

CASE STUDY

GE and the Jefferson and Stamford County Public Schools

The Project

The GE Foundation Developing Futures™ in Education program takes a new, comprehensive approach to supporting entire school districts in sustainable and scalable ways that increase impact, with the goal of improving student learning in math and science, improving college readiness, and closing achievement gaps. Developing Futures seeks to create positive change using a systemic approach that begins with collaboration among key constituencies and integrates its grant-making with leveraging the expertise and deep resources within GE's talented workforce to give specific school districts access to resources and knowledge it otherwise could not afford.

The Opportunity

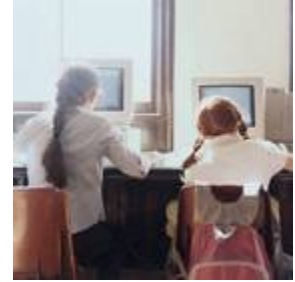
Access to an excellent education should be a right for all Americans, but there are huge discrepancies in quality among public schools, given factors including location, demographics of the youth they serve and the surrounding community, and ability to attract top teachers. The rates of college-bound seniors vary widely as a result. After a careful analysis of its education strategy, the GE Foundation determined that a more holistic, K-12 strategy was needed. In response, GE Foundation integrated its grant-making with GE's unique ability to develop and share best practices to improve the management of central office functions. GE Foundation's partnerships have provided access to the highest standards, most effective curricular material, strongest professional training and best teaching practices for chosen School Districts.

GE's Pro Bono Investment

Each district that is part of Developing Futures seeks to achieve systemic change and improved student achievement. The program strategy starts with collaboration among the superintendent, the board of education, the teacher's organization and a full time GE grant manager. Program components include constituency engagement, management capacity building, a common math and science curriculum, professional development and in-depth evaluation of the program. In addition, GE executives champion the program in each community and GE Volunteers bring their professional skills and capacity into the schools. The pro bono work done by GE in Louisville, KY, and Stamford, CT are examples that highlight the immense potential of the program.

At Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) in Louisville, the GE grant manager worked with the District's administration to identify specific areas where GE's methodologies and employees' expertise could be leveraged to develop system-wide capacity to improve functional and financial efficiency and effectiveness within district central offices. This focus helped strengthen management operations and improve leadership. One example includes GE's security experts sharing best practices to enable the JCPS Security team to heighten school safety for its employees and students. In fact, the District will be adopting the GE ID Card technology and electronic lock system as one of their programmatic changes.

Another GE team donates its resources in Stamford, CT, a city of considerable socioeconomic diversity with the fifth largest school district in the state. At the time of grant, the Stamford district had a relatively new central administration as well as new leadership at many of its schools, which presented a huge challenge to its aggressive agenda of improvement. GE stepped in to help strengthen key components of managing the schools.



“I would like to thank you for your invitation and willingness to share best practices and security information with my staff and me. My entire team was inspired by your presentations and hospitality. This visit has already generated innovative thinking and strategies for the security of Jefferson County Public Schools.”

-- Stanford T. Mullen, Jr., Director,
Security and Investigations
Jefferson County Public Schools

The school year started with a GE management course called Change Acceleration Process, which was specially tailored to the educational environment and specific issues facing the Stamford Public Schools. Additionally, with input from stakeholders, Stamford GE staff evaluated the effectiveness of the District's human resources department and invested significant time, including a day of training at a GE facility, refining the hiring process. The stakeholders also will be trained on a standard GE management resource tool, the New Manager Assimilation process, a facilitated exchange which allows a team and its leader to align expectations as well as provide an opportunity to identify potential roadblocks to meeting expectations and how each can be avoided. With the degree of change throughout the Stamford district, these sessions will be crucial opportunity to develop a sense of trust within the district's new leadership team.

The Impact

GE's investment in professional training for the leaders of both Jefferson County and Stamford Public Schools has already started to pay off. The partnerships, forged through the GE Foundation's flexibility, have allowed districts to be innovative and accomplish more than they would have otherwise, and they have established the basis for long-term sustainability. There is now a structure and timeframe around addressing issues like effective leadership training and human resources, which provides crucial opportunities to develop a sense of trust within the districts' leadership teams.

To ensure these projects are resulting in high quality impact, the GE Foundation awarded the American Institutes for Research (AIR) over \$2 million to support rigorous evaluation of the Developing Futures program and to document and disseminate findings nationally. AIR will evaluate the impact of each of the district's programs and the impact of the program as a whole on college-readiness.

About the School Districts

The Jefferson County Public School District is committed to education and the well being of students. This commitment is evidenced by our focus upon student success, family/guardian and community collaboration, and employee efficacy, and by the infusion of each into every aspect of the District's programs and activities.



Stamford Public Schools serve 15,500 students of considerable socioeconomic diversity. 39% of students are eligible for Free/Reduced Price Meals and the latest US Census data indicates that 8% of Stamford's population lives in poverty and 14% of families earn less than \$25,000 per year. The district's leadership team strives to improve education across the board, increase the graduation rate, and encourage its students to continue on to college.

About GE

GE is Imagination at Work - a diversified technology, media and financial services company focused on solving some of the world's toughest problems. With products and services ranging from aircraft engines, power generation, water processing and security technology to medical imaging, business and consumer financing, media content and industrial products, GE serves customers in more than 100 countries and employ more than 300,000 people worldwide.



About GE Foundation

The GE Foundation, the philanthropic organization of the General Electric Company, works to strengthen educational access, equity, and quality for disadvantaged youth globally, and supports GE employee and retiree giving and involvement in GE communities around the world. In 2007, the GE family of businesses, employees, retirees and GE Foundation contributed more than \$225 million to community and educational programs, including \$93 million from the GE Foundation. For more information, visit www.gefoundation.com.

