





MISSION

CityBridge Education incubates the people, ideas, and conversations needed for equity-driven innovation in DC public schools.

VISION

Washington, DC is the first city-level proof point for an excellent and equitable public education system.



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SECTION ONE

Letter from the CEO
Our Commitment
Our Work



Dear Friends,

After years of uncertainty and interruption, it appears we are finally (mostly) back to the routines and rituals of life that we all took for granted before the pandemic. I love looking out my car windows on the drive to the office in the morning and seeing the tiny brigades of children in backpacks walking to school, talking with their friends, and generally just getting to be kids again.

And, yet, scenes like these can be deceptive. In ways both mundane and dramatic, the effects of the pandemic are still taking a profound toll on our students and our DC community more broadly. Gun violence is on the rise. Educators report increased levels of student anxiety, depression, and conflict. Teacher morale is low, and schools are struggling to fill open positions. Standardized test data reveals shocking declines in math and reading with significant splits along lines of race and income. In short... the kids are not alright.

Now is not the time for modest proposals that support incremental improvement—this is our chance to address head-on the inequities and inefficiencies that have been quietly preventing our children from achieving their full potential in schools. We should not fixate on rebuilding what we have lost but, rather, building for the very first time what our students have deserved all along—a system that serves Black and Latino/a students as effectively as White students, that meets the needs of exceptional learners and students with disabilities, that nurtures the mental health and emotional well-being of students, and that ultimately prepares students to thrive in life and career after they graduate.

In the pages of this report, you will read about some of the “big bets” that we are making at CityBridge as part of our system-wide transformation.

For years, DC has been cited as one of the fastest-improving urban school districts in the country. There is no reason we should not also lead the charge to reimagine schooling system-wide in the wake of the pandemic. We have the talent. We have the resources. The question is: Do we have the will and the drive to make it happen?

I am confident that we do. And I am humbled by your support and partnership as we embark on this next, great chapter in our city’s public education story.

With gratitude,


RACHEL EVANS

It is not enough to reform our education system. We must redesign it so it works for all students and families.

Given the long history of racism in schools, we center race in our work. This requires empowering innovators at all levels who deeply understand and can authentically represent students and families who have been, and continue to be, marginalized. We build equity into our work through:

Design Thinking: Our design practice leads with empathy work to center the experiences of those most directly affected by the problem being addressed. We incubate projects designed with, not for, DC.

Investment: We prioritize investing in Black and Latino/a leaders to change the profile of who succeeds and leads in the city. We also know that leaders of color have historically received less support and access to capital than their White peers in entrepreneurial spaces.

Community Building: We create an environment where BIPOC entrepreneurs not only feel safe to bring any part of their identity to the space, but also feel celebrated and seen for their experiences and contributions.

Our charge is to create a public school system that is worthy of all children.



