



Education Forward DC

Impact Report

Fiscal Year 2022
(July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)



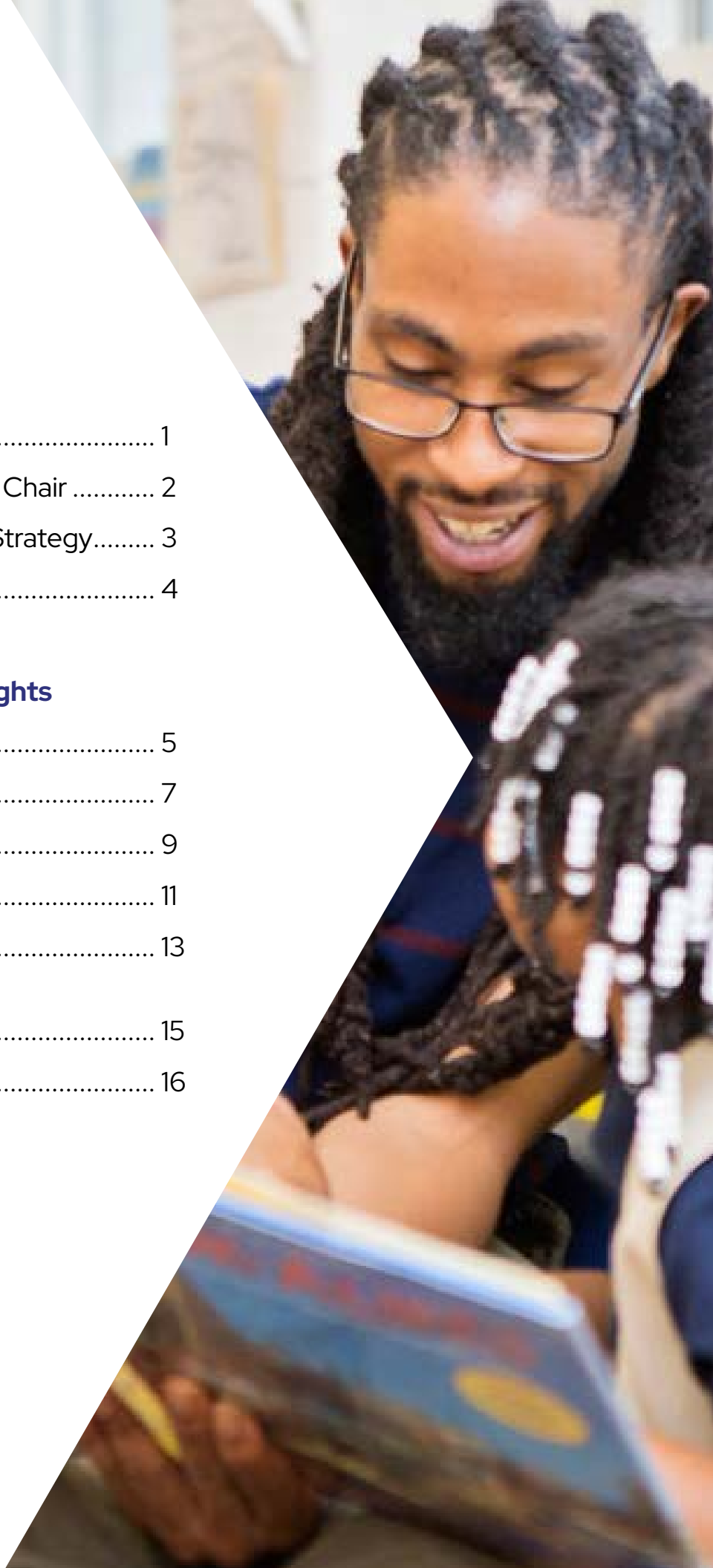


Table of Contents

Mission, Vision, and Core Values	1
Letter From Our CEO and Board Chair	2
Grantmaking Model and Fund II Strategy.....	3
Key Impact Facts and Figures.....	4

Highlights and Program Spotlights

Reimagine Schools.....	5
Support Talent	7
Recover Equitably.....	9
Advance Racial Equity	11
Foster Change	13
Schools In Our Portfolio.....	15
Donors and Board Members.....	16



Our Mission

Education Forward DC accelerates the work of visionary education leaders to foster a city of high-quality, equitable public schools for every DC student and family.

