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Annual Report

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Letter From Our Co-Director

Dear CJSF family and new friends,

For the CJSF squad, 2022 was a year of many experiments — big and little — in becoming and building. We welcomed new team members and they worked together to build strong relationships with our partners, many of whom are also organizations in the midst of change. As we built our “us” together, this year was one of striving and resisting, of moving fast and slowing down.

Together, our mighty little squad once again accomplished so much. We expanded our partner network by almost 25% to include 80 partners across 25 states, DC, Puerto Rico, and Canada. That’s right, go ahead and clap for that! We once again exceeded our best ever grantmaking year; we moved more than \$5.3 million in general operating, multi-year grants and contributions to our partners. We also increased our base-level grant size for many partners from \$100,000 to \$150,000. Our partner network now includes more groups in the south, more educator organizer groups, and more groups explicitly led by and focused upon building the leadership and uplifting the demands of trans and queer youth.

CJSF also stepped back out into the world and hosted a learning exchange focused on developing an affirmative vision for culturally sustaining pedagogy — part of our ongoing work to build narrative power around a comprehensive vision for holistically safe schools. We held space for grieving and healing. We came together to deconstruct the myth that community members cannot be researchers and we built and wielded narrative power together.

Equally important to the measurable evidence of our efforts to make a meaningful difference, we actively grappled with what it means to build and sustain a team culture grounded in wellness, rest, and care. We quietly piloted a four-day workweek in the latter part of the year and are



Jaime T. Koppel
Co-Director

80+

partners

25

states reached

\$5.3

million moved in general
operating, multi-year
grants and contributions
to our partners

reflecting on what it will take to authentically embrace such an approach moving forward. We launched our search for a new Executive Director (and hope you will help us find someone). We learned through a year-long impact evaluation process.

We will carry our learning and reflection into 2023 and continue to explore what it means to show up for a healthy, vibrant movement for racial justice in education while also showing up for ourselves.

We hope you will think of this annual report as a resource and base-building tool. Help us build our network of (1) folks in philanthropy who want to learn and engage in a space that believes liberatory education is possible, and (2) grassroots groups organizing for education justice. Please share this report with others as the resource guide it is intended to be.

From my heart,

Jaime T. Koppel

Jaime T. Koppel
Co-Director



2,099

Twitter followers

1,285

Instagram followers

399

Medium followers

878

Facebook followers

Join our community:



About CJSF

WHO WE ARE

Communities for Just Schools Fund is a national collaborative that links philanthropy with the power of grassroots organizing to transform schools. CJSF was started in 2010 by individuals in philanthropy who understood that, in the ecosystem of education justice, grassroots organizers are the least resourced and the most impactful. We are part of an arc that began with Black parents in Mississippi demanding change in their schools. Their children were being pushed out of school, disproportionately disciplined, and arrested for reasons that defied explanation except as symptoms of a pervasive system of racial hierarchy. A movement was born to end the school-to-prison pipeline.



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following terms are important to understanding CJSF's ecosystem and efforts.

Partner categories:

General Cohorts:

Locally-rooted grassroots organizing groups are the majority of our 80-partner network.

Connectivity:

Partners in this category are national movement networks, convenor groups and research partners. The number of partners in this category more than doubled in 2022 due largely to the addition of new educator organizing groups whose work bridges multiple places.

Responsiveness:

Support to existing partners or new partners facing unanticipated threats or opportunities. Responsiveness grants sometimes allow us to provide financial support to a new group before we can make a larger, sustained commitment.

Technical Assistance & Capacity Strengthening:	Support for leadership transitions, organizational development/skills building, generative strategy creation, political education, & healing & wellness.
Donor Members:	Our donor members are representatives of the foundations whose membership commitments range anywhere from \$50,000/year to \$1,000,000+/year. Our members come together several times a year for deep learning and discussion. Their efforts to carry learning back into their institutions and the broader field of philanthropy are the literal foundation upon which all of CJSF's efforts are built.
Organizing:	The processes and practices through which a community intentionally chooses to come together to learn (political education) and to address specific challenges and build momentum (basebuilding) for social transformation. Our partners organize around dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline, demanding police-free schools, culturally affirming social-emotional learning and mental health supports, culturally responsive/sustaining curricula and pedagogy, ethnic studies, restorative and transformative justice, reproductive justice, gender justice, parent partnerships, meaningful youth engagement, participatory budgeting, and more.
Narrative power-building:	We appreciate and align with these definitions: "Narratives explain how society should work. Narratives use values to establish norms and compel people to either enforce these norms or to change these norms. They shape and reshape the boundaries of what is possible." - ReFrame, and "Narrative power is the ability to change the norms and rules our society lives by." - Rashad Robinson, Color of Change
Police-Free Schools:	"Dismantling school policing infrastructure, culture, and practice; ending school militarization and surveillance; and building a new liberatory education system." - National Campaign for Police-Free Schools

PURPOSE

To connect the power of communities with necessary resources for the health and longevity of the nation's schools, the nation itself, and the world.

MISSION

We bring together the resources of philanthropy with the power of grassroots organizing to ensure that schools welcome all students and nurture their full potential.

GOAL

Proliferation of the mindset and values that fuel the creation of education models that acknowledge and grapple with historical trauma and oppression, as well as affirm and nurture the genius, gifts, and expertise of young people and their communities.

VISION

Systems and spaces of education in which young people are centered in the education process, treasured for their humanity and the power they carry, and where their learning is valued and fostered. We envision a world in which schools are places where all young people are affirmed in spaces that center joy, love, and creativity. Schools are welcoming, nurturing, and safe places for students where they have a deep sense of belonging and are challenged to grow. In this world, our communities are stronger and our future is limitless.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



FUND

We fund organizations that change schools and the system of education through community organizing. CJSF funds first, providing multi-year general operating grants typically ranging from \$100K – \$400K and responsiveness resources too.



CONNECT

We are dot-connectors. We foster relationships between our partners and philanthropy, policy, research, advocacy, national movement leaders, and others.



BUILD

We build the capacity of our partners by supporting their strategic know-how on everything from communications to data analysis and curating spaces for strategy construction and learning.



LEAD

We lead efforts, with our partners, to make community-rooted holistic school safety & positive school climate a priority for philanthropy, policy-makers, and national allies. See:

[Do the Harder Work](#) and [Reclaim Social-Emotional Learning](#) as well as the *key moments & resource guide* included in this report.

Our Team

WHO WE ARE

We are Black, Brown, Asian, and white. We are queer and straight. We are first-generation immigrants and college students. We are neuroexpansive. We speak multiple languages. We are multigenerational caregivers. We are descendants of liberators, creatives, resisters, poor, working class families, formerly undocumented immigrants, and the formerly incarcerated.



Allison
North Star and Ancestor



Alexis
Operations Manager



Briana
Director of Liberatory Learning
& Capacity Building



Erika
Georgetown Policy Resident



Jaime
Co-Director



Jose
Programs Curator



Kimberly
Education Anew Fellow



Marianna
Director of Movement Partnerships

THANK YOU, DR. CIERRA KALER-JONES!

We thank Dr. Cierra Kaler-Jones for her leadership and friendship as our inaugural Director of Storytelling. We are cheering her on as she takes the helm at Rethinking Schools as their inaugural Executive Director.