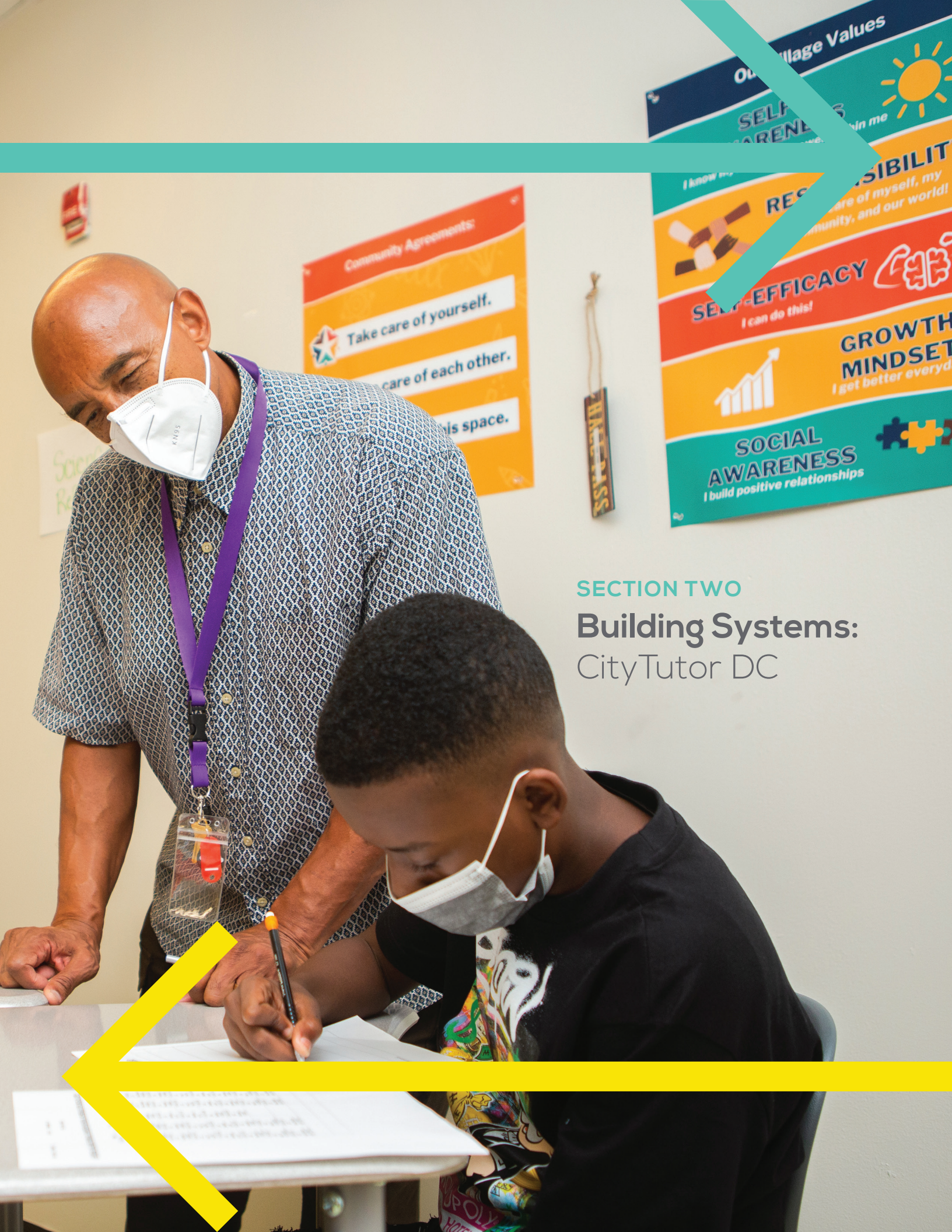


SPECIFICALLY, WE:

Empower and invest in educators and social entrepreneurs—especially leaders of color—creating innovative solutions to the intractable problems facing public education in DC.

Build and lead coalitions that boldly transform systems and produce excellence and equity at scale.

Over time, the cumulative effect of these efforts—at all levels, both from within and outside the existing system—is a public school system that provides every DC student with an excellent and equitable education.




SECTION TWO


Building Systems: CityTutor DC

In December 2020, EmpowerK12, a DC-based education data analysis group, found that pandemic-related disruptions resulted in DC students missing the equivalent of four months of instruction in mathematics and one month of instruction in English language arts by the midpoint of the 2020-2021 school year. If left unchecked, EmpowerK12 concluded that the effects of this COVID slide would likely continue, and the effects of lost instructional time would increase dramatically.

To respond to this urgent need, in early 2021, CityBridge assembled an advisory group of key stakeholders who identified high-impact tutoring (HIT) as a pathway toward accelerating student learning.