Our Vision

We envision a DC where students starting furthest from opportunity can chart their own path and thrive. Our 20-year vision is a city where public school students in DC are able to achieve economic success, power, and autonomy in their lives.



Our Core Values

We are resolute in our pursuit of great outcomes for all DC students.

We recognize current approaches are not enough to meet the needs of all students in DC's public schools. We work with leaders across the city to take bold action and engage in tough conversations to move the work forward. We make all decisions in service of students.

We are learners.

We embrace diverse perspectives to inform our work, especially from the communities we serve. We give and seek out candid feedback. We are open about what we do and why, we share what we've learned, and we are honest about our mistakes so that we can learn from them and improve.

We work intentionally to disrupt patterns of racial inequity.

We believe that addressing racial injustice in our schools and communities is fundamental to our success as a city. In particular, we prioritize investing in leaders of color who share the racial and economic background of the students we serve, and we create opportunities to amplify the voices of families and communities in DC. We seek to work in ways that dismantle existing power dynamics.

We care about each other and the leaders we support.

We passionately pursue our mission and bring our whole selves to our work. We strive to build authentic relationships with each other, our partners, and those we serve, and to foster a sense of community. We celebrate each success that brings us closer to achieving our mission!

Dear partners,

The last few years have been difficult for students, families, educators, and leaders. The pandemic created a disruption the effects of which we are still feeling and just now fully comprehending. As DC forges ahead with its COVID recovery, we find no shortage of challenges to build schools that serve our students better than before. New academic assessment data indicates that fewer students are ready for college and career. Our teachers and leaders are contemplating new careers after working tirelessly to deliver for our students. And city leaders are less open to creating more options for families at this time.

But, in recent months, the Ed Forward DC team has had the opportunity to join the leaders we support and their students as they reconnect and dive into learning in new school environments and out-of-the-classroom learning experiences. Seeing these students excited to be in school and engaged in learning is a strong reminder of why we do this work.

Every DC student deserves a great public school. The challenges ahead of us don't change that simple fact. And recent record enrollment in our public schools means the work is more important than ever.

Over the last year we have invested in leaders who are committed to recovering and reimagining education in DC and confronting the challenges before us by growing high-quality public school options, addressing racial inequities, recruiting and retaining excellent leaders, and fostering equity-centered change.

We can be successful because we have been successful. Ed Forward DC, under the leadership of Maura Marino who stepped down as CEO in September 2022, has supported over 100 schools and organizations with \$54 million in grants since 2016 to create more equitable school experiences in the District of Columbia.

We thank Maura for pushing us to dream big for DC students.

And thank you for your continued support. Together we can build a DC where students starting furthest from opportunity can chart their own path and thrive.

Sincerely,



Bisi Oyedele
Bisi Oyedele



Kendrick E. Curry
Rev. Dr. Kendrick E. Curry

Grantmaking Model and Fund II Strategy

At Education Forward DC, we invest in and support visionary education leaders' work to provide students furthest from opportunity the educational experiences they need to thrive.

We do this by:

- » Raising funds from local and national donors.
- » Supporting grantees with investments and strategic assistance.
- » Connecting leaders' efforts to support citywide transformation.

We blend grantmaking, technical assistance, and citywide coordination, while leaning heavily into thought leadership and communications work to inform citywide education conversations and elevate the voices of students and families.

