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WELCOME LETTER

How would public education in the U.S. work if, as a nation, we truly recognized the potential and valued the lives of ALL children, regardless of income level, skin pigmentation, first language, country of origin, or zip code?

Would we allow school districts with few to no children experiencing economic deprivation to receive far greater funding than districts with a high percentage of children whose basic needs are not consistently met?

Would we be content for children living in poverty to have more uncertified teachers, older textbooks, minimal options for elective and advanced classes, and fewer counselors and nurses? Would we accept conditions where under-resourced students lack access to fresh and healthy food and enriching after-school and summer programs, one-on-one or small group tutoring, or college advising and preparation support?

And what would change if, as a society, we recognized what nationally renowned early literacy expert and Stand for Children advisor Dr. Nell Duke often points out: teaching a classroom of first graders is comparable in complexity to being an emergency room physician, requiring a wide range of knowledge and skills and the capacity to manage and coordinate many “cases” at once? How would we adjust teacher preparation, compensation, and ongoing professional learning to be comparable to the preparation, compensation, and ongoing professional learning of doctors?

Finally, what if, given that students’ lives depend on the quality of their education, we approached educational practices with the same rigor as with standards of care in medicine and made sure that educators and school leaders and school district administrators implemented best practices?

Closing the gap between how things are and how they should be is why Stand for Children exists, and I know it’s why you are involved.

I couldn’t be more excited about the progress we made in the past year, which you will read about in this annual report.

We secured full funding for Measure 98 in Oregon and played a key role in achieving full-day kindergarten in Colorado. We reformed Arizona’s misguided and ineffective approach to instruction for English Language Learners and passed the nation’s first statewide automatic advanced course enrollment requirement in Washington state. We helped increase funding for high poverty school districts in Illinois by another \$375 million, bringing the total funding increase over the past four years for lower property tax wealth districts to more than \$1.3 billion. We also provided training, coaching, and peer-learning to help fifty high schools keep more of their ninth graders on track to on-time graduation. Through our Home Visit Project in Dallas, teachers visited the homes and families of 2,800 students yielding 5,510 impactful visits. Finally, by participating in our Teach Kindness challenge, teachers at nearly 250 schools across the nation taught best-in-class kindness and empathy building lessons to hundreds of thousands of students.

Together, we are closing the gap, and I couldn’t be more grateful for your support and partnership.

Thank for your standing with us.

With profound appreciation,
Jonah

OUR IMPACT

We fight for policies and investments made at every level of government, focusing on improving outcomes for underserved students.



HIGH SCHOOL SUCCESS

In today's economy, a high school diploma is not enough. Students need to excel and gain access to college and career training. More than 1.2 million U.S. students drop out of school every year before reaching college. However, since 2010, the U.S. economy has added 11.6 million jobs, 99% of which have gone to workers with at least some college education. Stand is committed to helping high schools implement the U Chicago Network for College Success' proven approach to helping more ninth graders finish that "make or break year" on track to graduate, and to increasing access to career and technical education, college-level courses, and post-secondary counseling.

PROGRESS ON HIGH SCHOOL SUCCESS

Last year, we shared how "success doesn't come overnight" when trying to take on big challenges such as low high school graduation rates. In 2019, Stand had many reasons to celebrate for high school students. In April, we met with our parent advocates at the Oregon state capitol as the Governor approved the budget that included full funding for Measure 98. In May, we were able to celebrate the passage of a first-in-the-nation Academic Acceleration law in Washington. And, in the fall we launched the Center for High School Success in Colorado.

Measure 98 is the high school success law Stand Oregon developed and, with the help of a former Governor and diverse coalition, passed at the ballot in 2016. When it first came up for state funding, Stand was able to secure partial funding – about half of what was needed – and spent the next two years helping educators implement ninth grade success programs to lay the groundwork for future graduation rate gains. Strong initial implementation and our effective continuing advocacy paid off in early 2019 when lawmakers approved the Student Success Act, providing \$2 billion for the biennium including full funding for Measure 98 (\$303 million) along with other early childhood and K-12 investments. We are thrilled that Measure 98 has helped Oregon's graduation rate surpass 80% for the first time this past year and expect significant continued progress in the years to come.

