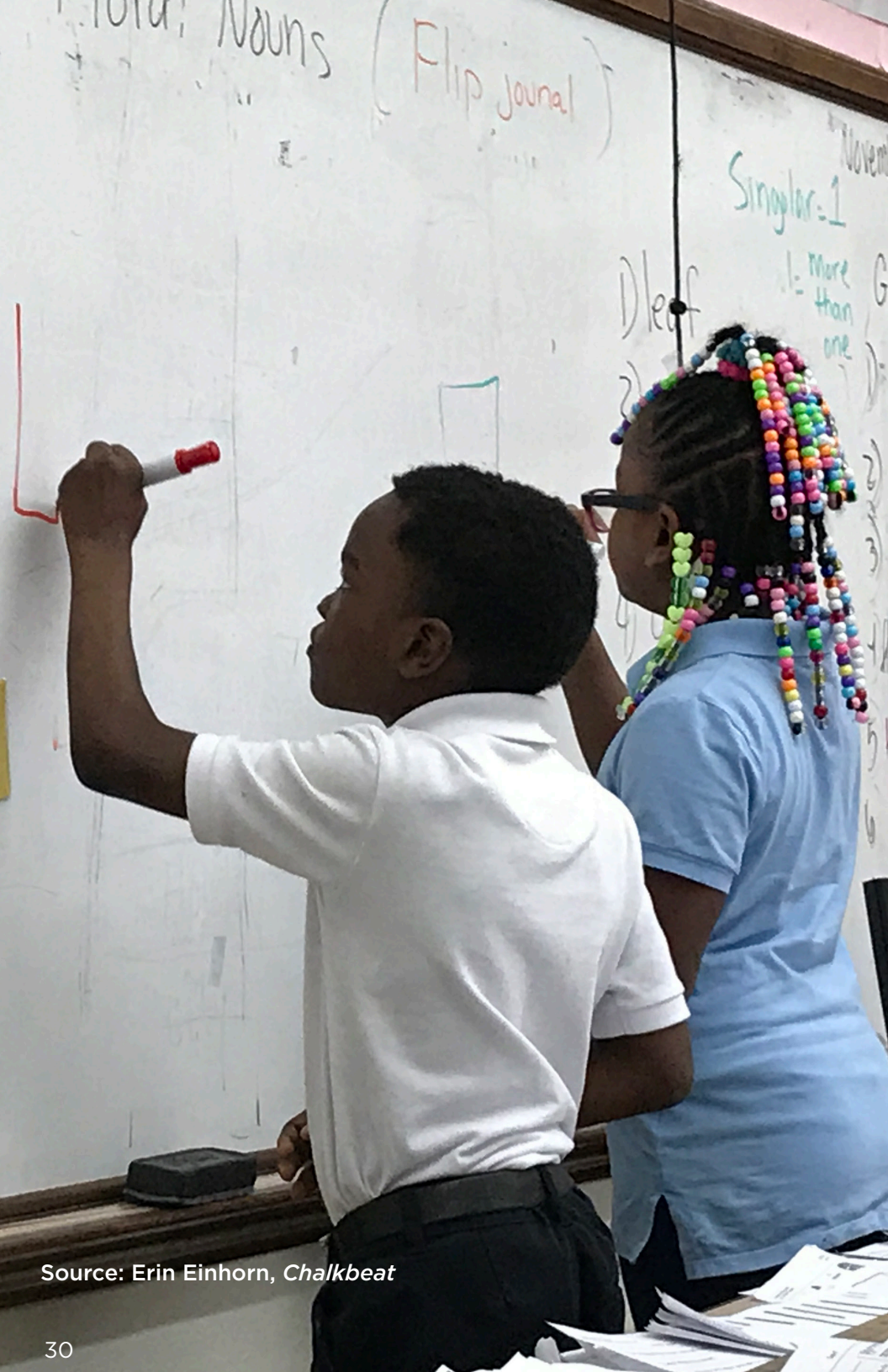
Figure 5 points to social determinants of health that impact the well-being of Detroit children. As of 2018, the number of Detroit children under the age of eighteen is 171,070. An extremely high number of these children are living in poverty (92,377), live in households that received food/ SNAP assistance within the past year (70,138) and qualify for the free or reduced lunch programs (150,541).

When it comes to education outcomes, Figure 6 shows that in Detroit graduation rates are in the 70th percentile and the dropout rate in Detroit is just less than 10%. More concerning, Detroit's youth reflect low percentages of students are considered "college ready." Only 15% of students in Detroit met state expectations for Third Grade (ELA) Proficiency. There is also the challenge of chronic absenteeism throughout the Detroit Public School Community District. Chronic absenteeism in the district was as at 26% in 2017. In 2018, Michigan had the "nation's sixth-worst rate of chronic absenteeism: Fifteen percent of Michigan students miss[ed] 1 in 10 school days. The state's policymakers have responded by tying consequences for schools to their attendance rates (Levin)." Researchers at Poverty Solutions, a project at the University of Michigan focused on student homelessness, found that housing instability is by far the largest predictor of chronic absenteeism (Levin).

	Detroit
Graduation Rate	78.3%
Dropout Rate	> 10%
College Ready	12.3% (SAT Score)
Third Grade (ELA) Proficiency	15% (Met Expectations)
Chronic Absenteeism	26%

Figure 6: Key education statistics in Detroit
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau - 2017 American Community Survey

Overall demographics and education statistics prove that many challenges exist for Detroit school children. High rates of poverty and hunger exists alongside low college readiness and third grade level reading proficiency. Also, the demographics and education statistics discussed in this section overwhelmingly prove that economic and social challenges within Detroit particularly negatively impact Black & Hispanic children. Children of color are facing challenges at home and school. The adverse effects of social determinants truly have an impact on the well-being of a child which, in turn, impacts their educational success. This fact alone could very well serve as an indicator that an unhealthy education ecosystem exists today.



Source: Erin Einhorn, *Chalkbeat*

CASE STUDIES

Case studies inform the research topic by providing insights into aspects of the education ecosystem, both in Detroit and other communities. The ones chosen for this project comprise of educational systems and organizations that may be reflective of unhealthy components of an education ecosystem or uplift successful models for equitable education. The team investigated the topic of education through multiple frames of reference, drawing comparisons and informing the development of the project proposal and potential solutions. A case study is an opportunity to assess a parallel community response, inside or outside the Detroit context, to the team's line of research inquiry, namely, how other communities have attempted to design a healthier education ecosystem. This method of parallel research comes with the disclaimer that each lesson must be understood as highly influenced by its particular social, economic and physical community context; however, overarching ideas and insights can still be reached. Also, through the use of case studies the Capstone team took note of how interactions within the ecosystem can be understood in relation to power and power dynamics and whether the impact of those interactions are indicators of its healthiness/unhealthiness.

In order to frame the research and analysis of these case studies, the Capstone group proposed three essential questions:

- 1. What is the context of the case study?** Who was part of the process? What roles do they fulfill?
- 2. How does this case study address aspects of an unhealthy education ecosystem?**
- 3. What does this case study propose for a healthier education ecosystem?** If possible, identify tactics and strategies used to cultivate a healthier ecosystem.

The Capstone group selected the following six case studies to inform an exploration of quality education in Detroit. One of the major concerns of the Capstone project is understanding grassroots, bottom-up approaches to reforming education. The Capstone team found it helpful to group the case studies under classifications that reflect various approaches to address enabling concepts of justice or disabling constraints that hinder students in their educational attainment. Those three classifications are:

Coalition-building case studies demonstrate how cross-sector collaborations were formed in response to major educational challenges within Detroit's education ecosystem.

Neighborhood as Campus case studies demonstrate place-based education opportunities that nurture matriculation through education within an environment inspired by its surrounding neighborhood or community context.

Community-driven case studies lean into experiences that were created out of a grassroots, bottom-up approach to education. Uniquely, community-driven case studies also reflect specific communities addressing their particular educational needs through cultural and value-based learning.

The case studies are as follows:

Coalition-building

- *Excellent Schools Detroit*: A former coalition-turned-nonprofit, education advocacy group that aimed to transform underperforming Detroit schools—public, private and charter—as well as suburban charter and private schools servicing Detroit children.
- *The Coalition for the Future of Detroit Schoolchildren (CFDS)*: A recently established education coalition with ties to the Skillman Foundation. CFDS has provided two proposals for Detroit’s education reform: *The Choice is Ours* (2015)—addressed to the state and *Our Schools Our Time* (2017)—addressed to Detroiters.

Community as Campus

- *Humboldt Park Community as a Campus (CAAC)*: A unique cradle-to-career pipeline pilot project in Chicago’s Humboldt Park community, designed by a neighborhood Community Action Council.
- *P-20 Marygrove Early Childhood Initiative + High School*: A new Detroit initiative that comprises of a cross-sector collaboration. The model is the first place-based public school development in Detroit. The curriculum takes shape around neighborhood challenges that were identified by residents, business owners, and other non-profits.

Community-driven

- *Nsoroma Institute*: A former K-8 African-centered charter school in Detroit that described itself as being “an academically rigorous program, with caring staff and a strong cultural foundation.” (Nsoroma)
- *The James and Grace Lee Boggs School*: A local charter school that offers place-based education for K-7th grade on Detroit’s east side. The mission of the Boggs School is to nurture creative, critical thinkers who contribute to the well-being of their communities.

Coalition Building

Part of understanding what makes for a healthy education ecosystem requires identifying the kinds of individuals and groups that contribute to the ecology of the system itself. In the early phases of research, the Capstone team identified education advocacy groups that play a major role in Detroit's current education ecosystem. It was important for the Capstone team to identify a case study representative of the sector often referred to as education advocacy groups. These groups have frequently borne the task of fighting for quality education. Through education organizing, advocacy groups create cultures of accountability between students, parents and school districts. Although Excellent Schools Detroit no longer exists in its original structure, a brief examination of its previous role within Detroit's education ecosystem can provide insight to how these groups function as advocates and how they relate to today's ecosystem.

Excellent Schools Detroit

What is the context of the case study?

Under Skillman's former CEO, Carol Goss, the foundation was a charter group as well as primary philanthropic driver of Excellent Schools Detroit five-point plan for education reform in Detroit. In 2010, the Detroit Public Schools (DPS) was under the control of state emergency management. Despite this challenge, DPS reported a graduation rate at 62% (Crain's Detroit Business) which was up from 52.7% in 2009. The district's dropout rate was 19%, an improvement from 21% in 2009. In comparison to the state, Detroit fell behind in both the graduation rate—79.2% and the dropout rate—14.68% (Crain's Business Detroit). That same year, Excellent Schools Detroit formed in response to Detroit schools earning the worst reading and math scores in the U.S. on the 2009 Nation's Report Card.

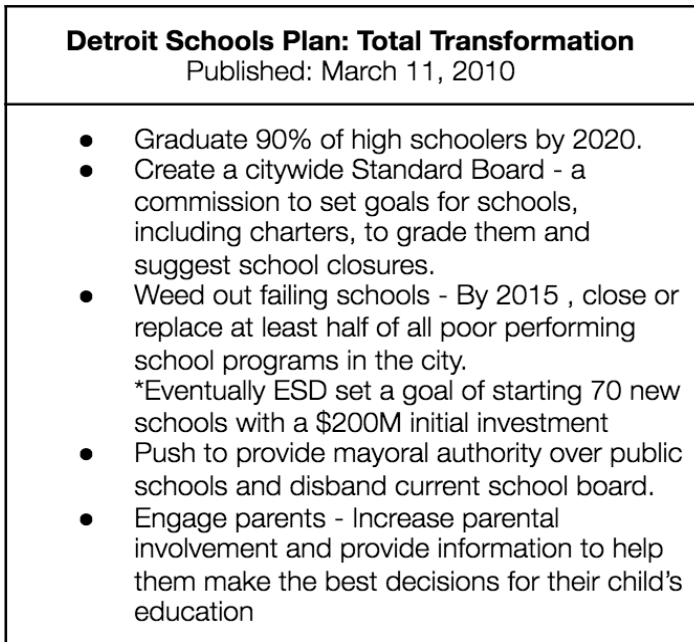


Figure 7: Five-point plan created by Excellent Schools Detroit
Source: Chastity Pratt Dawsey

Excellent Schools Detroit (ESD) started as a coalition of individuals and organizations whose goal was to seek positive transformation in Detroit's education system. The coalition was comprised of the Skillman Foundation, Mayor David Bing, Robert Bobb (appointed DPS Emergency Financial Manager), Doug Ross (an influential charter school founder) and other education-focused nonprofits. The coalition devised a five-point city-wide plan (Figure 7) that boasted key goals and action steps that would lead to successful change in Detroit schools. Although the plan claimed a desire for transformation of Detroit schools, in general, a couple goals singled out DPS as a target of ESD's vision for education transformation (Pratt Dawson, 2010).

How does this case study address aspects of an unhealthy education ecosystem?

Although the five-point plan acknowledges challenging human elements of an unhealthy education ecosystem, it is questionable whether or not ESD’s plan is balanced in its focus of human versus governance and bureaucratic concerns. Our team concluded that the overall plan is human-centered due to its intention to improve Detroit’s education system. Though the creation of Excellent Schools Detroit was a response to low national test scores, plans indicated interest that ESD execute its plan through political means—i.e. disbanding elected leadership, pushing for mayoral control of the district and creation of a citywide Standards Board. Mayoral control indicated access to decision-making power without checks on this power from a community-elected school board. If wielded “effectively,” that power might have guaranteed full implementation of ESD’s plan. However, community members have argued that a de-centering of Detroit schoolchildren and their need for quality education was a result of state and local education politics prioritized above these needs.

In 2010, the state was already wrestling with how to respond to Michigan’s overall academic performance in light of the 2009 Nation’s Report Card. ESD staked its claim in the midst of this education political storm. It seemed that no other type of education coalition had proposed a city-wide plan such as ESD. But according to Tonya Allen, CEO of the Skillman Foundation and a former ESD board member, the organization was not successful in fine tuning its mission and vision. Specifically, Allen stated “We needed a ground game that understood how parents were making choices. I don’t think we have mastered that in our city” (Pratt, 2017). Between 2011 and 2012, ESD’s primary work was in surveying Detroit schools and suburban schools that serviced Detroit children. This project became known as the city-wide “scorecard” of Detroit schools and inner-ring suburban schools.

ESD's fifth goal of the plan was to "increase parental involvement and provide information to help them make the best decisions for their child's education" (Pratt Dawson, 2010) and the scorecard system was the coalition's primary engagement method. Ultimately, the annual scorecard was not an effective engagement tool; it did not produce a solid partnership with Detroit parents. Between 2013-2017 ESD produced five kinds of school or education program scorecards. While ESD executed the scorecards, along with other educational initiatives, there were many other education reformers trying to address the issue of underperforming schools within Detroit. This appetite for systems transformation yielded duplicated efforts. "Several nonprofits were working on the same problems...While Excellent Schools Detroit advocated for early childhood education...the Kellogg and Kresge foundations were building a coalition to ensure every Detroit child got access to early childhood education from ages 3 to 5" (Pratt, 2017).

After seven years of working to improve the quality of Detroit schools, ESD closed its doors in 2017. After its anchoring CEO, Dan Varner, left the organization in 2016, and Educational Achievement Authority (EAA) schools returned to DPSCD the following year, Excellent Schools Detroit struggled to find a sense of purpose in education advocacy. However, ESD was more successful at producing spin-off organizations and coalitions, such as 482Forward - an education advocacy collaborative - and handing over its programs that address education barriers from the cradle to college. Detroit Parent Network picked up Enroll Detroit (a citywide common enrollment system that helps alleviate barriers for new and displaced students), and Detroit College Access Network was taken over by Michigan College Access (SAT and ACT test preparation and resources to complete FASFA). Finally, ESD's scorecard data and analytics relocated to the Skillman Foundation (Clifford).

The third goal of the five-point plan was to identify and address failing schools as an attempt to correct the chronic problem of underperforming schools within the district. ESD's plan to build 70 new schools did not address the impact of massive school closures on the physical, social and civic fabric of neighborhoods. Schools are often anchoring institutions that provide a geographic and social identity for neighborhoods. Detroit Public Schools Community District's newest school board member, Corletta Vaughn, explained that today, the district is forced to close down certain public schools because neighborhoods are more vacant and local schools are no longer the only choice for families, leading to schools operating well under their student capacity. Vaughn links depopulation to an oversupply in Detroit's education market. The impact of schools of choice and charter school policy has created a highly competitive education market.

From an economic perspective, after a reported \$32M spent in philanthropic support, ESD was not able to make significant, long-term impact on Detroit schools. ESD received funding from foundations such as the Skillman Foundation, the Kresge Foundation, the Kellogg Foundation and the McGregor Fund (Pratt, 2017). Since ESD's inception, top national and regional foundations invested millions of dollars to improve Detroit education. Most of that funding can be traced back to either education programs, advocacy groups or initiatives that supported schools under the supervision of the EAA. By 2012, national philanthropists invested more than \$45M into the state-run district. But when these same national players witnessed failed education reform initiatives, the city was either shunned or foundations began divesting from these initiatives. In 2016, one journalist wrote that national education philanthropists cited, "A chaotic school landscape with little quality control and a divisive political environment has resulted in no clear plan for fixing local schools" (Einhorn).

The main lesson from this experiment is that it takes more than a band of philanthropic support to transform a school district. Moreover, during ESD's seven year existence, public education was highly dependent on philanthropic support. The result was that when funders were no longer interested in education reform for Detroit schools, they quickly found other community projects to support. The Capstone team found that funding alone cannot create a healthy educational ecosystem in Detroit.

What does this case study propose for a healthier education ecosystem?

Although Excellent Schools Detroit was not successful in implementing its entire five-point plan, the most impactful contribution to improving Detroit schools was The Quality Schools Scorecard. The was an effective education tool that measured a school's execution of education provision. As a guide, the scorecard provided Detroit parents extensive information about the quality of schools. The scorecard also created a form of accountability between schools and parents on their delivery of education provision. In 2011, ESD partnered with the California-based consultant, National Equity Project (NEP), to design the Quality Schools Review process. NEP co-facilitated meetings with parents and community leaders to develop a shared definition of school quality indicators. The planning sessions were an opportunity for parents and community leaders to give input and take collective ownership of the review process. After the planning sessions, NEP conducted training sessions on how to conduct formal school site visits and evaluate school quality. Over 100 parents attended day-long training sessions. A total of 250 people were trained to carry out site visits at 175 public, charter and private schools.

What became known as the Excellent Schools Detroit Guide or Scorecard, evaluated quality of classroom instruction, school culture, and physical conditions of schools. A grade, A-F, was assigned to each school. The assigned grade incorporated a site team's overall impressions of a school's strengths and weaknesses (National Equity Project). ESD produced a total of five scorecards. Appendix B provides a summary of the type of scorecards provided, the defined school quality indicators and the overall assigned grade given to Detroit schools.

Although the intention of ESD's scorecard initiative was to help parents make informed decisions about their child's matriculation through education, a consequence of the scorecard was avoidance of underperforming schools within the district. The former does not address the systemic challenges that resulted in an overwhelming number of underperforming Detroit schools. The long-term effects of this consequence only exacerbate other challenges within the district: decaying school buildings and depopulation. In this case, avoidance of underperforming schools might be viewed as a systematically engineered contribution to chronic school closure within the public school district.

Excellent Schools Detroit began as a coalition with a five-point plan to transform Detroit schools. Although it received significant funding support from local and national foundations, ESD's lack of initial engagement with parents and students led to its eventual closure. However, other education advocacy groups inherited ESD's programming. Although it was not successful in executing a long-term strategy, it served a greater purpose as an idea incubator that led to the creation of organizations such as 482Forward and the Detroit Parent Network (Pratt, 2017).

The Coalition for the Future of Detroit School Children (CFDS)

What is the context of the case study?

Already highly invested in education initiatives in Detroit, the Skillman Foundation has served as the convener for the Coalition for the Future of Detroit Schoolchildren (CFDS). This coalition, comprised of leaders from education, business, policy and philanthropic sectors, serves as a think-tank that provides recommendations on how to improve the city's education system. CFDS formed in 2014 in response to Detroit Public School's crisis moment -- i.e. "being run by state-appointed emergency managers from 2009-2016, after being plagued by budget deficits, declining student enrollment, school closures, teacher shortages and poorly performing schools" (Detroit Free Press).

How does this case study address aspects of an unhealthy education ecosystem?

CFDS produced a report, *The Choice is Ours*, that identifies key focus areas they believe are crucial for the transformation of Detroit's educational system. (The Coalition for the Future of Detroit Schoolchildren). This report focused on how the state could help improve Detroit's education systems. The coalition created eight advisory committees that focused on eight critical areas needing attention in Detroit's education ecosystem (Figure 8). The advisory committees focused on specific education concerns, then offered recommendations to address each of the report's focus areas. Its second report *Our Schools Our Time* (2017) was addressed to Detroiters and focused on what Detroiters can do to strengthen the city's schools since regaining local control. "The 12-page report is a call for cooperation and accountability from Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD) and charter school leaders to better serve Detroit children and families (Detroit Free Press).

Original Focus Areas

- Citywide Coordination & Planning
- College and Career Paths
- Financial Implications for Special Education
- Increase Student Count
- Parental Support and Engagement
- Recruit, Compensate and Develop School Talent
- School Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism
- Third Grade Reading Level Proficiency

What does this case study propose for a healthier education ecosystem?