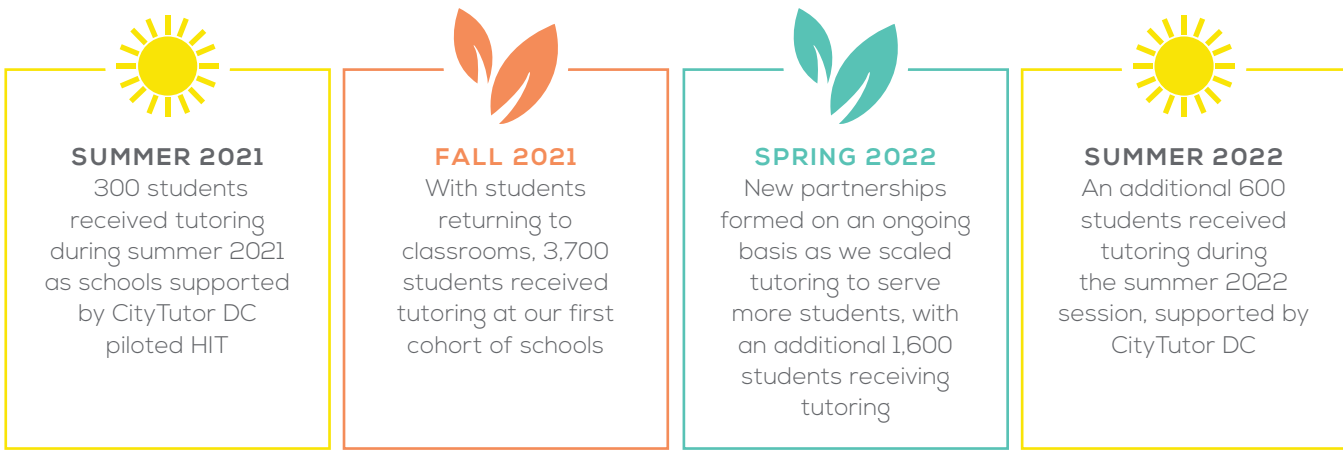
High-impact tutoring is a research-based practice of supplementing classroom instruction in a one-on-one or small group setting where a trained tutor and student meet frequently and consistently, typically with a focus on math or ELA.



Out of those conversations came CityTutor DC, a coalition of 50+ schools, community-based organizations, civic partners, and other stakeholders committed to addressing the pandemic’s impact on student achievement and well-being by dramatically expanding access to high-impact tutoring in our nation’s capital.

Since launching in spring 2021, CityTutor DC has built citywide systems and robust relationships, catalyzing tutoring for 6,200 students at 140 sites across the city.

TIMELINE



TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 6,200

Building Capacity for Effective Tutoring in Schools

To support high-impact tutoring at schools during the instructional day, CityTutor DC offered Design Sprints, multi-week cohorts where our expert coaches supported school leaders as they learned about high-impact tutoring standards and promising practices for implementation. School leaders also had facilitated planning time within their teams and several follow-up coaching sessions to ensure schools had continued support to scale their services. In 2021-2022, 120 school team participants from 55 schools in DCPS and public charter schools took part in our Design Sprints.

For students that were identified to receive high-impact tutoring during the Design Sprints, students tutored for 900+ minutes consistently grew more on DiBELS¹ than those with 1-450 minutes of tutoring.



"I used to think that tutoring was something that happened in a silo outside of the classroom, but now I think there are innovative ways to incorporate tutoring into the school day the same way we do any other elective."

—Design Sprint Participant

"Tutoring is now a non-negotiable at my school."

—Design Sprint Participant



Strengthening DC's Tutoring Force and Establishing Tutoring Networks

CityTutor DC formed several new partnerships to build tutor pipeline systems in the District, ultimately working with 1,011 tutors across 140 sites. We seeded new DC offices of national tutoring organizations, including Blueprint and Math Corps, and worked with local universities to create new tutoring programs.



A partnership between CityTutor DC and American University created AU Future Teacher Tutors, a program where School of Education students provide tutoring twice a week to kindergarten, first grade, and second grade students at Perry Street Preparatory Public Charter School in Northeast DC.



A partnership between CityTutor DC and George Washington University created Math Matters, where university students are trained in middle school math and provide tutoring for students at Eliot-Hine Middle School and Stuart-Hobson Middle School in Northeast DC and Sousa Middle School in Southeast DC.