Cierra joined the CJSF squad almost four years ago as Education Anew Fellow, working across both CJSF and our partner, Teaching For Change, and helping us all make meaning together despite the challenges of the moment. Her contributions in those early years continue to bear fruit and spark conversations across roles, places, and perspectives — as exemplified by the article she crafted early on in her time with us *When SEL is Used As Another Form of Policing*, which has been viewed more than 196,000 times.

When Cierra's fellowship ended, she became our first-ever Director of Storytelling, a role she crafted with care and attention to the needs of the movement and the importance of supporting narrative power-building. Across time and the roles she has played, Cierra has thoughtfully tended to our team, to our storytelling, and to our partners' and members' in ways that have invited all of us to see ourselves in the fullness of who we are becoming.

In everything she has done with and for us all, Cierra has danced with grace and brilliance. She has penned with love. She has modeled care. We are so profoundly grateful to Dr. Kaler-Jones for all that she has poured into our collective efforts.



Dr. Cierra Kaler-Jones
Director of Storytelling



TEAM REFLECTIONS



December marked nine months for me here at CJSF! Reflecting back, I am so in awe of the ways we have been able to come together to learn and to grow as a squad and partner network in a largely virtual space. I am especially grateful to my predecessors and colleagues for helping us to sustain and grow our partner network from 64 to 80 partners and counting! I am looking forward to welcoming new CJSF squad, partners and members as well as integrating more of our healing and wellness strategies into our movement building work.” - **Marianna**



I can’t believe it’s been over half a year since starting at CJSF! I am thrilled to serve in the new role of Director of Liberatory Learning and Capacity Building and have experienced so much growth already. I am grateful for the CJSF squad and for the warm welcome and support I have received while settling onto the team. We have such a dynamic partner network, and I am inspired by the transformational work that these organizers and advocates are leading in their communities. It has been an honor to learn from partners and support their wellness and their organizations’ capacities in this protracted struggle for education liberation. I am looking forward to continuing this support with new technical assistance and capacity-building offerings in 2023, and launching the radical sabbatical program. Thank you Thena and Allie!” - **Briana**



Since joining the CJSF Squad in April 2022, I have been so constantly amazed by the way CJSF continuously shows up so authentically and with deep intentionality and care in every space. This team continues to prove how small teams can be so mighty! I have had the pleasure to connect with so many partners through zoom and in person meetings/convenings, and I always feel so re-invigorated after every beautiful conversation and connection. I am so excited for 2023 and all of the amazing conversations, new partnerships/connections, and innovative ways we will advance a just world in a sustainable, holistic manner together.” - **Jose**



I am now one and a half years into my fellowship and have learned and experienced so much! One of the most memorable experiences I’ve had working with Teaching for Change is co-designing The Social Justice Curriculum Fair, which launched in August. The fair brought together local social justice oriented educators to connect with one another and with local social justice organizations, and

to participate in workshops aligned with various social justice topics and themes. I thoroughly enjoyed seeing this event develop from an idea offhandedly shared with my colleagues to a new signature D.C. Area Educators for Social Justice event. I'm looking forward to the fair growing to become a well-known and anticipated event for educators in the D.C. area. Through my work at CJSF, I have enjoyed leading our ongoing community of practice focused on culturally-sustaining pedagogy. To expand on our first virtual learning exchange in May, we traveled with partners to Seattle in November to continue building a vision for liberatory education. I'm looking forward to continuing learning alongside partners in this community of practice in 2023." **-Kimberly**



“CJSF continues to amaze me in how the values of each squad member show up in the culture of the organization. This is one of my first times being in a space that really allows for such shifting and flexibility in terms of what folks need and want. I've had opportunities to research issues I care deeply about, draft a *coming soon* resource around the teacher shortage, write and publish an op-ed, and uplift legislation that undermines equity in education. The culture along with the work of CJSF is really what I think my graduate program would refer to as “transformative,” I'm looking forward to more learning, growing, and transforming with CJSF in 2023!” **-Erika**



“Working at CJSF was such a formative and beautiful experience, and it was such an honor getting to know and collaborate with CJSF partners and donor members. At the intersection of philanthropy and grass-roots organizing, CJSF truly embodies what it means to pursue and sustain authentic partnerships in order to advance a vision of an affirmative and just education system that holistically serves all students. My work focused on ensuring federal policymaking reflects and aligns with the demands our partners are lifting, and I am proud of all I accomplished in community with my CJSF squad! I believe in the power of community-centered research and policy, and I know that our schools can be joyful spaces that reflect and affirm the lived experiences of the students they serve. My time at CJSF challenged, inspired, and reignited a critical hope in my heart that I know I will bring with me in all my endeavors to always pursue educational justice. Onwards!” **-Kate (Georgetown Policy Resident, Sept 21 – May 22)**

CJSF Members

Communities for Just Schools Fund is grateful to have the support and partnership of an esteemed, highly engaged network of donor members. Their contributions, connections, and care allow us to collectively:

- resource community organizers who are working to ensure that schools are holistically — physically, emotionally, psychologically, and intellectually — safe, particularly for Black, Brown, Indigenous, LGBTQ+ young people, and young people with disabilities;
- learn with and from one another about organizing work and the work of other stakeholders in the field to disrupt structures and systems of oppression and how they manifest in schools;
- understand the role and potential impact of philanthropy in supporting systemic change in education in the best interests of young people, communities, families, and, thus, the nation.



Over the course of 2022, our members included:

Andrus Family Fund
Annie E. Casey Foundation
Casey Family Programs
The California Endowment
Charles & Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation
Grantmakers for Thriving Youth Policy Working Group (Seattle Foundation)
Ford Foundation
Hyams Foundation
Nathan Cummings Foundation
NEA Foundation
NoVo Foundation
Oak Foundation
Public Welfare Foundation
Raikes Foundation
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Tides Foundation | Advancing Girls Initiative
Stuart Foundation
Voqal
Wellspring Philanthropic Fund
William & Flora Hewlett Foundation
William K. Kellogg Foundation
Hill-Snowdon Foundation

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

In 2022 our Executive Committee members were:



Bethiel Girma-Holton
Oak Foundation



Gisele Shorter
Raikes Foundation



Kathryn Bradley
Hewlett Foundation



Nyoka Acevedo
Andrus Family Fund



Toya Randall
Casey Family Programs



Our Partners

CJSF's partner network of bold, visionary leaders have constantly been on the edge of innovative ideas and solutions defining the future of just and liberatory education. Through multi-pronged organizing and advocacy, our partners engage youth, parents, educators, and community members from all backgrounds to collaboratively create spaces and policies that not only safeguard the rights of Black, Brown, LGBTQ+ students, but deeply affirm their experiences, wisdom, and lived experiences.



