



BRADLEY IMPACT BRIEF

SPRING 2020 ISSUE



"The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education."

— MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

FROM THE DESK OF GABE CONGER

Dear Friends,

In 1862 a widowed army nurse named Rebecca Pomroy was asked to care for young Thomas "Tad" and Mary Todd Lincoln, following the death of President and Mrs. Lincoln's third son William. Following a terrible storm, President Lincoln accompanied Nurse Pomroy to the hospital where she worked, and their carriage got stuck en route. President Lincoln moved several large stones to help Pomroy avoid the mud and get out of the carriage. He then escorted her to the sidewalk. Boots and pants now covered in mud, Lincoln said to her:

"All through life, be sure you put your feet in the right place, then stand firm."

President Lincoln's words ring as true today as they did almost 160 years ago. With a pandemic sweeping our country, it would be understandable to get caught up in the news of the day and lose focus. Here at the Bradley Impact Fund, we have five guiding principles to leading us from stone to stone to stay on the right path: fidelity to the Constitution, commitment to free markets, commitment to the fundamental institutions of civil society, dedication to the formation of informed and capable citizens, and the protection of donor intent.

It's that simple. And that difficult. In this issue of the Bradley Impact Brief, we focus on the educational efforts needed to give citizens the character, habits, and knowledge to succeed in a free society. In times of crisis, challenges to a free society multiply and are only overcome by informed citizens.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program, the first modern school choice program of its kind in the country. Drawing upon the four decades of experience in the fight for education choice by our colleagues at The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, we know that our feet are in the right place. And it's the commitment of the members of the Bradley Impact Fund donor community that keeps us standing firm.

Sincerely,

Gabe Conger
President, Bradley Impact Fund

BY THE NUMBERS

K-12 Education in Context: Response to COVID-19

With almost no warning, at least 124,000 public and private K-12 schools across the country were forced to shut their doors in mid-March due to COVID-19. The dramatic change has created tremendous pressure to adapt K-12 education to remote learning for 55.1 million students and their families.

The private and faith-based Milwaukee schools that encourage family- and community-centered education were well-positioned to make the switch quickly and effectively. These characteristics have facilitated their growth and success throughout the 30 years of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP), with longitudinal studies showing positive results that matter to students and their families. They are also critical in engaging students in remote learning and supporting parents in taking on a larger role in education as homes have become classrooms. Anecdotally we are already seeing agile responses and the flexibility and capability that a bottom-up choice-school approach creates in making the transition to remote learning.

Not all schools have been as agile, and for some students, education was essentially put on hold. With most schools likely to remain closed for the rest of the 2019-2020 school year, the K-12 education response to COVID-19 bears monitoring at the national, state, and local levels.

Source: Educationweek.com

First the good news ... after the school closures in mid-March,

- **50% of all public schools** began offering remote instruction within 2 weeks
- **80% of schools had switched** to some type of remote instruction within 4 weeks

Yet looking deeper, the same challenges of bureaucratic inflexibility and interference with educating children that plague school districts serving students and families at the margins of society remain. A recent article by Frederick Hess at American Enterprise Institute (AEI) explores these issues and presents some disturbing facts:

- **45% of the 82 major school systems** tracked by the Center for Reinventing Public Education were providing no instruction 6 weeks after school closures.
- **In Los Angeles**, the second largest school district in the nation with 735,000 students, the union and district agreed teachers would receive full pay in return for working four hours a day, at times of their choosing, and with no obligation to provide online instruction.
- **In the 202,000-student School District of Philadelphia**, district policy states that “to ensure equity, remote instruction should not be provided to students, including through the internet, technology at home, by phone, or otherwise.”



*The more innovative, child-centric approaches of private and charter schools **serving 30,000 students throughout the City of Milwaukee** have been much more responsive during the pandemic.*

***More than five weeks after schools closed,** the first MPS communication to families regarding virtual learning was sent, with limited options presented.*

Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) did not require its teaching staff to make remote contact with its 70,000 students and families for more than a month.

More than five weeks after schools closed, the first MPS communication to families regarding virtual learning was sent, with limited options presented.

PARENTAL CHOICE CONTINUES TO PROVE ITS VALUE

The more innovative, child-centric approaches of private and charter schools serving 30,000 students throughout the city have been much more responsive. A check-in with several of the K-12 schools participating in MPCP that we have featured in past Impact Briefs highlights a much more proactive student- and family-first approach to meeting the educational needs of the families they serve. The staff and leadership of these schools have all stayed closely connected to the students and their families throughout the pandemic. Work packets, virtual learning opportunities, and additional basic-needs support to families rolled out as the lockdown started, with ongoing outreach, refinement of services, and follow up continuing to ensure they are meeting the needs of their students and families to the best of their abilities in these challenging times.