As a 150 member coalition, CFDS demonstrates the role of coalitions in both educating community members as well as local and state leaders on systems-level educational challenges. Both published reports clearly lay out Detroit's educational concerns while offering strategic ways these challenges could be addressed. CFDS exemplifies the need to listen widely to stakeholders across the education ecosystem. For the second report, the coalition "spent a year conducting research--listening to local and national experts and receiving input from parents, students, educators and concerned community members" (Detroit Free Press). Input from those most adversely impacted by the ecosystem helped to frame recommendations that aimed to cultivate collaboration and increase accountability among leaders who serve Detroit's schoolchildren.

Recommendations

- Get Serious About Attendance
- Choose Detroit
- Learn to Read, Then Read to Learn
- Keep Pace with Detroit’s Economic Recovery
- Fully Fund Special Education
- Expect Improved Cooperation and Accountability from Our Leaders
- Next Steps - Reconvene in 2018 to explore ways to formalize collective action to link efforts that impact Detroit children and families, from cradle to career

Figure 8: Recommendations from the CFDS
Source: The Choice is Ours Report, CFDS 2014

CFDS also demonstrates the role of education coalitions in shaping state and local policy. CFDS worked closely with Detroit’s local government to lobby for a locally-controlled education commission that would “control the number of charter schools in Detroit and help steer charter schools to neighborhoods that need them instead of allowing them to congregate in neighborhoods already saturated with schools” (Einhorn). CFDS’s efforts did not make it into the \$617M “rescue package” -- a bailout crucial to Detroit’s newly established Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD). However, Tonya Allen, who co-chairs the coalition, believed that CFDS did accomplish one thing: directing the spotlight to Detroit’s chronic problems of underperforming schools (Einhorn). Today, with local control of public education, CFDS continues to focus its work on chronic absenteeism and improving teacher training opportunities for Detroit educators.

Neighborhood as Campus

Humboldt Park Community as a Campus (CAAC)

What is the context of the case study?

The Humboldt Park Community as a Campus (CAAC) initiative was developed in 2011 as a roadmap for improving educational opportunities and community supports in the neighborhood for youth, parents, teachers and administrators (Executive Summary). The creation of this framework was spearheaded by the Humboldt Park - Clemente Community Action Council, a coalition of parents, community advocates, aldermen and other elected officials (Karp). Through a series of engagements with community members, this coalition built a vision for the CAAC as an “educational campus that will provide a seamless academic pipeline of services, linking preschools and elementary schools to a high school hub and higher education institutions” (Humboldt Park CAC).

The development of this plan was initiated as a directive of newly formed Chicago Public Schools (CPS) Community Action Councils in 2019. These Councils, which are comprised of 25-30 community members including parents, elected officials, community activists, students, business leaders, faith-based institution leaders, educators and school administrators, were tasked with developing a “strategic plan for educational success” within their respective communities when they first convened in 2010 (CPS - Parent University). Nine Chicago [GN1] neighborhoods, including Humboldt Park were identified by CPS as areas that would benefit from additional support and community collaboration in the form of these councils.

The Chicago neighborhood of Humboldt Park is a community with a history of political engagement, self-determination, and coalition building (Humboldt Park CAC).

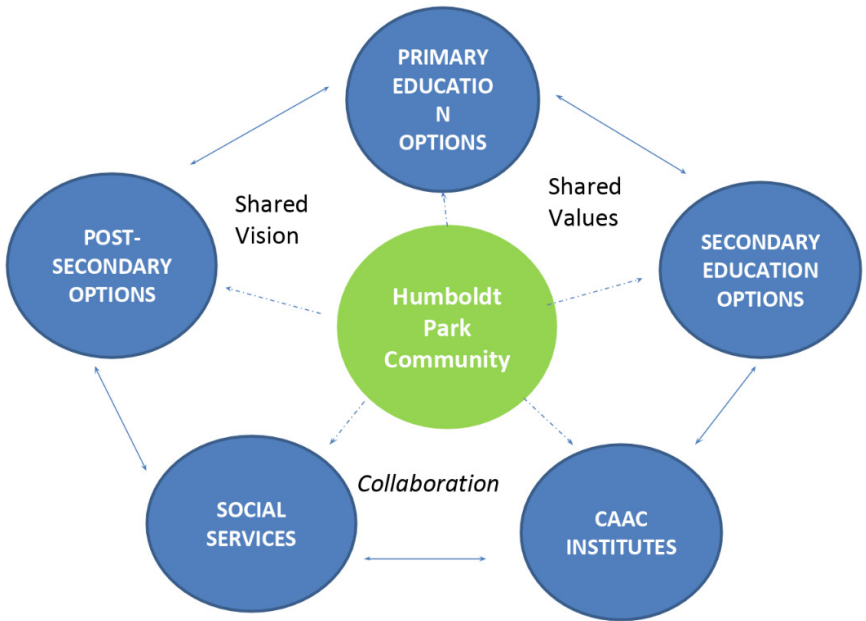


Figure 9: Humboldt Park rendered education ecosystem
 Source: Jose Lopez, Humboldt Park Community Action Council

Humboldt Park is also home to one of the largest concentrations of residents of Puerto Rican descent (Puerto Rican Cultural Center). Plan developers wanted to recognize this history and these human strengths and, consequently, used an asset-based approach to thinking about challenges in neighborhood schools and what recommendations they would provide to address them.

Understanding that growing these assets will be key to future success of the neighborhood, the plan proposed three new programmatic Institutes, anchored by the physical and social revitalization of the Roberto Clemente Community Academy and High School.

The three institutes are 1) **Parent Popular Education**, which provides multiple ways for parents to continue pursuing educational goals and connect to vital resources in the community, 2) **Youth Civic Leadership Development**, which aims to connect students to leadership and learning opportunities in their community and civic life, and 3) **Teacher/Administrator Leadership**, which supports educators by providing ways to pursue life-long learning with nearby colleges and universities.

Led by the Humboldt Park Community Action Council, 78 local partners and their representatives participated in the creation of the Humboldt Park plan, including parents, aldermen and other elected officials, educators, community leaders and the Puerto Rican Cultural Center. Ultimately, this plan was presented to and accepted by Chicago Public Schools in late 2011.

How does this case study address aspects of an unhealthy education ecosystem?

The Humboldt Community as a Campus initiative and the creation of the neighborhood Community Action Councils which precipitated it was an effort by the Chicago Public School District to address challenges within area schools. As part of the Office of Family and Community Engagement in Education (FACE2), The CACs and the plans they create are meant to serve as roadmaps to both address current issues and present a vision for the educational future of the whole community, including students, teachers and parents (Chicago Public Schools). The plan also addresses enrollment loss by proposing high-quality curriculum offerings that support the traditional school day through the three proposed Institutes, and attract new students while retaining existing ones.

As is the case with many large urban school districts, communication and transparency between decision-making boards, community members and educational staff and administration can be complicated and challenging. Even though the creation of the Community Action Councils indicate progress, the CEO of the School District is still not beholden to follow their recommendations, as originally created (Karp). Recognizing this failure of the system, in their presentation of plans and recommendations to the Chicago Public Schools Board, the Humboldt Park CAC includes clear alignment and transparency directives between organizational stakeholders, including CPS CEO and Board, Humboldt Park CAC, school administration, and community members. Regular meetings and communication are included in these recommendations as another means of remedying challenging inter-organizational relationships (Humboldt Park CAC).

Due to the increased competition between public, private and charter schools, many students who once attended local public schools are now choosing other options. This shift left the public community schools in Humboldt Park, including Clemente Community Academy and 11 area elementary schools. Additionally, because many charter schools are able to screen students, many of the remaining public school students required special social and physical support that were not being met by the traditional classroom. Using an asset-based approach, the Humboldt Park CAAC plan proposed enhancing and under-utilized space in neighborhood schools, particularly in Clemente, for the three learning institutes and additional educational supports. Additionally, the plan recommended aligning the 11 community elementary schools as feeders for the local high school.

In an effort to reduce the amount of “brain drain”—i.e. neighborhood youth leaving the community for educational and economic opportunities elsewhere once they have the chance, the plan proposes aligning curriculum across community organizations and businesses in the “community as a campus” to prepare students to enter into the community and workforce. This proposal included possible extension of the school day to allow students to participate in programs in the community (for example, at the Puerto Rican Cultural Institute or the local fire station) that would have them engage in hands-on learning and training. Learning focus areas include STEM, arts, the environment, culinary arts and other relevant skills programs (Humboldt Park CAC).

What does this case study propose for a healthier education ecosystem?

Many of the elements of the proposed plan and vision for the Humboldt Park learning community, as outlined by the Community as a Campus roadmap, are indicators of what the CAC and community members envision as a healthy education ecosystem for their community. As noted in the Executive Summary of the Humboldt Park-Clemente Community Action Council Strategic Educational Recommendations: “Too often important aspects of the life of the community live in isolation; there is too little dialogue and connectivity. It will take deliberate action on the part of residents and institutions as they identify the intersection of personal, cultural, political, and social beliefs and goals. The force of such work will transform a community” (Clemente Community Action Council).

Using the Roberto Clemente Community Academy as the centerpiece of the strategic plan, the CAC sees revitalization of physical space through the inclusion of quality and relevant educational supports for students,

parents and teachers as key to the future success of their community. Using a “social ecology model”, one of the most important aspects of this successful community educational campus are the three stakeholder institutes.

The Parent Popular Education Institute is envisioned as a “school without walls” which allows parents to earn their high school diploma, GED, or provide guidance on enrolling in post-secondary educational institutions. This program also provides a variety of workshops and classes including financial literacy, computer literacy, health and nutrition, youth development and community organizing. Importantly, the creators of this Institute will intentionally value the lived experiences of parents as foundational knowledge and expertise upon which to build their future learning and growth. The Teacher/Administrator Leadership Institute provides community teachers to pursue lifelong learning opportunities through partnerships with three nearby Colleges of Education.

The Youth Civic Leadership Institute uses a two-pronged approach to provide students with necessary resources for development and opportunities to grow in leadership and civic engagement. Content and curriculum as after-school programming will be conscientiously crafted using subject matter that is relevant to broader community life. This Institute will also connect youth to existing nearby youth development programs offered by other community-based organizations. The vision for this work is that youth will have the resources, opportunities and experiences that connect them to the neighborhood in transformative ways and encourage them to give back to the community that fed them as they grow (Strategic Plan).

Finally, none of the proposed educational campus improvements will be sustainable without the ongoing support of and collaboration with institutional powers. As such, the CAC includes clear guidelines for developing a transparent relationship between Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and CAC where both are equal decision-makers who meet regularly. The CAC summarizes this intention on the final slide of their presentation to the Chicago Public Schools Board: “We have a vision and a plan that provides solutions to the pressing education challenges that our community faces...As you in CPS move forward in your planning and decision-making process, please remember: NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US.”

CLEMENTE HIGH SCHOOL: A Creative Proposal

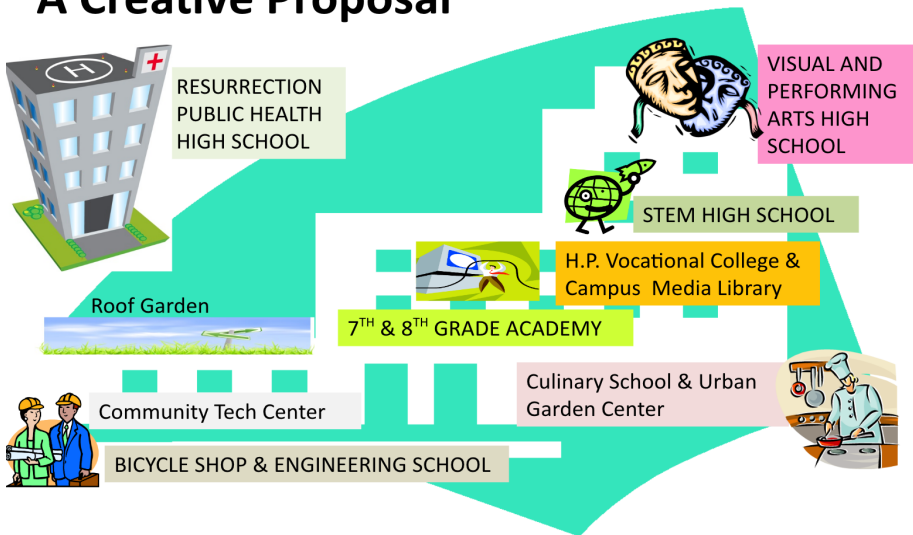


Figure 10: Clemente High School Proposal
Source: Humboldt Park Community Action Council

P-20 Marygrove Early Childhood Initiative & High School

What is the context of the case study?

The P-20 program at Marygrove is the newest educational program in Detroit. Since Marygrove College closed its doors in 2018, a coalition of community partners envisioned opening a new educational campus for neighborhood residents. The campus is home to educational programs that will provide opportunities for the population from “cradle to career”. The program received \$50M and is said to be “the largest philanthropic investment in history into a Detroit neighborhood” (Kresge 2). The key partners of this initiative include: Marygrove Conservancy (a legacy organization from Marygrove College), the Kresge Foundation (philanthropy), the University of Michigan School of Education (thought leader and curriculum developer), Detroit Public Schools Community District, Starfish Family Services (early childhood programming) and the Innovative Finance Foundation (resources and technical support). In 2019, the P-20 program opened its doors to the first cohort of 9th graders and plans to open the early childhood center in 2020.

How does this case study address aspects of an unhealthy education ecosystem?

This project takes into consideration the full life-cycle. The purpose of this program is to support the educational development of the student from birth until approximately 20 years old. Over a dozen nonprofit organizations convened to advocate for this initiative. This is the first place-based public school development in Detroit. The curriculum takes shape around neighborhood challenges that were identified by residents, business owners, and other nonprofits.

The intention is to service the needs of the neighborhood through student-led projects that addresses those needs. What is yet to be revealed is how power dynamics come into play with the stakeholders who created this initiative and how their influence and decision-making power shapes the next generation of leaders. Also, the Marygrove P-20 Initiative is the first neighborhood project of its kind to receive \$50M in funding. If done correctly, this area of town can generate wealth by educating the next generation of leaders, encouraging other capital investments, and increasing neighborhood value.

What does this case study propose for a healthier education ecosystem?

The curriculum has the potential to not only teach students to be collaborative and problem-solvers, but also help bring attention to and address neighborhood challenges along the way.



Figure 11: Opening Day at the School at Marygrove
Source: Anna Clark

Community Driven

Nsoroma Institute

What is the context of the case study?

Nsoroma Institute was founded by Malik Yakini who has a background in cultivating holistic businesses, opportunities, and educational structures with the purpose of sustaining and fostering spaces for black life to thrive throughout the city of Detroit. In 1989, Nsoroma Institute initially opened in Detroit as a private institution serving all Black American and African children in grades K-12. The institution became a public charter school in 1997. In 2005, Nsoroma had a total student body population of 60 children. According to founder Malik Yakini, enrollment doubled the first year as a tuition-free charter school and had leveled off in the three years prior to 2006.

Nsoroma was an African-centered school with aspects of African culture including music, language, dance, martial arts, and teaching styles ingrained into the school curriculum. The school uplifted a philosophy which sought to connect black American and African children with the cultural history and legacy of Afrikan people. Nsoroma cultivated an understanding of the importance of the interdependence of humans, plants, animals, air, water, soil and natural elements needed to sustain life. Students were afforded the opportunity to learn languages such as French and Kiswahili, which is a shared and practiced language amongst many African countries. African culture places a focus on the respect of elders in the community, which was also a norm for students attending Nsoroma. Students referred to male presenting teachers and faculty as “Baba” and female presenting teachers and faculty as “Mama”. These titles, which translate to “mother” and “father”, respectively, were a sign of respect and aligned with African culture and tradition.



Figure 12: Nsoroma Institute Logo

Source: Organization of African Centered Educators and Schools

Despite the necessary work of creating space for black children to connect deeper with the culture of the land they originated from, the Nsoroma Institute closed in 2014. Upon closing, Nsoroma had served 175 students and had a teacher to student ratio of 13:1 during its final year. Although classrooms sizes were comparably better than the average public school in Michigan (18:1), test scores reflected only 10-14% of students performed proficient in Math and 45-49% performed proficient in English. The aforementioned aspects of this Capstone project articulate why basing black and brown students' capabilities and performance solely on test scores is not effective and how lack of community resources and poverty will impact how well a student performs in school overall or on tests.

A majority of students attending the school were living in poverty, as reflected by 85% of students who qualified for and received free lunch. An issue that Yakini came across during his involvement with the institution involved the transition of the students back to their home communities throughout Detroit where African-centered lessons and practices were not the norm. This could cause the work started at school to be challenged or possibly undone. One way to counter this issue, according to Yakini, would be to reach out to African communities while those communities simultaneously reach out to “conscious” Africans. Along with improved outreach amongst African communities, making sure both black American and black African communities are aware of African-centered schools is also key (Yakini).

How does this case study address aspects of an unhealthy education ecosystem?

Nsoroma Institute relied heavily on human development to impact relationships with their student body and to foster their students desire for cultural connection and academic achievement. The intentional focus and practice of integrating African-centered traditions, norms, educational structures, and culture within the curriculum has been known to be effective as it pertains to positive human development of black youth.

According to research conducted by Dr. Efua Akoma in 2008, graduate of the School of Educational Psychology, Special Education, and Communication Disorders:

“School A creates an environment that incorporates the culture of the students as a core of the curriculum. It is probable that the teachers understanding and incorporation of culturally relevant curricula assisted the students in better understanding the material presented. In addition, the teachers in this school may have also been better able to provide scaffolding resulting students moving out of the zone of proximal development into greater comprehension which may have ultimately led to increased achievement scores. Statistical analyses [GN1] confirmed School A’s use of culturally relevant curricula is producing significant achievement results. Overall, School A’s students are performing at much higher achievement levels than School B.”

Black students attending a school where their ways of being, shared language, culture, and norms are reflected through their teachers, peers, and curriculum can assist with students feeling more understood and trusting of their environment. After the transatlantic slave trade, people of African descent were stripped of the culture they once knew and were unable to pass down the shared norms and sense of belonging in a colonized country. Most, if not all, African-centered schools have a teacher population which is 90-100% Black American or African which makes it easier to center the pieces of a culture that was preserved as it pertains to African nationalities and the culture being created through Black Americans. Being able to feel a sense of belonging while sharing positive experiences with those who look like you can help with positive emotional and academic development. This is sometimes reflected in ways such as increased feelings and examples of connection, trust, and relevancy in the

way information is presented during lessons.

Having teachers that reflect the race and ethnicity of the student body population is a necessity in black communities as it helps counter the school to prison pipeline. When the teachers in the classroom reflect the students, they can better relate to cultural norms and shared experiences that those of other races may not understand. This has led to white teachers responding negatively and harshly with more punitive punishments for black students. According to a 2015 study conducted by Stanford social psychologist Jennifer Eberhardt, it was found that “white teachers were more apt to recommend stricter punishments for students with stereotypically “black-sounding” names like Darnell or Deshawn, even when the hypothetical transgressions were no different from white students’.” Furthermore, evidence from a study conducted by Constance A. Lindsay, Professorial Lecturer in the School of Public Affairs at American University and Cassandra M. D. Hart, an assistant professor of education policy at the University of California, Davis, School of Education:

“...elementary school students are less likely to be subjected to exclusionary discipline when their race matches that of their teacher. Overall, students matched to a same-race teacher are roughly 1 percentage point less likely to be placed in detention, suspended, or expelled than students assigned to a different-race teacher. To put the size of this effect in context, the overall share of students who received any exclusionary discipline consequences during the study period was 7 percent. Therefore, the effect of teacher-student race match represents a 12 percent decrease in the number of students experiencing exclusionary discipline.”

What does this case study propose for a healthier education ecosystem?

The specific tactics used by Nsoroma Institute to perpetuate and sustain a healthy ecosystem are identified through the mission, curriculum, and race ethnicities, and nationalities, as seen in the demographic of the faculty and staff. The focus on interdependence of humans, plants, animals, air, water, soil and natural elements needed to sustain life helps students develop a connection to energetic elements outside of themselves. Students being afforded the opportunity to learn languages such as Kiswahili, a shared and practiced language amongst many African countries, helps students find as close of a connection to the land they originated from to develop a stronger sense of self.

Lastly, a teacher population that reflects the intersecting identities of the student population helps students develop a sense of understanding and trust that is important in communities which are impacted by colonization and gentrification which can negatively impact trust. Those who are a part of the process of creating, sustaining, and benefiting from African-centered Schools, such as Nsoroma, are the parents who decide what schools their children attend, students who are a central piece of and are impacted the most throughout the educational process, and teachers who connect with both parents and students to make the educational experience as rewarding and culturally competent as possible.

The James and Grace Lee Boggs School

What is the context of the case study?

The James and Grace Lee Boggs School is a community-based charter school managed by a non-profit management organization, Nataki Educational Services. It was founded in 2015 in the McDougall-Hunt neighborhood on Detroit's east side. The neighbors, parents and educators who started the school centered on the ideas of place-based learning and quiet revolution that inspired countless young people who participated in the Detroit Summer program, hosted by the Boggs Center in the 1990s. One of those young people, Julia Putnam, would be the first and current principal of the Boggs School. She continues the Boggses' central idea, that instead of overthrowing the institutions that oppress them, people should create alternative institutions that uplift them (Jackman). For Putnam and the original founders, that alternative institution is a school that humanizes and instills in students a sense of their own worth and connection to the place they live.



