Advancing equity in education, one classroom at a time.
A Note from the Executive Director

“Challenging” is the word that everyone is using to describe the past year in education, in the nonprofit sector, and in the world as a whole. At AdoptAClassroom.org, we found that we were in the right place, at the right time, and equipped with the right tools, to respond to the events and issues of the past year. In the face of these challenges, we not only survived, but had our best, most impactful year ever. Why? Because the challenges of the past year highlighted what we have been doing right all along.

- **A focus on equity:** COVID-19 revealed glaring inequities in education as students of color in high-needs communities were disproportionately impacted. AdoptAClassroom.org was already focused on supporting teachers and students in high-needs schools. Our existing relationships with leaders in some of the highest-needs districts in the country allowed us to quickly deploy resources to where they were needed most. The end result was that 86% of the 33,000+ classrooms adopted were high-needs this year (Page 3).

- **Agile, responsive programs:** Our experience working with schools following natural disasters positioned us well to respond in 2020. We quickly launched the COVID-19 Relief Fund for Schools and Teachers in March, 2020 reaching 46,000 students in 48 states (Page 3). When teachers were asking for more diverse books and support for students of color, we created the Racial Equity in Schools Fund in June, 2020 and supported 574 classrooms nationwide (Page 9). Our ready network of partners and advisors quickly informed and guided the design, launch, and continuing evolution of these new programs.

- **Leveraging technology:** Technology is our “superpower.” Previous investment in our technology made our successful support of classrooms in 2020 possible. It enabled us to seamlessly pivot to remote work arrangements; to quickly adapt to new ways of serving teachers and schools as they shifted to remote learning; and to continue to improve our technology infrastructure to better meet the needs of teachers and donors.

Our nonprofit model and experience supporting educators during disasters meant we already had the toolkit to be there for teachers and schools. We delivered critical support when teachers needed it most. Ultimately, you made this possible. In 2020 we saw an increase in donations from individuals, businesses, and corporate sponsors. AdoptAClassroom.org was showcased on the annual “CNN Heroes” television special in December, 2020 featuring nonprofits making the biggest impact in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our work together has been nationally recognized as some of the most vital relief efforts accomplished during 2020.

I look forward to working with you during the coming school year. Together we can create a world where every child has the school supplies they deserve to succeed in school.

[Signature]

Ann Pifer, Executive Director
"I have spent many hours during the pandemic tracking down funding sources, identifying students who lack access to books, ordering books, and personally delivering them to students’ homes. The joy of seeing students watch out their window for my arrival has been a highlight of the past few months."

- Kirsten, Teacher in Illinois
Technology Makes It All Possible

Technology powers everything we do. As we ramped up to support more classrooms than ever before during the pandemic, we were able to do so because our technology allows us to scale efficiently. We know where each donation goes and how it is spent on classroom supplies. Your gift to AdoptAClassroom.org supports the technology maintenance and development that powers our mission.
92% of classrooms have students whose families cannot afford school supplies.

Educators fill the gap, spending an average of $745 a year.

What schools provide...

...what teachers add from their own funds.

How AdoptAClassroom.org Works:

1. Educators create a fundraising page or apply for a Spotlight Grant.
2. Donors give to a classroom, school, Spotlight Fund, or where it’s needed most.
3. Educators receive funding in the form of an online credit to the AdoptAClassroom.org marketplace.
4. Educators can immediately order the items they need.
5. Donors receive updates about the impact they made.

Together, we ensure students have the supplies they deserve to succeed.

Our Promise: When you donate online to a teacher, 100% of your gift goes immediately in their AdoptAClassroom.org account so they can order supplies in our marketplace.
The COVID-19 pandemic turned the 2020 school year on its head. While we stayed at home to keep one another safe, teachers worked harder than ever to keep their students connected and learning. Teachers have always filled multiple roles: they’re surrogate parents, therapists, nurses. During the pandemic they were also frontline workers.

We launched the COVID-19 Relief Fund for Teachers and Students in March 2020. We received an outpouring of support across the country and immediately sent teachers emergency grants for supplies.

**Keep Learning Safe**

The Impact of the COVID-19 Fund

- **$591,000** Raised
- **48** States Reached
- **1,471** Classrooms Adopted
- **46,000** Students Impacted

The COVID-19 pandemic turned the 2020 school year on its head. While we stayed at home to keep one another safe, teachers worked harder than ever to keep their students connected and learning. Teachers have always filled multiple roles: they’re surrogate parents, therapists, nurses. During the pandemic they were also frontline workers.