Sources: AEI School District Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Round 3, Plans for a Remote Finish, April 27, 2020; Appreciating what schools are doing doesn't mean giving them a pass," AEI.org April 28, 2020; Milwaukee Public Schools COVID-19 Update

Kingdom Prep Lutheran High School

13 Wolfpacks of seven to eight boys per pack rendezvous daily to check in on each other – “We thrive or struggle together!”

LUMIN Schools

85% of LUMIN's scholars are participating in distance learning, and to date, LUMIN has loaned 153 Chromebooks to students without a device.

Messmer Catholic Schools

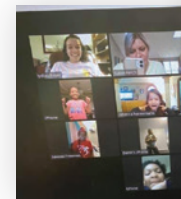
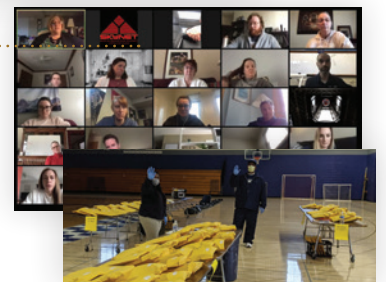
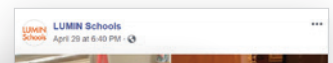
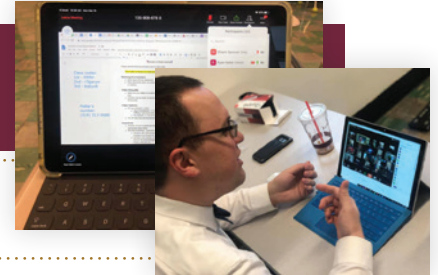
Teachers, administrators, and staff have personally connected with each of the school system's 1,300 students, a wellness resource guide was created for families, and teaching/learning began promptly online where it left off at the time of the school closures - including attendance and grading.

St. Marcus Lutheran School

120 middle-school students received recognition for special achievement in behavior, effort, merit, and academic performance in a virtual ceremony that has been viewed more than 1,800 times since May 1.

Wisconsin Lutheran High School

Despite the shift to a virtual format, the school's Annual Dinner Auction raised \$474,000. All sponsors donated their table costs back to the school as a matching gift for the night's Fund-a-Student Initiative.



DONOR STORY

MARY READ

NEW IMPACT FUND MEMBER



"I was drawn to the Impact Fund for its connection with Milwaukee's choice schools and for its steady focus on donor intent. Choice schools that instill the values of a free society and help students pursue higher education and a career that matches their interests are critical. I want to support students in this education experience."

— **MARY READ**
IMPACT FUND MEMBER

Mary Read's passion for urban education grew out of her life experience. "When I took time off from my legal career in Milwaukee to raise my family, I saw firsthand the life-changing impact a solid education can have on a child, and I thought, 'How can we get a great education for all kids?'" says Mary. Volunteering as a docent at the Milwaukee Art Museum, she began interacting with urban students from schools throughout Milwaukee. She created a scholarship fund in honor of her husband's uncle, John Chapman Chester, for students at Milwaukee Public Schools. After careful consideration, she now directs the scholarship fund's support to students attending Milwaukee charter or Milwaukee Parental Choice Program schools.

She is using her Impact Fund Personal Giving Account to manage the scholarship. "Through a family connection on my husband's side, I knew of The Bradley Foundation's work with school choice and its consistent commitment to donor intent," says Mary. "It's clear that the Impact Fund is carrying that commitment forward."

**MARY USES HER
IMPACT FUND
ACCOUNT TO
MANAGE A
SCHOLARSHIP.**

Mary grew up on a ranch north of Cheyenne, Wyoming. She met her husband while earning degrees in Government and Art History at Smith College. Mary earned a J.D. from Marquette University Law School, and began her legal career at First Wisconsin Trust Company (now US Bank). She continues to be a very active volunteer in the areas of education, art and history in Milwaukee, serving on the Boards of the Layton Art Collection, Inc. and the War Memorial Center, as well as on the National Trust Council of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. She is also a life director of the Florentine Opera Company.