NATIONAL PARTNERS

- Advancement Project
- Alliance for Educational Justice
- Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools
- BLM at School
- Center for Popular Democracy
- Coalition for Liberated Ethnic Studies
- Data for Black Lives
- Dignity in Schools Campaign
- Education for Liberation Network
- Journey for Justice
- National Black Women's Justice Institute
- NYU Metro Center - The Education Justice Research and Organizing Collaborative
- Families
- Intergenerational
- Faith
- Educators
- Youth Organizing
- Research

ALL CJSF PARTNERS

[412 Justice](#)

[Advancement Project](#)

[Alliance for Educational Justice \(AEJ\)](#)

[Alliance for Quality Education \(AQE\)](#)

[Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools \(AROS\)](#)

[ARISE](#)

[Assata's Daughters](#)

[Ayuda Legal Puerto Rico](#)

[Baltimore Algebra Project \(BAP\)](#)

[Black Organizing Project \(BOP\)](#)

[Black Swan Academy](#)

[BLM at School](#)

[BLM Freedom School](#)

[Boston-Area Youth Organizing Project \(BYOP\)](#)

[BreakOUT!](#)

[Brighton Park Neighborhood Council \(BPNC\)](#)

[Californians for Justice](#)

[Center for Popular Democracy \(CPD\)](#)

[Citizens of Louisville Organized and United Together \(CLOUT\)](#)

[Coalition for Liberated Ethnic Studies \(CLES\)](#)

[Coleman Advocates](#)

[Communities United](#)

[Community Asset Development Re-Defining Education \(CADRE\)](#)

[Community Organizing and Family Issues \(COFI\)](#)



[Creative Justice](#)

[Critical Exposure](#)

[Data for Black Lives](#)

[Desis Rising Up & Moving \(DRUM\)](#)

[Dignity in Schools Campaign \(DSC\)](#)

[Dignity in Schools Campaign California \(DSC-CA\)](#)

[Dream Defenders](#)

[Education for Liberation Network \(Free Minds Free People\)](#)

[Education Justice Alliance \(EJA\)](#)

[Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children \(FFLIC\)](#)

[Federacion de Maestro de Puerto Rico \(FMPR\)](#)

[FIERCE NYC](#)

[Florida Student Power Network](#)

[Freedom, Inc.](#)

[Gender & Sexualities Alliance Network \(GSA Network\)](#)

[Girls for Gender Equity \(GGE\)](#)

[Grassroots Arkansas](#)

[GSAFE](#)

[Gwinnett Parent Coalition to Dismantle the School to Prison Pipeline \(Gwinnett SToPP\)](#)

[Hearing Youth Voices](#)

[Journey for Justice \(J4J\)](#)

[Juntos](#)

[Kids Rethink New Orleans Schools \(Rethink\)](#)

[Labor Community Strategy Center \(The Strategy Center\)](#)

[Leaders Igniting Transformation \(LIT\)](#)

[National Black Women's Justice Institute \(NBWJI\)](#)

[New Settlement Parent Action Committee \(PAC\)](#)

[Nollie Jenkins Family Center](#)

[NYC Coalition for Educational Justice \(CEJ\)](#)

[NYU Metro Center – The Education Justice Research and Organizing Collaborative \(EJ-ROC\)](#)

[Movimiento Poder formerly Padres y Jóvenes Unidos \(PJU\)](#)

[Philadelphia Student Union \(PSU\)](#)

[Power U Center for Social Change \(Power U\)](#)

[Providence Student Union \(PSU\)](#)

[Providence Youth Student Movement \(PrYSM\)](#)

[Puente Human Rights Movement \(Puente\)](#)

[Racial Justice NOW!](#)

[RYSE Center](#)

[S.O.U.L. Sisters Leadership Collective](#)

[Southern Echo](#)

[Southern Movement Committee](#)

[SouthWest Organizing Project \(SWOP\)](#)

[Step Up Louisiana](#)

[Students Deserve LA](#)

[Teachers for Social Justice – Bay Area](#)

[Teachers Unite](#)

[Teaching for Change](#)

[Texas Organizing Project Education Fund \(TOP\)](#)

[The Lighthouse | Black Girl Projects](#)

[Twin Cities Innovation Alliance \(TCIA\)](#)

[Urban Youth Collaborative \(UYC\)](#)

[Youth Justice Coalition \(YJC\)](#)

[Youth Together](#)

[Youth United for Change \(YUC\)](#)



Our Impact by the Numbers

80+

partners...

25

...in 25 states, Puerto Rico, Canada, & Washington, D.C.

\$150K

base grant size for most cohort two partners, an increase from \$100K

DATA POINTS

- 80 partners in 25 states, Puerto Rico, Canada, & Washington, D.C., up from 64 partners the previous year
- Change in base grant size for most cohort two partners increased from \$100,000 to \$150,000 for most partners
- Grantmaking categories include general support, rapid response, connectivity, technical assistance and capacity-building
- The vast majority of CJSF's grantmaking across these categories are general operating support and direct contributions. Our grantmaking cohorts reflect grassroots base building and advocacy organizations as well as national and state connectivity partners

GRANTS & CONTRIBUTIONS: \$5,315,397

- **31** General Operating Support Grants (**\$3,900,000**)
- **11** Connectivity Grants (**\$1,050,000**)
- **14** Responsiveness Grants & Contributions (**\$256,347**)
- **5** TA & Capacity Building Grants & Contributions (**\$109,050**)

Since 2016, CJSF has moved more than \$26 million in general operating support to grassroots organizing for education justice.

FEATURE STORY

Black Lives Matter at School has been evolving as a national organization to advance Black liberation through PK-16 education since its inception in late 2016. Like several movement partners CJSF supports, BLM at School has largely operated as a full volunteer-driven operation, committing close to 100 hours each year to renewing the celebrations and actions without receiving any grant support and very light operational crowdfunding. This year, CJSF supported BLM at School with its first general operating support grant which will allow the organization to have their first employees, bring greater efficiencies and effectiveness to their continued national organizing. You can read more here: [CJSF BLM at School's first funder](#)

Key Moments and Resource Guide

JANUARY

- Hosted “Reclaim SEL” workshop for the Mississippi Coalition to End Corporal Punishment

FEBRUARY

- Coordinated Federal School Discipline and Climate Coalition retreat to refine collaboration across grassroots partners and those who engage in federal advocacy

MARCH

- Teachers Unite released their [“On Our Terms”](#) website and action toolkit
- CJSF traveled to Mississippi to meet with partners, including Nollie Jenkins Family Center, The Lighthouse | Black Girl Projects, and Southern Echo. During our time we helped NJFC refine their plan and interview protocol for inviting elders to share oral histories and planned for a Federal Brownbag Learning Session.