Our Fund II Strategy

Investing in visionary education leaders focused on dismantling inequity and empowering students and families can create a reimagined experience for students that meets their full academic, social, and emotional needs. In Fund II (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2026), we will support an equitable pandemic recovery and ensure that students have greater access to higher quality and more equitable public schools, with the **five-year goal to double the proportion of DC schools providing high-quality, high-equity experiences—increasing the share from 21% to 42% by 2026.**

To achieve this result, we aspire to put **\$62 million** towards the following five priority areas:

- » **Reimagine Schools**
- » **Support Talent**
- » **Recovery Equitably**
- » **Advance Racial Equity**
- » **Foster Change**

Key Impact Facts and Figures

From Fiscal Year 2022



33 UNIQUE

Organizations supported

3 SCHOOLS LAUNCHED

Serving 1,159 students at full scale



67%

Directed to an organization with a Black and/or Latinx executive director and/or board chair



\$30.8M

Secured as of the conclusion of FY22

Reimagine Schools



Five-year Goal

Schools will emerge from the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic to provide a reimagined experience for students that values their identity and meets their full academic, social and emotional needs.

Key Highlights

- » Supported the expansion of Capital Experience Lab at Friendship Public Charter School, Friendship Online Public Charter School, and a second KIPP DC Public Charter High School that will provide high-quality, high-equity educational experiences to 1,159 students at full scale.
- » Funded Mary's Center to support business planning for a school-based mental health clinician fellowship program in an effort to expand its clinician pipeline to respond to the outsized demand for school-based mental health services.
- » Funded the Special Education Leader Fellowship to partner with up to five public education networks in DC to offer targeted trauma-informed re-entry and recovery supports for students with disabilities.

Joy beyond the classroom

We have an unprecedented opportunity to lay the groundwork for a reimagined school system that serves DC students even better than before. For Capital Experience Lab (CapXLab) that means using DC as the classroom.

With support from Education Forward DC, CapXLab welcomed its first students in school year 2022 and is immersing them in community-based learning that takes advantage of the rich history and culture at our fingertips in the nation's capital. Educators design learning experiences that are aligned with learning science and are intended to promote autonomy and mastery.

Students spend two days a week outside the classroom engaging with the city and the material at places like the Smithsonian museums. It makes for a more fun and interactive day "at" school.

"The museum helps me learn because it's physically seeing it," said one student.

At the end of six-week units, students share what they learned with families and community members in their Celebrations of Learning. Parents see firsthand their students' love of learning and growth. For some parents, it's precisely what their student needs.

"[CapXLab] gives students the opportunity to learn through experiences and challenges them to think on a broader scale," said one.

Now CapXLab is sharing its model with educators across the city to spread the joy that their students experience to other DC students.



Support Talent



Five-year Goal

Ensure DC has a robust pipeline of Black and Latinx school and non-profit education leaders who work to foster strong school communities.

Key Highlights

- » Continued support and facilitation for the launch of the Surge Institute's first DC cohort of the Surge Academy fellowship program, which will prepare and train a group of 12 Black and brown non-profit leaders working in education and community engagement to build skills and develop key networks to drive more systemic change for education in DC.
- » Supported the launch of a pilot fellowship cohort with School Leader Lab that provided professional development via executive coaching and access to a network of peer thought partners to 12 C-suite leaders (11 of whom identify as Black) at the central education network level with the aim to collectively improve conditions for the students and staff they serve.
- » Funded a staffing innovation pilot across seven school networks to support schools in exploring how they might innovate on their staffing model to increase teacher satisfaction and boost retention. Learnings were shared with the DC public education sector via a [white paper](#) and webinar.

Innovating to support educators

Stabilizing DC's education ecosystem requires stability in teachers and school leadership. As DC confronts the reality of talent retention after the pandemic, innovating and adapting will be key to ensuring that excellent educators and leaders invested in our students' futures are in every school.

In spring 2022, Education Forward DC funded schools to test strategies that brought their teachers greater flexibility in an effort to boost teacher retention. This work sparked a conversation among our partners across the city wanting to further support educators and elevated important learnings for other school leaders seeking to improve the teacher experience during a challenging period.