Washington state has knocked down barriers to success for previously underserved students thanks to its first-in-the-nation Academic Acceleration Law. The automatic enrollment policy for advanced math, English, and science classes in all high schools is designed to reduce historic barriers to dual credit and advanced class enrollment and will go a long way toward reducing racial and ethnic enrollment disparities in advanced courses. The attainment of college-level credit in high school also reduces financial barriers for post-secondary opportunities. After supporting passage of this policy,

Stand started an Academic Acceleration Workgroup that is assisting school districts in their adoption of the policy.

Stand began ninth grade success efforts in Colorado in partnership with then gubernatorial candidate (now Governor) Jared Polis, who, in close partnership with Stand adopted the strategy and promoted it during his campaign. After his election, we partnered with Governor Polis to pass House Bill 1276, which established a Ninth Grade Success Grant Program of \$725,000 to support high schools committed to keeping more ninth graders on track to graduate on time.

In the midst of these critical legislative wins, our work on implementation of new policies continues. The [Center](#)

[for High School Success](#) (CHSS) first opened in Oregon and now serves more than fifty partner high schools with nearly half the ninth graders in the state. CHSS also has staff helping close to fifty additional high schools in Memphis, TN, Washington state, and Colorado implement the Ninth Grade Success Approach to ensure ninth graders are on track to graduate. We have seen encouraging early bright spots – ninth grade on track rates at our partner high schools in Memphis increased on average by 16 percentage points between the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school year – and are working hard to help all of our partner high schools achieve significant gains in on track rates and lay the groundwork to expand the network with increasing overall quality.



KINDNESS

Kindness, like other skills, needs to be taught, fostered, and celebrated. Kind schools are more effective at helping students succeed, both in school and in life. At schools where educators intentionally teach practical life skills related to kindness, students feel a greater sense of safety, support, and acceptance.

BE KIND

Biographers of Henry James tell us of advice he once gave to his nephew, who was heading off to school for the first time. “Three things in human life are important. The first is to be kind. The second is to be kind. And the third is to be kind.” This advice still rings true over 100 years later.

Hundreds of thousands of students across the country benefitted from Stand’s Teach Kindness program in 2019, with 232 schools completing the program. The program launched in 2017 for middle schools and was such a success that Stand added an elementary school track last year.

The students at the General John Stricker Middle School in Baltimore, Maryland were the Kindness Challenge National Champion celebrated in March 2019. In addition to following the four-week program, students at Stricker Middle created a quilt made of patches representing kind acts witnessed at school and a tree filled with uplifting messages to each other.

“The most powerful part is the leadership from our teachers and students,” said Principal Laurie Phillips Friend.

“The kindness challenge went right along with the work we’re doing this year on trauma-informed instruction. Not only did most educators sign up to teach a kindness lesson, but the challenge also gave students a purpose—even kids you would not expect to participate,” she continued.

Since Teach Kindness began, over 11,500 teachers have completed the introductory reflection exercise focused on encouraging stronger relationships with often marginalized students and more empathetic responses to unproductive

student behavior, and over 35,000 kindness activities have been taught.

The activities are making a concrete difference. At Woodlake Elementary, in Sacramento, California, teachers not only observed that students were behaving more responsibly and were more willing to help each other, but also noted that many parents reported that behavior improved at home!

With nearly one in three students reporting that they have been bullied (in person or online), kindness is needed more than ever. The next time a young person asks you for life advice, you can follow in James' footsteps and encourage them to be kind, be kind, be kind. You can hear what students themselves have to say about the Kindness Challenge in this [amazing video of middle schoolers](#) from across the country!



LITERACY

One in six children who are not reading proficiently in third grade do not graduate from high school on time, a rate four times greater than that for proficient readers. Knowing the importance of proficient reading and writing by third grade, Stand has been working on key factors that help address the barriers many students face, including access to Pre-K, Full-Day Kindergarten, and high-quality literacy instruction and effective interventions in elementary school.

TAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO EARLY LITERACY

Improving literacy proficiency has been a part of Stand's platform for several years, with significant achievements through policy such as the READ Act in Colorado, early literacy grants in Arizona, and local and state efforts to preserve and increase access to high-quality Pre-K seats. In 2019, Stand forged ahead into new territory in Arizona and Colorado, where third grade reading proficiency is at 56% and 41% respectively.

In Phoenix, Arizona, Stand worked closely with five school districts to expand its Every Child Reads (ECR) program. ECR focuses on parent workshops, at-home reading,

access to books, and school-parent partnerships to improve students' literacy outcomes in the early grades. The program includes a partnership with Unite for Literacy, which provides access to a digital bookshelf through which families read more than 2,340 books last year. Participating families also receive books to keep at home, with over 1,500 distributed.

"I'm a little embarrassed to admit this, but before participating in the Every Child Reads program with Stand for Children Arizona, I didn't know how important third-grade reading was to my child's education and life success. It has taught me that there are many things we can do as parents to help our children succeed in life. But one specific workshop that changed my perspective is "Why Reading Matters." I didn't know how important reading really is, and more specifically, that if our children are not reading at grade level, they'll get left behind."

- Celia Guillen, Stand Parent

While this effort was underway in local school districts across Phoenix, Stand Arizona was also busy at the state capitol. After two years and countless setbacks, Stand Arizona-sponsored English Language Learner reform legislation passed in 2019. This will have incredible impact,

positively affecting 85,000 English Language Learners (ELL) across the state. Until then, it was Arizona's policy to require ELL students to be in four-hour blocks of language isolation during the school day. As a result, ELL students were kept out of their core classes. Senate Bill 1014 allows ELL students to spend more time interacting with native speakers to learn English faster.

And, in Colorado, Stand was a pivotal partner in the state-wide victory for free, Full-Day Kindergarten which Governor Polis championed and signed into law last spring, and the legislature provided \$175 million to pay for HB-1262. Of the

13,324 seats that were in half-day Kindergarten last school year, 97% were full-day in September 2019. Governor Polis' commitment to this work was integral to its success, and a team of Stand Parent Advocacy Fellows worked tirelessly to support its passage, giving media interviews and press conferences, participating in roundtable discussions, testifying before House and Senate Committees, gathering petitions, and writing letters to the editor and to legislators. Mom of three and Stand Parent Advocacy Fellow Asia Zanders spoke at the bill signing, recognizing the bill's impact *"to give every child the opportunity to reach their full potential... and give families the chance to thrive."*



ADEQUATE FUNDING

We know that schools with higher per pupil funding tend to get better academic results. We also know that it costs more to educate students growing up in poverty. Yet the United States is one of only a few countries in the world where students from upper income households go to schools that have higher per pupil funding than students growing up in poverty. That's why Stand supports adequate and more equitable funding, with targeting and accountability to ensure to the greatest extent possible that more funding leads to improved results.

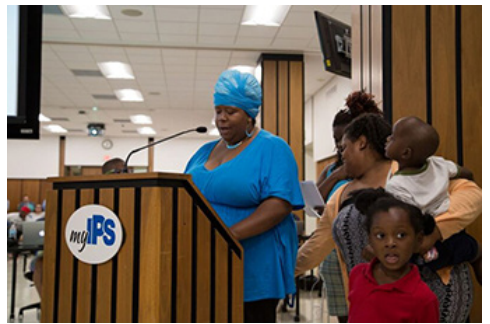
PURSUING THE FIGHT FOR FAIR FUNDING

Stand Illinois continued its tireless fight to improve education funding, playing a central role in securing new dollars for the Evidence Based Funding (EBF) formula. In fact, we helped persuade legislators to increase it by \$25 million for a total of \$375 million through the formula for low-property wealth school districts. These dollars supplement the \$1 billion in increased state investment that we and key allies helped secure for high poverty school districts in the last two years.

