

TOGETHER  
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EDUCATION

# IMPACT REPORT 2021-2022

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*Together Chicago exists to be a catalyst for lasting transformation in the city of Chicago.*

**Mission:** We help churches and other organizations adopt schools to **remove the barriers** that disrupt a quality education for over 3000 Chicagoland students.

**Vision:** We plan to impact over 3000 Chicago-land kids and their families, each school year.

This work will be a catalyst for lasting transformation in the city of Chicago that results in disrupting the school to prison pipeline and a reduction of violence in our city.

## THE VILLAGE HAS BEEN HARD AT WORK!



### Partners Donated To Meet School Needs

\$41,000 donated to schools from partner orgs



### We Offered Mental Health and Emotional Wellness Training

383 Adults - parents, school staff, and mentors - received training to mentor students



### We Increased School Partnerships

We grew from serving 6 schools to 76 schools across Chicagoland



### Youth Programing

We made measurable impact for 3201 Chicagoland youth

## THE VILLAGE BEGINS WITH YOU!

Together Chicago believes the **village is the launchpad** for our schools and begins with us! We help our community's civic groups, businesses, and faith-based communities plug into the unique needs of schools while sowing the seeds for **community transformation**.

From reading buddies to rolling up our sleeves, there is no task or goal too big for the Together Chicago Village! **Join the village and envision what is possible together!**



### LOVE OUR SCHOOLS DAY

Each Spring, Chicago schools gather their **village** for a day of service with one goal - to make their school shine! With **200+ volunteers** deployed, Love Our Schools Day has a remarkable impact on and off campus. Email [damien.howard@togetherchicago.com](mailto:damien.howard@togetherchicago.com) to get your team involved!



### SEL & MENTOR TRAINING

We offer **mentor training** that teaches **Social Emotional Learning** strategies and language for student success! This training is available for **parents, school staff, and mentors**. Email [damien.howard@togetherchicago.com](mailto:damien.howard@togetherchicago.com) to get your school or organization involved!



### LOVE OUR SCHOOLS SUMMIT

Together Chicago ends each school year by convening school administrators, stakeholders, and industry **experts** for a **must attend event**. Cross-sector **leaders** engage in critical systems level conversations focused on **innovative** asset-based **solutions** for our school communities.



### LOVE OUR SCHOOLS CAFE

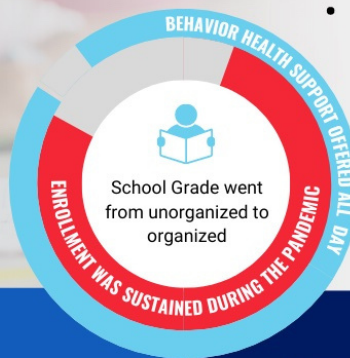
CAFE's hold the secret to **engaging** the entire community around a school! These events facilitate local **strategic partnerships** which extend our reach and expand our **local impact**. Community driven, the CAFE model is **capacity building** at its finest! Email [damien.howard@togetherchicago.com](mailto:damien.howard@togetherchicago.com) to get your team involved!



**Case Study:** Doolittle Elementary School is an inner-city PreK-8 grade school of **235 students with 100% free and reduced lunch rate**. In Partnership with Willow Creek Church, masks were donated, a staff lounge received new furniture, 7 mentors offered tutoring, 3 sensory rooms were created, and parent leadership training took place. Principal Jones' vision for her school is to staff a full time therapist for students and families.

**After three years under Principal Jones' Leadership:**

- The 5 Essentials (School Culture) Grade went from "not yet organized" to "organized"
- Maintained enrollment throughout the pandemic
- Principal Jones' Behavior Health Model offers emotional and mental health support throughout the entire school day
- Since starting our education initiatives with 6 schools in 2018, Together Chicago is now partnering with 76 of Chicagoland's 700+ public, district, and charter schools



**GET INVOLVED**

Have a special skill/talent? Youth can volunteer too! Service projects for your Eagle Scout, or Bar mitzvah/Bat mitzvah would be a natural fit! Class projects, service learning, and so many other opportunities - we are excited to hear from you!