We learned that many teachers want improved conditions to support their work with students, not simply less work. This could mean higher-quality planning time, more opportunities for teacher collaboration, or improved coaching and other instructional support.

Surveys in some schools found that even small-scale shifts can have a meaningful positive impact on teacher experience. "A very small thing can make a difference. It is important to ask teachers what they want, but then any step forward can be a really good step," as one leader put it.



Recover Equitably



Five-year Goal
Support COVID-19 recovery to enable the creation and implementation of a community-informed, citywide vision of equity and excellence for all students.

Key Highlights

- » Supported the State Superintendent of Education Dr. Christina Grant and her senior executive team with change management, leadership development, and coaching supports via a grant to Chiefs for Change to ensure the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is well prepared to sustain and deepen the significant strides DC has made in improving public schools.
- » Supported and facilitated collaborative planning efforts for education agency leaders at DC Public Schools, the Office of the DC Deputy Mayor for Education, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education, and the Public Charter School Board to address key COVID recovery challenges within the DC education ecosystem.
- » Launched the Better Than Before event series to help education leaders, schools, and policymakers better understand what supports students need to thrive in the coming school years in conjunction with supporting the launch of EmpowerK12's city-wide education data dashboard on COVID recovery.

Bringing students and education leaders together for a strong recovery

Getting our education system back on track after over a year away from the classroom will require strong supports for our students and collaboration from city leaders.

That starts with listening.

Policymakers, education advocates, and school leaders came together in June to hear directly from students at the first in our Better Than Before event series. More than 20 students shared the real challenges they have faced over the past three school years with reconnecting to their school communities and re-engaging in the classroom, including neighborhood and school safety, longer commutes, and peers suffering emotionally.

We're elevating these concerns to policymakers, as well as making it easier for them to track DC's road to recovery. Working with our grantee Empower K12, we've created an Education Recovery Dashboard to provide an at-a-glance look at a variety of metrics that help us understand how our students are doing and the health of our overall education system.

We're building on these conversations moving forward and keeping the conversation focused on what DC schools need to help students do even better than before.



Advance Racial Equity



Five-year Goal

Build capacity of community members and education leaders to identify and address the systemic barriers anti-Black racism creates for students.

Key Highlights

- » To further our systemic anti-racism work, we funded strategic plans grounded in racial equity across three of four city education agencies (Office of the DC Deputy Mayor for Education, DC Public Schools, and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education). The Public Charter School Board had already created an equity-centered strategic plan.
- » To further our school-based racial equity work, we funded a cohort of nine school networks to pilot the Insight Racial Equity Analysis—a deeper set of survey questions developed by The New Teacher Project (TNTP) to analyze diversity, belonging, equity, and inclusion (DBEI) in their school communities, and to develop corresponding action plans to address any inequitable systems, structures, and behaviors in their schools.

New leaders committed to equity



We can't build an education system that results in success for Black and brown students without new leaders who are committed to better outcomes for them.

This year Education Forward DC supported the DC expansion of the Surge Academy as part of our work to develop the next generation of Black and Latinx education leaders. This national program "develops, elevates, and unites leaders of color" in schools and organizations that serve youth and provides them an intensive leadership experience and a deep exploration of personal growth, trauma, and the state of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the US.

The first cohort completed the program this year, and one fellow is already stepping up as a city leader: Brandon Best, whom voters recently elected to serve on the DC State Board of Education. Best had been searching for a leadership fellowship for some time, but other programs didn't seem like the right fit. Until he heard about Surge and its focus on racial equity for students.

"At the core of everything Surge is about equity," Best said. "It's innate to my character. That's why it was a perfect match."