Figure 13: Students at the Boggs School
Source: The James and Grace Lee Boggs School website

How does this case study address aspects of an unhealthy education ecosystem?

The Boggs School exemplifies the power of community members who, recognizing where they can be most impactful in their neighborhood, decided to create a new education opportunity for area young people that offered a healthy alternative to other schools. These teachers, parents and organizers created a safe and creative space, centered on students and grounded in the community as fertile ground for learning, inquiry and growth.

What does this case study propose for a healthier education ecosystem?

This case study demonstrates, at the scale of the school, a model for quality education, driven by those most impacted by the education ecosystem. Additionally, curriculum is created with great intention, so as to remain relevant to the context in which students live, rather than being solely beholden to standardized tests. Though still early in its existence, the school has become popular enough that parents living beyond the neighborhood are choosing to send their children to the Boggs School.

Each of the above chosen case studies provided the team with examples of how different community groups have worked together to address education needs. Though each is scaled differently, from the individual school to the neighborhood, they exemplify tactics that could be used to inform future actions taken by students, parents and teachers to influence their experience and the outcomes of children. One key takeaway is the need for meaningful inclusion of these most-affected groups at the decision-making level. If these groups are not present, the initiative may not survive or achieve the goals it has set out for itself. With this in mind, the team looked for a community partner which carried within its principles and practices radical inclusion of community members, particularly youth.

COMMUNITY PARTNER

Establishing a Community Partner

Each Capstone team is required to establish a relationship with a community partner in the Detroit. The relation between the Capstone team and its chosen community partner is facilitated through an agreed upon memorandum of understanding. This MOU is critical to the partnership as it helps to provide clarity on the agreed mutuality of the newly established relationship. Overall a community partner:

- Provides introductions to various community organizations which currently or previously have worked directly with them.
- Refer the Capstone team to any community or local activities that may impact the outcomes of the Capstone team's findings.
- Develop a process that allows for the team to have appropriate access to learn about the community partner's services and/or attend the partner's programs and community-hosted events.
- Connect with a community partner liaison that will be the main point of contact throughout the Capstone process.
- Provide some level of evaluation on aspects of the team's work such content or approaches to community engagement.

Within the MCD program most Capstone projects are place-based--i.e projects focus on a particular neighborhood that provides a geographical focus area for a team's research. As mentioned before, this Capstone team chose an issue-based project. The research for this Capstone project is not tied to a geographical focus area. The nature of issue-based Capstones is that topics may or may not be assigned a geographical focus area, but the topic itself can have

large scale impact(s) that are city-wide or regional. For this Capstone project the implications of education ecosystem is city-wide but far extends beyond the geographical boundaries of Detroit. Once a Capstone team chooses a specific neighborhood or other location with distinct boundaries, a community partner is chosen from that area to further ground and legitimize the research work of Capstone groups within specific neighborhoods and communities.

The Education Capstone team ran into challenges establishing a relationship with a community partner. So the team created its own community partner rubric (see Appendix C). The rubric became a helpful evaluative tool that guided the team to the best fit for this Capstone project, Urban Neighborhood Initiatives UNI). Even though the partnership was forged within a short time frame the team's chosen community partner was able to fulfill critical aspects of the agreed partnership. UNI's greatest contribution to this project was connecting the Capstone group to 482Forward's city wide conference. The Capstone team was able to host a small focus group at this conference. The work accomplished in that session was invaluable to the overall purpose of the Capstone.

Urban Neighborhood Initiatives

The team established a partnership with Urban Neighborhood Initiatives (UNI), a neighborhood nonprofit and community development organization in Springwells located in Southwest Detroit. At a time when Springwells did not have enough opportunities for youth development, All Saints Catholic Church launched UNI. After working in the community for some time UNI renovated an old church and revitalized the community through the creation of All Saints Neighborhood Center. One of UNI's contributions to the social and physical fabric of the neighborhood is



Figure 15: Springwells neighborhood in relationship to Detroit

Springdale Green Playlot. UNI purchased eight empty lots across the street from the neighborhood center. Springdale Green is a greenspace enjoyed by everyone in its neighborhood (UNI Detroit - About Us). Founded in 1997, the mission of UNI is to “work with communities in urban neighborhoods to build safe and thriving environments where people want to live, work, and play” (UNI Detroit).



Figures 16 & 17: The All Saints Center before and after renovation
Source: Urban Neighborhood Initiatives website

UNI focuses on three programmatic areas, (1) Land Use and Economic Development, (2) Youth Development, and (3) Education. Closely linked, UNI focuses on the issues of education and youth development because, “education is essential to developing self-reliant residents and a strong, stable community” (UNI Detroit).

- 1 Land Use & Economic Development**
- 2 Youth Development**
- 3 Education**

UNI was chosen as the team’s community partner because of its grass-roots, bottom-up approach to community development. UNI brings a wealth of experience to Detroit’s education ecosystem achieving community impact on multiple levels: individual students, neighborhood schools, and city and state-wide education advocacy work. UNI’s approach to the work of community development and the value base for its model of community transformation embodies what the Capstone group believes is necessary for the existence of a healthy and effective education ecosystem.

The community partner liaison for this project was Christine Belle, UNI’s executive director. When the Capstone group asked Belle about UNI’s goals for their work in education she replied, “To make every school in Springwells a quality school.” To the same affect, this project aims to accomplish this very same goal but on a much grander scale, for Detroit schoolchildren.

Conclusion

In summary, to date, the team has taken account of the social, political and economic history that has contributed to the education environment we see in Detroit today. When viewed together, several themes begin to emerge, including a history of racist decisions and policies, tightly controlled state-oversight, experimental and often unsustainable decisions made on the part of politicians and philanthropy, and coalition-building as a community response to the aforementioned challenges. Variations on this response in both Detroit and outside communities were explored by the case studies. With this in mind, the team next looked to several tools that might be used to better understand what has been uncovered thus far.

MAPPING + ANALYSIS

MAPPING TOOLS

In order to analyze the context of the education ecosystem various forms of mapping were used to focus and guide the Capstone team's research. Application of asset mapping, needs assessment and a SWOT(strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis provided a mixture of traditional and non-traditional uses of these tools. Asset mapping highlights the existing strengths and opportunities available to actualize enabling forms of justice. The needs assessment highlights (1) weaknesses (gaps) and threats that perpetuate disabling constraints within the ecosystem and (2) how these weaknesses and threats stem from influences of the ecosystem. The SWOT analysis can be considered a marriage between asset mapping and a needs assessment. Summarily, it displays strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that exist in relation to the ecosystem.

The Capstone group also applied the SWOT across the HOPE model so that strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats could be understood in light of the ecosystem's human, organizational, physical and economic influences on adversely impacted groups. Another mapping tool that became central to exploration of power and its dynamics within the ecosystem was power mapping. This section demonstrates how these various tools work together to build the team's understanding of Detroit's education ecosystem.

ASSET MAPPING

As mentioned before, asset mapping highlights existing strengths within the ecosystem as well as new opportunities that can build upon these strengths. The Capstone team identified stakeholders that make up and/or influence Detroit's education ecosystem. Some of these stakeholder groups provide education services or programs that cater to K-12 students. The stakeholder groups include sectors such as philanthropic, nonprofit organizations (education advocacy groups, programmatic/human service organizations, networks/associations/coalitions and unions), and government (local, state and federal).

The research team then created an asset inventory (see Appendix A). Even though this project focuses on the education ecosystem, and specifically its influence on public education--i.e. the Detroit Public Schools Community Districts (DPSCD), the Capstone group still found it necessary to identify the number of schools throughout the city.

Figure 19: Where Detroit Youth under 18 Attend School
Source: DPSCD - Detroit State of the Schools, 2019

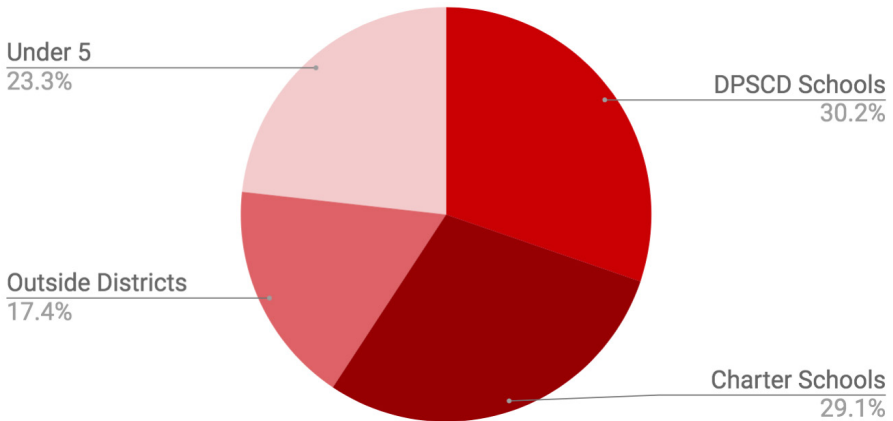
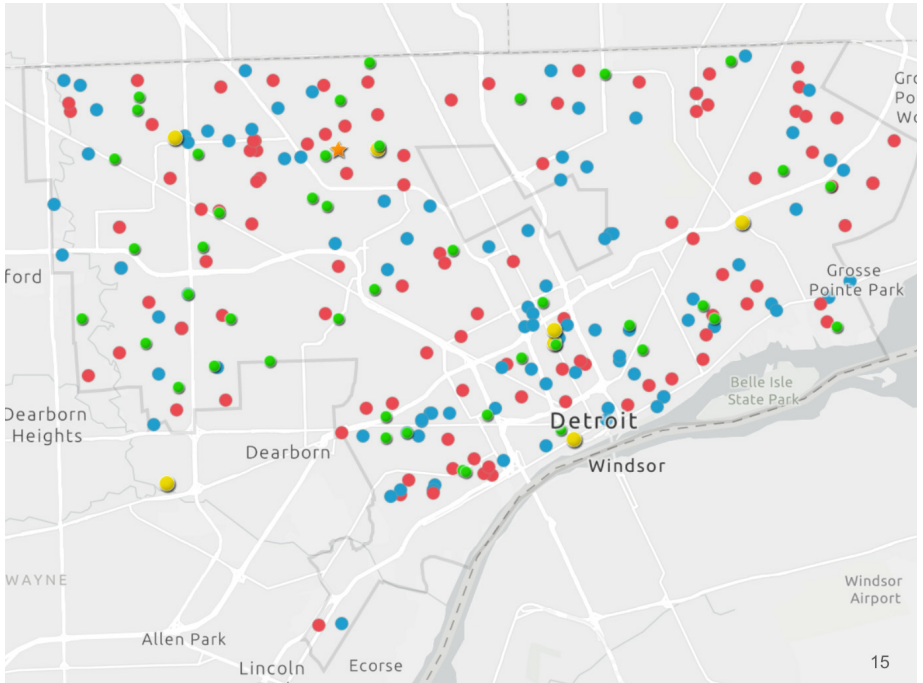


Figure 18: Asset Map of Detroit Educational Institutions (2019)
Source: DPSCD - Detroit State of the Schools, 2019



- Detroit Public School Community District (111)
- Charter Schools (~80)
- Private School (~65)
- Colleges, Universities and Trade Schools

Above, the visual map reflects the number of schools that exists throughout the Detroit area. This includes 111 public schools, 65 private schools, 80 charter schools and a notable presence of post-secondary centers. Identification of education providers helps not only to quantify these entities, but also to visually gauge where schools are physically located, what kind of access families have to education opportunities within their neighborhood, and the current model for that local education provision.



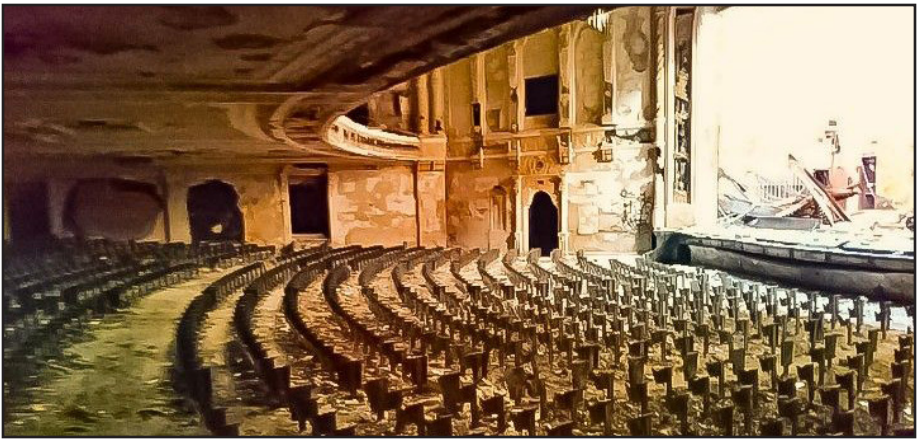
Brady Elementary (closed 2007) | Source: Kyle Brooky



Cesar Chavez Academy | Source: The Leona Group



MLK High School | Source: Community Education Commission



Cooley High School auditorium (closed 2010) | Source: Todd Farnum



WAY Academy | Source: WAY Academy Website



Cooke STEM Academy | Source: Richard Bacolor

ECOSYSTEM & POWER MAPPING

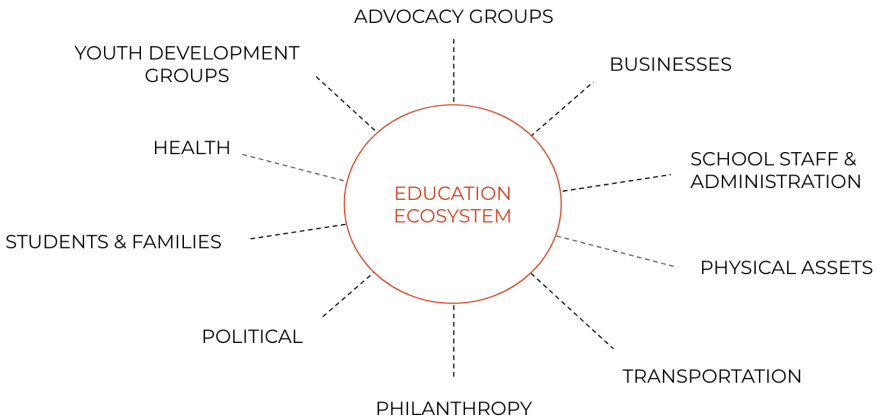


Figure 19: Initial Ecosystem Map created by Capstone team

After gaining a sense of the education ecosystem's assets, the Capstone team translated these assets into an illustrative ecosystem map. The education ecosystem is comprised of people, physical assets, organizations, and industries that impact the overall quality and experience of education for K-12 students. As a map, Figure 19 represents the education ecosystem as the team understood it in the first phase of the Capstone process. The shape of the map looks like spokes on a wheel. For example, the wheel could represent the public education system while the spokes are people, physical assets, organizations, and industries. The group interpreted the education ecosystem as a vast system that operates more like spokes on a wheel and less like an interconnected web. This observation plays an important role in understanding the inner workings of the system. As the team's understanding of the ecosystem grew, the illustration of the ecosystem shifted in its look. This evolution will be reflected in the ecosystem illustrative

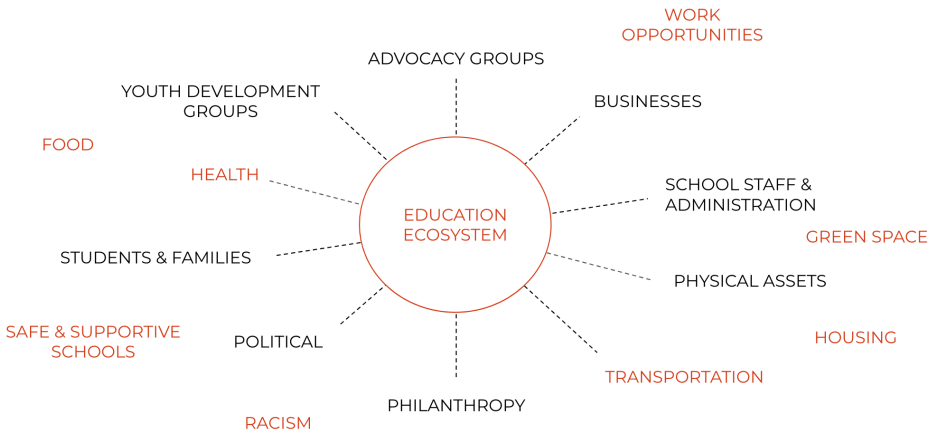
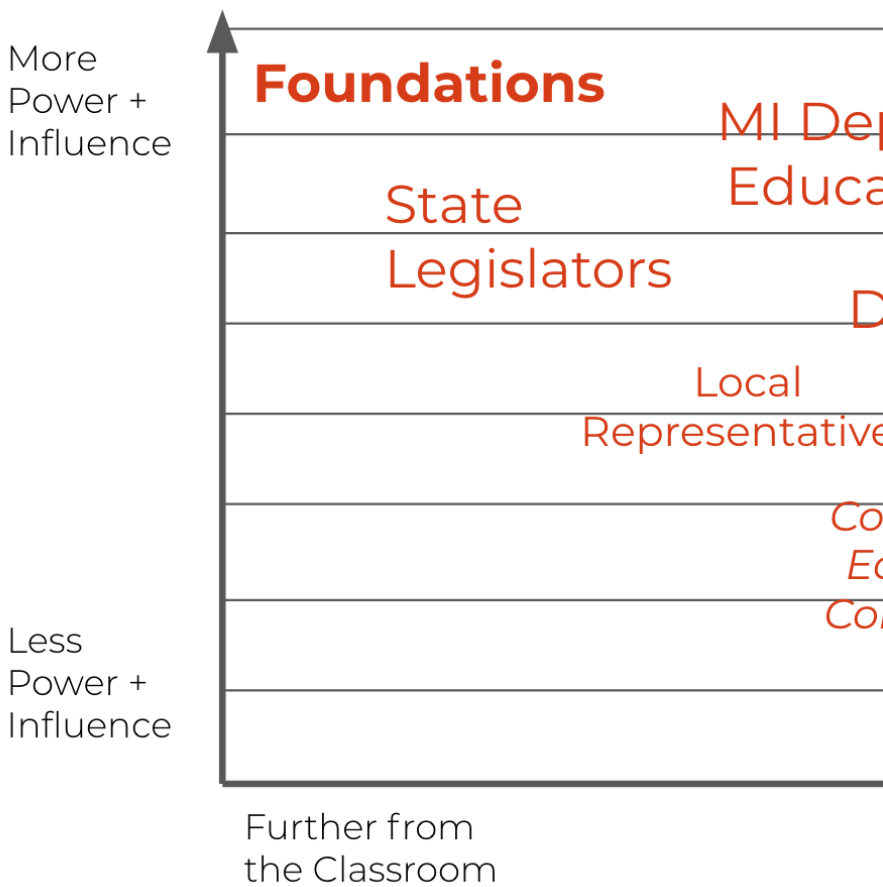


Figure 20: Ecosystem Map + Social Determinants by Capstone team

map covered in the upcoming Research Question section.

In May 2019 two Capstone team members attended the 2019 Design Futures Student Leadership Forum at the University of Utah’s School of Architecture. The forum is “a five-day, interdisciplinary convening bringing together student leaders from across the country with practitioners and university-faculty to learn and discuss best practices in social equity and community impact” (Design Futures Forum). At the forum the team members were introduced to a power mapping tool that is often used in community organizing. The tool is typically used to help stakeholders in community organizing to identify what groups exists within a community, what kind of power they hold, and what happens when their power is used in relation to others within a community.



This power mapping tool was helpful in conducting an initial power analysis of groups within Detroit’s education ecosystem. Figure 21 illustrates the team’s use of power mapping in relation to the ecosystem. The power analysis below reflects how the team understands what power dynamics look like within the ecosystem today. The X-axis of the tool illustrates groups that are far removed from the educational experience in the classroom and groups that are physically present in the classroom. The Y-axis shows groups that have less recognized decision-making power and influence and groups that have the most recognized decision-making power and influence.

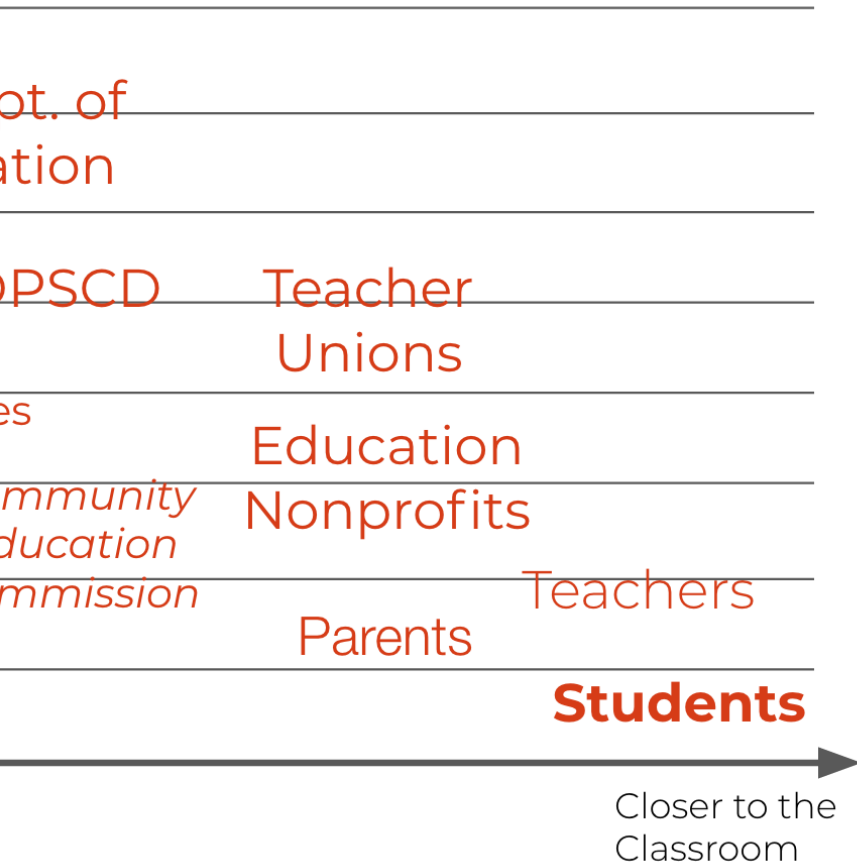


Figure 21: Initial Power Map created by the Capstone Team

Philanthropy is further removed from the educational experience in the classroom and has more power and influence, while teachers and students are present in the classroom and have the least power and influence. This observation plays an important role in understanding power and its dynamics, which will be explained later in this paper. Lastly, the team conducted focus groups made up of ecosystem stakeholders. In the stakeholder sessions, individuals identified groups they thought made up Detroit’s education ecosystem. The focus groups then engaged in power mapping. The takeaways from these focus groups led to a co-creation of recommendations that will be shared in the Outcomes and Conclusion sections.