Contact [damien.howard@togetherchicago.com](mailto:damien.howard@togetherchicago.com)



**BECOME A HERO**

The village needs **heroes** like you! Join us as an individual, faith community, local business, or granting foundation. Your **contributions** through Together Chicago are **magnified** to reach 4x the number of students! Be their champion and create **sustainable** change.

Contact [damien.howard@togetherchicago.com](mailto:damien.howard@togetherchicago.com)



**CONNECT WITH PURPOSE**

Together Chicago is **calling** all community members to participate in committees, virtual fundraising, employee **engagement** projects, and CAFEs with School and Regional Champions. Have another **great idea**?

We would love to hear it!

Contact [damien.howard@togetherchicago.com](mailto:damien.howard@togetherchicago.com)



**WISH LIST**

Make a **HUGE** difference in creating a village around every school in Chicagoland! Stocking up our classrooms and providing **teachers** with what they need is **imperative**. Host a Together Chicago "Roll Up Our Sleeves to Fill the Need" drive and **engage** the whole office, church, or civic group!

Contact [damien.howard@togetherchicago.com](mailto:damien.howard@togetherchicago.com)

**Together Chicago** believes that, in order to facilitate **meaningful and lasting change**, the key sectors of our society including the faith and the business communities must be brought together to re-imagine ways of working together

**We are working on specific opportunities in these areas:**



ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT



EDUCATION



JUSTICE  
CENTERS



VIOLENCE  
REDUCTION

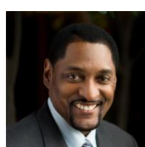
## TEAM MEMBERS



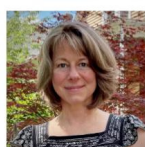
**Michael Allen**  
Co-Founder & Chief Strategy Officer



**Jonathan Banks**  
Chief Operations Officer



**Rev. Alvin Bibbs Sr.**  
Community & Faith Engagement Officer



**Gineen Cali**  
Data & Mobilization Coordinator



**David Dillon**  
President & Co-Founder



**John Fuder**  
Director of Faith-Community Mobilization



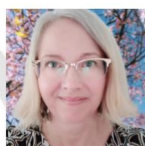
**Diane Gibbs**  
Education Team



**Jurema Gorham**  
Education Team



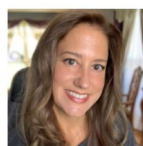
**Tio Hardiman**  
Supervisor for Violence Reduction Strategy



**Kimberly Harshman**  
Prayer & Mobilization Coordinator



**Damien Howard**  
Director of Education Initiatives



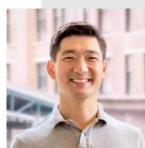
**Tara Linta**  
Chief Program Officer



**Christopher Mallette**  
Violence Reduction Strategist



**Jacqueline McMiller**  
Assistant Director of Business Incubation



**Brian Ng**  
Associate Director of Economic Development



**Mark O'Halloran**  
Director of Economic Development and Chief Financial Officer



**Roy Patterson**  
Director of Media Relations



**Shelby Parchman**  
Director of Business Incubation



**Edward Peecher**  
Chief Operations Officer



**Nate Tubbs**  
Associate Director of Faith-Community Mobilization



**Dr. Deborah Umrani**  
Education Programs Specialist



## EDUCATION PURPOSE

We empower mentors and tutors, primarily from local churches and colleges, to **adopt** Pre-K-12 Chicago-land **Schools**. Also, to **remove the barriers that disrupt a quality education**, we help build villages of support around schools to offer comprehensive wrap-around services for children, their families, and for **education reform**.

**TC's Education Initiatives are empowering over 3000 Chicago-land kids and their families, this school year!**

This work will be a catalyst for lasting transformation in the city of Chicago that results in disrupting the school to prison pipeline and a reduction of violence in our city.



## EDUCATION MISSION

We help churches and other organizations **adopt schools** to **remove the barriers that disrupt a quality education** for Chicago students.





