



Mile High United Way

IMPACT REPORT 2019-2020



MILE HIGH UNITED WAY UNITED FOR SCHOOLS

Mile High United Way is uniquely positioned to help our community from early childhood education through the critical stages of learning in school to promoting economic opportunity after graduation. As part of this continuum of impact, our United for Schools (UFS) program focuses on improving student attendance and engagement in early elementary schools as this sets the foundation for future academic success.

Rarely is a child's chronic absenteeism a reflection of the child's desire to be in an educational environment. Rather, we see time and time again how extenuating circumstances within the homes and communities of these students prevent them from being able to prioritize their education, even if it is their fervent desire to do so. This is why we focus on stabilizing the home environment through basic needs support.

CREATING BETTER ENVIRONMENTS FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT



Garden Place Academy staff and Parent Leader from the school's Parent-Teacher Leadership Team (PTLT)

In 2019–2020, within the seven counties served by Mile High United Way, 122,671 students were chronically absent. This means that these students missed at least 2.2 million combined days of school. In fact, at the Adams 12 schools that we partner with, 46% (or 739 students) were chronically absent during the Fall 2020 semester. This equates to over 6,600 missed days of learning for these students.

We believe a quality education is critical to breaking generational cycles of poverty. That's why, in addition to stabilizing home environments through basic needs support, we are also strengthening school-community partnerships, developing parent advocates, investing in social and emotional learning, and bridging the digital divide for low-income families.

“I've never had a budget for social and emotional learning. United Way has helped with Tier 2 and Tier 3 curriculums. We have tools now for kids to reintegrate into the classroom quickly. There's no way we could do it without Mile High United Way's support.”

DONALD BEUKE
PRINCIPAL, CORONADO HILLS ELEMENTARY

BY THE NUMBERS

40

Parents completed Digital Literacy Training, positively impacting the at-home learning environment and communication with teachers

\$167,000

In direct assistance provided to United for Schools families

154

Students participated in Out-of-School Time (OST) programming in Fall 2020

We are also working to make systemic change at a district level by working with our partner schools to create the much-needed infrastructure within their individual school systems to tackle this problem more actively and on their own. We are helping schools build capacity for attendance-focused teams and providing them with the tools to create accessible, repeatable systems that will increase understanding of their school's chronic absenteeism and help them increase attendance and engagement over time.

While components of our United for Schools program are available to 2,461 students at seven schools across Adams, Aurora, and Denver County school districts, our Community Advocates have built deeper relationships with over 200 families, incorporating more wraparound services to meet those families' whole spectrum of needs. Within the next year, we hope to expand our program to reach an additional two schools to further deepen the support of our young learners.





Abril, a UFS Community Advocate, with Gabrielle, a parent who went through Parent Technology Trainings and now teaches the class

United for Schools offers:

- Direct family assistance
- Data and Capacity-Building for School-Led Attendance Teams
- Family engagement through Parent-Teacher Leadership Teams
- Digital literacy training
- Computer/Internet access
- Quality Out-of-School Time (OST) programming
- Social Emotional Learning resources

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Remote and hybrid learning laid bare the inequities in our education system and shined a bright light on the digital divide. Mile High United Way's United for Schools (UFS) program has been helping families and students overcome the digital divide since the onset of the pandemic and our work continues to be relevant in 2021.

While providing laptops and reliable access to WiFi is a start, it isn't enough. So UFS created Parent Technology Trainings to support parents in building their computer skills. Through these training resources, parents are better able to support their child's remote and online learning.



“I learned a lot that has helped me to support my son on any homework or any computer tasks. We support each other, as he is being raised in this technological world, he is very advanced with it and the areas in which he doesn't manage, I help him. Having the knowledge removes the fear.”

YADIRA, UFS PARENT ON TECHNOLOGY TRAINING

Academic success isn't just about getting good grades, it's about building a foundation for future learning. We know that statistically, students who are successful academically in their earliest grades are able to gain traction and build on that success throughout their academic career – which then leads to increased graduation rates.

THANK YOU for helping us break generational poverty cycles by ensuring the families in the neighborhoods we work within have what they need to focus on their children's education and that our education system offers more equitable opportunities for all students.

Learn more about United for Schools and what you can do to help students remain engaged in their learning at unitedwaydenver.org/united-for-schools.