

Supporting All Students: Innovation Required

CREATING
SOLUTIONS

By Holly Davis Trifiro, Executive Director, Teach For America - Northeast Ohio - Cleveland

The classroom is a powerful place for students to find their voice. To prepare students to play an active role in their education and chart the course to their career aspirations, schools must think creatively about engaging students and families to facilitate systemic change in low-income communities.

In January 2015, an analysis of federal data showed that the majority of children in public schools nationwide live in poverty. In Greater Cleveland, just 40% of kids growing up in poverty scored proficient or above in math on state standardized exams, compared to 84% of their more affluent peers. In science, just 28% of kids from low-income communities scored proficient or above, compared to 77% of their wealthier neighbors.

While unequal access to quality education has long been drawn along lines of race and class, this challenge grows ever more salient. The demographics and life experiences of children entering public schools are very different today than a half-century ago. This evolution requires educators to

respond to the changing needs of kids and their families.

Cleveland is home to countless outstanding educators helping our schools keep pace with these changes. Alongside this growing network of school leaders and teachers, Teach For America corps



members and alumni play leading roles in many of the region's organizations. They work tirelessly across sectors and in partnership alongside students, families,

schools and communities to ensure that all children have the opportunity to obtain an excellent education.

What's more, a growing body of rigorous research indicates that Teach For America teachers have a positive impact on student learning. Several states have studied the effectiveness of beginning teachers and have identified Teach For America as one of the most effective teacher providers. Many of our alumni also choose to continue affecting change in education, with over 60% working in the field of education, including 30% who continue leading classrooms across the country. Cleveland harbors several important alumni, including Stephanie Klupinski, who serves as the executive director of charter schools for CMSD.

Teach For America is proud to be a community partner in Cleveland. Each member of our community shares an important role in education. We must recognize the evolving challenges families, kids and teachers face and build a system that is responsive to their changing needs. Together, we can be the Cleveland our kids deserve.

About the Author

Founded in 1990, Teach For America recruits and develops a diverse corps of outstanding college graduates and professionals to make an initial two-year commitment to teach in high-need schools and become life-long leaders in the effort to end educational inequity. Today, 8,800 corps members are teaching in 52 urban and rural regions across the country while more than 42,000 alumni work across sectors to ensure that all children have access to an excellent education. Holly Davis Trifiro, is one of these. A former corps member, Holly holds a bachelor's degree from Ohio University and a master's from Johns Hopkins University. She believes deeply in students and families in Northeast Ohio and is committed to excellence for kids in her home region. For more information, visit www.teachforamerica.org.

TEACHFORAMERICA