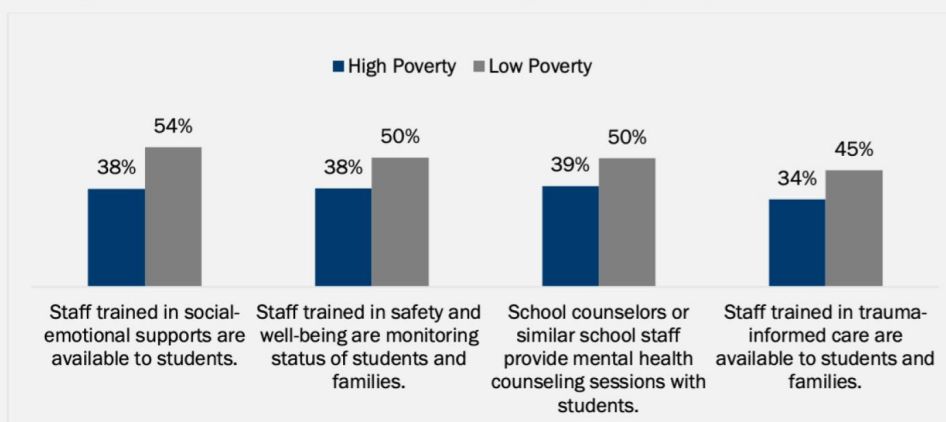
## WHY THIS WORK MATTERS

High-poverty districts reported less capacity to provide supports than low-poverty districts. Research demonstrates that students from low-income families are more apt to experience adversity, stress associated with financial instability, and trauma, **which serve as barriers to learning and development** (McLaughlin & Sheridan, 2016; Shonkoff et al., 2012), and there is preliminary evidence that **such families also have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic** (Adhikari et al., 2020).



## WHY THIS WORK MATTERS

Figure 1. Availability of trained staff to provide social-emotional supports, safety/well-being supports, counseling, and trauma-informed care (for all families), by district poverty level



Source: AIR, 2021



## EDUCATION INITIATIVES

- Mentoring and Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

### Training

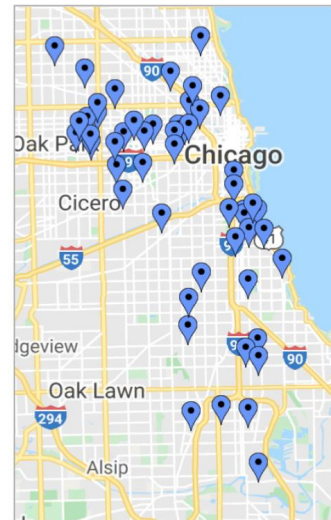
- We provide evidence based Social Emotional Learning and Mentor training for parents, school-staff, and mentors (primarily church volunteers and college interns)
- We offer social and emotional mentoring and academic check-ins, during the school day, for PreK-12 schools

- Tutoring

- We recruit volunteers from local churches and other organizations to support after school academic enrichment, primarily for Reading and Math

- “Village of Support” Building

- We help churches and other organizations adopt schools and offer comprehensive wrap-around services in order to remove the barriers that disrupt a quality education for Chicago students



## OUR ADOPT A SCHOOL MODEL AND MENTOR TRAINING PROGRAM



**SCHOOL  
CONNECT**

**SEL+**  
EMPOWERING MENTORS TRANSFORMING EDUCATION



## WILLOW CREEK COMMUNITY CHURCH + DOOLITTLE SCHOOL 21-22 SY CASE STUDY

- **20 Doolittle students, and 6 adults**, attended a GLS Next Gen (leadership development) Summit
- A TC Board Member offered **100 KN95** masks for Doolittle staff in need
- Willow Creek Church **gifted furniture** to enhance the teacher's lounge
- Doolittle's Parent Advisory Council had **15 unique parents** participate, representing **23 Doolittle students**
- Together Chicago onboarded and trained **7 mentors/interns** to serve Doolittle students during the school day
- **\$15,000 donated** to support the Principal's Behavior Health Model - offering therapy for students
- **100 Willow Creek volunteers** participated in a **school beautification project** and Love Our Schools Day Service Project
- **30 chairs (with desk attachments) were donated** to support the Principal's Behavior Health Model

### *Beyond Doolittle*

- A parent champion was **gifted with a car** from Willow's Cars Ministry
- Willow **served a hearty meal** to the entire staff of a school before their winter break



# EDUCATION

# LEAD QUESTION

Answering the following question has been the driving force behind our education initiatives:

Can Together Chicago prove that when the Chicago faith community adopts schools that school children are positively impacted, the culture of schools improves, and families of school aged children are supported and strengthened?