APRIL

- Celebrated welcoming new team members — Director of Movement Partnerships, Marianna Islam; Programs Curator, Jose Santacruz; and Director of Liberatory Learning & Capacity-Building, Briana Perry
- Hosted partner gathering to share federal strategies and rally for [GSA Network’s Devising Freedom National Strategy](#) to combat efforts targeting trans and nonbinary young people
- Dignity in Schools Campaign released their resource guide [Healing and Repair: Restorative and Transformative Justice](#) toolkit

MAY

- Organized Federal Brownbag learning session entitled [“The Path to End Corporal Punishment, Session 1: The Legacy of the Lash”](#)

- Launched our [community of practice 2.0 and related research skillshare](#)
- Raikes Foundation invited Jaime Koppel (CJSF) to be a panelist alongside Lija Farnham (Bridgespan) and Dennis Quirin (Raikes) at the [Global Equity Organization conference](#) in Chicago
- Issued a [Call-to-Action to Philanthropy](#): We Must Dig Deeper in Support of Black and Brown-led Organizing Groups' Leadership and Vision

JUNE

- CJSF and partners drafted this [memorandum](#) to the House Oversight Committee before their hearing entitled "The Urgent Need to Address the Gun Violence Epidemic"
- Hosted a Virtual Workflow space for partners and squad members to build a culture of care and support
- Convened "Coming Together," a community care space for partners to process and grieve the tragedy in Uvalde, Texas
- Dignity in Schools Campaign, Gwinnett SToPP, Black Swan Academy, Advancement Project, Education for Liberation Network, LA Students Deserve, Center for Popular Democracy, and CJSF hosted a media call to discuss what building holistically safe schools require
- CJSF's inaugural Policy Resident, Kate Price, graduated from Georgetown University's Master's in Educational Transformation program

JULY

- Successfully placed an op-ed in NewsOne and Philanthropy News Digest – [Police-Free Schools are Critical to Reproductive Freedom](#) and [It's Time to Fully Invest in Schools and Community Organizing](#)
- Hosted a [press conference](#) on the importance of policefree schools and visions for holistic safety
- PR consultant Jennifer Farmer helped to organize an opportunity for CJSF and partners – Gwinnett SToPP, Black Organizing Project, and network partners — Partners for Dignity & Rights and Advancement Project — to share at a USA Today editorial board meeting



- Hosted our first narrative power-building session on Crafting a Collective Vision
- RYSE Center opened [RYSE Commons](#), their new youth-designed 45,000-square-foot campus

AUGUST

- Cierra Kaler-Jones (CJSF), Ms. Ellen Reddy (Nollie Jenkins Family Center) and Ms. Janice (Nollie Jenkins Family Center) [presented at the Women's Convention](#) on ending corporal punishment and narrative power-building
- Issued a [public statement on the MS water crisis](#)
- Amplified and attended Journey 4 Justice's press conference launch of their [Equity or Else demands](#)
- Education Anew Fellow Kimberly Ellis co-designed and hosted D.C. Area Educators for Social Justice's [inaugural Social Justice Curriculum Fair](#)
- Jose Santacruz (CJSF) was selected for the [Nonprofit Tech Readiness Program](#) offered by the Ford Foundation. This program focuses on technology infrastructure building and operationalizing tech tools
- Advancement Project, Alliance for Educational Justice, and Brighton Park Neighborhood Council (BPNC) brought together the organizations that make up the National Campaign for Police Free Schools for the first time in person since late 2019. 120 young people and organizers from 26 organizations across the country came together in Chicago
- Engaged in our annual Wellness Week and shared some of our thoughts and favorite resources [on wellness](#)

SEPTEMBER

- Co-hosted "Organizing & Beyond: Freedom is Our Future," a virtual funder briefing, in partnership with GSA Network and Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing, Edward W. Hazen Foundation, and Wellspring Philanthropic Fund
- CJSF and PR consultant Jennifer Farmer helped Nollie Jenkins Family Center place [this op-ed](#) about ending corporal punishment in Truthout
- With the leadership of CJSF member, Hill-Snowdon Foundation, CJSF co-hosted a funders' briefing — [Freedom to Learn: Pathways to the Victory for the Police Free Schools Movement](#)
- Raikes Foundation sponsored our workshop, Ending Intellectual Policing: Movement Towards Holistically Safe Schools, featuring Education for Liberation Network, BLM At

School, Communities United, and GSA Network at [Grantmakers for Education](#)

- CJSF and Gisele Shorter (Raikes) traveled to Mississippi to meet up with Sara Sneed (NEA Foundation) and local organizers, activists, and elected officials. [We did a learning tour and visited Nollie Jenkins Family Center in Durant.](#)
- Marianna Islam (CJSF) was invited to participate in the Evolutionary Leadership Cohort in Fayston, VT. Marianna used the time to become more skillful in her practice of holding intentional space for healing and relationship-building for women of color.

OCTOBER

- CJSF PR consultant Jennifer Farmer helped to write, pitch, and place Black Organizing Project's [op-ed on police-free schools in NewsOne.](#)
- Black Lives Matter at School [received an initial \\$100K investment from CJSF](#) to expand community collective power in public education for thriving Black futures
- Communities United, in partnership with Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital, was celebrated as one of the awardees of W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Racial Equity 2030 Challenge
- We completed our year-long impact evaluation. Stay tuned for the public-facing version coming in January 2023
- Grantmakers for Education offered so many opportunities for connections with members, partners, and other funder friends. Thanks again to the Raikes Foundation for sponsoring our workshop, Ending Intellectual Policing: Movement Towards Holistically Safe Schools, featuring Education for Liberation Network, BLM At School, Communities United, and GSA Network.



NOVEMBER

- Georgetown Policy Resident, Erika Roberson's, literature review abstract was accepted to present at the Southern Humanities Conference in January

- Hosted our [second learning exchange](#) as part of our community of practice 2.0 in person in Seattle, Washington
- Facilitated our second virtual research skillshare alongside partners to discuss liberatory, arts-based, and community-centered data collection methods
- Cierra Kaler-Jones (CJSF) was named to Black Enterprise's 40 Under 40 List for social impact
- CJSF launched a search for our next [Executive Director!](#)

DECEMBER

- Hosted a narrative power-building workshop with PR expert Jennifer Farmer and Associated Press journalist Hilary Powell



Programs Highlights

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND CAPACITY-BUILDING



SOLIDARITY, LEARNING, AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In the summer, we supported a partner organization's identity learning workshops as they dove into exploring and unpacking gender identity and gender oppression.

We also supported a partner organization in their work to deepen organizational processes and practices, particularly around harm and safety. Our support has included participation in Vision Change Win's safety school, a board retreat hosted at Highlander Research & Education, and facilitation for that board retreat.



STRATEGIC PLANNING

In September, we contributed resources for Providence Student Union's strategic planning process.



LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS

We moved resources to a partner's strategic planning needs as they move through an executive director transition.



GRIEF, HEALING, & WELLNESS SUPPORT

In June, we hosted a community care offering for partners in the wake of the mass violence in Uvalde, Texas. A healing justice facilitator held this space.

In December we supported 10 partners' participation in [The Givers Revival](#) in Miami, FL. This was an immersive two-day healing and spiritual arts experience specifically designed for organizers from the south.





GRANTMAKING STRATEGIES

As CJSF moved through a season of expansion of our partner network, we honed and refined our existing grantmaking categories (which are all general operating support) to better reflect opportunities for partners to collaborate with each other and with others — including our members and philanthropy. In September, we invited our current partner, National Black Women’s Justice Institute (NBWJI), to shift to our Connectivity partner cohort since their work is a great example of research and policy advocacy that “centers and uplifts the voices and experiences of Black women and girls who have been affected by the criminal legal system.” NBWJI has been strategizing on how they can help districts build robust mental health systems in schools to support the healing students need rather than punishment they are often times met with. As part of a pilot, they are working with a local Indiana school district to develop an organizational assessment tool for schools focused on mental health that want to engage Black girls and gender expansive youth in creating systems of holistic mental health. The tool will be designed to help organizations assess what their mental health services are from an intersectional lens and what elements need to be considered to create healthy school environments.

As the new CJSF team members completed grant renewals for 2022, they turned to partnership expansion. Acknowledging that more than 200 bills are introduced yearly attacking trans and queer young people, with guidance from our partners at GSA Network, the team included a focus on expanding resources to trans and queer youth of color for healing, justice, and power building.