We launched the COVID-19 Relief Fund for Teachers and Students in March 2020. We received an outpouring of support across the country and immediately sent teachers emergency grants for supplies.
Where Did The Funding Go?
The Impact of the COVID-19 Fund

Challenges created by the pandemic were unique to every school community. Throughout 2020 and into 2021, we coordinated with education leaders to identify areas of greatest need and the strongest solutions, from bridging the technology gap during distance learning to digital thermometers for temperature checks.

Our relief efforts reached 46,000 students in 48 states, with an emphasis on communities with great need in New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Boston.

New York, NY
New York City Department of Education opened up nearly 100 enrichment centers throughout the city to address remote learning and childcare needs of essential workers. We deployed critical aid in the form of emergency grants for classroom supplies to support students at enrichment centers.

Boston, MA
We delivered 100s of no-contact thermometers to schools in Boston to keep learning safe for students attending class in person. Thermometers were used for temperature checks to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Los Angeles, CA
School leaders immediately found there was a technology gap when students learned from home. We rush delivered laptops to students in the Watts neighborhood in South Los Angeles.

Chicago, IL
In Chicago, schools set up technology pick-up stations where parents could receive laptops for their children. Educators handed out Chromebooks, a cost-efficient laptop, to parents who needed them.

"Receiving this Chromebook will truly help my child finish his school year strong! I am very happy and grateful for this support."
- Parent of Student in Chicago, IL
What Did Teachers Need?  
_The Impact of the COVID-19 Fund_

COVID-19 rewrote the traditional school supply list. Educators overwhelmingly asked for personal protective equipment, cleaning supplies, and technology for distance learning.

How great was the need? Maria, a school social worker, was issued only one N-95 mask at the beginning of the pandemic. We sent her paper face masks and face masks with a transparent panel—key for communicating to students with disabilities. Without funding, many teachers would have had to pay out of pocket for something as simple as a face mask.

“This school year I’ve already used $40 in AdoptAClassroom.org funds to purchase face masks. I purchased cloth face masks and face masks with clear plastic windows. This is especially important for my students working on emotion identification—many of them are on the Autism spectrum.”

- Maria, School Social Worker in Denver, CO
Thank You From Educators
The Impact of the COVID-19 Fund

"You all have made enormous changes for the better in our school. The kids are so happy—learning and growing—due in large part to the help we received from AdoptAClassroom.org. Thank you so much."
- Jenny, Arts Teacher in New York, NY

"From the bottom of my heart, thank you for your support. As adults, we know that this is just a moment in time, and the challenges presented by COVID are temporary. But for my young students, these challenges are scary, never-ending, and all-consuming. Having the proper resources to meet their needs will make these challenges easier to bear for my students and for me."
- Jennifer, 4th Grade Teacher in Akron, OH

"Access to education totally stopped for many of our students when schools closed. The laptops you donated are absolutely critical for students in our community. We are extremely grateful for your generosity."
- Luis, School Administrator in Los Angeles, CA
In June 2020, we launched the Racial Equity in Schools Fund in response to a growing demand from educators for tools to better serve BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) students. We received an unprecedented number of grant applications—more than ever before.

Due to an outpouring of support, we funded 574 educators across the country who were championing initiatives in their schools to better support their students of color. Grant funding empowered educators with knowledge through professional development to eliminate racial biases, enriched classroom libraries with multicultural books, and more.

“To the donors of the Racial Equity in Schools Fund, thank you so much. Students of color, as well as their classmates, will come away from the learning that we’re able to obtain from this grant much more knowledgeable, much more aware, and much more empathetic to the needs of others.”

- Monisha, Teacher in Jasper, AL
During the 2020 back-to-school season, Burlington Stores raised $1.5M+ to help K-12 teachers and their students get the learning tools and materials they needed this school year. Even in the midst of a global pandemic, Burlington’s customers in all of their 730+ stores stepped up to support teachers at high-needs schools in their communities, by donating when they checked out. This is the fourth consecutive year Burlington Stores has partnered with AdoptAClassroom.org.

2020

- $1,500,000+ Raised
- 3,502 Classrooms Adopted
- 87,550 Students Supported

All Time

- $7,000,000+ Raised
- 38,838 Classrooms Adopted
- 1,000,000 Students Supported

During a typical year, Burlington surprises teachers at selected schools with a donation during a school-wide assembly. That all had to change in 2020. When the pandemic hit, AdoptAClassroom.org helped transition from in-person school-wide events to virtual surprises during all-staff school video conferences, like this one:

“The impact Burlington has had on my students and me has been immeasurable. It made my students feel equal, since they were all provided with the same, great quality school supplies.”