## ANNUAL QUESTIONS AND IMPACT RESULTS

### 2018-2019 Question:

Can adult mentors positively impact the grades of Chicago students (primarily from schools on the South and West sides of Chicago)?

### 2018-2019 Impact Results:

**462 students were served by mentors. We saw dramatic improvements with grades and standardized test scores (as reported on the next page).**

### 2019-2020 Questions:

Can Together Chicago train mentors to positively impact Chicago children?  
Can trained mentors make a positive impact upon children, schools, and families?

### 2019-2020 Impact Results:

**1185 students were served by mentors. This year of services proved that we can train school staff and community-based mentors to support the social and emotional development of students.**

### 2020-2021 Question:

Should parents be included (and even prioritized) as mentors trained to positively impact kids, schools, and communities?

### 2020-2021 Impact Results:

**21 trained mentors reached 420 students, during the pandemic. This year, we learned that parent training is a huge void in our schools. We are now confident that our SEL Mentor Training is effective for parents, school staff, and community-based mentors. Parents reported better relationships and increased self-reflection after being trained.**

## ANNUAL QUESTIONS AND IMPACT RESULTS

### 2021-2022 Question:

How can we best focus our efforts to take our past learnings and create a solid impact plan for the following 3 years?

### 2021-2022 Impact Results:

**We were able to effectively enhance the culture of schools we serve, removing barriers to academic success. We helped schools build villages of support, we helped schools obtain wrap-around services, and we trained adults (parents, teachers, mentors) on Social Emotional Learning strategies to improve life outcomes and student success.**

**This will be our district wide model, moving forward. We will have a focused approach for 5 schools, that will include wrap around services. Thus more, we will offer training and help build villages of support for schools across the city of Chicago. This will drive our approach and goals for the next 3 years.**

*\*Improve School Culture = help schools to improve towards having a school environment where students and families feel safe, nurtured, and supported. This will continue to be determined through interviews and surveys.*

*\*Improve Academic Success = students impacted by our interventions are expected to have better grades, fewer behavior infractions, and fewer absences. School leaders have access to this data throughout the school year and it is only shareable at their discretion and according to district policies.*

# MENTORING SUCCESS

During the 2021-2022 school year, we partnered with **76 schools** impacting **3201 students**. This impact was made through our mentors, tutors, parent training, school staff training, Out of School Time academic enrichment services, and leadership summits.

Our training efforts reached **186 unique parents**, **148 teachers**, and **49 interns**.

Not including school level leaders, this year's team consisted of **12 independent contractors**, working across the city to improve the culture of school building and to help students win.

We surveyed the school leaders of our partnering schools and got the following results:

**100%** of School Leaders reported that we positively impacted their school culture! This included realities such as less fighting, increased student engagement in class, etc.

**83.3%** of surveyed School Leaders stated that Together Chicago made a positive impact upon Student Academic Success!

**100%** of surveyed School Leaders want to continue partnering with Together Chicago beyond this school year!

**91.7%** of surveyed School Leaders is committed to recommending our organization to at least one additional school leader.

We obtained **\$322,804** to sustain our work through 2022. This includes over \$40,000 donated to address urgent needs in schools to improve school culture and student academics.

## EVALUATION PLAN

As we take our learnings from the past four years and focus our efforts, we will continue to evaluate the following:

### How are school cultures transforming and how is this impacting student academics?

We anticipate that schools will continue to report that we are positively impacting the culture of their schools at a high rate. We will leverage or develop tools to give us greater quantitative insights on cultural transformation and academic impact.

### How are surrounding communities impacted by our efforts?

As we continue to help build villages of support, for comprehensive wrap-around services, we anticipate community transformation. We want to, eventually, leverage or develop effective tools to assess community impact.