TREND ANALYSIS

Turning to key takeaways from the Capstone team's research, four elements were extracted from the group's historical survey. These historical elements are among the determining factors that help explain Detroit's current education ecosystem. Three of them can be described as playing a pivotal role in creating forms of disabling justice, while the fourth is an example of how the community has responded to these injustices. They are as follows:

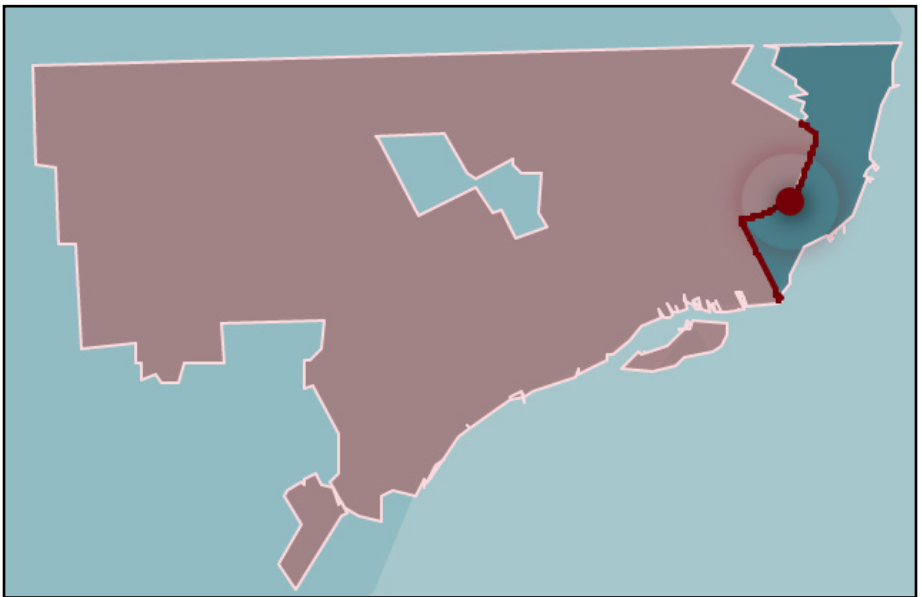
- Institutional racism--i.e imbedded within the fabric of educational policies, systems or institutions that serve Detroit students.
- Short term thinking & approaches with regards to philanthropy or education politics and policy.
- The long-term organizational and financial consequences of the public school system under some form of state oversight.
- Coalition-building as a community response deals with actions, decisions and conditions that together have impacted Detroit schoolchildren and public education.

Institutional Racism

Inequity is endemic, not only in schools in southeast Michigan, but in school districts across the country. These disparities, especially along racial lines, have persisted over the years, despite policies which have explicitly attempted to curb state-sanctioned segregation and resource allocation, including *Brown v. Board* and the Civil Rights Act. Beyond racial isolation, this segregation translates into significant per pupil funding disparities, with whiter, wealthier districts receiving, on average, \$4,000 more in per pupil funding per year (U.S. Census Bureau). The reasons for this persistence and even growth in disparities between schools and school districts seem to be perplexing; however, upon closer examination of a few key decisions made by institutions and local actors, a better

understanding emerges for why today’s schools are more segregated than ever.

Detroit, whose public-school district, DPSCD, is today 98% nonwhite, is no exception to these patterns and influences of race and racism in its public school system and relationship to surrounding school districts (EdBuild 1). In many ways, it is one of the worst examples of an American city where, over the course of several decades, racist federal and local real estate practices merged with conservative, business-led state policies to starve a community of the resources and means to sustain a healthy education environment for Detroit children and families.



DISTRICT	POVERTY RATE	ENROLLMENT	MEDIAN PROPERTY VALUE	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME
Detroit City School District	49%	49,043	\$45,100	\$26,087
Grosse Pointe Public Schools	7%	8,328	\$220,100	\$90,542

Figure 22: Map & data showing disparities along the Detroit/Grosse Pointe border

Source: EdBuild - “Faultlines: America’s Most Divisive Borders”, 2016

The 1950s brought both education reform within the courts and, conversely, local and state entrenchment of conservative and segregationist policy. The landmark case *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 handed down the ruling that states could not keep schools separated along racial lines, even if it was argued that those schools were equal in quality. This decision brought on quick and often violent responses from districts, politicians and white families who opposed integration, including the incident at Little Rock Central High School in 1957 in which federal troops had to be summoned in order to quell the protests. This decade also was the moment when notable economist Milton Friedman wrote, “The Role of Government in Education”, developing an argument for school choice and laying the ideological groundwork for future advocates of school choice policy.

In addition to these shifts in judicial decisions and education theory, notable federal policies were shaping social patterns in communities and neighborhood schools. The link between property taxes and dollars for education



Figure 23: Sign in a white Detroit neighborhood (1940s)
Source: Walter P. Reuther Library

has deeply embedded disparities in race and wealth across school district lines. This correlation has roots in the early and mid-20th century when federally-sanctioned redlining and locally developed restrictive covenants communicated to the real estate community and general public that nonwhite families were not allowed in white neighborhoods. Further, those geographies and neighborhoods in which nonwhite communities were confined were labeled as “non-desirable”, making it nearly impossible to acquire home loans in these communities. In the 1940s, a decade which was a high point in the wave of black Americans moving to industrial cities like Detroit as part of the Great Migration, saw only 1,500 single-family homes constructed that were open to black Detroiters, compared to 186,000 homes for white families (Sugrue 45).

The effects of these policies cannot be understated. Nonwhite families, unable to purchase a home without cash means, were unable to achieve the economic security that this life step entailed, thus, curtailing potential generational wealth accumulation and opportunity. Even when families were able to purchase homes in nonwhite neighborhoods, these properties held far less value than their white counterparts.

In this environment of institutional and industry-led racism which shaped Detroit’s neighborhoods, public schools and the children that attended them were certainly not immune, and echoed racist ideas. In 1946, one 6th grade classroom at Van Dyke School illustrated these sentiments. When asked to write an essay about “Why I like or don’t like Negroes” students mentioned, violence, cleanliness and housing conditions as reasonable explanations for their claims about their black neighbors (Sugrue 218). Instilling these racist ideas at a young age all but ensured these children would grow up to be parents who might have protested the busing of young black children to better-resourced white schools in the 1970s.

As neighborhood populations changed and white families moved at an alarming rate to the suburbs, fueled by relatively affordable homes and federally-funded freeways, the racial makeup of neighborhoods and their schools also transitioned. By 1970, only 1 in 3 students in Detroit Public Schools were white, and still mostly concentrated in majority white schools (Graham). Segregation in Detroit's schools was, in fact growing, while schools in the South began implementing desegregation plans. This flight was again aided by passing of a Michigan state law which, though providing more local controls to neighborhood schools, also allowed white students to leave their neighborhood schools, even though they continued to live in these neighborhoods. Black Detroit parents, working with the NAACP brought a lawsuit against the state (*Milliken v. Bradley*), challenging this law on the grounds that it led to increased racial isolation in schools that continued to be unequal. Determining that, at this point, there were not enough white students in Detroit have effective integration, U.S. District Court Judge Stephen Roth ruled that black and white students should be bussed across district lines between Detroit and the suburbs.

The response from white, suburban parents was swift and angry. A concurrent lawsuit which attempted to integrate Pontiac public schools by busing students to and from surrounding suburbs led to organized parent protests and, in 1971, the bombing of 10 empty Pontiac school buses by the KKK (Graham).

Though *Milliken v. Bradley* was upheld by two lower courts, once the appeals process finally brought it to the level of the U.S. Supreme Court, the decision was made 5-4 to overturn the busing plan, opening the doors for decades of de-facto segregation to follow. Summarized in his dissent, Justice Thurgood Marshall notes,

“Because of the already high and rapidly increasing percentage of Negro students in the Detroit system, as well as the prospect of white flight, a Detroit-only plan simply has no hope of achieving actual desegregation. Under such a plan, white and Negro students will not go to school together. Instead, Negro children will continue to attend all-Negro schools. The very evil that Brown I was aimed at will not be cured, but will be perpetuated for the future.”

- Justice Thurgood Marshall

The case also conveyed in a larger sense to civil rights groups, that the federal government could not be counted on to uphold justice and equity in American communities. In 1974, when the Supreme Court struck down desegregation plans in *Milliken v. Bradley*, ruling that busing could only occur within Detroit and no further, it essentially took the wind out of the NAACP's decades long focus on schools as providing the main leverage for civil rights and racial justice (Kang 7).

As deindustrialization and loss of jobs continued to draw families toward the suburbs, the loss of students and the funding they carried with them, threatened the financial stability of Detroit's public school district which, up until the 1960s, was trying to keep pace with a growing student body. As referenced in Figure 24 below, the 1970s became a turning point for the district and the city, in which the loss of overall population was mirrored by a shrinking student body.

Figure 24: City of Detroit Population & Detroit Public Schools Enrollment
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Michigan Center for Educational Performance

	1970	1980	1990	20
City of Detroit	1,511,482	1,203,368	1,027,974	951
Detroit Public Schools	293,822	224,358	182,332	169

Though the decline was consistent between the 1970s until the 2010s, charter schools and Schools of Choice policy that was introduced in the 1990s and expanded in the subsequent decades, ushered in a new era of Detroit public school challenges. This more recent history saw not only white families continuing to leave DPS in search of better-resourced schools, but, increasingly, nonwhite families also used these new opportunities. Over the years, both Detroit charter schools and adjacent suburban districts saw an increase in students who formerly were a part of the Detroit Public School system (Figure 25). Today, roughly 30,000 Detroit students travel outside the city for school in suburban school districts (Lenoff).

These trends have the effect of creating additional competition for the current Detroit Public School Community District. In spite of efforts to provide additional choices for nonwhite families, students continue to attend schools and these trends have the effect of creating additional competition for the current Detroit Public School Community District.

2000	2010	2015	1970-1990	1990-2015
1,232	713,777	677,116	-32%	-34%
1,363	77,594	47,959	-38%	-73%

In spite of efforts to provide additional choices for nonwhite families, students continue to attend schools and districts which are still largely segregated by race and the majority of schools have been hurt by the increased competition. In 2016, there were an estimated 30,000 empty seats in Detroit schools, with this oversupply leading both public and charter schools to lose critical resources and struggle to keep up with basic building maintenance (Einhorn).

Detroit Resident Public School Student Enrollment by Type of District, 2009-10 to 2015-16

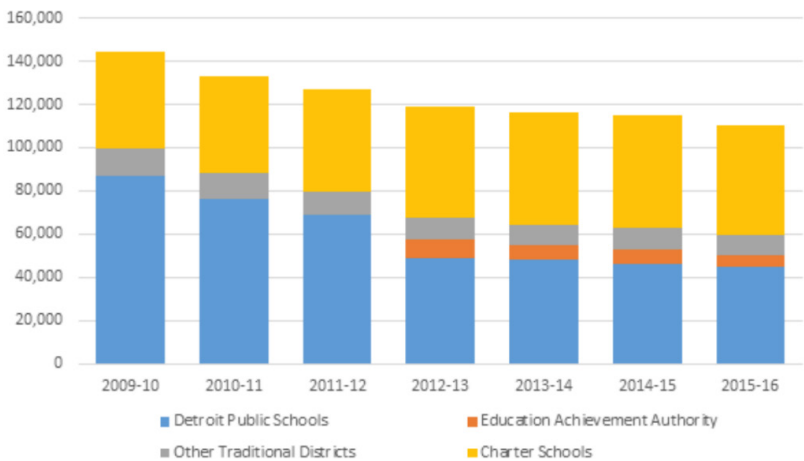


Figure 25: Detroit student enrollment by district type
Source: Wayne State College of Education

Not all school districts have decided allowed inter-district student participation, and further, choice is further limited by the ability for families to transport students to schools that are greater distances from where families live. In fact, a 2018 report found that in metro-Detroit, black and brown students travel farther to school than their white and asian counterparts (Cowen). Moreover, even with the call of better schools, parents in “choice-rich” cities prioritize distance to school as at least as important as academic quality (Cowen). This pattern is summarized by EdBuild in a 2019 report, *Dismissed: America’s Most Divisive School District Borders*:

“Today, it is common around the country for majority-minority communities to be hemmed into single, large school districts while whiter and more affluent communities each get their own micro-district. These divisions are not by accident. As described above, decades of racist policies and local practices have contributed to shaping Detroit education system as it is today. Though many other factors contributed to these outcomes, race continues to influence policy and funding for Detroit public schools.”

Lack of Sustainability

The second historical element, or form of injustice, is lack of sustainability and forward thinking approaches via philanthropy or education politics and policy. This section explores the inter-related nature of policy and politics, wealth and the influence of foundations on the Detroit public school system and finds that, though the resources may be plentiful, they have not been distributed and planned for with long-term, public access in mind; thus, contributing to the inequities we see between community school systems today.

When it comes to sustainability and future thinking for education in Detroit and communities across Michigan, both state policies and philanthropic investments have displayed a lack of consistency in providing the resources necessary to support education for all students. Since the 1990s, Michigan policy has sought to remedy challenges in public school systems, including large urban systems such as Detroit's, by encouraging competition between schools and creating more options for families to choose from. As described in the earlier trend section exploring race, these policies had the effect of further depleting a school district already in crisis, due to population, by opening further avenues for students and their families to flee. With the loss of student funding, Detroit Public Schools began taking steps to curb further losses by closing schools and cutting any academic resources not deemed essential, including school social workers, teachers aid and extracurricular classes.

Seeing this compounding loss in resources and support for Detroit schoolchildren, several major philanthropic entities have stepped in to fill these funding gaps. Millions of dollars have been spent in the last few decades on programs for Detroit schools and youth; however, much of these funds have been spent on special programs, experimental

initiatives and the creation of frameworks that are time bound and have done little to move the needle on improving student experience and increasing access to better educational opportunities for the majority of Detroit students.

Philanthropic giving has expanded over the years and has increasingly taken on a larger role in community development and, more specifically, education initiatives. This rise in philanthropic giving mirrors a decline in overall public funding for education, with Michigan ranking last among states in funding growth for public education over the last 25 years (Arsen). Both national and local foundations, including the Kresge Foundation, Skillman Foundation and the Kellogg Foundation, have poured millions into education initiatives in Detroit. Much of this funding has been spent on charter school support, education advocacy groups, and “turn-around” programs without providing direct support to public schools themselves. The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation alone contributed \$25 million to the newly formed Education Achievement Authority in 2012, a state-run school district that was later absorbed back into the Detroit Public School Community District. Eight EAA schools were listed as part of 38 Michigan schools set to close in 2017, just five years after the creation of the EAA and initial, significant investment. This “failure” of the EAA has contributed to the hesitation some philanthropic organizations feel when considering investments in Detroit. These investors want to have some guarantee that their money will not go to waste.

No single foundation can change the trajectory of a community education system, but their collective impact has certainly been felt in the Detroit public school system. While coalition-building between public, philanthropic, and business entities has been a positive recent direction taken by foundations, these efforts still lack meaningful inclusion

of residents, students and community members most impacted by their decisions. As described by Wayne State University education professor Thomas Pedroni, “It would be different if what foundations were doing was taking huge quantities of funding and listening to education research and community activists and putting [money] where research says it would make a difference.”

Most alarming to the current state of Detroit Public School Community District is that fact that its existence is on the clock, as well. With the initial agreement that created the new district, the state still has the legal right to assume control of it if financial stability is not achieved by 2026. Back in 2016, Chris Theil, a policy analyst with the Citizens Research Council of Michigan, warned that the state’s new rescue plan will certainly help DPS in the short term, but the state will have to do more to address the district’s “ongoing structural problems of declining enrollment, rising numbers of special education students, and a shrinking market share.”

Recent research in education policy recommends Michigan re-assess its decades of approaching public education with a business mindset, which has harmed both public and charter schools (Arsen). If the state is going to hold students and teachers to high standards, attached to tests which often determine the fate of not only students, but schools themselves, the state is obligated to provide adequate resources to meet those standards of learning and development. Given the high risk associated with investing in program-based, short-term education initiatives, the philanthropic community would best serve Detroit’s education system by participating in coalitions, in which residents, teachers and students have a seat at the table. Out of these coalitions, investment decisions would be made by those most impacted by them: students, who have the most incentive to support long-term education initiatives and invest in their success.

Emergency Management & State Oversight

The third disabling constraint is reflected in long-term organizational and financial consequences of DPS under some form of emergency financial management. DPS was under state control from 1999-2005. This state oversight was primarily tied to poor academic performance across the district. From 2009-2016 state oversight was in the form of emergency financial management. This emergency management overlapped with the establishment of the Education Achievement Authority (EAA)—a turnaround district for Michigan’s poorest, academically performing schools. In both cases, there were high amounts of school closures that impacted the overall health and vitality of the public-school district. There are a number of factors that further propelled DPS into economic downturn. This downturn was not isolated from the City of Detroit’s economic challenges. As mentioned under the first disabling constraint, DPS’ student depopulation mirroring Detroit’s depopulation patterns.

The one question that many people ask is: Why did Detroit spiral into continuous decline? John Mogk, a law professor and historian at Wayne State University, frames Detroit’s challenges under two factors: city demographics and infrastructure. A culmination of federal, state and local policy shaped the social, physical and economic landscape of Detroit. The city’s demographic characteristic was significantly poor and black. Why? Community revitalization under the guise of urban renewal, the subsidized highway system, and discriminatory loan policies that gave whites a pass to the suburban life and strategically kept black people within the city (Beyer). Mogk also links Detroit’s economic challenges to its outdated post-industrial infrastructure:

“leftover housing and factories that make it difficult to develop economically, blighted buildings that are difficult to remove or repair, and limited land opportunity because Detroit’s land is occupied with empty and blighted buildings” (Beyer).

Peter Saunders, a native Detroiter and Forbes columnist, aligns with Mogk’s view but he believes much of Detroit’s economic state is due to “poor planning or the lack thereof.” Saunder’s main concern is Detroit’s legacy of “antiquated and idiosyncratic land use character that prevents post-industrial [economic] growth.” He points to issues such as a poor public realm—i.e. old housing stock, non-cohesive neighborhoods and car-oriented road design, a downtown that was allowed to become weak, lack/of or loss of a transportation network, local government organization that was not ward or district based, as well as ill-timed and unfulfilled annexation policy (Saunders).

But Michael LaFaive, of the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, ascribes Detroit’s economic downturn to the city’s inability to attract human and financial capital. LaFaive highlights Detroit’s overall efforts to attract corporations, who in the end choose to set up shop outside the city limits. In his opinion, “Detroit politicians for decades have repeatedly made capital unwelcome.” According to a 2014 study by the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Detroit had the highest property tax rates of any major U.S. city, it provided poor city services to its citizens, due to strict occupational licensing laws there was little to no economic freedom, and pure political corruption (primarily under Mayors Coleman A. Young and Kwame Kilpatrick). As a free capitalist, LaFaive believes that you must “attract rich people who create jobs and fund services needed for cities to continue growing.” Detroit’s economic struggles are not about socially-engineered, segregationist patterns of urban planning but simply Detroit’s inability to attract capital, business and economic growth” (Beyer).

No matter one's perspective on Detroit's economic downturn, all of the above rationales touch on the social, political, and economic forces that shaped Detroit's complex landscape. But to understand the context of DPS' challenges in the late 90s requires a brief overview of the factors that led up to the school district under state control.

Under State Control

On March 26, 1999, Governor John Engler signed into law Public Act 10—legislation for DPS board takeover. There was much debate within the state legislature about what to do with Detroit's currently elected school board. State oversight was enacted due to DPS' poor academic performance, enrollment and a dire graduation rate of 30%. The previous year the district had 180,000 students; about 71% of the population were unexplainably "missing in action" (Mackinac Center for Public Policy). PA 10, the "mayoral takeover" law, suspended the currently elected school board and its superintendent and authorized the mayor to appoint a reform board. "The reform board, consisting of seven members, would determine school policy including the selection of Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The seventh member, however, was the governor's appointee who had special powers to veto the selection of the new CEO if he/she deemed necessary" (Kang 73).