Narrative Power

Over the past year, we've deepened our work in the narrative power-building space, based on feedback and desire from partners. We partnered with Jennifer Farmer, PR expert, who has helped us to successfully place three CJSF op-eds at NewsOne, one at Philanthropy News Digest, and supported partners like Black Organizing Project at getting placed at NewsOne and Nollie Jenkins Family Center at Truthout. Additionally, we were able to host a [press conference on police-free schools](#) that yielded an opportunity to have a meeting with members of the editorial board at USA Today. We also hosted two narrative power-building workshops — one aimed at strategy around providing an affirmative vision for the schools and the world we're trying to build despite the harmful legislation. We also explored tools to assess our audiences and determine values-based messaging aligned to speak to those audiences. The second session served as a media training with Jennifer Farmer, where Hilary Powell, a journalist with Associated Press attended and was in conversation with partners. At the Seattle Learning Exchange in November, we also led a mini-session on using Public Narrative Method and counter-narratives in narrative strategies. This is work that partners have asked for and will continue to be built on in the years to come — particularly more narrative power-building sessions around personal storytelling, content creation, social media, op-ed writing, op-ed pitching, and more strategy sessions.

While CJSF continues to grow, we seek to share our own story and let our collective voice resound. This year, we released a number of statements to publicly state our commitments, as well as call others in philanthropy into the work of supporting grassroots organizers in the education justice movement.



Research Skillshare #1:

What is Participatory Action Research?

Intercambio de técnicas de investigación #1:

¿Qué es la investigación de acción participativa (PAR)?



RESEARCH SKILLSHARES

As part of this work, we recognize the important role that research plays in building narrative power. While data collection and analysis, in many ways, has been used as a tool of extracting information from communities, we used research skillshares as a way to push back. Alongside partners Communities United, Twin Cities Innovation Alliance, Education Justice Alliance, and Teachers Unite, we created space for organizers to share the varied and creative ways they are already using research every day. In May, we hosted the virtual launch of the research skillshares, which focused on exploring participatory action research, particularly how it is a disruption of the harmful ways that research has extracted information from community. In November, we facilitated a session on liberatory, arts-based data collection methods, such as photovoice and visual art.

CJSF'S STATEMENTS

- [Water crisis](#)
- [Reproductive justice](#)
- [Wellness](#)
- [Against Raging White Supremacy](#)
- [Communities for Just Schools Fund Issues Call-to-Action to Philanthropy](#): We Must Dig Deeper in Support of Black and Brown-led Organizing Groups' Leadership and Vision

In the News and Research

OP-EDS PLACED FOR PARTNERS

- [Schools Should Ban Corporal Punishment – and Teach Restorative Justice Instead](#)
- [As Classes Begin, A Reminder Why Police In Schools Aren't The Answer To Students' Safety](#)

CJSF OP-EDS

- [Education is on the Ballot: Voting for Candidates who Value Safe Learning Environments](#) – NewsOne
- [It's time to fully invest in our schools and community organizing](#) – Philanthropy News Digest
- [School Safety Requires Deep Investment Not More Police](#) – NewsOne
- [Police-free Schools are Critical to Reproductive Freedom](#) – NewsOne

CJSF MENTIONS/FEATURES

- We are grateful to [@kelloggfoundation](#) for lifting up CJSF and the legacy of our ancestor, Allison R. Brown on [#EveryChildThrives](#). [@kelloggfoundation](#) Program Officer Renee Blahuta named Allison as her Black history hero. She says about Allison, "Brown constantly championed safe, healthy, equitable schools for Black and Brown children. Throughout her life and in her other roles as an attorney, in philanthropy, and as a mom, Allison was a tireless and fierce advocate for racial and education justice."
- [Teaching about Racism](#) – CQ Researcher
- Sillerman Center CJSF spotlight
 - [Spotlight brief](#)
 - [Conversation](#)



“Brown constantly championed safe, healthy, equitable schools for Black and Brown children. Throughout her life and in her other roles as an attorney, in philanthropy, and as a mom, Allison was a tireless and fierce advocate for racial and education justice.”

Federal Strategies

CJSF's approach to federal strategies has always been grounded in the need and importance of serving as a dot-connector. We strive to ensure that our partners' work is uplifted in spaces and conversations that do not always consider their demands or needs.

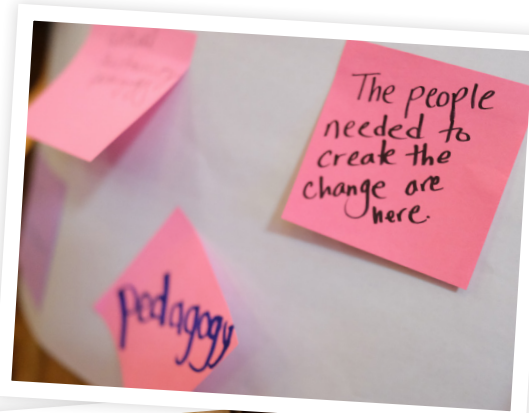
CJSF relaunched our federal brownbag learning sessions in 2022. In May 2022, we hosted **The Path to End Corporal Punishment**. The session, geared towards executive branch agency staff, featured CJSF partner Nollie Jenkins Family Center. This session focused on the history of corporal punishment, its impact on communities in and beyond Mississippi, and the imperative that the federal government take action to end this abuse. The resource sheet from this session can be found [here](#). The next brown bag sessions will be in the spring of 2023.

In June, CJSF and our partners drafted this [memorandum](#) to the House Oversight Committee before their hearing entitled "The Urgent Need to Address the Gun Violence Epidemic."

In September, squad members, Kimberly, Cierra, and Erika attended the Congressional Black Caucus' Legislative Conference in Washington DC. They attended sessions and engaged in conversations with activists, educators, and government leaders on issues ranging from environmental justice as racial justice to art as a form of activism.

CJSF continued to play a role in the Federal School Discipline and Climate Coalition (FedSDC) space, beginning with our role organizing a strategic planning retreat in early 2022.

As the year came to a close, CJSF squad members were preparing to convene a partner call in early 2023 to discuss all things federal strategies with partners.



GEORGETOWN POLICY RESIDENT REFLECTIONS

Since 2021, CJSF has been partnering with [Georgetown University's Master of Arts in Educational Transformation](#) program by housing a policy resident each academic year who supports a variety of CJSF efforts, including our federal strategies and communications work.



Kate Price, 21-22 Policy Resident - During her time with CJSF, Kate curated and wrote a resource guide that highlights federal legislation efforts around school climate and safety. She crafted CJSF partner profiles and assisted in #ReclaimSEL trainings. She also conducted research to assist in our storytelling and narrative power-building efforts around legislation such as Protecting Our Students in Schools Act (POSSA) and the Counseling not Criminalization Act (CNC). Kate collaborated with our partner, Nollie Jenkins Family Center, to plan a federal brown bag sessions for executive branch staff to learn about the harms of corporal punishment and solutions communities are lifting in their work every day.