George Washington University (GWU) Math Matters tutoring impact showed higher student growth scores than non-tutored peers at each school they served, even in their first year.



"Not only does our partnership improve learning outcomes for our DC public school students, it also offers American University School of Education students the opportunity to receive real-world training."

—Dr. Cheryl Holcomb-McCoy, Dean of the American University School of Education

"We saw the need to accelerate young learners in the wake of the pandemic's disruptions, and we're glad to have the resources to meet that need and give GW students meaningful opportunities for service and connection to the broader DC community."

—Amy Cohen, Executive Director of the Honey W. Nashman Center for Civic Engagement and Public Service at George Washington University



Supporting Tutoring and Learning Outside of Schools

To leverage existing relationships in high-need communities, we selected six community-based organizations to establish CityTutor DC Hubs. At Hubs, high-impact tutoring takes place alongside other programming that promotes overall student well-being, such as sports, mentoring, homework help, and arts enrichment. In 2021–2022, our Hubs supported more than 300 students with high-impact tutoring and wrap-around supports.

2021–2022 Hubs: GOODProjects (Ward 6), Higher Achievement Program (Ward 1), Horton's Kids (Ward 8), Reading Partners (Ward 1), Serve Your City/Ward 6 Mutual Aid (Ward 8), and The Fishing School (Ward 7). **GOODProjects was a small CityTutor Hub with a big impact**—100% of their students met their overall growth goal compared to 63% of their non-tutored school peers.



"As a CityTutor DC tutoring Hub, our trained volunteers deliver crucial elementary literacy tutoring and, even more importantly, build relationships with children enrolled in our program. The connections volunteer tutors make with children is what makes them return to programming, day after day."

—Gina Burd, Senior Director of Academics, Horton's Kids

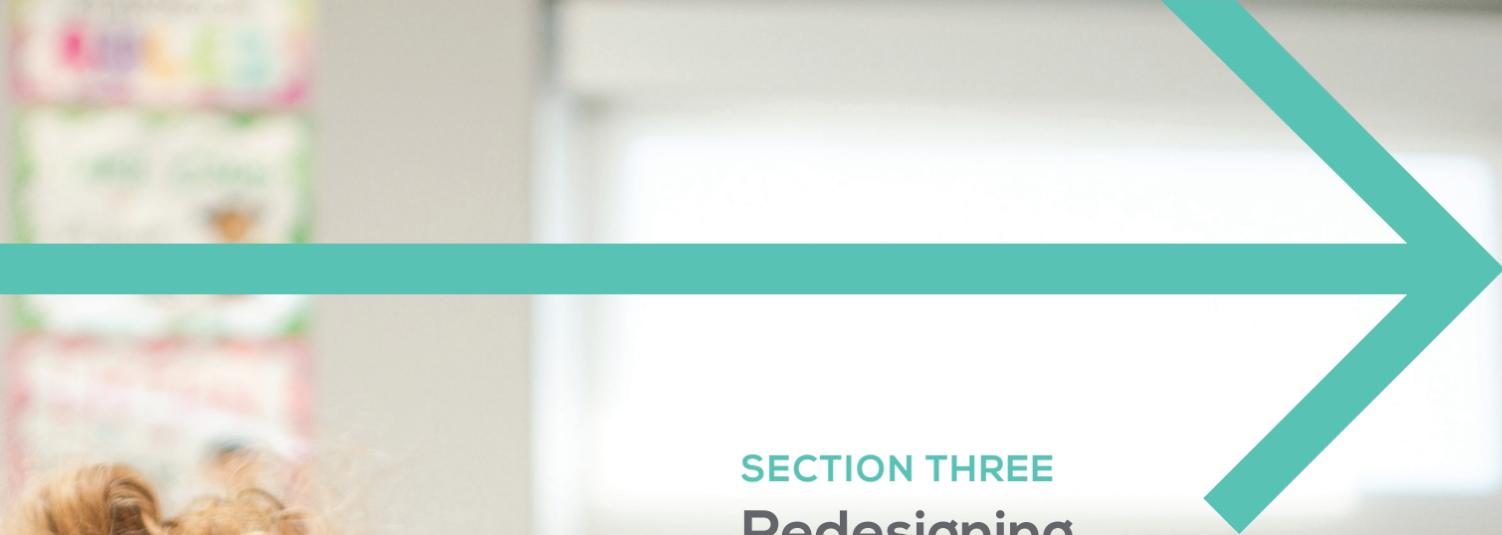
ULTIMATELY, WHEN CITYTUTOR DC IS INVOLVED, MORE TUTORING IS CATALYZED, THE QUALITY OF TUTORING IS HIGHER, AND THE PATH FOR IMPROVEMENT IS CLEAR.