The governor's reform board was known for its aggressive school closure and consolidation approach to improving the state of the school district. Loveland Technologies Report entitled, *A School District In Crisis: Detroit's Public Schools 1842-2015*, describes the district's state after seven years of the state's appointed mayoral takeover:

By 2006 the district was losing over 10,000 students a year, and the number of school closings that year jumped to 26. The rapid pace with which schools closed meant that some students attended four different schools in four years. Closings and consolidations that had affected only a few thousand students three years ago now impacted over 10,000 students every year. With fewer schools to choose from, students began walking longer distances to school, often through dangerous neighborhoods that lacked streetlights. Closing high schools was especially problematic. Most of the city's high schools were large, sprawling campuses designed in the 1920's and 30's for thousands of students. With graduation rates of only 56% and a dropout rate of nearly 30% in 2007, 92 high school students were at especially high risk of leaving the school system if buildings had to be closed or consolidated.

As early as the 1970s Detroit has experienced a constant rate of depopulation. These depopulation patterns are mirrored in the decline of DPS' student enrollment. The decline in student population pointed to an ever-increasing bout of chronic school closures throughout the district. Between 2000 and 2015, 195 Detroit Public Schools closed as enrollment fell from 162,693 students to 47,959, a decline of 71%. There were 93 active school buildings in 2015, compared to over 380 in 1975 (Loveland Technologies). Today many of the 111 remaining schools are under capacity, with aging infrastructure and an oversupply of student seats that makes them expensive to operate.

There is also the role of state policies that facilitated greater school choice. Michigan's education legislation, PA 300 (1996), "removed the requirement that the school district of residence had to approve a student's transfer to another district within the same intermediate school district" (Mackinac Center for Public Policy).

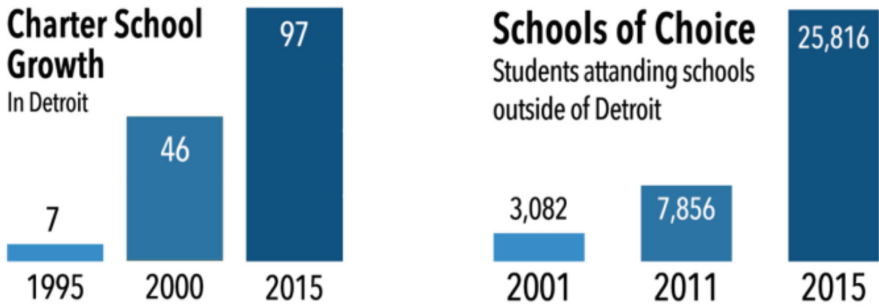


Figure 26: Growth of charter schools 1995-2015
 Source: mischooldata.org

In 2013 the Michigan legislature expanded the opportunity for school districts to participate in the School of Choice program under section 105/105c of the State School Aid Act. Prior to the passing of PA 300, Michigan voters passed Proposal A (1994) which fundamentally changed the funding structure for public school education. One of the consequences of Proposal A on DPS schools was that it allowed funding to follow the student to the education provider of his or her choice (Citizens Research Council of Michigan 3). When DPS’ many struggles started to plateau, to a parent “school of choice” was a crucial “pass” to better educational conditions and opportunities for Detroit their children.

The presence of charter schools was another factor that added to DPS’ challenge with depopulation and chronic school closures. The revised school code legislation, PA 451 (1976), permitted the creation of public-school academies— “state-supported public schools under the state constitution, operating under a charter contract issued by a public authorizing body.” Charter schools are considered school districts and are treated no differently than traditional public-school districts (State of Michigan).

By definition, charters and their charter schools are supported by the state, primarily through per-pupil funding. Figure 26 illustrates the rate of charter school growth over a 15-year period as well as reflects “schools of choice” and its relationship to students attending schools outside of Detroit. By mere existence, charter schools and “schools of choice,” created a type of competition amongst education providers. And for DPS this competition translated in loss of its student population and, consequentially per-pupil funding, charter school growth and “schools of choice” also created competition in teacher recruitment and affected teacher retention in DPS schools. In 2017, it was reported that “teacher turnover is driven in part by the competition between schools in Detroit that has intensified as charter schools have expanded—they now comprise nearly half of the city’s schools” (Einhorn). High levels of teacher turnover do affect the learning outcomes of students and DPSCD has attempted to address the issue of teacher turnover. In 2018 DPSCD made the following statement regarding their teacher recruitment efforts:

We have reduced teacher vacancies over the past year indicated by there being 270 vacancies two years at the opening of school, 160 last year, and 80 this year. To improve teacher recruitment we have increased salaries, maintained the cost of benefits, expanded recruitment to HBCUs nationally, and created new partnerships with universities to place student teachers as interns in our schools (McAboy).

In addition to DPSCD efforts, Skillman Foundation has created initiatives such as Teach 313 to address the overall need of teachers within Detroit. This initiative focuses on recruitment of teachers, increasing the quality of life for teachers in Detroit and increasing retention of teachers in the city” (Teach 313). Teach 313 is designed to be the “central hub for resources, incentives and career opportunities within its online platform and app” (About - Teach 313). As a leading Detroit education philanthrope, Skillman directly impacts the educational ecosystem by strengthening the educator pipeline and providing teachers with tools and resources that impact their professional development.

Under Emergency Management

In 2008 Gov. Jennifer Granholm invoked Public Act 72 to declare emergency financial management of DPS, due to the elected school board’s failure to erase the district’s 35 deficit of \$200M. DPS was under emergency management from 2009-2016. In 2004 Burnley announced a \$200M deficit ending June 30. Superintendent Burnley and Granholm arranged for \$210M, 15-year loan with a 50 percent finance charge as part of repayment schedule (Dismantling DPS Timeline). In 2009 DPS went under emergency management. This introduced a litany of emergency managers who promised to eliminate DPS’ debt. Three of the four emergency managers would take out huge loans to repair or build new schools or refinance existing debt. It was only under emergency manager Roy Roberts that that DPS’ debt was reduced through refinancing its \$245M long-term debt. Figure 8 summarizes DPS’ six years under emergency management. Without failure, the elected school board would inherit some form of debt after emergency management came to an end. The exercise of following the spending habits under emergency management may help in creating a narrative that connects decision-making power and its impact on the shape and ethos of Detroit education.

In 2008 Gov. Jennifer Granholm invoked Public Act 72 to declare emergency financial management of DPS; this While DPS was under emergency management another form of state control was underway due to poor academic performance reflected in the bottom five percent of Michigan’s schools. In 2011, the new “state-wide” district, the Education Achievement Authority (EAA), eventually assumed oversight of 15 DPS schools. Student enrollment within this district totaled 11,000 students; five years later enrollment in these schools dropped to 5,000 students (Higgins). The economic impact of the EAA was the migration of per-pupil from DPS. This compounded with emergency management left only exacerbated DPS’ economic fragility. A close examination of financial management, between 2009 and 2016, enables an effective analysis of the relationship between decision-making and its impact on Detroit education can inform the Capstone team’s recommendations on how to improve the fiscal health of DPS and ultimately DPS education.

In 2016 Gov. Snyder signed into law a \$617M bailout that ended emergency management of Detroit public schools and created the new Detroit Public Schools Community District. The Capstone team attended DPSCD’s board Finance Committee Meeting last month. DPSCD’s CFO, Jeremy Vidito, reported that DPSCD was in its third year of a balanced budget. However, the new school district has old and new debt service it is currently paying down. In 2016, DPSCD inherited legacy debt that amounted to \$1.9 billion in operating liabilities (mostly pension liability costs) and owed another \$1.7 billion in bonds and state loans for capital improvements (Zaniewski). In early May 2019, DPSCD had to make a \$182M payment to bond holders of its capital debt. Half of the payment came from Michigan’s School Loan Revolving Fund and the other half from levied property taxes—i.e. commercial, industrial and residential (Livengood).

Timeline of DPS under Emergency Financial Management (2009-2014)

Source: "Detroit schools may take next step without an EM" by Shawn D. Lewis

- **March 2009:** Robert Bobb named emergency financial manager, pegs deficit at \$150M.
- **April 2009:** Bobb says unbudgeted employees, excessive overtime and other costs will boost deficit to more than \$300M.
- **May 2009:** DPS says it will close 29 schools.
- **June 2009:** Bobb plans to lay off more than 1,700 employees. The number is later reduced to 1,510.
- **November 2009:** Detroit voters pass a \$500.5M bond to revamp 18 schools.
- **March 2010:** Bobb projects a \$319M deficit by June 30th but says the district will be in the black by 2013.
- **May 2011:** Roy Roberts named new emergency financial manager.
- **July 2011:** Roberts overrides union contract and imposes 10% pay cut on DPS employees.
- **October 2011:** DPS refinances \$245M in long-term debt, cutting its deficit to \$84M.
- **September 2012:** The Education Achievement Authority opens with 15 schools transferred from DPS.
- **January 2013:** DPS files financial plan calling for deficit to be eliminated by 2016 through school closings and job cuts.
- **July 2013:** Jack Martin is named new emergency financial manager. He vows to fix finances by attracting new students.
- **November 2013:** DPS leaves "high-risk" status and federal oversight—in place 2008—after fiscal conditions improve.
- **March 2014:** The district's deficit jumps to a projected \$120M.
- **August 2014:** DPS proposes a 10% salary cut and class sizes of up to 43 students. The state approves the plan, but the district cancels it after protests from teachers and parents.
- **October 2014:** The district agrees to transfer 77 vacant schools building and lots to the city to erase an \$11.6M debt.
- **December 2014:** Gov. Rick Snyder says the state's emergency manager law has failed to fix DPS. A state report says the deficit has grown to \$169.4M. The district submits a revised plan calling for it to get out of the red by 2022-23.

Figure 27: Timeline of Detroit under Emergency Management
Source: Shawn D. Lewis

DPSCD faces \$500M in capital needs and has an outstanding loan balance Michigan's School Revolving Fund that amounts to \$152.6M. The former is in addition to nearly \$410M borrowed by DPS since 2011. The \$91.5M dollar loan from the revolving fund is 1/5th of the \$412M that 103 school districts in Michigan have borrowed to bridge gaps between tax collection and debt obligations. DPSCD's CFO Jeremy Vidito explained at the board's finance committee meeting DPSCD cannot issue bonds for capital construction until DPS' \$1.4 billion in outstanding bond debt is paid off in 30 years or more. This means that Superintendent Vitti has a challenge in finding ways to address DPSCD's \$500M in capital needs.

To address this challenge Vitti has appointed Dave Meador, Vice Chairman and Chief Administrative Office at DTE Energy, to assemble a “small cross-functional team of public finance experts, construction project manager and attorneys from businesses in Detroit” to address DPSCD’s growing threat of used school buildings that need repairs (Livengood).

Institutional racism, short-term thinking in philanthropy, education policy and the financial and organizational consequences related to state oversight has had a profound impact on a very significant aspect of Detroit’s education ecosystem, its public school district. The litany of attempts to bring about education reform, through local and state education legislation reflects a lack of comprehensive strategy between these levels of government to address major systemic educational challenges. But the relationship between state and local educational leaders was a relationship fraught with hostility due to emergency management and oversight. One could argue the above disabling constraints are unwelcomed occupiers of public education. And the response to these constraints have fueled the legacy of coalition-building that spans across the century divide.

Coalition-building

During the early 20th century, the advent of rapid industrialization and urbanization in America, introduced a new generation of educational reformers came to the forefront. These Progressive Era reformers, an elite group of business and educational experts, sought to control and professionalize schools through the establishment of a school board at the top of a hierarchical system. They instituted a centralized, corporate type structure for education governance that supported a “one best school system”—local control of the educational system and in educational decision-making” (Kang 2-3). Progressive Era reformers eventually matured into what Clarence Stone refers to as the urban regime, “a postwar coalition” (Kang 6-7). An urban regime is “the informal arrangements by which public bodies and private interests function together in order to be able to make and carry out governing decisions (Kang 55). Urban regimes shaped and addressed many social challenges during the first half of the 20th century—this included public education.

But the 1960s and 70s introduced new social, economic and political realities that challenged the impact of the one-best school system on specific groups within urban communities. For example:

Millions of Blacks who migrated to central cities from rural areas between 1940-1970 in hopes for better opportunities found themselves in educational wastelands. Racial discrimination and de facto segregation resulted in Black pupils disproportionately attending the worst schools. African Americans and other American minorities had long been dissatisfied with the one best system. Finally, in Detroit, for example, Blacks would gain some political leverage by the late 1940s and began organizing around the educational needs of their children, some of the first steps taken by the civil rights movement. (Kang 22)

As early as the 1940s, Black civic leaders joined with White liberals and labor leaders using class-based discourse to form a coalition in support of educational reforms, often in opposition to business. Because blacks who migrated from Jim Crow South to Detroit were well aware of the fight against social, economic and political inequality, their specialized concerns regarding education for black children put a strain on Detroit's education coalition. By the 1950s, as the Black population continued to grow, they increasingly became an important voting block and a significant member of the coalition that supported DPS (Kang 5). Partnerships between the NAACP and organized labor such as the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the Detroit Federation of Teachers (DFT) forged a powerful liberal-labor-black coalition in support of addressing educational inequalities and the public schooling of all children (Kang 5). Embedded within Detroit's history of coalition-building is community building through community organizing. This is reflected in programs like James Boggs and Grace Lee Boggs's Detroit Summer. Both James and Grace were leading Detroit community activists; their influence reached back as far as Detroit's Labor, Civil Rights and Black Power movements (Chow). They were also actively involved in the work of environmental justice. Grace Lee Boggs once shared her thoughts about her evaluation of Detroit's school system and its impact on children:

"It is because our school system deprives children and young people of opportunities to engage in activities like these [community building] as a natural and normal part of the curriculum that it is now in such crisis. All too many classrooms have become war zones where teachers can't teach and children can't learn because we are still following the "command and control" model created 100 years ago to prepare young people for factory work."

In the late 1980s and early 90s James and Grace saw the need to reach out to Detroit’s youth. Detroit Summer was started in 1992. It was patterned after the 1964 Freedom Summer (also known as Mississippi Summer). Freedom Summer was an effort that re-energized The Civil Rights Movements, primarily through student led organizing aimed at voter registration(Editors, History.com). Grace Lee Boggs felt that “young people needed a chance to make a difference in their city.” Detroit Summer was the tool that introduced Detroit youth to the idea of youth participation and leadership in community building (Putnam). The program fosters youth empowerment and development through community building activities such as “planting community gardens, recycling waste, organizing neighborhood arts and health festivals, rehabbing houses, and painting murals” (Putnam). The reach of the Boggs exists in other initiatives such as the Boggs Center to Nurture Community Leadership—an institute that builds



Figure 28: Detroit Summer youth participants, 1990s
Source: The Boggs Center

community leadership capacity in middle school and high school youth (Americans Who Tell the Truth).

Grace Lee Boggs sentiment that young people needed a chance to make a difference in their city is no better reflected than protests back in 2012 over the threat and impact of school closures. At that time, DPS' Emergency Manager Roy Roberts had announced that 16 schools would be closed or consolidated, 4 would be chartered and 15 would go under the Education Achievement Authority (EAA). Of the 15 schools, four of them (O.W. Holmes, Logan, Maybury Elementary & Southwestern High School) were located in Southwest Detroit, primarily serving a significant population of Spanish-speaking DPS students (Foley). A coalition made up of students, parents, and community activists, organized a protest at Maybury Elementary, to express their displeasure about Roberts' announcement. The coalition included organizations such as Clark Park Coalition, Occupy Detroit and By Any Means Necessary. Students at nearby Southwest Detroit public schools participated in walkouts to express their solidarity with the coalition's efforts. But students expressed concerns about the closure and consolidation of schools, especially when it came to violence due to Latin gang members attending the same schools or the need for bilingual teachers (Sands).

The coalition demanded a meeting with Roberts to express their overall needs and concerns about systemic challenges that impacted DPS students. DPS contracted the Detroit Parent Network to arrange customized hearings to address these concerns. The Capstone group could not find if the meetings occurred, but Maybury Elementary stayed open and Southwestern High School eventually closed in 2012 (Burns). Now under the DPSCD, Maybury offers a Montessori approach to education—"which demands multi-age learning, small class sizes and allows even young students great discretion in how they spend their school days" (Dickson).

Earlier in the case studies section, two education coalitions were introduced, Excellent Schools Detroit (ESD) and The Coalition for the Future of Detroit's Schoolchildren (CFDS). Detroit's legacy of coalition building is also reflected within coalitions like ESD and CFDS. Again, they are a part of a litany of education reformers who wanted to see improvement in Detroit's education systems, both public and charter. In some ways, both education coalitions represent the concept of the urban regime. An urban regime looks and functions similar to the way the Capstone team understands the ecosystem today. But the term urban regime, "the informal arrangements by which public bodies and private interests function together in order to be able to make and carry out governing decisions," more so describes the way that various aspects of the education ecosystem function in relationship to each other for the purpose of education reform (Kang 55). The concept of the urban regime fully embraces the reality that education politics exists within the regime itself. Informal decisions made between public bodies and private interests should be considered education politics.

For the Capstone team, ESD's eventual closure, as an education coalition turned non-profit, reflected an inability to manage themselves as a leading education reformer who successfully leveraged education politics ultimately for the benefit of Detroit schoolchildren. Their influence to create something like an EAA had already caught the attention of state education officials and legislators. But the EAA's impact on public education left DPS economically vulnerable with its loss of 15 DPS schools within DPS' portfolio of physical assets and the loss of per pupil funding that followed public school students to their new home within the EAA. When the EAA was created there were local and state camps in favor as well as against such a drastic move on the part of the governor. But the EAA was presented to Detroit parents as a necessary intervention to ensure quality education.

One must ask why such a move was necessary when in the end the same 15 schools were transferred back to Detroit's public school board under its newly formed DPSCD. The question still remains: *How did Detroit's schoolchildren benefit from the creation of the EAA?* There were critics who felt the EAA had "too many inexperienced teachers and a stubborn reliance on educational software that was rife with problems" (Guyette). As a turnaround school district the EAA did not quite reach the mark as an alternative to failing public school education under DPS. Upon the disbanding of the EAA, Excellent Schools Detroit closed its doors. These two occurrences of closure were not a coincidence. The education reform efforts of ESD definitely had state backing, but even with this, ESD was not able to report that its work had succeeded in making critical transformation through the educational experiment of the Educational Achievement Authority.

The second education coalition, The Coalition for the Future of Detroit Schoolchildren (CFDS) has taken a different trajectory than ESD. Similar to ESD, CFDS has financial backing and leadership from the Skillman Foundation. CFDS has not taken efforts to operationalize its work through an established nonprofit. Unlike ESD, this initiative has remained a coalition in its purest form. By the time the EAA disbanded and their schools were returned to local public oversight, CFDS was already in existence. CFDS saw this occurrence as a critical moment to address Detroiters - students, parents, teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators and the newly established DPSCD school board - to challenge them to work collaboratively and strategically for the future of Detroit's schoolchildren.

Their first report *The Choice is Ours* (2015) challenged the state to work in partnership with local leadership in transforming public and charter school education in Detroit. CFDS members had witnessed the immediate contentious years of education reform and concluded that efforts failed to secure the future of Detroit schoolchildren. Its challenge to both the state and local leadership demonstrates CFDS ability to manage themselves as a leading education reformer while leveraging this position for the benefit of Detroit's education ecosystem.

Although the Capstone team is not clear regarding whether CFDS is still in existence, it has proven to be a uniting force that provided a single vision that groups across the ecosystem could believe in and relate too. CFDS has played a critical role in placing issues like school attendance and chronic absenteeism, as well as the idea of Third Grade Reading Proficiency, into the spotlight. Currently, work across the ecosystem on chronic absenteeism seems to be one of the most pressing issues that various education advocacy and community development organizations have taken on since its inception.

The Coalition for the Future of Detroit School Children Proposals for Education Reform in Detroit			
The Choice is Ours (2015) *Addressed to the State		Our Schools our Moment (2017) *Addressed to Detroiters	
Key Points	Recommendations	Focus Areas	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing responsibility for turning around Detroit schools. • Choosing academic excellence (rejecting mediocrity in education performance and provision). • Choose a citywide system that works for all students and families in every neighborhood. • Choosing equitable supports for all students and families in every neighborhood. • Choosing fair and sustainable funding for students and families in every neighborhood. • [All stakeholders] Understand the implications of choosing well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citywide Coordination & Planning. • Return governance of Detroit Public Schools to an elected school board. • Charter authorizers and charter school boards should improve transparency, focus more on quality, and better coordinate all charter schools. • The state should assume the DPS debt. • Create a new nonpartisan entity, the Detroit Education Commission (DEC), to coordinate and rationalize citywide education functions in partnership with Regional Councils to incorporate neighborhood level input. • Establish advisory School Leadership Teams. • Empower and fund the State School Reform Office and State School Reform District • Create shared systems of data, enrollment and neighborhood transportation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citywide Coordination & Planning • College and Career Pats • Financial Implications for Special Education • Increase Student Count • Parental Support and Engagement • Recruit, Compensate and Develop School Talent • School Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism • Third Grade Reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get Serious About Attendance • Choose Detroit— Making Detroit and its education market attractive to highly-skilled, educated teaching professionals and students. • Learn to Read, Read to Learn • Keep Pace with Detroit's Economic Recovery • Fully Fund Special Education • Expect Improved Cooperation and Accountability from Our Leaders • Next Steps— Reconvene in 2018 to explore ways to formalize collective action to link efforts that impact Detroit children and families from cradle to career.