Shockingly, 85% of Illinois' students still attend under-funded schools, and the amount needed to close the adequacy gap is \$7.1 billion.

Stand knew that despite the benefit of the EBF formula, solving Illinois' education funding problem requires a multi-pronged approach, and we have been working on solutions that will move the state closer to its goal. Early in 2019 Stand released a report, ["Accelerating Equity: Integrating Teacher Pension Funding into Fair School Funding."](#) The plan this report presents is called an "equity boost" which would dismantle the inequality of education pension funding and build on EBF to provide predictability and stability for school districts that have been fearing a sudden pension cost shift. It protects teacher pensions and would direct about \$230 million more State dollars to the neediest districts.

In addition, Stand is supporting an amendment to the state constitution to move the state from a flat tax rate to a "fair tax" structure that would enable the state to close that still wide adequacy gap. Voters will have the opportunity to decide on the amendment this November.



QUALITY SCHOOLS

For children growing up in high poverty communities, great schools, including great teachers, can be a ticket to educational success and upward mobility and mediocre schools a pipeline to continued poverty and, too often, entanglement in the criminal justice system. That's why, in districts across the country, Stand works with parents and teachers who are deeply committed to their children's education to improve chronically low-performing public schools.

GREAT TEACHERS HELP MAKE GREAT SCHOOLS

Stand's work with parents in Indianapolis and with teachers in Dallas and Fort Worth demonstrates two of the ways that we have been tackling the improvement of schools this year.

Stand Indiana has found success for students at failing schools in Indianapolis by working closely with the Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) to establish Innovation Schools that have improved some of the lowest performing schools in the district over the past few years. In fact, eight of the 11 A-rated schools in IPS are now Innovation Schools, and Innovations Schools serve 20% of the district's students. This years-long effort was made possible in part because of work Stand did to help reform the IPS School Board, which led to the hiring of a new superintendent, Dr. Lewis Ferebee, who spent five years at IPS before leaving to lead District of Columbia Public Schools last year. With Dr. Ferebee's departure Stand knew what it had to do – make sure IPS hired another excellent leader. Stand engaged its parent members in every public aspect of the hiring process and supported the selection of Aleesia Johnson as the new superintendent in order to build on the progress made during the past five years.

However, improving the school model and having district support is not enough. To have a high-quality school, you

need high-quality teachers. In January 2019, Stand Indiana released a report, ["Addressing Indiana's Quiet Teaching Crisis"](#) (in partnership with Teach Plus), that details how Indiana's teachers aren't being paid enough, have little room for career growth, and are not being trained or retained very well. Their starting pay is near the poverty line. Nearly 50% of public-school teachers surveyed in Indiana are not satisfied with their career options in the state, and there has been a 50% drop in individuals entering Indiana's teacher preparation programs between 2008 and 2013. Ninety-two percent of districts report that they struggle to find qualified candidates to hire for open positions. How can our schools do better for our students when they cannot hire qualified teachers?

Stand Indiana is on the road to righting these wrongs and won support for a series of legislative initiatives aimed at elevating the teacher profession this year, including pushing for a meaningful increase in public school funding to raise teacher pay (2.5% each year of the biennium budget, for a total of \$274 million) and approval for use of state reserves to free up \$140 million over two years in addition to the base funding increase. Stand also won support for House Bills 1008 and 1009 for the first state investment in teacher career ladders and teacher residency programs, a total of \$4.5 million in competitive grants for districts to start new programs or scale existing ones.

There is a long road to travel to fix the systemic issues, but Stand is pleased to see the legislative support growing for solving the crisis.

Teachers have been improving the school experience for students in Dallas and Fort Worth, Texas again this year as well through our Home Visit Project (HVP), which was [highlighted in the New York Times](#) in August 2019. Now in its fifth year, HVP is going deeper into the communities with

the greatest need in North Texas, which is experiencing the highest child poverty rate in the country with over a third of children under 18 living in poverty. Engaging families early in their children's education better establishes a path for kids to enter into kindergarten ready to learn, be reading proficiently by the end of third grade, and then staying on

track to graduate from high school. Through the project this year, 770 educators from 110 school campuses visited the homes and families of 2,800 students yielding 5,510 impactful visits. This high level of engagement is creating strong connections between teachers and families.