"The best part about tutoring is how supportive [my tutor is] and how they always push me to do my best work and to keep trying." - 8th Grade Student

Though CityTutor DC was created as a response to the pandemic, the systems and relationships we have invested in will take us beyond recovery to build a brighter future for all students. In the coming year, we will incorporate caregiver engagement to foster uptake, consistency and satisfaction, learn how to best support tutoring hubs and schools through curriculum, and expand observation and feedback loops to improve the practice of tutoring.





SECTION THREE
**Redesigning
Systems:**
Transforming
Teaching



REDESIGNING SYSTEMS:

Transforming Teaching

The school shutdowns of the pandemic and resulting declines in student achievement and well-being laid bare the crucial role that school plays in the lives of children beyond the business of learning. School provides much-needed stability, socialization, and supervision. For many students, school is where basic needs are met—prior to the pandemic, 77% of DC children relied on free or reduced price school meals for the nutrition they need to learn and grow.

At the heart of this system is the teacher, for whom expectations and responsibilities have continually increased even as school remains structured the same way it has been for decades. In addition to the academic progress of the 20 to 30 students that make up their classroom, teachers face heightened social-emotional needs, obligations to cover lunch and recess, and often even the financial pressures of outfitting their classrooms with supplies. The pandemic has exacerbated the problem as teachers have had to face an immense amount of health and safety concerns while delivering instruction through brand new platforms.

The tremendous progress DC's education system has witnessed over the past 10 years is at risk. **We know that teachers are the most important school-based factor for student achievement and growth.** The pandemic increased the already-heavy burden DC teachers bear, leaving many feeling burned out and looking to leave teaching.

Every year, the US needs to hire 300,000 teachers to fill spots opened by attrition.

Black teachers are departing teaching faster than White teachers

22%

BLACK TEACHERS
ATTRITION RATE

15%

WHITE TEACHERS
ATTRITION RATE

The nation's crisis is DC's crisis:
Teacher resignations in 2022 were 52% higher than 2019-2021.



REDESIGNING SYSTEMS:

Transforming Teaching

Unless DC can attract, develop, and retain enough great teachers—particularly in the wake of the pandemic—an excellent, equitable education system will remain out of reach.

To turn the tide, DC schools need to transform the teacher role to set teachers—and their students—up for success.



A Call for Redesign

In spring 2021, we convened 30 DC school leaders and school support organizations for a series of conversations focused on teacher role redesign. We worked with these leaders as they grappled with different models of organizing teacher work.

At the end of 10 weeks, they expressed one of their biggest fears: We will turn the page on the pandemic without addressing the crisis in teaching.

A Way Forward

Today’s teachers are isolated, under-respected, overburdened, and mired in a rigid system ruled by the bell. District and LEA leaders can pull school system levers¹—hiring, curriculum, schedules, technology, use of space, etc.—to redesign current systems, creating teaching roles that are more attractive and sustainable for teachers and that bring greater success for students.