# 100%

OF SURVEYED SCHOOL LEADERS REPORTED THAT

**WE HELPED THEM**

TO IMPROVE

**THE CULTURE OF THEIR SCHOOLS**

# PARENT CHAMPIONS

## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

During the 2021-2022 school year, we doubled down on our Parent Champions program. From previous work, we are convinced that we can uniquely enhance the culture of school buildings, and surrounding communities, by improving the leadership capacity of parents.

Our Parent Champions program uses easy to use videos for our parents to lead social skills and emotional health sessions with other parents from their child's school. Also, we have monthly coaching sessions for Damien Howard to model how to develop thriving parent communities in schools.

We trained **22 parent champions** to operate as local leaders within their school buildings. These 22 parents represent **17 unique school buildings** impacting **186 total parents and 260 students**.

## Principal Testimonial

Latanya Owens, Assistant Principal from Chicago's Okeeffe Elementary School, stated that this activities and lessons [from the parent champions program] added value to the schools Parent Advisory Council Meetings. Okeeffe staff credit this partnership as a major factor which helped them to increase parent participation and allow parents to leave parent meetings feeling empowered with resources that benefit children. Latanya and her team are eager to keep working with the Together Chicago Staff.

## Parent Testimonial

Chamika Jones, parent of Suder Montessori School in Chicago, stated that this training helped her to make it through the pandemic. It was this program that helped her to have strategies to hold things together with her profession and with her family, during one of the most difficult seasons of her life.

Chamika has now successfully completed two years of training. Her support of parents has been so successful that there are now other parents wanting to be trained to help multiply the amount of parents who participate in parent meetings regularly.

## Staff Testimonial

Jaleelah Campbell from Hope Learning Academy was able to grow her parent group to over 15 consistent parents attending her monthly meetings.

Jaleelah used tools, from our coaching sessions, to improve the social skills and emotional health of her parents.

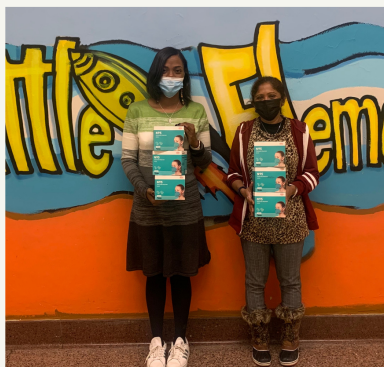
Also, Jaleelah, as a top Parent Champion received a car from one of our partner churches. She had a critical need and we found a partner to help meet the need.

**"I WOULDN'T HAVE  
MADE IT  
IF IT WASN'T  
FOR THIS PROGRAM"**

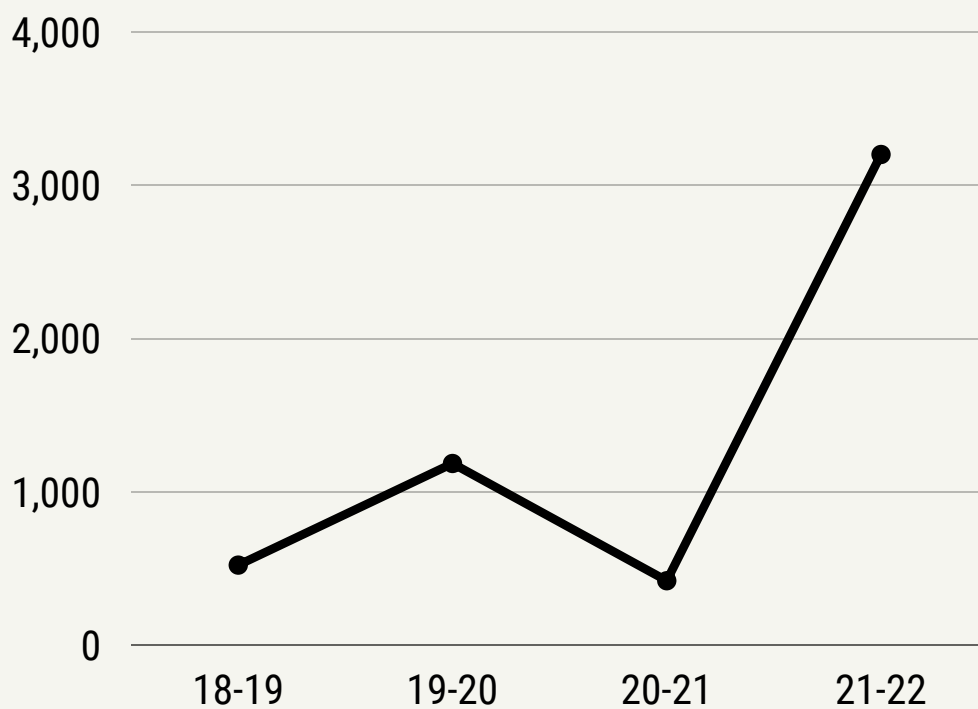
# 383 ADULTS RECEIVED MENTOR TRAINING TO IMPACT 3201 CHILDREN