The commencement address by former DC Public Schools Chancellor Kaya Henderson inspired Best and he decided he wanted to do more for DC's students and families. Surge helped connect him to other leaders of color in the city who encouraged him to run and provided the mentorship and resources that were integral to his successful campaign. Not to mention some of his cohort members who were there supporting him throughout the whole process collecting signatures and introducing him to voters.

"I would not be here today as a member-elect if it weren't for Surge," said Best.

Now he plans to use his time on the Board of Education to advance a system that works best for students.

"The decisions we as adults make do not always align with what students need to be successful after high school," he said. "Those who are best suited to solve the challenges in our education system are those who experience them daily: our families, our communities, and our students. I want to create a more inclusive state board that is listening to them and incorporating what they are telling us."

Foster Change



Five-year Goal

Build a supportive policy environment that fosters equitable school access, resource allocation, and long-term trust.

Key Highlights

- » Via the DC Students Succeed campaign, coordinated engagement and advocacy efforts across a coalition of more than 40 organizations, yielding a 5.9% Uniform Per Student Funding Formula increase, 3.1% increase in the charter facilities allotment, an increase in funding for school-based mental health (\$6M) and out-of-school time activities (\$5M), and increased funding for schools with high concentrations of students designated as at-risk of academic failure in the FY23 DC Council budget.
- » Provided funding to support the launch of the DC Education Research Collaborative, the District of Columbia's new education research practice partnership (RPP) housed at the Urban Institute. A successful RPP, with its focus on quality and engagement, will help to build back trust in the public education system while increasing access to credible, transparent, and accessible information that helps stakeholders understand the practices and policies that can improve educational outcomes for DC students.
- » Hosted two events to bring together thought leaders to generate ideas on how to best ground the upcoming DC Public School (DCPS) boundary process in equity and ensure voices of community members across the city were fully represented. In order to promote public awareness, we funded Greater Greater Washington to publish a series of informational online editorials discussing the decennial DCPS school boundary process.

Securing historic investments in student success

Transformational change that leads to student success happens when education leaders and policymakers make decisions informed by community voices, especially as DC seeks to recover from the pandemic and reimagine schools.

This year, Education Forward DC pulled together a broad coalition of more than 40 education, health, and community organizations, schools, direct service providers, advocates, and allied groups into the DC Students Succeed campaign. Unified by the belief that students come first, these organizations sought a city budget that equitably funded schools, expanded joyful extracurricular experiences, and supported Black and brown education talent.

And leaders listened. Policymakers finalized a budget that ensures DC students are successful in school and in life with record high funding levels, new investments for students furthest from opportunity, expanded school-based mental health, strong out-of-school programming, and additional educator supports for professional development and housing.



Schools In Our Portfolio

Education Forward DC currently works with 26 public charter school networks and district schools encompassing a total of 79 school sites. Below is a list of the public charter school networks and public district schools in our portfolio.

- » Anacostia High School
- » AppleTree Early Learning Public Charter School
- » Ballou High School
- » Bard High School Early College DC
- » Capital Village Public Charter School
- » DC Bilingual Public Charter School
- » DC Prep Public Charter School
- » DC Scholars Public Charter School
- » Digital Pioneers Public Charter School
- » District of Columbia International School
- » E.L. Haynes Public Charter School
- » Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School
- » Friendship Public Charter School
- » Girls Global Academy Public Charter School
- » I Dream Public Charter School
- » Ingenuity Prep Public Charter School
- » KIPP DC Public Charter School
- » Mundo Verde Bilingual Public Charter School
- » Rocketship DC Public Charter School
- » Social Justice Public Charter School
- » Statesman College Preparatory Academy for Boys Public Charter School
- » The Sojourner Truth Public Charter School
- » Two Rivers Public Charter School
- » Washington Latin Public Charter School
- » Washington Leadership Academy Public Charter School
- » Washington Yu Ying Public Charter School



Thank you to our generous donors and committed board members whose partnerships make our work possible.