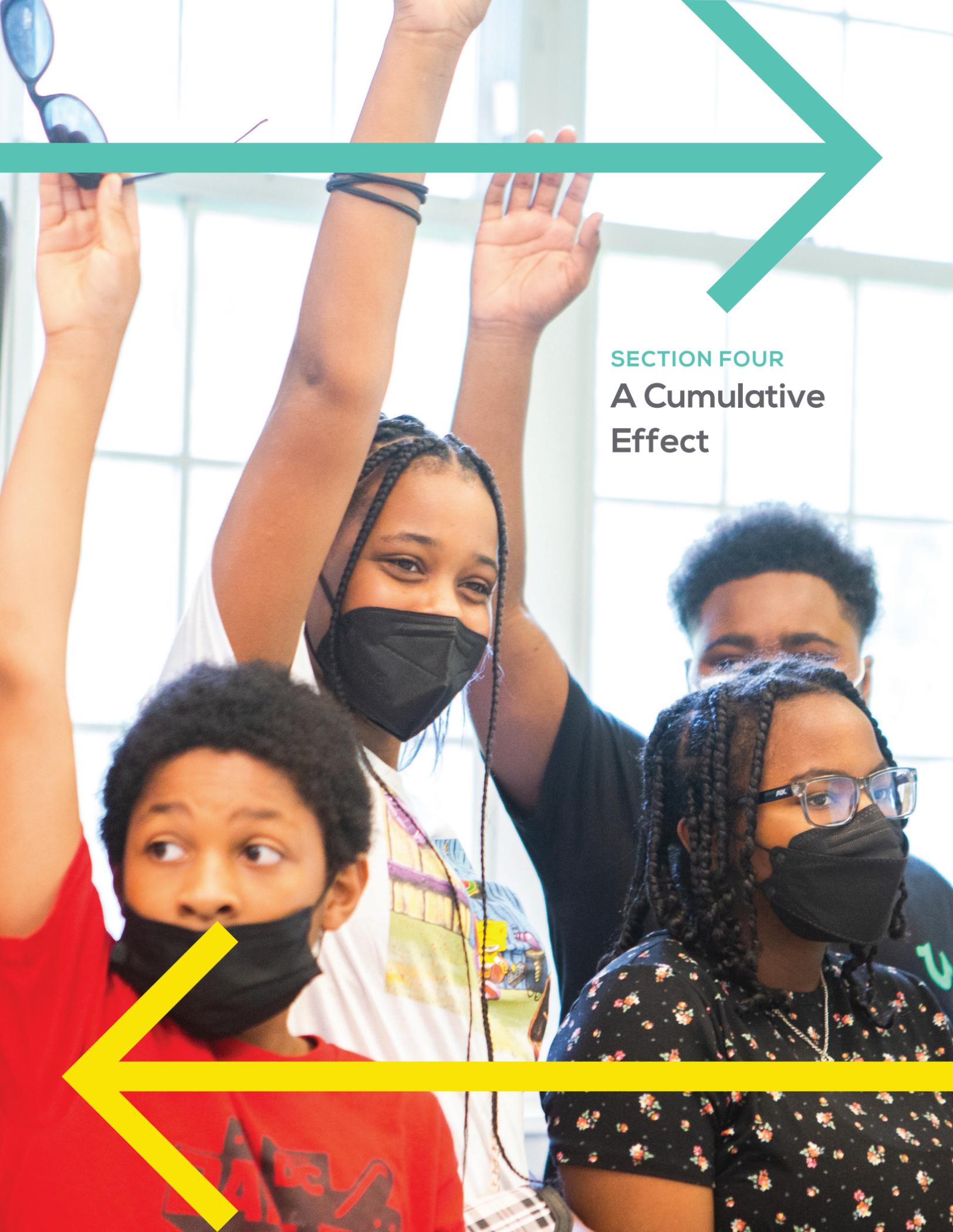
Following rigorous research, a canvas of alternative models, and extensive conversations with practitioners in the field, we identified four design principles that address four common pain points as experienced by teachers.