ELECTIONS

Elections can make the difference between steps forward in helping students succeed in school and life and steps backward for students who desperately need a better education than they're getting. That's why Stand recruits, endorses, and helps elect candidates who will make decisions that provide a high-quality education to the students who need it most.

EDUCATION CHAMPIONS

During 2019, Stand endorsed and supported seven state-level candidates who all won, for a 100% state-level win rate. Stand also endorsed and supported eight school board candidates, five of whom won their races for a 62.5% win-rate and an overall win-rate of 80%.

In Louisiana, we successfully targeted seven Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) candidates with support in their fall 2019 election. All seven won.

Incumbents and those seeking a seat on BESE for the first time spoke loud and clear about why we're seeing progress, their leadership on those issues, and their commitment to continue pushing forward a student-centered agenda.

In Oregon, we successfully supported school board candidates in May 2019 elections in Portland (the largest district in the state) and Hillsboro Public School Districts, where we helped a former educator and diverse candidate prevail over an entrenched incumbent.

Meanwhile in East Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Stand supported the election of a new Chair and Vice Chair of the School Board who have made school quality their top priority. During the 2019-20 school year they began a superintendent search as well, and we are optimistic a high-quality leader with experience in addressing low-performing schools will be selected.

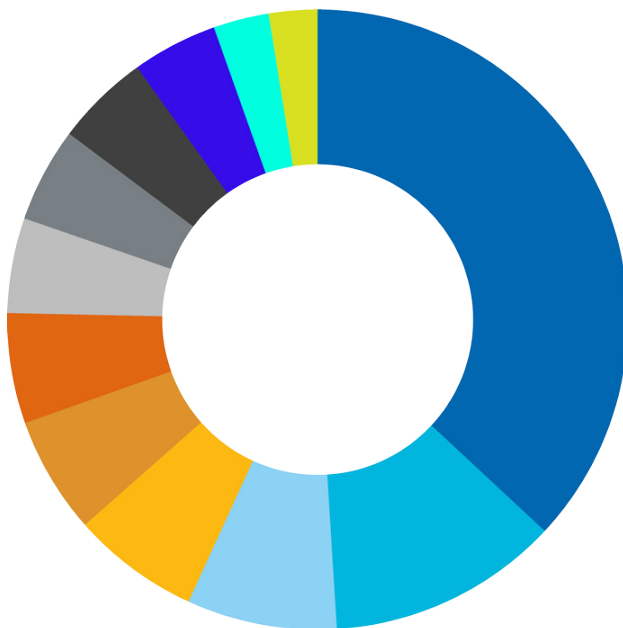
STAND FOR CHILDREN LEADERSHIP CENTER FINANCIAL SUMMARY

For the fiscal year ending August 31, 2019

Stand for Children Leadership Center is a 501(c)(3) public charity focused on education advocacy. The organization ended FY2019 in a strong financial position and continued to maintain six months of operating reserves.

The complete FY2019 audited financial statements are [available here](#).

EXPENSES BY STATE



AZ 5% CO 4% IL 5%
 IN 7% LA 8% MA 5%
 OR 6% TN 3% TX 2%
 WA 6% CHSS 12% NATL 37%

ASSETS	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$19,914,907
Pledges and Accounts Receivables	146,250
Other Current Assets	604,110
Fixed Assets, Net of Accumulated Depreciation	22,789
TOTAL	\$20,688,056
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	\$1,575,182
Total Net Assets	19,112,874
TOTAL	\$20,688,056
REVENUES	
Grants and Contributions	\$16,333,869
Other Income	827,179
TOTAL REVENUE	\$17,161,048
EXPENSES	
Program Services	\$12,894,172
Management and General	3,597,673
Fundraising	966,630
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$17,458,475
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	(\$297,427)



Stand for Children Leadership Center maintains a three-star rating for sound fiscal management from Charity Navigator, the nation's premier independent evaluator of charitable organizations.