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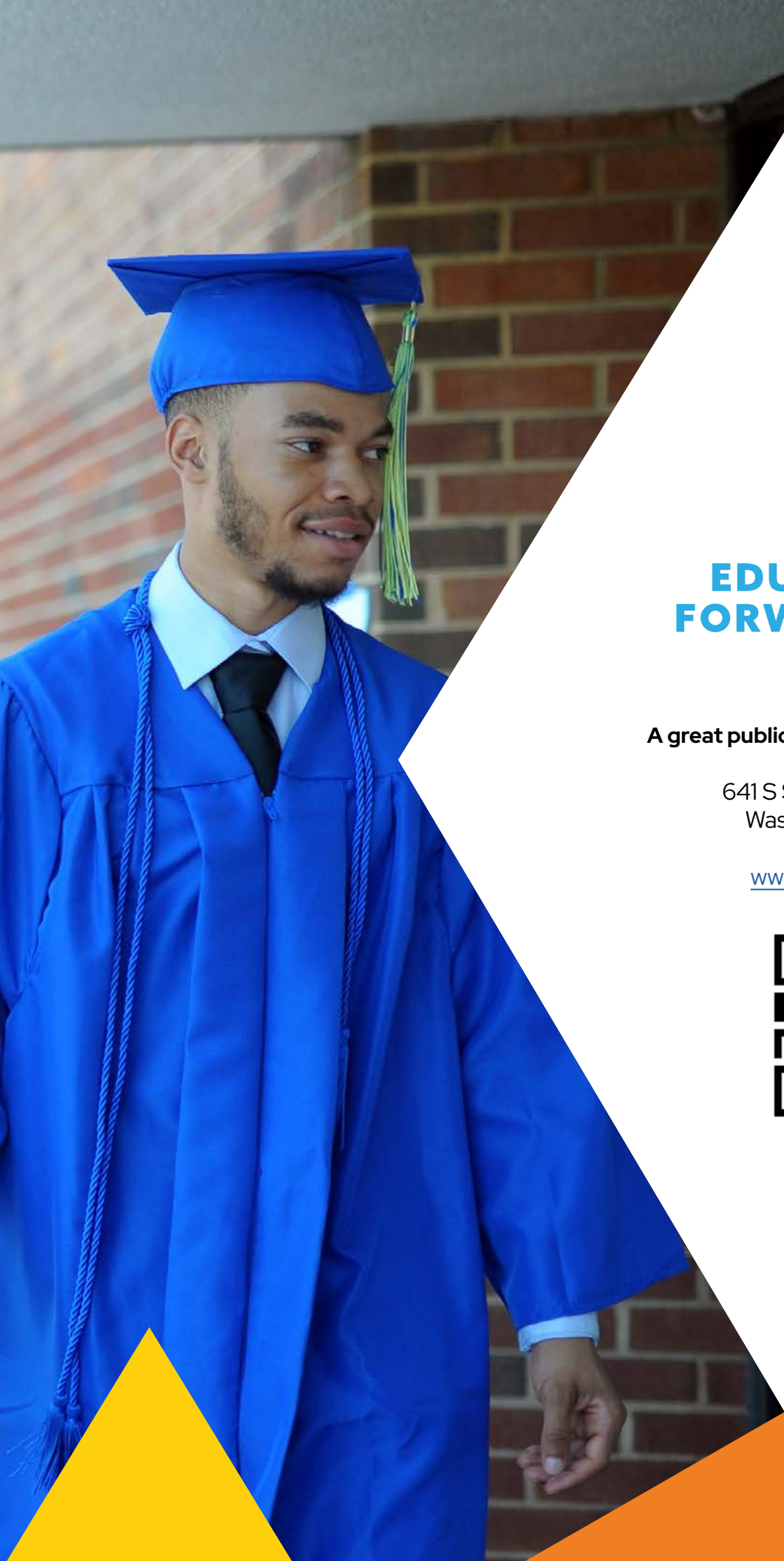
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