- Karen, Middle School Teacher in Haverhill, MA

In 2020, Burlington became the Founding Sponsor of AdoptAClassroom.org’s Racial Equity in Schools Fund. In addition to their in-store fundraiser, Burlington donated $155,000 in honor of the 155th anniversary of Juneteenth. Learn more on Page 9.
2020 has been one of the most insane and bizarre years that anyone has ever taught in. We have been so supported by families, administration, and the community as a whole. With that said, it has also been one of the most tumultuous times in schools. We are faced with incredibly difficult decisions and constant change. This donation will allow us to serve our students a little easier, and means we are able to focus on getting the extra things that we would not have otherwise.

- Denise, Instructional Specialist in Brooklyn Park, MN

In honor of World Teachers’ Day, HTLF’s 11 member banks each donated $20,000 to a high-needs school in their community. An executive from each bank surprised the teachers at their bank’s adopted school during a virtual staff meeting with news of their donation. HTLF’s surprise donations brought immense joy and needed relief to educators who were working tirelessly to keep their students safe and engaged in their learning, during one of the most challenging school years ever.

HTLF encouraged employees to join their efforts with a fundraiser to increase their impact. 100 percent of employee donations went to the banks’ adopted schools.
In honor of Teacher Appreciation Week 2020, Puffs started a movement to thank teachers. During their #PuffsLovesTeachers campaign, Puffs invited the general public to customize a Mad-Lib-style poem for their favorite teachers. The poems recognized teachers for their dedication and hard work.

In conjunction with the campaign, Puffs donated $500,000 to AdoptAClassroom.org, flash funding 1,200 classrooms at high-needs schools across the country. It was a big surprise for teachers, at a time when they needed help more than ever before.

Corporative Partners

500,000+ Donated
1,200 Classrooms Adopted
30,000 Students Supported

Nate Berkus and his daughter joined in on the fun to thank their favorite teacher with a #PuffsLovesTeachers poem.

@Puffs thank you for your generous donation via @Adopt_classroom! The funds will be used to purchase new books that will expose our students to diverse characters and cultures while instilling a love for reading. #puffsloveteachers

Thanks @Adopt_classroom and @Puffs for the kind donation to my classroom! It was a pleasant surprise 😊👍. #PuffsLovesTeachers

HUGE shout out to @Puffs for their generous donation to my amazing young #art #students! Your gift will affect close to 600 children in grades K-6th grade! I cannot thank you enough! #PuffsLovesTeachers
VTech surprised 100 Pre-K teachers in high-needs schools with $250 each on AdoptAClassroom.org. During a year when teachers have been spending more than ever before on supplies to support remote teaching and learning, and to keep themselves and their students safe in the classroom, VTech provided much-needed funding to Pre-K classrooms across the country.

Norma in Hemet, CA is one of the Pre-K teachers we surprised with funds from VTech.

Watch her surprise below.

“Thank you VTech for adopting my classroom so we can get all the supplies and materials that we need. This will make a big difference, especially with parents losing employment—purchasing materials for their children will be one less thing they need to worry about.”

- Tamrah, Pre-K Teacher in Chicago, IL
“Wow! What an awesome giveaway! These funds will help my students who are all learning from home. I would like to buy them books and other materials they may need while distance learning. Thank you so much for this gift!”

- Irene, Kindergarten Teacher in Las Vegas, NV

During the 2020 back-to-school season, Lenovo launched the Lenovo Teacher Giveaway, a monthly sweepstakes program to support teachers across the country. Throughout the year, the public can nominate PreK-12 teachers for the chance to win a $1,000 grant on AdoptAClassroom.org to purchase school supplies. At the close of the sweepstakes in September 2021, one teacher will win the grand prize, a $2,500 grant on AdoptAClassroom.org and a Lenovo notebook computer of their choice.
By providing teachers with the resources and supplies they needed to teach STEM, Staples helped ensure more of our nation’s students will be better prepared for twenty-first century jobs.

Staples also supported schools in three different school districts with $5,000 each, so they could purchase the resources and supplies they needed for distance learning, and to keep staff and students safe during COVID-19.

“Most of my students enter my classroom below grade level in both reading and math. Providing daily exposure to STEM activities has had a massive impact on student outcomes. By the end of the school year, my students grow an average of two grade levels, with some students growing as many as three.”

- Arianna, 3rd Grade Teacher in Richmond, VA

“This school year has been the most challenging in my 24 years in education. We have had to think ‘outside the box’ with everything we do in creating a positive, worthwhile learning experience for our students. The donation from Staples truly helps us purchase those items that are more than just pencils. Thank you!”