Erika Roberson, 22-23 Georgetown Policy Resident - "I have learned so much from the CJSF squad as well as partners. The work that CJSF and partner organizations do is so in sync with my coursework. Recently we read 'The History of 'Zero Tolerance' in American Public Schooling by Judith Kafka and I could not help but to think about the work of folks like Teachers Unite and so many other partners throughout my reading. Another full circle moment I'd highlight is the Seattle Learning Exchange on Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies and Black Liberatory Education. This learning exchange put into context the theories that I read about and discussed with my peers during my first summer session back in July."



MEMBER REFLECTIONS

- “The thoughtfulness in the way [CJSF] talks about the work and the way they present their work and the work of [grassroots] organizations has been really helpful for me in... bringing information back to my team and even [thinking about] how we structure our own internal meetings. They are very thoughtful about how they create the space and hold the space and ask for input from different folks, and I really appreciate that.”
- “I think CJSF does a phenomenal job at demystifying and translating what is happening at the federal level, not only for the local organizations that they support but also for us funders, too.” Another member shared, “I think one of the things that a group like CJSF does so well is bridging what’s happening at local levels with what we need to be paying attention to federally as well. The bi-directionality of these two pieces... helps us have confidence that what they’re moving forward is really grounded and situated in the lived experiences of folks locally.”
- “My analysis and relational practice has been so informed by the CJSF team – their intentional and relational approach to grantmaking, field building, and funder organizing, [along with] their clarity of political analysis and their ego-free centering of the work of movement.”

PARTNER REFLECTIONS

- “CJSF ‘helps to break down the power dynamics that oftentimes [are] at play when you think about the grantor-grantee relationship.’”
“I think that [CJSF] have been really helpful advocates in amplifying storytelling and messaging.”
- “Every time I show up in [a] conversation as a grantee speaker, it’s very trust-based. I feel like the work has already been done and we’re not being propped up as some funders might do with us...they’ve already tilled the soil and prepared funders to hear us. That level of practice and solidarity is really, really priceless.”
- “CJSF is ‘very intentional about creating space for us to come together, but in a way that adds value to us as opposed to just sucking up time.’”
- “Building relationships with fellow organizers opened our minds to all of the different people who were doing different work across the country,”



- “CJSF learning exchanges have been useful in bringing organizers and justice organizers together around sets of issues that maybe they hadn’t thought about or thought about organizing together which has generated some political will and some political action together.”
- “Any [publications] that they put out, we’ve had the opportunity to seriously weigh in on... Being able to pull those up, utilize them, and drop them in policymaking spaces is very helpful.”
- “Having conversations with the DOJ, having us be able to be at those conversations, that would not happen without someone like CJSF who’s able to bridge that gap for us... that’s been a very clear big picture way that CJSF has come through for all of us.”
- “CJSF has been in solidarity of getting us and others in front of funders, but I think more of that, just making sure that the funders help make the work that we’re doing visible, because we’re often so busy doing the work that we’re not as good at painting a picture of it.”

Member Programming and Philanthropic Organizing

In March, CJSF members convened virtually for a conversation with CJSF's newest connectivity grant partners, [Black Lives Matter at School \(BLM at School\)](#). They shared their overall strategies and needs in and beyond this moment.

In May, Raikes invited Jaime to be a panelist alongside Lija Farnham (Bridgespan) and Dennis Quirin (Raikes) at **the Grantmakers for Effective Organizations Conference** in Chicago. Thank you, Zoe and Gisele! The session was entitled: Philanthropy's Role in Building Back for Equity. Session Description: *There is an urgent opportunity to reimagine and reinvest in more equitable systems and systems change work in response to the many challenges we are facing—including the impacts of the pandemic on our already inequitable systems. But who makes change happen? And what does it take to effectively lead these efforts? Success in solving complex social problems frequently hinges on the work of organizations that harmonize the action of myriad actors—we call them “field catalysts” and “nerve centers.” Though critical to building game-changing fields and movements, field catalysts generally operate behind the scenes, rarely visible enough for funders to recognize their work and fund them. And even when funders are aware of them, knowing how to evaluate and support them has proved challenging. In this session, we will share recent research highlighting the pivotal role field catalysts can and do play, the assets they bring, and opportunities to support them.*

In June, we convened with our members again — this time in the aftermath of the tragedy in Uvalde. We held space for and with each other while also discussing how CJSF and our members were thinking about much needed:

- **Healing & Wellness Offerings:** intentional movements and spaces for collective processing, grieving, and healing. In the wake of the tragedies at Robb Elementary (Uvalde) and Tony's grocery store (Buffalo), partners asked for a space to do just this: collectively process and grieve.
- **Narrative Strategies and Work:** Partners called us into supporting narrative power-building efforts through learning and strategy sessions.



- **Federal Strategies:** We built meaning and sought connections between local demands and organizing and federal conversations around threat assessments, gun violence, and school safety.

In September, we helped organize two funders briefings:

- With the leadership of CJSF member, Hill-Snowdon Foundation, CJSF co-hosted a funders' briefing – [Freedom to Learn: Pathways to the Victory for the Police Free Schools Movement](#). Thank you to the [Black Organizing Project](#), the [Alliance for Educational Justice](#) and the [National Campaign for Police Free Schools](#) for sharing their work, victories and future plans for the police free schools movement.
- **A Call to Action for Queer and Trans Youth:** we co hosted "Organizing & Beyond: Freedom is Our Future", a virtual funder briefing, in partnership with GSA Network, Edward W. Hazen Foundation, Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing, and Wellspring Philanthropic Fund. Our objective was to engage our philanthropic comrades as resource mobilizers to take us beyond this current moment to a future that trans and queer young people envision for themselves.



We postponed our in-person September Collaborative meeting (a convening of our partners and our members together) until January 2023 because of the water crisis in and around Jackson, MS. [We issued this statement.](#)

In October, CJSF and many of our members were at Grantmakers for Education (GFE) in Austin. The conference offered so many opportunities for connections with members, partners, and other funder friends. Thanks again to the Raikes Foundation for sponsoring our workshop, Ending Intellectual Policing: Movement Towards Holistically Safe Schools, featuring Education for Liberation Network, BLM At School, Communities United, and GSA Network

In November, CJSF convened with our members to discuss our impact evaluation findings and to strategize about our search for a new Executive Director.

In December, we convened with members again to reflect upon the year and to strategize about conversations and learning for 2023. We spent time in small groups and members named interests in ongoing conversation on topics including Narrative Power Building, Intergenerational engagement (youth/adult partnerships across issue areas), discipline in schools, LGBTQ+ students and school discipline and larger disciplinary systems, importance of connecting the dots increasing the supports for public education, and the desire to see more work in the South and rural areas broadly.

Community of Practice 2.0

CJSF's community of practice is a generative learning space meant to invite partners into collective dreaming and strategy that moves us closer towards a vision for holistically — physically, emotionally, and intellectually — safe schools. Our current community of practice is the third installation of this work. We are connecting the dots of our previous efforts to much needed work around culturally-sustaining pedagogy to move beyond the intellectual policing that is happening at an accelerated pace. To address these new and ongoing threats, as well as the “null curriculum” (Pinar, 2002) in schools, CJSF continues to uplift and catalyze our partners' popular and political education — work that simultaneously looks backward to probe the problematic roots of public education in this nation and looks toward an abolitionist future.