COMMON PAIN POINTS	DESIGN PRINCIPLES
ISOLATION	Shared Responsibility Integrated teams of teachers, staff, and (potentially) community members work together to meet educational and developmental needs of students.
LACK OF RESPECT	Professional Trust Schools invest trust in teachers as professionals, heeding their voice and providing them with meaningful opportunities to influence and shape the core functions of school. The wisdom and perspective of BIPOC teachers are given due weight.
JACK OF ALL TRADES	Specialization Teachers move from being jacks-of-all-trades to taking on specific roles in supporting student learning and growth. Training and career pathways open opportunities (including leadership) for teachers and staff.
RULED BY THE BELL	Workday Flexibility By focusing on impactful activities and employing technology, teachers can gain more flexibility in how they use time, allowing them to strategically prioritize the way other types of busy professionals do.

CityBridge knows DC schools cannot go through the arduous process of redesign alone. **WE COMMIT TO CO-DESIGN, COORDINATE, AND FUND 50 SCHOOL-LEVEL DESIGN PROJECTS TO TRANSFORM TEACHING OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.**

Fifty schools represent 25% of our city’s schools—a share that would have a significant impact on the ecosystem and, we believe, inspire a ripple effect of innovation. If we start this work now, DC can lead the nation in transforming teaching at scale.

¹The System Elements: Key Levers of School Design from Transcend Education



SECTION FOUR
A Cumulative
Effect

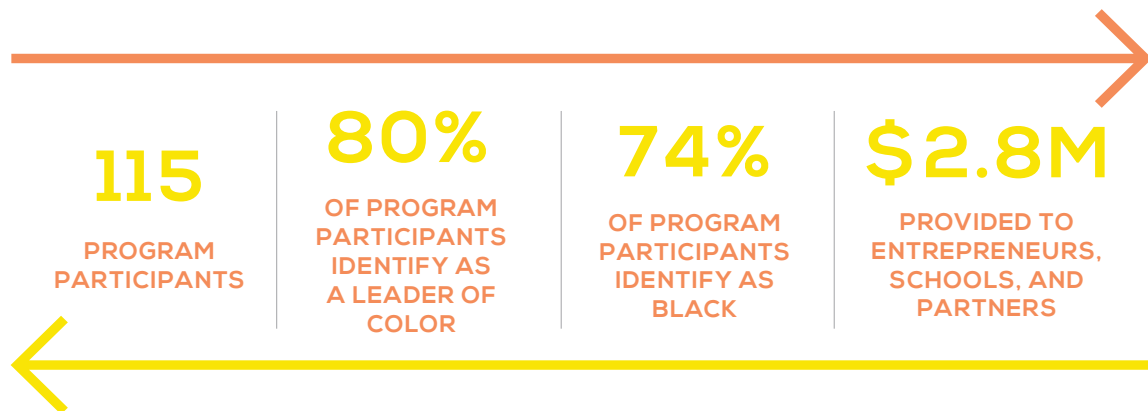
A CUMULATIVE EFFECT

As CityBridge works to seize this unique moment in time to build and transform systems impacting students and educators in DC at scale, we continue to drive innovation by funding and supporting local leaders—prioritizing leaders of color—who are transforming the student experience.

Customized for each individual's and team's needs, CityBridge offers three programs of increasing intensity, support, participant experience level, and length—**Design Studio**, **Design Fellowship**, and **Design Residency**. In each program, our participants are provided the funding, coaching, and tools required to deepen their understanding of a problem facing students and families, design and test their ideas, and build a guiding coalition—all of which results in solutions that are built with, and not for, the communities we serve.



2021-2022 IMPACT



We support the design and redesign of schools, as well as the creation of education startups. Our educators and entrepreneurs operate on multiple levels—the classroom, the school, the community, and system-wide. Some create within existing structures and others create ventures that are altogether new. All are focused on addressing the inequities and inefficiencies in DC's K-12 education ecosystem.



"Honestly, I don't know of any other space offered to education advocates that functions to build coalitions, networking, and collaboration among various individuals. I gain so much thought-partnering with other folks who are passionate about education. I think anyone who is working to disrupt educational inequities should consider CityBridge as a support for their development."