"I very much enjoy being part of the Impact Fund community and the access to interesting resources and expert speakers," says Mary. "It's inspiring to connect with others who value our Constitution and the freedom and ideals of our country."



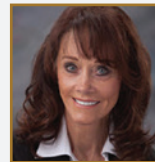
THE BRADLEY IMPACT FUND

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF

As Michael W. Grebe retires from the Bradley Impact Fund Board, we thank him for his steadfast commitment, astute vision, and many years of dedicated service. Please join us in welcoming Curt S. Culver as Bradley Impact Fund Board Chair, Phillip Prange as Treasurer, and long-time Impact Fund member Patrick J. English as a new Board Director.



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Community Spotlight on Families

C OVID-19 has placed tremendous stress on American families. In this section we highlight two organizations whose work with children and families has become more important than ever in recent months.



MILWAUKEE RESCUE MISSION'S CROSS TRAINERS ACADEMY

Cross Trainers Academy is a Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP) school started by Milwaukee Rescue Mission (MRM) in 2006 to create educational opportunities for the city's children. The Academy and MRM provide essential resources and stability for homeless children and their families. This support is all the more vital during a time of sheltering-in-place.

Cross Trainers Academy is a core component in MRM's full-service programming for helping families. Nearly 400 students attend the Academy in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. The school limits class size to 20 to be able to give the attention and academic support its students need to build the skills and self-confidence to thrive. Because of the 20:1 student-staff ratio, MPCP funding does not meet all of the school's costs. The Bradley Impact Fund, its donor community, and other donors and volunteers help bridge that gap.





SAFE FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

The mission of Safe Families for Children (SFFC) is to protect children from potential neglect or abuse arising from a crisis by providing them with a safe, stable, temporary home. SFFC recruits volunteer Host Families to care for children while it works

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with their parents to address the problems that precipitated the crisis and determines how quickly the family can be reunited. Children stay with families in their own communities whenever possible.

SFFC works to build a circle of support around the family in crisis and its Host Family, which may include a church, a Family Coach, and Resource Friends. SFFC also facilitates connections to Family Friends, who can make meals, babysit, help with transportation, and broaden the family's network.

At this time, SFFC Wisconsin is responding to increased demand for services as families struggle with added economic and social stress. Learn more from Nicole Zorn, Director, Safe Families for Children Wisconsin in our video blog (November 22, 2019) at bradleyimpactfund.org/blog.



What typically happens with grantmaking from donor-advised funds in times of uncertainty?

For many Americans, the want and the need to do good are magnified in times of crisis and uncertainty. Over the past few months, we have seen this manifested in many ways, including charitable giving. There is historical evidence for this phenomenon too.

Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Memphis have explored donor-advised fund (DAF) giving in times of uncertainty. They found that during the most recent recession DAF grantmaking at the organization level remained steady. This was in sharp contrast to all other charitable giving in the country, which decreased by 7.0% in 2008 and by another 6.2% in 2009. In their study of nearly 1,000 DAF organizations, grantmaking for 2007 through 2016 actually increased during the recession. The flow rate, defined as the ratio of grants to contributions, also increased. They concluded that, “During this time, donors with money in donor-

advised fund accounts were uniquely positioned to continue to support the causes they cared about. Our findings suggest that grantmaking from donor-advised funds is less affected by economic recession than other forms of charitable giving.”

With the flexibility to contribute and to give at their pace, Bradley Impact Fund Personal Giving Account holders are able to invest consistently in the nonprofits they believe in. They have the time to be thoughtful about when and where to give for greatest impact.

During this difficult time, please take advantage of our expertise and the information we have gained through relationships with nonprofit leaders working locally and nationally to advance the principles we stand for. We'd love to have a conversation with you today about strategic giving during this time.

Sources: Understanding Donor-Advised Funds: How Grants Flow During Recessions, September 2019; Charitable Giving And The Great Recession, The Russell Sage Foundation and The Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality, October 2012.

10th Annual Bradley Impact Conference

2020 VISION: PHILANTHROPY IN FOCUS

October 8 & 9, 2020 | Grand Geneva Resort, Lake Geneva, WI



What is our response to rebuilding our country post-pandemic? We will look deeply at our four areas of giving to identify strategic philanthropic opportunities that can propel America forward in the right direction and enable our community to stand firm with donor intent. It is our intention to offer both in person and virtual participation options. We will reach out soon about your preferences so that we may take an approach that works for everyone.

Please join us, in person or virtually, for important conversations that will impact the future of our nation.