Grassroots and movement organizations have long played the role of filling in the gaps—or righting the harms—of explicit and implicit curricula in schools (e.g., Rosa Parks did not learn about direct action and interracial organizing from school, but rather from the Highlander Folk Center). As we looked to our partners' praxis as organizers to better understand what “good SEL” can and should look like, now we are holding space for partners to learn together (and from one another) about what culturally sustaining pedagogies should look and feel like — and where there is resonance with what many of them model in their popular and political education programming.

SPRING 2022 LEARNING EXCHANGE

In mid-May, CJSF launched our community of practice 2.0 virtually with a two-day meeting and hosted a related research skill-share for partners.

On day one, “Interrogating the Origins of Schooling,” Manuel Criollo invited partners to explore how schooling has been used as a tool of colonization and oppression. We then learned about Gwinnett SToPP's political education work, engaging their local community in a storytelling project to shed light on schooling inequities while building community.

On day two, “Moving Towards the Learning We Want to See,” participants applied learning from day one to envision what culturally-sustaining pedagogy looks and feels like. We used NYU Metro Center's Culturally Responsive ELA Curriculum Scorecard to analyze a current 5th grade ELA



curriculum while discussing ways to make curricula more responsive and sustaining.

On day three, our first research skillshare, we explored participatory action research, including its joys, challenges, and how it is a disruption of the harmful ways that research has extracted information from community and served to gatekeep knowledge. We left the session with the reminder that communities use data in their work every day.

Participants said: “I felt like the meetings really taught me more about the detailed issues behind the work that we do and gave us a safe space to share and tackle those situations as organizers. I learned a lot of new terms I never heard about until we had the discussions.”

BUILDING TO LIBERATORY LEARNING

In November, we convened a two-day partner learning exchange in Seattle, Washington. Together CJSF squad members and 50+ partners explored, dreamed, and strategized together around what we want pedagogy or “the how” of liberatory teaching and learning to look like. Through powerful sessions facilitated by [The Heron’s Nest](#), [Creative Justice](#), [Jesse Hagopian](#) & [Dr. Cierra Kaler-Jones](#), [ARISE](#), and [Freedom School Toronto](#) and an unconference session, we spent time exploring the following learning questions:

- What is pedagogy and how does pedagogy differ from (and relate to) curriculum?
- How does the fight for culturally-sustaining pedagogy relate to the broader movement for holistically safe schools?
- What is your/our vision for pedagogy that is culturally-sustaining? Liberatory? Where and how do we see this vision already happening? How can we continue to assert our demands while building

“I felt like the meetings really taught me more about the detailed issues behind the work that we do and gave us a safe space to share and tackle those situations as organizers. I learned a lot of new terms I never heard about until we had the discussions.”



50+
partners attended

alternatives (since we know the state cannot fully meet our needs or our desires)?

- White supremacist backlash to efforts to teach about systems of oppression is not new; how can we use history as a way to strategize and organize around present-day attacks?

One participant shared the following key takeaway:

“The interconnectedness of anti-Indigeneity, anti-Blackness and racial capitalism were brought to the fore through the information and activities. Making spaces for us to self-reflect and dialogue around how the destruction and erasure of knowledge, land and people through commodification and dehumanization, and, likewise, the preservation of these for self-determination and liberation, were important learnings for me.”

Another participant shared that their organization will use the “big ideas/contexts” shared during the learning exchange to “inform our organizing work and how we engage community. It’s a helpful frame for myself and the members of our organization who were there. The knowledge helps ground our practice.”

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Impact Evaluation Findings

From summer 2021 – summer 2022, CJSF worked with CommVeda consulting on an impact evaluation of our work over the last few years. The purpose of the evaluation was to take stock of CJSF's work to date, solicit reflections on the current challenges and strengths in the education justice landscape, and gather perspectives on the opportunities that lie ahead for CJSF and its network.

EVALUATION HIGHLIGHTS

As a grantmaker, CJSF's value proposition is that grassroots organizing is among the most impactful, yet least supported, strategies for achieving social and educational justice.

The purpose of this evaluation was to:

- Take stock of CJSF's work to date
- Solicit reflections on the current challenges and strengths in the education justice landscape
- Gather perspectives on the opportunities that lie ahead for CJSF and its network

RESOURCING EDUCATION JUSTICE AND SHIFTING PHILANTHROPIC PRACTICE

Through its grantmaking and field support, CJSF has:

- Consistently increased its funding for grassroots organizing
- Provided crucial multi-year, general operating support
- Resourced education justice organizations via rapid response and organizational strengthening support
- Supported organizations in geographic areas and communities that are often overlooked by mainstream philanthropy
- 84% of partners said grant funds allowed them to do work they would not have been able to do otherwise
- 72% of partners said CJSF funding helped them leverage funding from other sources

57

in-depth interviews with
partners, members,
network stakeholders,
and CJSF staff

1

member focus group

32

responses to a
partner survey

14

responses to a
member survey

100+

internal documents
from CJSF

CJSF's philanthropic advocacy work has helped members and other funders:

- Deepen their understanding of education justice
- Shift towards more equitable grantmaking practices
- Consider the power dynamics between funders and grantees
- Develop deeper and less transactional relationships with grantees.
- 64% of members said that CJSF had a moderate to significant influence on them becoming a more vocal advocate for education justice within their foundation

CURATING RICH AND GENERATIVE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

CJSF has created a variety of opportunities to promote collective learning and action, by:

- Cultivating a generative and trusting network for learning and growth
- Creating opportunities to learn, strategize, and develop community through partner calls, convenings, learning exchanges, and webinars
- Publishing reports that members and partners see as critical resources in their work

ADVOCATING FOR POLICY AND NARRATIVE CHANGE

CJSF plays an important public-facing role as an advocate for education justice by:

- Publishing op-eds and receiving media coverage
- Engaging partners in strategic federal policy learning and action
- Elevating partner perspectives
- Making connections between local and national work for partners, members, and others
- 52% of partners said CJSF support helped them influence and participate in federal strategy discussions and action
- 88% of partners said CJSF helped them increase their visibility



The thoughtfulness in the way [CJSF] talks about the work and the way they present their work and the work of [grassroots] organizations has been really helpful for me in... bringing information back to my team."

80%

of partners said CJSF support helped them engage in helpful political education and learning

76%

of partners said CJSF support helped them build relationships with other organizing groups

64%

of partners said CJSF support helped them develop new campaign strategies and tactics

INVESTING IN BASE-BUILDING AND POWER-BUILDING

CJSF prioritizes sustained funding and support, which has led to:

- Partners expanding their bases
- Aligned view of intersectional and multi-issue power-building between CJSF and its partners
- Partners building power by cementing their role and reputation within communities
- Partners building coalitions and networks to build collective power

CATALYZING POLICY WINS

CJSF's funding support has helped partners achieve the following policy and practice changes:

- Progress towards police-free schools through years of local organizing and national coordination
- Key financial investments in school safety, partially through divestment of funds previously allocated towards police
- Reductions in school disciplinary practices and expanded positive social supports
- Public accountability for policy changes

CALL TO ACTION FOR PHILANTHROPY AND FOR CJSF

Philanthropy is stepping up, but there is much more that needs to be done.