Figure 29: Proposals for Education Reform based on two reports
Source: The Coalition for the Future of Detroit School Children

SWOT ANALYSIS

In order to contribute to the co-creation of an ecosystem, the Capstone team considered the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that impact the educational landscape. Strengths relates to notions of power or agency. Weaknesses are related to deficiencies or elements lacking within the ecosystem. Opportunities point to what is possible in changing power imbalances and creating quality conditions within education. Threats point to possible dangers that could occur as a result of actions or decisions within the ecosystem. Incorporating the HOPE model with the SWOT allows the Capstone team to take a holistic approach with its analysis. The HOPE-SWOT enables the group to assess:

- How individuals and organizations work independently or collaboratively within the ecosystem;
- In doing the former, understand how individuals and organizations impact education, and specifically, those adversely impacted by the ecosystem; and
- Who are the decision makers impacting the ecosystem in significant ways and how do they decide who and what kind of impact will take place.

What follows is a brief overview of the Capstone team's investigation of the ecosystem and its overall assessment of the key takeaways from the research.

Strengths

- Elements for a healthy education ecosystem are present within Detroit.
- The ecosystem is vast because there is a vested interest in improving education in Detroit.
- DPS has strong alumni pride.
- Community organizing is central to Detroit's DNA and shows up in education coalition building ("urban regime").

The Detroit education ecosystem possesses a myriad of strengths that are often overshadowed by systemic challenges. Community organizing and grassroots efforts to protect students and teachers from inequitable practices, and which also support students and teachers to actualize the system they deem is most effective, has been monumental and is a strength of the current ecosystem. Pushback against an unjust educational system took place when Detroit Public Schools Community Districts (DPSCD) students sued the state of Michigan for lack of access to literacy resources within. On June 29th 2018, Judge Stephen Murphy, of the U.S. District Court, dismissed a lawsuit filed on behalf of seven Detroit public schools Community District students that claimed the state of Michigan denied them access to literacy due to the poor conditions of Detroit Public Schools. When Judge Murphy made the decision to dismiss the lawsuit, the students decided they would appeal the ruling. This organizing effort amongst students is important because it helps highlight the power of voices in young black students and people of color. Furthermore, not appealing such a decision leaves other brown and black students, parents, and community members under the impression that literacy and quality equitable education is a privilege and not a human right (Wilkinson).

The right to education is reflected in international law in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Articles 13 and 14 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The right to education is also reaffirmed in the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education, the 1981 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. Attorney Mark Rosenbaum, who represents the student plaintiffs stated, "Children from affluent communities in Michigan do not attend schools in their communities lacking teachers, books and safe and sanitary conditions, and children of color and from less advantaged communities are entitled to no less. This is both a moral and a constitutional imperative" (Slagter). Although youth organizing is a very important strength, there exists opportunity for this type of organizing to occur as often as necessary — i.e. placing power is in the hands of those most impacted by the decisions made within the educational ecosystem.

Community organizing is central to Detroit's DNA and is exhibited in education coalition building. For example, the efforts of a community coalition included organizations 482Forward, ACLU Michigan, American Federation of Teachers, Michigan Detroit Federation of Teachers, Good Jobs Now, MOSES, Mothering Justice, NAACP-Detroit Branch, formed the Detroit Education Justice Coalition. This coalition created a platform which held the DPSCD School Board accountable to the following promises: Full, fair funding and democratically accountable governance, manageable class sizes and caseloads, schools that educate and support the whole child, welcoming safe and inclusive schools, supported educators, culturally relevant curriculum, and equitable special education services. This coalition was developed as part of a campaign to lift up public education as a key issue in the 2018 elections.

In order to see this goal accomplished, the coalition held listening sessions across the state with parents, students, educators, and residents. The goal of the session was to hear what improvements residents of Macomb and Oakland Counties wanted to see in our public education system. When multiple organizations come together to co-create platforms that showcase issues and form accountability, it strengthens the ecosystem's human and organizational aspects of development (482Forward - Detroit Education Justice Coalition).

Several promising community efforts for equitable education have proven to be people-based and human-centered due to human assets and strengths of groups such as students, parents, and teachers. Detroit's education advocacy group 482Forward is known for making strides with community organizing and adding to the many layers of strengths within the ecosystem:

“Education organizing refers to the actions of parents and other residents of marginalized communities to transform low-performing schools towards higher performance through an intentional building of power. This is different from other approaches to school improvement because we [482Forward] believe those who are most affected by the problem should help create the solution” (482Forward).

The efforts of 482Forward, which places emphasis on shifting power to students and parents, is a part of a larger human and organizational development tactic; these efforts directly impact the holistic needs of child development and are done by an organization working to meet community needs.

Both organizing efforts — DPSCD students advocating for access to literacy resources and the community organizing leadership of 482Forward — represent grassroots, bottom-up approaches to achieving educational justice. The organizing efforts by Detroit students was not part of a larger organization’s agenda; it was an effort to create favorable conditions and access to educational resources that impact students’ futures. The organizing efforts present within the Detroit system highlight the fact that elements for a healthy education ecosystem are present within Detroit and proves that there is a vast ecosystem with vested interest in improving education in Detroit and helping DPSCD become a local governing body.



Figure 30: Campaign poster from 482Forward
Source: 482Forward website

Weaknesses

- There is no unified vision for public education.
- The decentering of DPSCD leadership on setting vision for public education as philanthropic presence and influence increases.
- National standardized testing is the primary measure of student success.
- National standardized testing is an accepted indicator of a failing school.
- Teachers, principals and other school staff are overworked and underpaid.
- Few neighborhood-based schools that serve the immediate community.
- Lack of culturally competent curriculum can lead to lack of connection for students.

Although the education ecosystem reflects the presence of coalition-building, the challenges and threats that currently exist are a reason for the necessity of such organizing work to continue. Currently, there is no unified vision for public education; this is part of the reason why the Detroit Education Justice Coalition (a partnership between 482Forward, the ACLU of Michigan, the American Federation of Teachers, the NAACP and others) was created to address DPSCD concerns. Furthermore, national standardized testing is currently the primary measure of student success and is an accepted indicator of a failing school. Insight provided by Dan Hardy of Philadelphia's Public School news source, *The Notebook*, is a reminder that,

“Many researchers say that an “opportunity gap” leads to an “achievement gap.” As explored in the Demographics section, socio-economic factors including income levels, educational attainment, employment rates, housing options, neighborhood crime rates, and resources available to schools, are worse for African Americans and Hispanics,

than for Whites. These circumstances often result in fewer opportunities for African American and Hispanic children to access a wide range of activities and experience an enriched educational environment. African Americans and Hispanics often do not have the educational advantages that more wealth brings” (Hardy).

This significant weakness must be considered through human and organizational lenses because lack of access to resources in poverty-stricken homes and neighborhoods of concentrated poverty can create mental, emotional, and physical challenges for residents.

The chances for improvement of conditions within school systems once control is given to an outside entity has not been proven by history. This was explored in earlier sections of the Capstone book outlining a pattern of state control of DPS through entities such as the Educational Achievement Authority and Emergency Management. The track record of state control and government officials interceding, regardless of opposition of community members, parents, and teachers, results in a lack of trust from those community members.

In schools themselves, teachers, principals and other school staff are overworked and underpaid in the Detroit Public Schools Community District in comparison to other districts throughout Michigan. Out of 562 Districts, Detroit Public Schools ranks 229 with an average teacher salary of \$57,997. Gov. Gretchen Whitmer wants to send an additional \$507 million in state funds to schools in 2020, some of which could be used to increase teacher salaries. However, her proposed budget needs the support of the Republican-controlled legislature, whose members have opposed many of Whitmer’s ideas in her tenure as governor, thus far. Teachers’ salaries are an economic development issue as this is a direct funding issue.



Figure 31: Candidate interviews at a Detroit Public Schools job fair
Source: Clarence Tabb Jr., *The Detroit News*

Neighborhood-based schools that serve the immediate community are becoming increasingly rare in the Detroit landscape. Over 200 Detroit public schools have closed in less than two decades. Further, as explored in earlier sections, many are not being attended by Detroit youth as a result of increasing school choice and competition between public, charter and adjacent districts. A new report finds that just a quarter of students are now attending the school nearest to their home. The rest are traveling to schools outside their neighborhoods, making round-trip journeys averaging 14 minutes for elementary school students and 24 minutes for high school students. Those traveling students are attending slightly higher-quality schools on average than they would if they stayed closer to home, according to the report from the Urban Institute, and researchers from Michigan State and Seton Hall University. That's especially true for the 1 in 5 students who leave the city every day to attend schools in the suburbs (Einhorn). In addition, a continued decrease in overall population in Detroit, has led to further funding challenges for the Detroit Public School Community District.

Finally, there is no universal curriculum that uplifts cultural competency. A lack of these curriculums can lead to a missing relevancy to the materials for students. According to the Detroit Education Justice Coalition, to provide a world-class education for all children, our schools must ensure that all curricula are culturally inclusive, accurate and relevant. Detroit is a racially, linguistically, culturally, economically and ethnically diverse city, and our students deserve a rich curriculum that reflects that diversity (DEJC). The DEJC believes that Detroit students, educators and community members deserve greater opportunities for parent participation in school activities, a curriculum that is centered on students' culture and experiences; and opportunities to build cross-cultural respect. There are past models which were successful such as Nsoroma Institute that was mentioned in the Case Studies section.

Opportunities

- There is room to create a supportive ecosystem that supports public education.
- A strong ecosystem could change the trajectory of Detroit children and their future.
- DPSCD school board can reclaim its role as advocates for students, teachers, administrators and staff.
- Fully maximize alumni support (i.e. funding, mentorship, thought partnership, etc).
- Develop deep partnerships with employers, universities, and other post-graduation opportunities.
- Encourage families to advocate for better school conditions vs. switching schools.
- Large population of Detroiters under 18 with potential to direct and lead the future of education.
- Allow more students to lead the way as narrative builders for what is needed in the education system.

Considering the weaknesses that exist within the ecosystem, there are many opportunities to create access to resources and environments where Detroit students can thrive educationally. A strong ecosystem could change the trajectory of Detroit children and their future. The DPSCD school board has room to reclaim its role as an advocate for students, teachers, administrators and staff; that is if they receive enough support and respond to the efforts of coalitions working for education reform across the district. Fully maximizing alumni support—i.e. funding, mentorship, thought partnership—could help with the mission of the DPSCD school board reclaiming power. It would be beneficial if deep partnerships with employers, universities, and other post-graduation opportunities were developed as well.

In response to families finding the need to switch schools often due to chronic school closures, there could be an opportunity for families to advocate for better school conditions. According to the 2017 American Community Survey, conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, there are 171,010 Detroiters under the age of 18 which makes up just over 25% of the population. Considering this statistic represents one-fourth of the population, there is potential for those individuals to direct and lead the future of education. This can be accomplished through allowing more students to lead the way as narrative-builders for what is needed in the education system.



Figure 32: Vacant former Detroit Public School building
Source: Loveland Technologies

Threats

- DPSCD's failure to keep a balanced budget could activate emergency management/state oversight.
- Politics are landmines in the education system.
- More school closings.
- More students leaving DPSCD for other school districts, private or charter schools.
- High dropout and absenteeism rates.
- Aging school buildings and cost of upkeep without the ability to propose millages.
- Development tax incentives diverting future education tax dollars.
- Poverty rates throughout the city can impact motivation and learning abilities for DPS students.

The threats detrimental to the education ecosystem intersect each aspect of the HOPE model. Trends of more students leaving DPSCD for the other school districts, private schools, and charter schools have led to an increase in school closings.

Additionally, aging school buildings and the cost of upkeep or repair have led to, in some instances, deplorable conditions and difficult decisions by DPSCD's school board. Most of its buildings are broken, but it can't propose millages to raise property taxes to address nearly \$543 million in needed repairs. These repairs include inoperable boilers, corroded plumbing fixtures, missing ceiling tiles in classrooms, exterior walls with cracks, roof leaks, incomplete fire alarm systems, electrical panels in classrooms known to be fire hazards and more. These expensive, growing capital needs exist across 100 school buildings at the Detroit Public School Community District where facilities have been neglected for over a decade under emergency management.

Waiting another four years to deal with widespread poor building conditions would cause the price to soar to nearly \$1.5 billion, according to an assessment by engineering consulting firm OHM Advisors (Chambers).

Social determinants such as poverty rates throughout the city can negatively impact motivational and learning abilities for DPSCD students. Sometimes their personal lives at home does not allow for needs to be met on a holistic level—access to food and water and other needs which are not commonly or consistently met in poverty-stricken households. According to the 2017 American Community Survey conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 34.5% of Detroit’s population lives in poverty. Research conducted by the National Center for Children in Poverty ranks, Detroit number one for the number of children in poverty at 57.3%. Poverty as a threat to the educational achievement and, without basic human needs being met, students will not perform at their highest capacity.

Lastly, there are current debates about the impact of tax breaks to huge corporations such as Ford which could potentially serve as a threat to DPSCD students. “If the Ford tax break means less property tax money for the Detroit district, “that’s a direct hit to the school aid fund,” said Craig Thiel, research director for the Citizens Research Council of Michigan. And that means less for every school in the state and could eventually translate to lower per pupil funding when lawmakers look at the state budget (Levin). Tax breaks, such as those for developments in Corktown, Downtown and Midtown Detroit, could potentially mean loss of tens of millions of dollars over the lifetime of these agreements, resulting in loss of dollars in the state’s education budget.

Conclusion

In examining the historical conditions of Detroit's education landscape through its present day, four key indicators come to light. These patterns help explain the ecosystem's current state and what actions and decisions led to its current climate.

Racism manifest in institutions, industry, and policy is, perhaps, the most influential trend that shaped Detroit's education system. Linked at the political level, repeated influence of the state and its control over public education has significantly impacted Detroit schools. The third trend revealed the willingness of the state to frame policy and funding for public schools from a business model mindset that values competition over justice and access. These education policies have left gaps in education needs which philanthropy has tried to fill; however, by valuing quantifiable outcomes and quick impact over process and long term investment, both philanthropic dollars and state policies lack the sustainability and forward thinking needed to support children moving through the education system.

Finally, local history reflects how Detroit has a rich legacy of community organizing and coalition-building. It is this last trend in which the team finds hope and a potential roadmap toward a quality education ecosystem.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The original question posed at the beginning of the Capstone process was: *What does a healthy education ecosystem look like for the future of public education in Detroit and how might we get there?* This question framed the beginning of the Capstone team's exploration into Detroit's education ecosystem. It provided a springboard from which the team was able to get a sense of the education landscape, past and present. But the Capstone group realized that the question did not seem to address issues of structural injustice and how they showed up in the ecosystem--i.e. in relationship to students, parents, teachers and other adversely impacted groups. Over two semesters Capstone team members engaged teachers, parents, and students in focus groups, interviews and through a survey. Team members also listened as these same groups, including paraprofessionals and administrators, fervently shared their fears and concerns in public meetings about the state of public education. Their concerns were anything from lunchroom attendants also functioning as classroom attendants receiving low wages for their service, to teachers advocating in DPSCD board meetings on behalf of other teachers, who must navigate long summers without sufficient income.

As mentioned before, most of the needs or challenges expressed by adversely impacted groups were shared with the expectation that local leadership would do something to address their concerns. That local leadership is primarily DPSCD's superintendent and school board. These various engagements with Detroit's education ecosystem led the Capstone team to the issue of power and its dynamics within the ecosystem itself. Ideas were exchanged within the Capstone group and there was a certain curiosity about (1) whether imbalances of power had anything to do with the current state of the education ecosystem and

(2) if imbalances of power qualifies the ecosystem as an unhealthy one. The main research question then shifted to reflect the relationship of power and its life within the ecosystem. The Capstone team then reframed its main research question in this way:

*What conditions are needed to shift power so **those most impacted** - Detroit's students, parents, and teachers - can **co-create a healthier one** where they can thrive?*

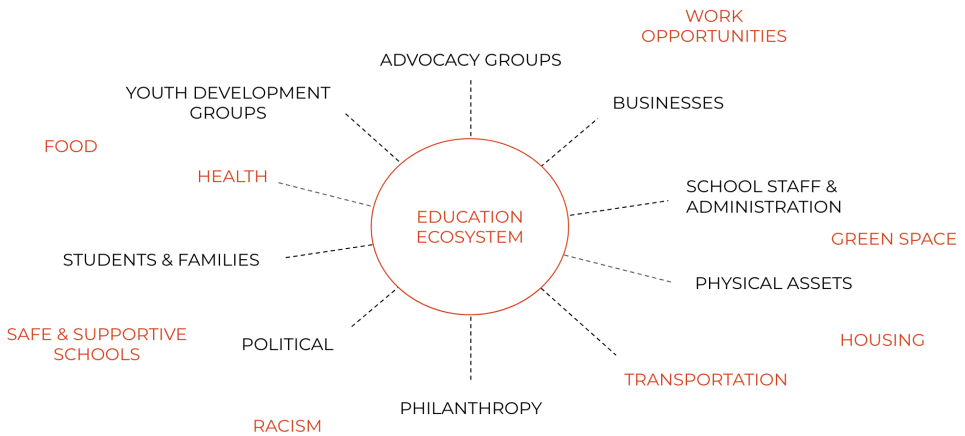
The Ecosystem Revisited

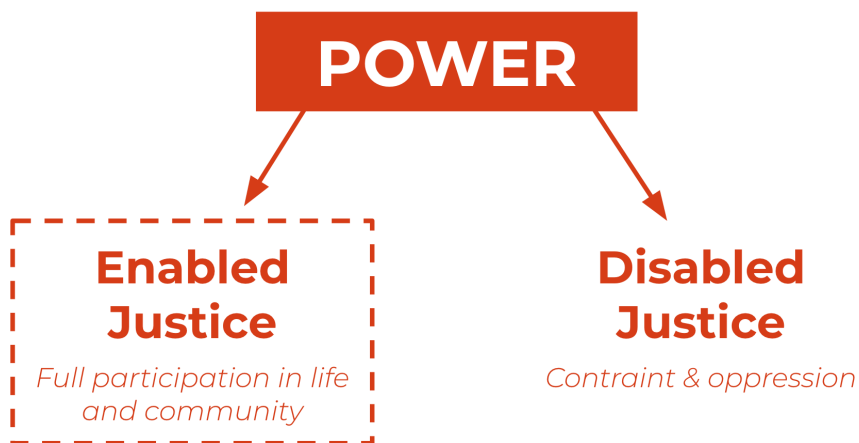
Engaging in the act of research can take researchers down paths that connect them to associated topics or issues related to the one in question. The former describes how the Capstone group connected social determinants of health to the education ecosystem. Though the group was intimately focused on the inner-workings of the ecosystem, some of the systems level issues brought up in community or DPSCD meetings pertained to mental or physical health. At one of the DPSCD school board meetings a teacher who had a former student in need of an IEP (Individualized Educational Plan) came to express her concerns about systems failure in completion and implementation of this tool at the student's new school. The Capstone team believes it is crucial to acknowledge there are other factors that contribute to the well-being of students and their unique educational learning experiences, i.e. social determinants of health.

These determinants “are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age. They include factors like socioeconomic status, education, neighborhood and physical environment, employment, and social support networks, as well as access to health care” (Artiga & Hinton).

Quality of life impacts a student’s ability to succeed throughout one’s matriculation in education. A healthy education ecosystem must exist to ensure its work is centered on the student and addresses students’ educational needs in a holistic way.

Figure 33: Education Ecosystem with Social Determinants





Closely looking at power and its dynamics within the ecosystem is foundational to assessing if the work of the ecosystem is truly in service to creating ideal conditions for giving or receiving holistic and fruitful education. Iris Marion Young's enabling concept of justice offers a foundation for understanding concepts of power and their institutional dynamics within complex systems such as Detroit's education ecosystem. An enabling concept of justice not only acknowledges distributive justice but further promotes justice as "the institutional conditions necessary for the development and exercise of individual capacities and collective communication and cooperation" (39). This means a healthy education ecosystem works to eliminate forces that hinder full participation of those most impacted, to shape and experience conditions for quality education. By the ecosystem doing this work, it is a champion for an enabling justice. But the ecosystem does this work primarily through addressing power imbalances by reimagining and actualizing power through forms of equitable collaboration. The next section demonstrates how the Capstone team does this work in collaboration with groups that make up Detroit's education ecosystem.

ENGAGEMENT

ENGAGEMENT PLAN

The following section outlines the team’s research plans and goals for community engagement. To recap, the team’s research pointed to institutional racism, state oversight and short-term planning as reasons contributing to power imbalances within the education ecosystem. The team also found that community coalition-building has been a historical response to those imbalances. Therefore, our engagements focused on learning from stakeholders that are most adversely impacted by poor conditions in the ecosystem. Those stakeholders include students, parents, teachers, and paraprofessionals. We worked with our community partner, Urban Neighborhood Initiative (UNI), to reach those stakeholders.