OVER \$40,000 HAS BEEN DONATED TO HELP SCHOOLS MEET  
URGENT NEEDS AND TO IMPROVE THEIR SCHOOL CULTURE



# HOW MANY STUDENTS IMPACTED



522  
2018-2019

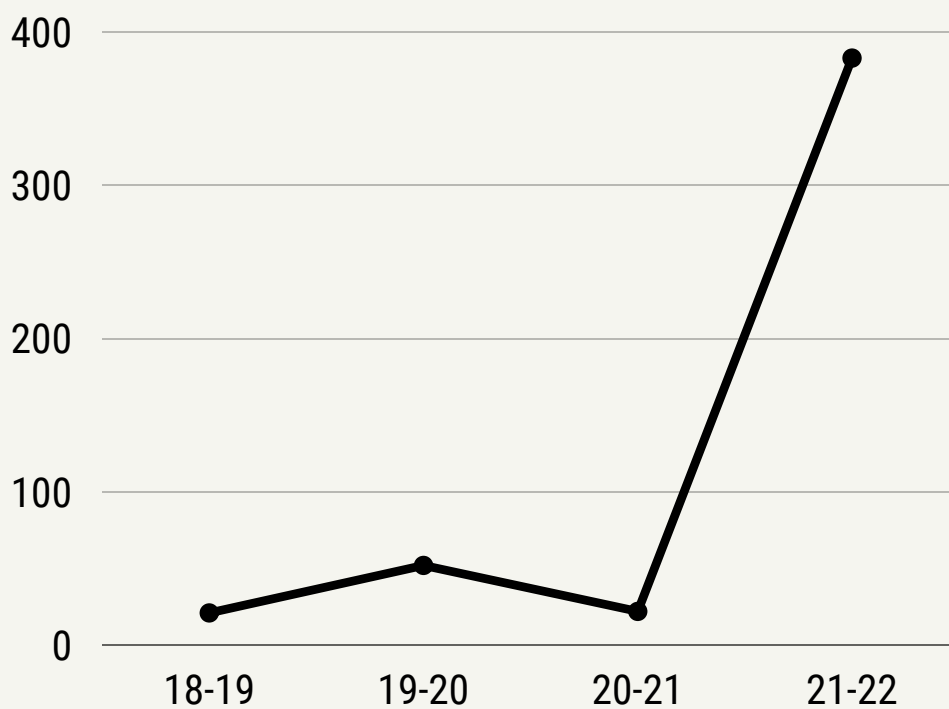
1185  
2019-2020

420  
2020-2021

3201  
2021-2022

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# NUMBER OF TRAINED MENTORS



21  
2018-2019

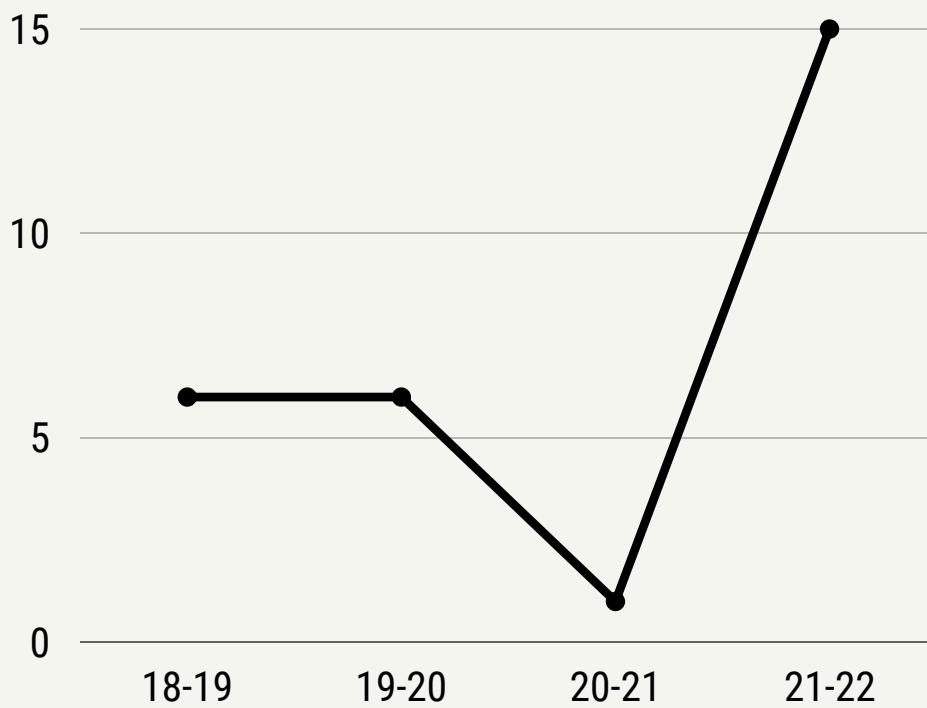
52  
2019-2020

21  
2020-2021

383  
2021-2022

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# NUMBER OF CHURCH PARTNERS



6

2018-2019

6

2019-2020

1

2020-2021

15

2021-2022

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# WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING



## TROY BRYANT

Dean of Students - Donoghue Elementary School

*"The mentors (interns) participating in the program have made a positive impact by helping to extinguish negative behavior and increasing positive behavior amongst students with some of the most challenges."*

*"We have observed a decrease in class removals and increase in instruction time with the assistance of the mentors."*

## CRISTINA M.S. AMORTEGUI

Trained Mentor - Doolittle Elementary School

*"One student I work with was recently shot and has since then fallen into the wrong crowd."*

*Over time, while working with this student, they have not only opened up, but have become more interested in school than they ever have before."*

*Also, they have been excelling greatly in their schoolwork, completing, and acing their assignments. I have seen this student grow so much these past months working at this site and could not be more proud of them."*

## LAYNE VANDYKE

Trained Mentor - Dulles Elementary School

*"After about a month of working with the students, some of them began coming to small groups with their own suggestions of skills they wanted to learn."*

*They also report that small group is often their favorite part of the day. One of the sixth-grade students reported that they began to implement the strategies we discussed after our lesson on self-control."*

*Their ability to pay attention better in class has improved their grade for this quarter."*

**"OVER TIME  
THEY NOT ONLY  
OPENED UP  
BUT HAVE  
BECOME MORE  
INTERESTED IN  
SCHOOL"**

# OUR 22-24 GOALS

We were effective in enhancing the culture of the schools we serve and remove barriers to academic success. We helped schools build villages of support, we helped schools obtain wrap-around services, and we trained adults (parents, teachers, mentors) on Social Emotional Learning strategies to improve life outcomes and student success.

This will be our district wide model, moving forward. We will have a focused approach for 5 schools, that will include wrap around services. Thus more, we will offer training and help build villages of support for schools across the city of Chicago. This will drive our approach and goals for the next 3 years.