STAND FOR CHILDREN, INC. FINANCIAL SUMMARY

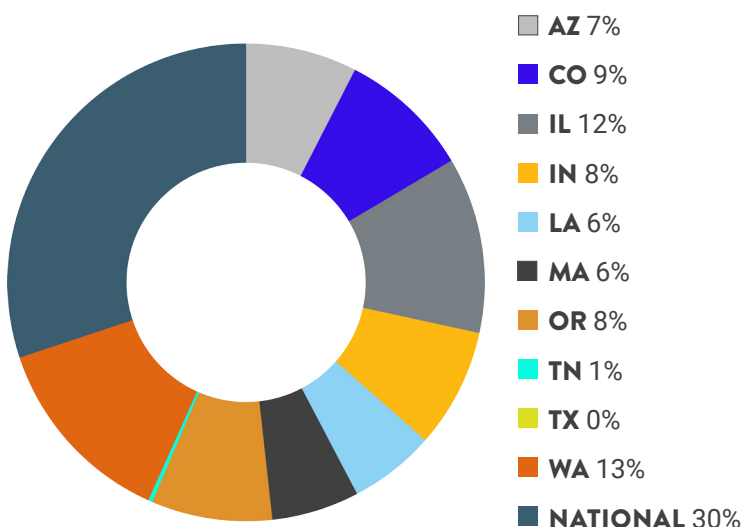
For the fiscal year ending August 31, 2019

Stand for Children, Inc. is a 501(c)(4) social welfare organization which also includes state-level 527 organizations. The organization strategically leverages resources on a year-to-year basis to engage in lobbying and electoral work where opportunities arise.

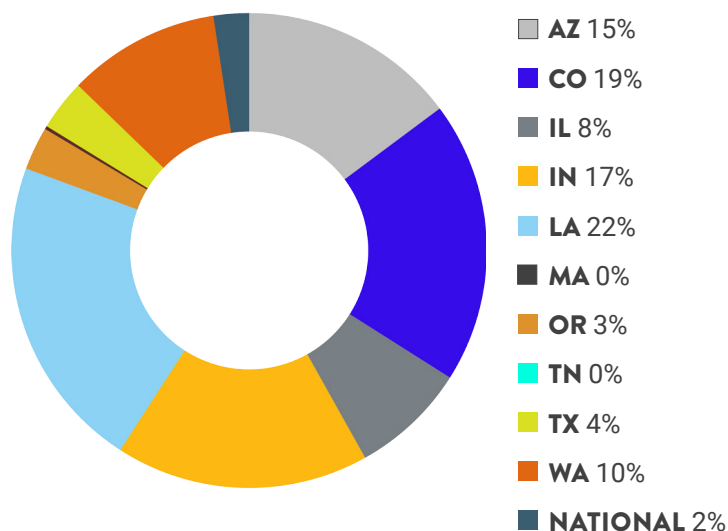
The complete FY2019 audited financial statements are [available here](#).

EXPENSES BY STATE

OPERATIONAL EXPENSES



ELECTORAL EXPENSES



ASSETS

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$10,395,971
Other Current Assets	67,217
TOTAL	\$10,463,188

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	\$369,993
Total Net Assets	10,093,195
TOTAL	\$10,463,188

REVENUES

Grants and Contributions	\$6,863,285
Other Income	78,158
TOTAL REVENUE	\$6,941,443

EXPENSES

Program Services	\$5,437,583
Management and General	727,734
Fundraising	27,305
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$6,192,622

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS

(\$ 748,821)

FUNDERS AND PARTNERS

We are grateful to have an extraordinary group of supporters who believe in our work. As we share our impact in this report, we would like to thank the following donors who contributed \$100,000 or more during our 2019 fiscal year and our primary program partners. We would also like to thank the many donors and organizational partners who are too numerous to list but whose contributions support all aspects of our work and success. Without their support, none of our achievements for students would be possible!

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