TARGET STAKEHOLDERS:

- Parents
- Students
- Teachers
- Paraprofessionals

Engagement Goals

The team’s goals for community engagement are to:

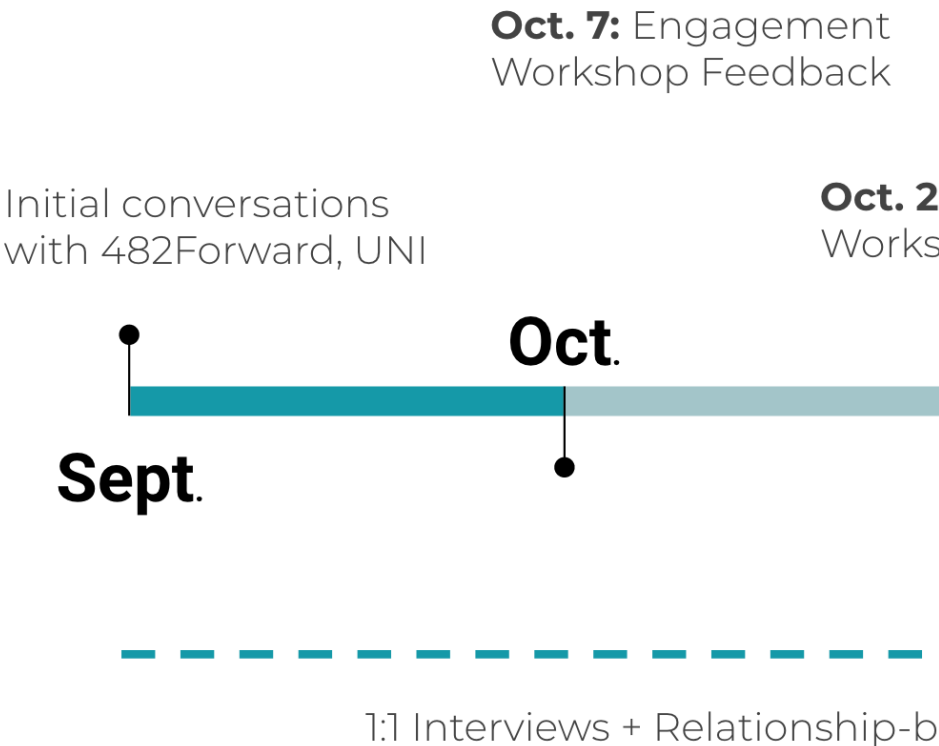
- a) gain insights for creating healthy conditions for student success;
- b) define power and power dynamics within the education ecosystem; and
- c) identify future actions and needs for coalition-building.

Guiding Principles

The team developed the following guiding principles to ensure a thoughtful experience for participants:

- **Do no harm.** The team will not intentionally bring emotional harm to the stakeholders therefore we will test out our tools and tactics before facilitating them with the public.
- **Move at the speed of trust.** Establishing trust with the community partner and stakeholders are paramount to how we find and share information. We will not move outside of boundaries that will be set by all involved.

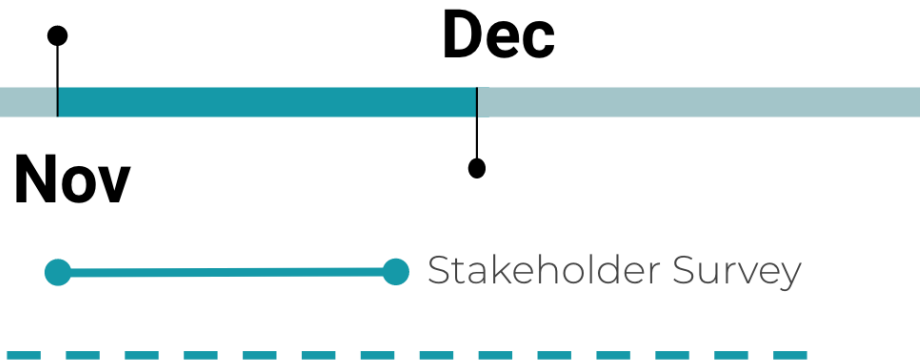
Figure 34: Engagement Timeline



- **Co-creation will guide the process.** A goal of this project is to imagine an educational future that considers the complete well-being of the student. The group will heavily lean on the lived experiences of the stakeholders to make that consideration.
- **Stay focused on the human experience.** The education ecosystem is not human centered therefore, the team will primarily focus on how inputs, outputs, groups, and the overall system impacts the student experience.

Nov. 16: Focus groups at 482Forward Conference + AfroFuture Youth Retreat

8: Engagement
hop Test



uilding

Engagement Process

To make sure the team was acting in accordance with the goals and principles set at the beginning of the Capstone process, the development and testing of engagement activities were conducted over several months (see timeline in Figure 34). An initial test session followed by a walk-through of the activities, were initiated with the direction and feedback of the Capstone Advisory Committee, before meeting with stakeholder participants.

The team worked with community partner Urban Neighborhood Initiatives to connect with possible participants. UNI invited the team to facilitate an engagement session at 482Forward's Fall Conference. 482Forward's vision is "to create a Detroit where every student graduates ready to become a fully engaged participant in the world, equipped with the character and the capacity to negotiate her environment and change it for the better" (482Forward).

The team also facilitated a workshop with Afrofuture Youth in order to make sure Detroit students' voices, needs, and opinions were uplifted throughout the engagement sessions. Afrofuture Youth is a Detroit based, youth led, organization which uses an Afrofuturism framework to guide youth in creating a more equitable world for all aspects of black life. Through the lenses of art, tech, media, and healing, youth participants create long term projects in order to uplift the mission of the organization.

Finally, a survey was created and shared with a wide set of education stakeholders in gain broader perspectives on the perceived healthiness/unhealthiness of the education ecosystem.

Engagement Activities

The team created a series of engagement activities and tools that would allow participants to walk through the following stages:

- **Name** stakeholders in ecosystem
- **Define** different kinds of power
- **Map** power & power dynamics in the ecosystem
- **Reflect** on personal experience
- **Understand** power & power dynamics in the ecosystem
- **Gain insight** into how these dynamics influence community-building

These activities translated into the following exercises and anticipated outcomes:

Exercise	Specific Outcomes
Ecosystem Mapping - a visual way to view stakeholders in the ecosystem	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• List stakeholder groups in the ecosystem.• Understand the connections between stakeholder groups.
Power Type/Mapping - a visual way of identifying who has power based on a collective definition of power	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stakeholders articulate types of power.• Power dynamics are identified.
Journaling - a written account of times stakeholders felt powerful and powerless.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deepens definition of power.• Provides specific examples and stories of how power is used.

Each of the above exercises were adapted into a 90 minute workshop that could be facilitated by team members with different target stakeholder groups. The first two exercises (ecosystem and power mapping) were tested at the 482Forward Fall Conference, while the third exercise (journaling and reflection) were conducted with the AfroFuture at their retreat. Each of these exercises and a Facilitator Guide can be found in Appendix D.

ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

Based on these engagement exercises, the Capstone team hoped to deliver on the following expected outcomes:

- Initiate conversations about improved conditions for stakeholders
- Build language to help those most impacted engage in equitable coalition-building
- Introduce “enabled justice” as a foundation for beginning to shift power in the ecosystem

482Forward Conference

On Saturday, November 16 at Marygrove College, the team facilitated the engagement workshop with a group of five participants. The conference tagline was “our fight for budget that reflect our values” (482Forward). The conference attracted parents, teachers, students, policy makers and foundation representatives.



Figure 35: Engagement workshop at 482Forward Conference



Exercise 1: Stakeholder ID & Ecosystem Mapping

The team asked workshop participants to list as many stakeholder groups as possible. As a result, the team learned that the original map was incomplete as it did not show other factors that impacts condition within the ecosystem.

As one workshop participant pointed out, “we must include things that impact us on a daily basis-- like food, transportation, lead levels in the water (Micken).” This insight affirmed the consideration of social determinants of health that the team explored in the research phase of study.

In addition to the stakeholders identified by the Capstone team, participants included:

- law enforcement
- faith community
- community residents
- charter authorizers
- voters
- social workers
- business community



Figure 36: Participants reviewing degrees of recognized power

Exercise 2: Power Identification and Mapping

The power mapping exercise helped the team define and assign power types to the stakeholder groups. The power types are:

- **Financial.** Power that comes from economic resources
- **Political.** Power built through politics, politicians or political parties
- **Social.** Power that comes from networks and relationships;
- **Informational.** Power that comes from having insight or expertise on a given subject.

Figure 37 shows the results of focus group participants identifying types of power and which ecosystem group aligns with a corresponding form of power. In general, every stakeholder holds power. The team identified knowing one's power as the first step in building momentum to create change.

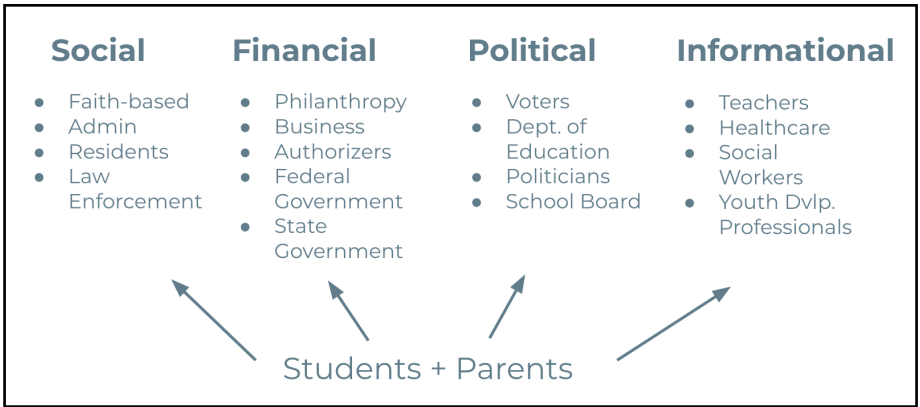


Figure 37: Participants categorizing stakeholder power in the ecosystem

The team then asked workshop participants to place stakeholders along the spectrum of power. First, participants identified stakeholders closer to the classroom (or in the classroom everyday) and stakeholders furthest away from the classroom (or never or rarely in the classroom). Second, participants created a hierarchy of power. We recognize that every stakeholder has power, but not every power is realized. In the end, the map in Figure 38 was created.

This map confirmed that focus group participants felt that stakeholders whose primary power is political and financial hold the most recognized power while stakeholders like parents, students and teachers hold the least recognized power, even though they feel the impact of decisions made about the education ecosystem in their everyday lives.

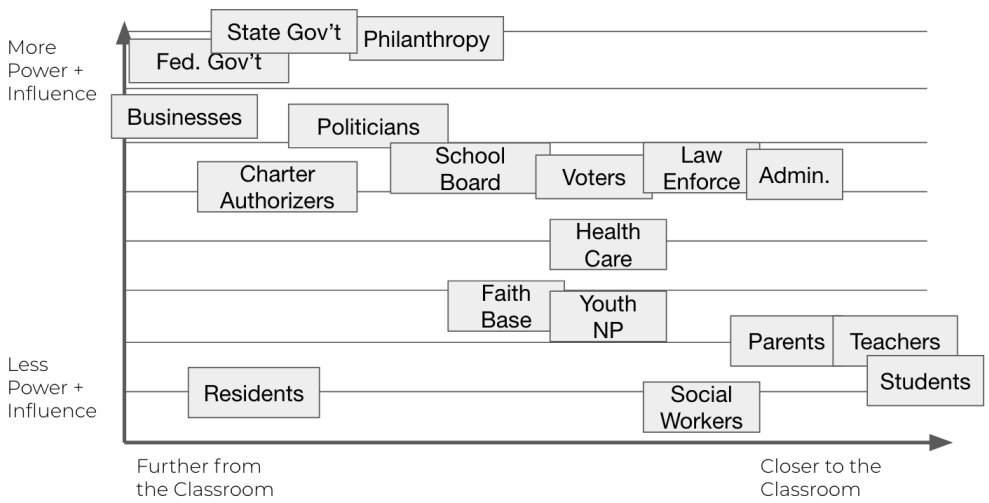


Figure 38: Power map created by focus group participants

AfroFuture Youth Retreat

Afrofuturity Youth held a weekend long retreat where youth were able to test out aspects of the curriculum and work on fundraising initiatives as well as participate in the engagement session created by the team for the purposes of Capstone research.

The journaling experience allowed youth to express moments in their educational experiences, as students part of Detroit’s educational ecosystem, when they felt powerful as well as moments when they felt powerless. Youth felt best when they could be recorded sharing the experiences and enjoyed the group discussion that the stories allowed to be fostered. Youth decided to first share the moments they have felt powerless or disempowered as students which led to them sharing personal stories highlighting areas where they expected their needs to be better met by teachers, staff, and administration.

The students remained anonymous for this process and were very excited to share experiences from both sides of the spectrum. Youth shared moments they felt powerful as well in hopes that these examples will continue and be looked at as moments to be replicated in the future.

Students first responded to the prompt that asked them to share moments where they felt powerless. Students interpreted being powerless at first as not having a voice or not having opinions at all. After further discussion amongst the group they came to the understanding that they do have power, however there are moments when that power is not recognized. One student shared her frustrations with having to miss school due to a lung disease. “I would go to school and they would give me packets to complete at home while I was sick and when I came back to school to check on my grades, I was informed that I had a 0.5 G.P.A. They said since I missed 11 days of school they could not put my grades in” (Anonymous student).



Figure 39: AfroFuture Youth logo
Source: AfroFuture Youth website

The student expressed her frustrations surrounding the fact that she was told since she was not physically present at school they could not put her grades into the system even though she had completed all work which was assigned to her. This serves as an example of powerlessness or power not being recognized because she had no control over a situation nor any adults within the school willing to advocate on her behalf.

Another student expressed frustrations pertaining to memories from 8 years prior associated with being a first grader reading at a 2nd and 3rd grade level. The student explained how finishing her work early because she was no longer challenged due to having classwork at lower reading levels, or being assigned work she had already completed, caused her to get in trouble with her teacher. Despite her parent showing up to school to advocate on her behalf to the principal, no assistance to meet the child where they were was offered to ensure the student could perform successfully throughout the school year. This example allows us to see parents in a position where even advocacy does not always guarantee a student's needs will be met.

A third student shared her experiences from her 11th grade year where she spoke for herself to make sure her needs were met and she would not be overwhelmed with the subject matter for her classes that she had to take. Student 3 expressed that she informed her counselor that she needed more support in math more so than any other subject. She explained how she didn't believe two math classes in one semester would benefit her as she feared she would be overwhelmed and stressed based on her experience with math classes in the past. She asked if one math class could at least be online in order to give her a different way of approaching the subject for one class.

Her counselor encouraged her to take both classes anyways and wanted the student to believe in herself, and decided to not make changes to her schedule. This also serves as an example of powerlessness as her counselor did not think the student knew what was best for her own emotional and mental capacity which she had expressed multiple times. The frustrations with her math classes and little support in order to be successful with the classes led to the student transferring to an alternative school to get her grades up and work at a pace that was best for her. There were other options for the student to remain at her highschool and get her grades up, but according to the student and her experiences, no efforts were made by the counselor to discuss the options in depth and move forward without having to transfer schools, although that's what the student would have preferred.

Student 4 expressed that they felt powerless 7 years prior when they recalled memories from the first grade. The student repeatedly asked the teacher if they could go to the bathroom and were told no. After waiting for what was too long for the student to continue to control their bladder, the student accidentally used the bathroom on themselves in the classroom in front of their peers and teacher. This final example serves as another way in which students can feel powerless because it shows the consequences of not establishing ways to build trust with our students or respecting students bodies and needs once articulated.

Students were also eager to share the moments they felt the most powerful throughout their educational experience. One student expressed their frustrations from their 8th grade year of middle school. This student shared how they felt defeated because they got called to the board to do a problem that they didn't understand and did not want to complete the problem in front of their class because they did not feel encouraged enough or supported to do so and

did their best to express this. They shared how their teacher forced them to wait until the end of the class to tell them that she didn't have faith in them to graduate middle school and make it into highschool.

A moment of power for this student came from them simply graduating from middle school, on time, and proving this teacher wrong despite the odds or what was expected. Another student expressed how her moment where her power was recognized came from stepping into an advocacy and leadership role when the adults and teachers around her failed to support another students emotional safety. A fellow peer in this students classroom was being bullied and the student intervened and gave a speech about creating problems and bullying those who are not causing us any harm or those who we know may not defend themselves. Her voice was recognized by both her peers and her teacher and she taught her class the proper ways to interact with those who are in vulnerable positions.

Survey

In addition to the workshops, the team created a 6-question survey (see Appendix E). The purpose of the survey was to engage stakeholders beyond the focus groups. A survey link was emailed to the team's network. We received 24 responses. Stakeholders identified with many groups in the ecosystem including parents, teachers, community advocates and administrators. When asked about the health of the education environment in Detroit today. Most people said that on a scale of 1 - 5 with 1 representing an unhealthy environment and 5 a healthy environment, Detroit fell between a 2 and 3.

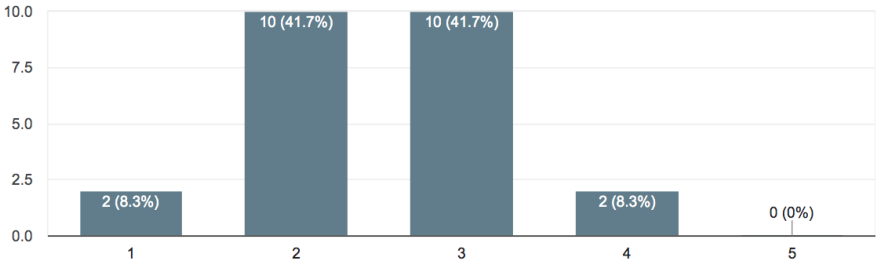


Figure 40: Survey results about the perceived healthiness of the ecosystem

Respondents recognize the enormous work Detroiters have been putting into improving the education system, yet they face enormous challenges. Here is a sample of their answers that indicate that, in its present state, the system is still largely broken and unequal:

- The community within the city of Detroit is doing ALL IT CAN to keep schools and school children healthy.
- Students are graduating not ready for life/future education. Teachers are not supported or paid the wages they deserve.
- Students are not as equally prepared for post secondary options like their peers in surrounding cities/suburbs
- Systemic racism has dismantled and segregated Detroit schools from suburban schools. Disinvestment has crippled infrastructure

In spite of this overall rating on the health of the ecosystem, respondents expressed cautious optimism in their hopes for the potential and future of Detroit's education landscape. Here is a small sample of that hope exemplified in the following responses:

- It does seem like some progress has been made, and some schools provide a great education.
- There is a culture that values education present in the city of Detroit.
- I think that there is a lot of hope and people working to solve the issue, but they we aren't there yet.
- There are some bright spots--great teachers, Dr. Vitti seems to be moving DPSCD in the right direction. But there still is A LOT of room for improvement.

Key Takeaways

The engagement at the conference and youth retreat yielded insightful conversations and affirmed the team's hypothesis: stakeholder groups whose primary power is financial and political create power imbalances that contribute to poor conditions within the education ecosystem. To balance the scales, the following must be considered:

- Social determinants of health are factors to consider as it pertains to improving educational conditions
- Stakeholders must recognize their power and harness it for a common, preferred future--a future shaped by most adversely impacted groups.
- Students and parents are more powerful than they know!

Results from the journaling exercise led to the following needs being uplifted, as well as suggestions on who may be best suited to fulfill each need, as it pertains to envisioning

the future of education in Detroit according to students:

- Although students recognize they are closest to the classroom, they do not feel their voices and opinions about what is best for them in order to feel supported mentally and emotionally is being considered.
- Students feel most powerful when they can advocate for their peers in the midst of social hardships, are heard and worked with as it pertains to their capacity to handle courseloads, and when areas that need to be strengthened are supported instead of doubted.
- Students are aware of their own capacity and needs and would appreciate a deeper trust from teachers and staff as they articulate those needs.

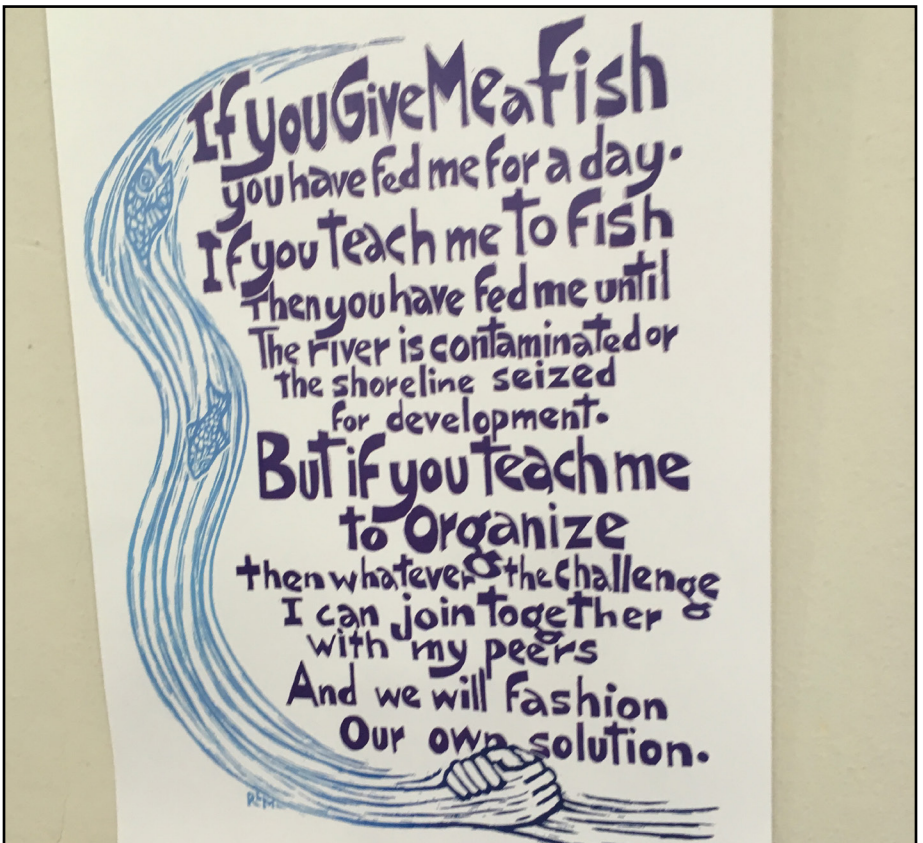


Figure 41: Poster at the 482Forward Fall Conference

Connections to We-Search

The previous section provided an overview of the Capstone group's engagement plan and its implementation. In addition to earlier community engagement efforts in the Capstone process, team members engaged stakeholders most impacted by the ecosystem in two ways: a survey and through focus groups who participated in the building blocks to coalition building exercises--i.e ecosystem mapping, power mapping, journaling, and needs based envisioning of the future of education in Detroit. These two community engagement tools were chosen so the Capstone team could hear directly from these groups on their daily interaction with/within the education ecosystem. When the team co-created the engagement sessions the goals for these sessions was:

- (1) to **cultivate a safe space** for stakeholders (who actively engage the ecosystem) to participate in a well organized process that nurtured their voices and opinions,
- (2) to **gain depth in understanding** of how power is understood by stakeholders,
- (3) to hear stakeholders identify **who within the ecosystem can support their needs**, and
- (4) to build language and motivation to **encourage coalition building** directed by the needs and collective vision of those stakeholders.