## '22

### Doolittle, Melody + City-Wide Impact

For 2022, Doolittle Elementary School plans to expand their Behavioral Health Model. This Model has already vastly improved the school culture and the ultimate goal is a full time (culturally sensitive) therapist. Melody is working on a laundry and grocery (in house) facility to support families in need. **We plan to see the culture of these schools improved for greater academic success and a more thriving community.** We will also continue to offer city-wide SEL training for mentors and tutors along with Village building **to positively impact over 3000 students and the culture of Chicago schools.**

## '23

### 3 Focus Schools + City Wide Impact

We will assess if we can add an additional Focus School in 2023, based on the progress of Doolittle and Melody work. It is important to have strong Villages of Support that can help to sustain the comprehensive wrap around services for all of our Focus Schools.

We will continue to offer city-wide SEL training for mentors and tutors along with Village building **to positively impact over 3000 students and the culture of Chicago schools.**

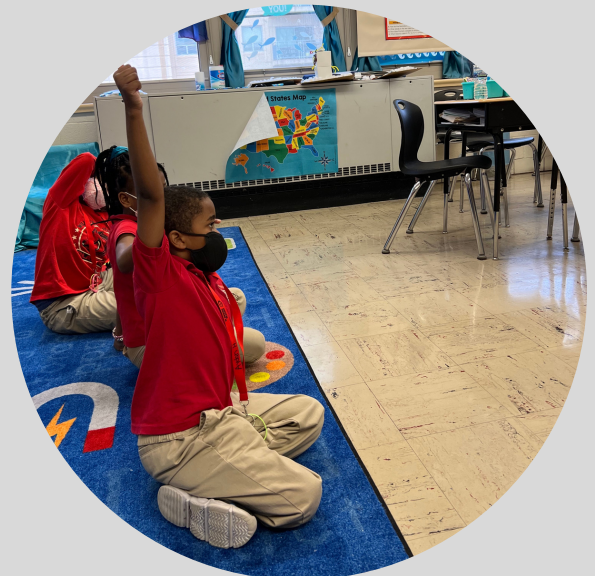
## '24

### 5 Focus Schools + City Wide Impact & Reform Model

**We hope to have five focus schools** by the end of 2024 if the previous Focus Schools are experiencing sustained growth.

We will continue to offer city-wide SEL training for mentors and tutors along with Village building **to positively impact over 3000 students and the culture of Chicago schools.**

At the end of these 3 years, we anticipate having a level of influence whereby **our model is embraced and elevated across Chicago.**



*Together Chicago exists to be a catalyst for lasting transformation in the city of Chicago.*

# \$250

Cost to mentor one student and build  
a village of support at their school

# 3000 STUDENTS

Chicago students we will impact with your support  
during the 2022-2023 School Year



We will focus our wrap-around services efforts on 5 schools over the next 3 years while offering mentor training for schools across the city. Donations allow us to partner with entrepreneurial school leaders to offer supports that impact the culture of their schools. **For only \$250** we can offer mentoring for a student from the South or West side of Chicago and build comprehensive wrap around services for their school.

**Please donate** to support this transformative vision. Quality mentors and thriving schools are more important now than ever before. We believe that this work will **bring reform to schools and communities** on the South and West sides of Chicago.

**#MentoringMatters**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS:

**Felicia Thompson and Tom Formolo** - TC Board of Directors

**Anonymous Donor** - Impact Investor

**Altum Fund**

**Marc and Jeanne Malnati Family Foundation**

**Stand Together Foundation**

**SEL Plus, LLC** - Designed the mentor training program to implement for Chicagoland schools and communities

**Together Chicago NFP** - The lead Chicago partner allowing this work to thrive in Chicago schools

**Mark and Joann Chassman** - Mentors and impact investors

**Willow Creek Church** - Impact investors and lead church partner

**Chicago Education Partners** - Michael Goggins (Willow Chicago), Shawn Procter (GRIP Outreach), Marvella Black, Angela Simms, Jonathan King (Child Evangelism Fellowship), Diane Gibbs (Together Chicago), Jurema Gorham (Together Chicago), Chamille Doss (TC Education Team), Deborah Um'rani (Together Chicago) along with other team members and partners

**Adler School of Professional Psychology** - Provides interns, work-study students, and research interns

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**Damien Howard**

Director of Education Initiatives

# WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF OUR WORK

# INTRODUCING A CITYWIDE COLLABORATIVE

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