- Build Narrative Power – Support organizers to advance affirmative narratives for what our schools can look like and how they can nurture the gifts and talents of Black and Brown students.
- Create Spaces for Collective Strategizing – Support organizers to engage more deeply with one another and also with unusual suspects to build power in new ways.
- Invest in Organizing Infrastructure – Support organizing groups for the long-term so they can invest in building the youth, parent, and community leadership needed to sustain progress.

84%

of partners said grant funds gave them freedom and flexibility to try new outreach strategies

60%

of partners said CJSF support helped them pursue intersectionality in their work

Organizational Wellness and Culture

2022 was a year of becoming — becoming a squad by moving at the pace building trust requires and taking the time to learn from partners and members — to understand their needs and their work. In all of that, we continued to call upon the words of our beloved ancestor, Allison R. Brown, “CJSF’s culture, its aura, can be summed up in a few words: Trust. Love. Belief. We hire highly talented people who have experience and demonstrated capacity such that we trust them to perform as professionals. We identify community groups that are working toward equity in education and society at large. We love the communities we serve, and we believe in Freedom, that it is possible...in our lifetimes. We have the opportunity, as an organization, to model what school culture and climate can be and what philanthropic support of grassroots organizing must be.”

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In 2022, we continued our experimentation in how we not only seek to support our partners in wellness but also hold that as an internal value that we live out actively. In that spirit, we once again held time for rest during our annual summer [wellness week](#) and our winter break.

We began quietly experimenting with a four-day work week in the fall and committed to honest, generative conversation about this experiment — which continues today. And, we held time quarterly not only for retreat space where we aspire to build squad community, engage in strategic learning and planning, and map our individual and collective work but also for “inward focus” weeks where we focus on creating space for the tactical, practical, and operational work that is so crucial to being a healthy squad and organization that can stretch towards the vision we hold with our partners, members, and other friends.



The Work Ahead – Join Us

CJSF's partners' efforts invite us all to dream towards a bold and liberatory vision for education that transcends our current understanding of what is possible. Their striving models the power of solidarity. It is because of organizers that we know what can exist when love is at the center and when we move beyond policing that confines and constricts the beauty and genius of Black and Brown people's humanity, culture, and existence. It is because of our donor members that we can audaciously move in support of building a bigger base of support and resources for their vision — for the vision they are inviting us all to join them in building.



In 2023, we will continue our audacious efforts to continually build the pot of resources we move as grants and contributions. Our technical assistance and capacity-building offerings will include more opportunities for building community and accessing healing and wellness supports. Together — CJSF squad, partners, and members will learn together and build narrative power that lifts the vision for liberatory education that those who oppose us seek to erase.

Some offerings that we are really looking forward to next year include:

- Facilitated Circles with outgoing leadership and incoming leadership at organizations to share lessons, experiences, and build community.
- Organizing 101 Series
- Community Care Space Series featuring art for healing
- A curated resource list that includes trainings, workshops, consultants, and facilitators across the issue areas that partners have lifted up.

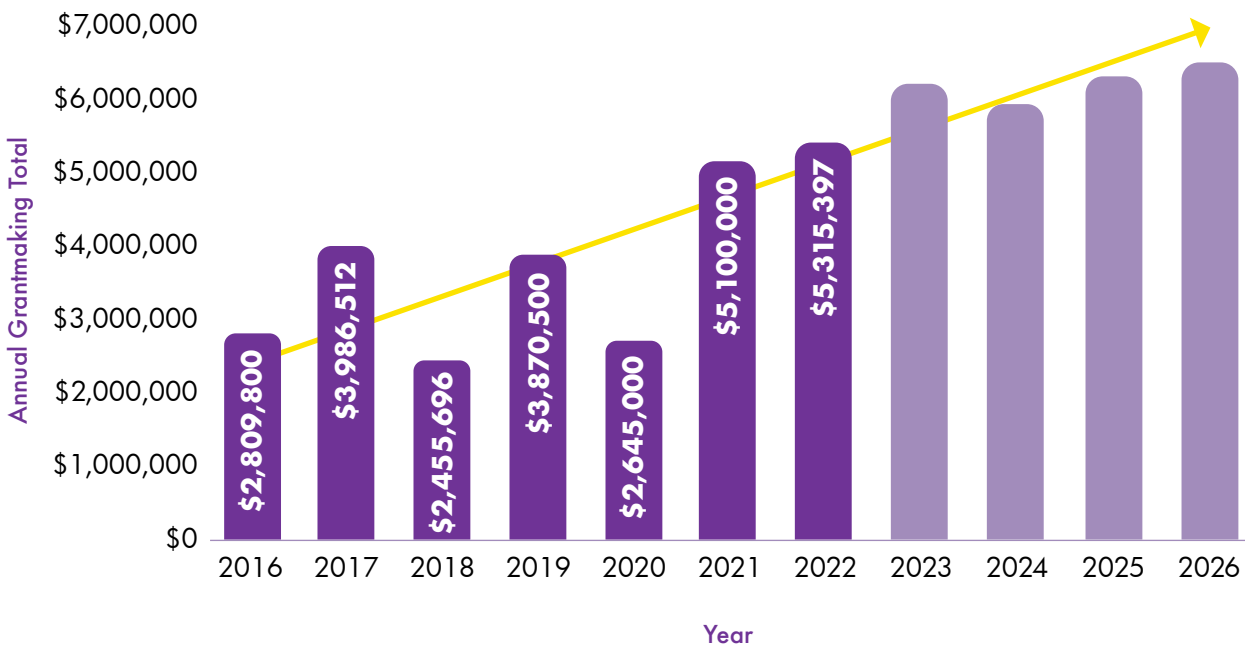
We will continue to explore liberatory pedagogy through our community of practice, delving into explorations of dual power.

We will host even more federal brownbag learning sessions to break down the silos between federal executive branch agency staff and grassroots organizers.

We will come together to learn and to strategize — squad, partners, and members.

We have audacious and necessary dreams. Our partners are counting on us to deliver on the grantmaking goals we have set for ourselves. We invite you to join us in ensuring that we are resourcing vibrancy, belonging, and connection in and across communities so that they may continue to point us towards solutions and be supported in their own wellness and care. Help us get to this year’s grantmaking goal of more than \$6 million. Help us continue to resource technical assistance and capacity strengthening that ensures a vibrant movement. Join us in connecting the dots to other efforts. If you are interested in collaborating with CJSF in any way please reach out today!

GROWING CJSF’S GRANTMAKING BEYOND OUR BASELINE



Since 2016, CJSF has moved more than \$26 million in overlapping cohorts of two-year general operating support grants to grassroots organizing for education justice.

This trending direction is where we must continue to move together in support of the education justice movement and their vision for holistically safe, nurturing, equitable schools. This is only the tip of the iceberg of need. We must stretch ourselves well beyond these numbers.

CJSF’s efforts, in collaboration with our community partners and members, most directly impact and uplift the striving and dreaming of Black, Brown, Indigenous, LGBTQ+ parents/caregivers, young people, including young people with disabilities and immigrant families and youth. We hope you will join us in 2023 — as a member, a partner, a conspirator, or a contributor. There is room for us all on the path we are paving.



Linking the resources of philanthropy with the
power of grassroots organizing.

Dreaming, strategizing, and acting towards
more just futures.

Building and sustaining the schools – and the
world – we all deserve.

Join us.

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