Each goal was efficiently and successfully completed.

The various engagement opportunities with stakeholders confirmed the team's initial observations when its own members went through a similar process as the one created for focus group participants. Through we-search-*-i.e.* research that furthers community building through equitable collaboration, in partnership with the most impacted groups, the three conclusions:

- 1 The education ecosystem is not human centered.**
As expressed in bot conversations with stakeholder participants and the Capstone group's historical research, the current education ecosystem does not center the student or the student's needs. Bureaucracy, politics and funding are drivers of the system.
- 2 There is inequity in our current in education system.**
Education as a marketplace creates clear winners and losers. Competing school systems, lack of resources, and limited staff and staff support puts DPSCD students at a disadvantage. These conditions create inequity in the ecosystem alongside students who attend institutions outside of public schools.
- 3 The people closest to the problem have the answers.**
The team focused on learning from people most adversely impacted by changes in the ecosystem. We believe lived experience is equal to or greater than research and traditional education. Lived experience can be a catalyst for fully understanding the problems and therefore finding the right solution.

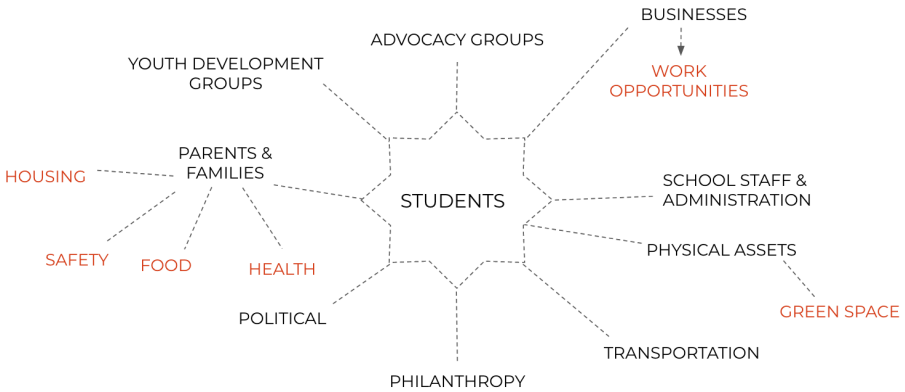


Figure 42: Beginning to reimagine the education ecosystem

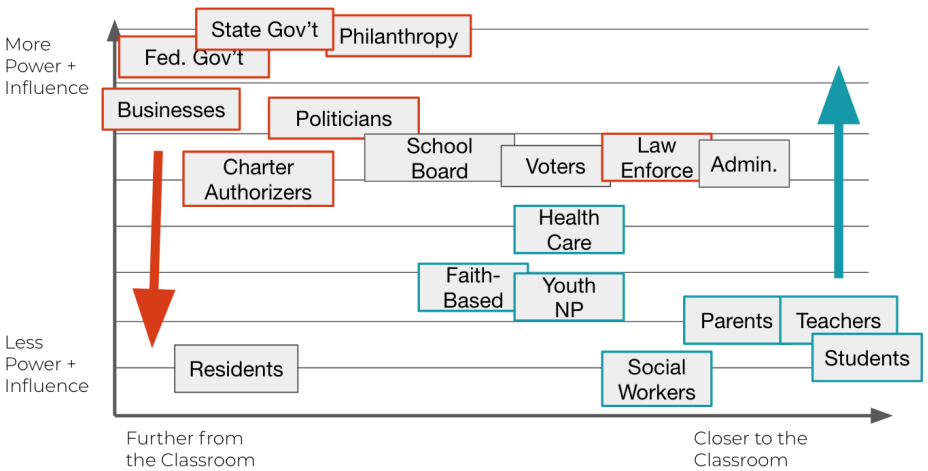


Figure 43: Shifting power within the education ecosystem

RECOMMENDATIONS

After a year of extensive research, along with input provided by ecosystem stakeholders, the following recommendations for next steps are framed for both the Capstone team and for community members who are eager to learn more about this topic on how to get involved.

For the Capstone Team

- As a follow-up to this project, **create *Building Blocks to Coalition Building: A Community Resource Guide***. The guide would include exercises used in focus groups sessions and provide case studies of how groups within an education ecosystem successfully shifted power. The main goal of the resource would be to introduce an enabling concept of justice by reimagining power through equitable collaboration.
- **Partner with UNI to shape *Community Resource Guide***. UNI played a major role in connecting the Capstone group to an existing network of education advocacy groups committed to the future of Detroit schoolchildren. With its level of expertise, as well as its local and regional influence, UNI would function as an advisor throughout the creation of the guide. This would be with the hope that UNI houses this resource on its website and circulates it throughout its network(s).

- **Introduce the Capstone topic as a public parlor talk** with podcasts and hosts who address educational challenges and triumphs within Detroit's education ecosystem. Podcasts are another form of engaging the Detroit community on issues related to Detroit's education ecosystem. Podcasts would encourage Detroiters to lean in for the purpose of hearing the teacher, student, social worker, principal, or school board members share their concerns, hopes and what they are doing to improve the healthiness of the ecosystem on a daily basis.
- **Serve as a Capstone advisor to future Capstone teams interested in building on this work.** This Capstone team views this project as a foundational contribution to community building for the purpose of public education reform. We hope that another Capstone team would capitalize on this project in their own unique way. A Capstone team member serving as a future Capstone advisor would bring continuity to work that builds upon research shared in this project. This Capstone topic is deep and goes wide across various human, organizational, physical and economic development concerns. This project has laid the foundation for further study in service to building quality education. A group of current MCD students attended the public presentation and have already expressed interest in continuing the conversation on how to co-create conditions for a healthier education ecosystem.

For Community Members

- **Donate to organizations doing education advocacy work.** Organizations such as 482Forward and UNI could use support in securing the future of Detroit students. Funding for education reform exists within a highly competitive philanthropic landscape. The Capstone realizes that it takes financial resources to enable community development and education advocacy groups to make a huge impact within the ecosystem. Giving to the work of trusted organizations like 482Forward and UNI means we are one step closer in the work of improving conditions for quality education in our public schools.
- **Build knowledge of upcoming education policy initiatives** (school funding reform, local millages). The world of education policy is a complicated one. Sometimes it can be intimidating to understand: (1) what type of education policy is out there and (2) how does it directly impact groups like students, teachers and parents.
- **Serve on a prospective community advisory committee** that helps to shape the Community Resource Guide and offers suggestions on improvement of the guide as it is being used throughout the Detroit education ecosystem.
- **Talk to your neighbors** about what you've learned! Community members are community developers-- i.e. they are engaged in community building through information sharing. You can host a community conversation and invite our Capstone to present on this very topic. Over a cup of coffee with close friends or during a brown bag lunch on your job you can share what you've learned to spark dialogue and help neighbors think about the consequences and possibilities of this important issue.

The results from our research through the engagement sessions led us to understand that those closest to the classroom do not feel they have the most recognized power, more specifically students, teachers, social workers, and parents. Students, teachers, and paraprofessionals had the opportunity to more formally and structurally organize needs and concerns as it pertains to their power not being recognized enough within the ecosystem to make the changes they feel are necessary. Ecosystem and power mapping created room for each stakeholder to visually see a representation of what is currently taking place with power structures in order to best understand how to move forward. The results of the students envisioning a needs based future allowed for them to not only articulate needs, but do so in a solution oriented fashion that allowed them to identify advocates and allies within the ecosystem to support and uplift needs. Both engagement sessions have created room for potential coalition building and have offered a starting place for stakeholders to understand where they can all fit in the reimagining of Detroit's educational ecosystem with room for the planning and continuation of this work through coalitions, advocacy, and allyship.

CONCLUSION

KEY TERMINOLOGY

Education Ecosystem: A complex, interconnected system - made up of people, physical assets, organizations, and industries - that impact the quality of education.

Enabling Justice: Recognizing and upholding the inherent worth and dignity of all humans; conditions that create the opportunity to participate fully in life and community.

Power: Forces that have the ability to enable or disable justice; ability to determine decisions or conditions for the future.

Social Determinants: The conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age; these conditions influence life outcomes.

Disabling Constraints: Anything which impedes the ability for one to fully participate in the decisions about their life; oppression

FURTHER RESEARCH

Costing Out the Resources Needed to Meet Michigan's Standards and Requirements

Michigan School Finance Collaborative
fundmischools.org

- Framework for understanding how to fully meet public education needs in Michigan

EdBuild's Reports + Interactive Maps

EdBuild | edbuild.org

- National think tank that works to improve school funding systems through data visualization and policy analysis.

Babies Over Billionaires

Michigan Education Justice Coalition
babiesoverbillionaires.org

- Statewide education coalition of parents, students, community members, and educators advocating for quality public education for all students.

Detroit Education Research Partnership

Wayne State University's College of Education
coe.wayne.edu/kaplan-crue/student-exit-mobility-and-attendance-in-detroit.php

- Research collaborative that has published recent studies about Detroit student mobility, absenteeism and attendance.

Review of Detroit Public Schools During State Management 1999 - 2016

The Allen Law Group, PC
chalkbeat.org/posts/detroit/2019/11/14/report-detroit-schools-emergency-management/

- Report release in November 2019 which outlines the cost of years having the Detroit public school system under state control.

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APPENDIX A

Education Ecosystem Asset Inventory

Name	Address	Region/ District	Ecosystem Layer	Purpose/Mission	Website	H/O/ P/E
Detroit Independent Freedom School	Cass Corridor Commons 4605 Cass Ave., Detroit, 48201	Midtown	Program/Resource	Creates free, African-centered, loving educational experiences for Detroit children and families by mobilizing community volunteers and resources to cultivate community strength, self-determination, and build movement-based futures.	http://freedomschools.info	H
Charles H. Wright Museum	315 E. Warren Ave., Detroit, 48201	Midtown	Resource	The Wright connects visitors of all backgrounds with the stories of resilience, ingenuity, and courage that define the African-American experience.	https://www.thewright.org/	H
Detroit Food Academy	4444 Second Ave, Detroit, MI 48201	Midtown	Organization/ Program/Resource	Helping students achieve through math and literacy skills, connect to resources to support their social development, and develop the perseverance, self-efficacy, and resilience necessary for youth to maintain the effort to succeed.	https://detroitfoodacademy.org	H/O

Teen Hype	1391 E. Woodbridge, Detroit, MI 48207	Midtown	Program/Resource	Help develop self-sustaining adults that positively contribute to their community. This is what Teen HYPE was created to foster.	https://www.teenhype.org/who-we-are	H
Detroit Parent Network	726 Lothrop St., Detroit	New Center	Organization/ Resource	At this parent-led organization, parents can find a number of resources for themselves and their students. Programs include Parent Advocacy Training,	http://www.detroitparentnetwork.org	O

APPENDIX B

Excellent Schools Detroit Scorecards

Excellent Schools Detroit Summary of Quality Schools Scorecards (2013 – 2017) Figure 2				
Year	Type of Scorecard (Grade Level)	School Quality Indicators	# of Schools/Education Programs Evaluated	Overall Findings
August 2013	K-12 Scorecard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40% of school grade is based on how many students are considered proficient in English arts, math, science and social studies on state exams. 	<p>204</p> <p>including public, private, charter and parochial as well as a few suburban schools that have target Detroit students.³</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 51 schools earned a grade of C+ or better.³
2014	K-8 Scorecard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Another 40% of the grade is based on how much improvement students make in English language arts and math. The final 20% is based on a climate and culture survey of the school based on feedback from parents, teachers and educational experts. <p>*Only schools that earn a grade of C+ or higher are recommended for enrollment by ESD.¹</p>	<p>nearly 200 schools; includes 94 early learning care programs.⁴</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 32 schools earned a grade of C+ or better.⁴
May 2015	K-5 Early Learner Scorecard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ranking based on school environment, culture, feedback from parents & staff on how the programs scored as part of a state assessment program. Rating expressed as gold, silver or bronze medals.² 	<p>140</p> <p>that include programs within a 5 mile radius of the city.²</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 gold, 24 silver and 59 bronze medals.²
June 2015	K-12 Scorecard	Same as other K-8 or K-12 Scorecards	<p>212</p> <p>schools from DPS, EAA, charters, parochial & suburban schools that enroll Detroit students.³</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 schools received a grade of C+ or higher: 15 K-8 schools and 6 high schools.¹
February 2017	K-8 Scorecard		<p>Unknown</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 schools earned a grade of C+ or better. 33 schools received an F grade. No schools earned a grade of A.³

APPENDIX C

Community Partner Rubric

	Rate your level of awareness of org. (1 to 5; 1= not aware, 5=fully aware)				Do we currently have a point of contact for this org?	How available can the org be to us?	Is the org part of the ecosystem we want to focus on? (Nonprofit, education advocacy, coalition-building)	Is the org located in a neighborhood of interest?				Rank your overall level of enthusiasm to work with this org (1 to 5; 1=no enthusiasm, 5 = most enthusiastic)					
	AA	CL	KH	DW				AA	CL	KH	DW	AA	CL	KH	DW		
(Team Members)																	
Urban Neighborhood Initiatives (UNI)	1	3	4	3	Yes - Raul	TBD	½ - Nonprofit, education advocacy	2	2	3	3	2	2	3	3	4	
482Forward	1	2	4	2	No	TBD	2/3 - Nonprofit coalition-building	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	3.5	4	3.5		
P20 @ Marygrove	2	2	2	2	Yes - Julia, Jonathan, Starfish	Yes	½ - Nonprofit	5	5	4	4	3	3.5	3.5	3	3	
Brilliant Detroit	3	2	2	3	Yes - Cindy	No/Maybe	1.5/3 - Nonprofit, coalition-building	4	3.5	3	3.5	3	2.5	3	3.5		
Freedom Schools	5	2	3	2	TBD	TBD	½ - Nonprofit	2	1	1	1	5	2	3	2.5		

APPENDIX D

Engagement Tool - Power Map

Power Map

From your perspective, who has the most power/least within the education ecosystem? Plot sticky notes along the vertical-axis (power + influence) and horizontal-axis (furthest away [from classroom](#) and closest to the classroom) on power map.

**Most Power +
Influence**



**Least Power +
Influence**

Furthest

Closest

APPENDIX D

Engagement Tool - Journal Prompt 1

Capture Your Experience

In the space below, please write about a time when you felt **powerless** in your educational experience [5 minutes].

I am a (current connection to education)...
And I felt powerless when...

APPENDIX D

Engagement Tool - Facilitation Guide (1)

Community Engagement Guide | 90 minutes

TIME	ACTIVITY	SUPPLIES	LEAD
Welcome & Introductions: 15 minutes			
Ex. 1pm- 1:05pm	Welcome [5 min] <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome & thanks for coming• Introduce research group: UDM students in MCD program• Studying the health of the education ecosystem in Detroit• Your input today will inform our research.• Your input will remain anonymous.• You're invited to attend the public presentation on Dec. 2nd at 6:30pm at UDM.	Copies of agenda	
	Introductions/Icebreaker [5 min] <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name• Occupation or grade• Name of current/latest school	Copies of agenda	
	Overview of research project [3 min] <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our research question: What does a healthy education ecosystem look like for Detroit and how might we achieve it?• Our research is centered around identifying healthy conditions to improve education in Detroit.• You are helping us define and identify power within the education ecosystem in Detroit• Key definitions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Power: forces that enables or disables freedom.○ Justice: is the use of power to support fair treatment and due reward.○ Ecosystem: a complex, interconnected web.	Copies of agenda	
	Brief overview of agenda [2 min] <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You will participate in a 90 minute workshop with 3 activities and a 5	Copies of agenda, sign-in sheet	

APPENDIX D

Engagement Facilitation Guide (2)

	<p>minute break.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants will reflect on their educational experiences, define types of power, and identify power imbalances within public education in Detroit. 		
Activity #1: 25 minutes			
	<p>Power Mapping - Intro [2 min]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of this exercise is to lean on your current or past educational experiences to define power types and power dynamics within the education ecosystem. We will use several mapping tools to help us with this exercise. What questions do you have? 	Copies of agenda	
	<p>Power Mapping I - Power Types [5min]</p> <p><i>Stakeholder:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The team came up with stakeholder groups in the education ecosystem: <i>students, parents, teachers, youth development professionals, social workers, administrators, politicians, philanthropist.</i> <p><i>Prompt:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who are we missing? <p><i>Power Types:</i></p> <p>The team realized that power comes in different forms. We identified 4 different power types in education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Financial</i>, power that comes from economic resources <i>Political</i>, power built through politics, politicians or political parties <i>Social</i>, power that comes from networks of relationships <i>Informational</i>, power that comes from having insight or information <p><i>As we move through this exercise you might identify other power types, feel free to add.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ecosystem stakeholders (i.e. students, parents, teachers, etc.) fall into these power types. 	Sticky notes, sharpies, board/poster paper, power map, tape or push pins,	

APPENDIX D

Engagement Facilitation Guide (3)

	<p><i>Prompt:</i> What would you add or change?</p>		
	<p>Power Mapping II - Stakeholder Placement [5min] <i>Stakeholder map placement:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graph: the horizontal axis shows stakeholders closest (i.e. students,, etc) to the classroom and furthest away (i.e. philanthropy, etc) from the classroom. Meaning in the classroom everyday. <p><i>Prompt:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On a scale of 1 to 10, of the stakeholders previously mentioned, who are <u>closest/furthest</u> to the classroom? For example, students are a 10 and philanthropist are a 1. Where would the others go? 		
	<p>Power Mapping III - Power Hierarchy [13min] <i>Hierarchy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>We all agree that each stakeholder has power. Now we would like to measure that power.</i> <p><i>Prompt:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On a scale of 1 to 10, who has the most power within the education ecosystem? On a scale of 1 to 10, who has the least power within the education ecosystem? <p><i>Discussion:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What surprises you about this map? 	Sticky notes, map	
Activity #2: 12 minutes			
	<p>Journal - Instructions [2 min]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of this exercise is to learn about times you felt powerless and powerful in your education experience. Your written responses will remain anonymous. Questions? 	Copies of agenda	
	Activity #2: Journal, pt 1 [5 min]	Worksheet,	

APPENDIX D

Engagement Facilitation Guide (4)

	<p><i>Individual activity:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prompt 1: I am a ___ (i.e. student, etc) ● Prompt 2: Write about a time when you felt powerless in your education experience 	pens	
	<p>Activity #2: Journal, pt 2 [5 min]</p> <p><i>Individual activity:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prompt 1: I am a ___ (i.e. student, etc) ● Prompt 2: Write about a time when you felt powerful in your education experience 	Worksheet, pens	
BREAK - 5 MINUTES			
Activity #3: 25 minutes			
	<p>Activity #3 pt 1 Directions - Building connection [8 minutes]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This final activity is an <i>I - Pair - Share</i> exercise. ● <i>Please find a partner.</i> ● <i>Write and reflect on the following question: Who in this place do you think can best elevate your voice or amplify your needs and why?</i> ● Share with your partner ● Share out: What was most interesting/surprising about about the conversation with your partner? 	<p>Copies of agenda and paper and pens</p> <p><i>I - Pair - Share</i></p>	
Wrap: 5 minutes			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recap the day ● Thank you for attending ● One-word wrap 	N/A	

APPENDIX E

Stakeholder Survey

Survey on Health of Detroit's Education Environment

Q1. I identify primarily as a _____.

Student

Teacher

Parent

Paraprofessional

Advocate

Funder

Youth Development Professional

Administrator

Former Student

Other: _____

Q2. From your perspective, what does a supportive educational environment feel like to you?

Q3. From your perspective, do you see shortcomings in the education environment in Detroit? If so, where?

Q4. On a scale of 1-5 (1=unhealthy, 5=healthy), from your perspective, please rate the health of the education environment in Detroit today.

Unhealthy 1 2 3 4 5 Healthy

Q5. Tell us the reason for your rating above.

Q6. What is your wish for education in Detroit?

Q7. Please enter the zip code of where you go to school/ conduct educational work/fund educational initiatives.

optional