- Program Participant



INCUBATOR CASE STUDY: CITYWORKS DC

Jennie Niles, founder of E.L. Haynes Public Charter School and former Deputy Mayor of Education, joined CityBridge's incubator in 2018 having identified a consistent and common problem: DC high school graduates, especially low income students of color, were not getting hired into the competitive, family-sustaining career opportunities this city offers, relative to others from outside DC.

Through her Fellowship, Niles founded CityWorks DC, an organization with a simple north star: improved social and economic mobility for DC youth, especially young people of color and youth experiencing concentrated poverty.

CityWorks DC works directly with young people to ensure they acquire industry-valued credentials, paid, relevant work experience, and social capital. The organization also leads citywide, strategic initiatives in partnership with government, employers, and educators to create the conditions for an employer-driven, local, equitable talent pipeline to thrive.

During its time in the CityBridge incubator, CityWorks DC launched CareerWise DC, a three-year, modern youth apprenticeship program. Over 40 students from ten high schools have apprenticed at 16 employers in IT, Business Operations, and Finance. Participants who complete their apprenticeship are typically hired into the company as entry-level employees. A second signature program is Embark, a ten-month program that offers career coaching, supporting 18-24 year old graduates of DCPS and DC public charter schools in building the necessary skills and network to succeed early in their careers.

In June 2022, CityWorks DC officially launched as an independent nonprofit organization with 16 full time staff and a \$4.3 million budget that will allow them to increase their impact through the scaling of key programs and initiatives across DC.

FELLOWSHIP CASE STUDY:

Addressing the Social and Emotional Well-being of Secondary Students

When students are emotionally well, they are better able to learn and thrive—out of school and in the classroom. The increased stressors of the pandemic only exacerbated mental health needs of adolescent students. Despite wide acceptance that social and emotional learning must be built into the fabric of school, practices are often inconsistent and varied. Over the past year, several Design Fellowship teams designed solutions to the challenging reality of secondary students' social and emotional well-being.

- The team from Girls Global Academy recognized that their students need a way to explore and communicate feelings and needs to form meaningful and healthy relationships. **In Design Fellowship, they piloted ways of building community and creating restorative spaces where students will feel confident and safe sharing their feelings and needs.**
- The team from Cardozo Education Campus understood that students need consistent and intentional spaces to live out the school's "One Cardozo" vision. **In Design Fellowship, they designed a summer experience for incoming 9th grade students to help acclimate them to the school.**



THANK YOU

We cannot do this work alone. We rely on dedicated investors generously supporting the transformation of DC public education. We are grateful to our donors, including:

- 
- Aviv Foundation
 - Bellwether's Filling the Gap Program
 - Bloomberg Philanthropies
 - The Blum Kovler Foundation
 - The Boone Family Foundation
 - Katherine and David Bradley
 - Carnegie Corporation of New York
 - Education Forward DC
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We are also grateful for the service of our Board:

- Katherine Bradley,
Founder and Board Chair
- Barry Caldwell,
Principal, Wroxton Civic Ventures
- Boykin Curry,
Partner, Eagle Capital
- Rachel Evans,
CEO, CityBridge Education
- Maria S. Gomez,
Founder, Mary's Center
- David Sutphen,
Founder & Co-CEO,
Jasper Advisors





JOIN US TO ENSURE THAT EVERY STUDENT RECEIVES
THE EXCELLENT AND EQUITABLE EDUCATION THEY DESERVE.

TO LEARN MORE, [VISIT US AT CITYBRIDGE.ORG](https://citybridge.org)

GET INVOLVED

JOIN OUR INCUBATOR

Receive coaching and support to bring innovative solutions to DC public schools.

ATTEND OUR EVENTS

Engage with our network and learn about the issues impacting public education.

TUTOR STUDENTS

Make a direct impact on DC students by becoming a tutor.

DONATE

Support our work to bring equity-driven innovation to DC public schools.

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