- Traci, Principal in Burlington, NC

Staples funded STEM education in 24 classrooms across the nation, giving teachers and students access to the resources they needed for STEM curriculum. STEM is an educational approach that integrates science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. STEM education has become increasingly important in preparing our youth for jobs of the future, but our schools are not equipped to meet the demand. Shrinking school budgets make necessary STEM tools and materials, especially big-ticket technology items, unobtainable for many teachers and schools.

**Staples Impact**

$50,000+ Donated  
24 Classrooms Adopted  
3 Schools Adopted  
2,184 Students Supported
2020 Financial Summary

Full, audited financial statements are available on our website

BREAKDOWN OF GROSS REVENUE

- 81% Corporate & Business Donors
- 13% Individual Donors
- 6% Vendor Contributions & Other Income

2020 Gross Revenue
$4,594,304

BREAKDOWN OF OPERATIONS EXPENSES

- 84% Program Services
- 7% Administration
- 9% Fundraising

2020 Expense Breakdown
$3,467,917

GuideStar awarded AdoptAClassroom.org with the highest possible rating Platinum Seal of Transparency.

Charity Navigator awarded AdoptAClassroom.org the highest possible rating of 4 stars for ten consecutive years.
AdoptAClassroom.org Honor Roll
January 2020 - December 2020

$1,000 or more
Agnes Hsu
Alpine Testing Solutions, Inc. *
Ami Anderson *
Ann Whitley *
Badcock Home Furniture & More Of Orange Park
Benjamin And Karen Malave *
Burgis Holdings Llc
Century Gold LLC *
Cheryl Mandala
Dermalogica
Emilie Kintner
Eric Haaser †
Erik Huckle *
Greg And Julie Marsh *
Heatherann Dawson *
Jai Kim *
Janet Rivas *
Jennifer Swanson * †
Judith Pollack *
Kevin Debb †
Lane Albanese *
Laura Chen
Law Offices of Jeffrey L. Baxter, P.A. *
Lawless French *
Leslie O’Loughlin * †
Martha Phelps
Maryanne Young
Paige Winebarger *
Paula Patineau
Randy Doroff
Richard Huckie *

Ronald James Pozzi *
Rouse Family Foundation *
Salma Ibrahim
Steve Noll
Tony Marchese
Zhong Gao

$999 - $500
Aaron Pilcher *
Alexia Leib *
Alison Arnold
Anthony Phillips
Bill Blackstone
Chuck & Jill Stroud *
Chris Pahl *
Courtney Bowers *
Coyote Logistics
Deborah Dagang *
Diana Podol
Diana Vowels
Ellen Peloquin *
Gabriel Petloe *
Hailey Balestra-Foster
Harsh Patel
Heidemarie Maierhofer *
Jacquilyn Cleary
Janet & Gerald Mckinney
Jitender Singh
Jonathan Tan *
Julie Vaeillo *
Justin Sheehy
Karen Dennis
Karen Kochhar *

**Monthly Giving | Denoted by †
Our monthly supporters have committed to education by giving on a recurring basis. Thank you for standing by our side every single month.**

**Sustaining Giving | Denoted by *
Our Sustaining Donors have chosen to make unrestricted gifts to AdoptAClassroom.org to support our team, our technology infrastructure, and to give us the flexibility to be nimble and responsive to changing circumstances in education.**

"The uncertainty and volatility of the past year have made the inequality that exists in education access and resourcing even starker. Although many students are not in a physical classroom right now, the need to equip teachers with the right tools is greater than ever."

- Sarah, Donor

"I contributed because a lack of technology shouldn’t be a reason kids can’t participate in school. I also feel very fortunate at this time to be in a position where I can give a little back to those less fortunate during this pandemic."

- Michael, Donor
"Education is essential to everyone’s path in life. Having great teachers and resources to grow young minds is vital to their development. It’s a privilege to be supportive of AdoptAClassroom.org and their teachers.”
- Kevin, Donor

“I gave because I had a great education growing up— incredible teachers, specialized courses, and all of the materials I needed to learn. Education is transformational, and it’s heartbreaking for kids to lose that because of a circumstance so far outside of anyone’s control. I’m ecstatic that AdoptAClassroom.org is able to best use my funds to reach the most vulnerable populations during this time.”
- Alexandria, Donor
AdoptAClassroom.org Honor Roll
January 2020 - December 2020

Corporate Sponsors

Burlington  Puffs  P&G  QUAKER  Staples  Leap Frog  vtech  Lenovo  Kleenex  Alerus  ooly

and its member banks:

Business Donors

CHAIN  Danaher  galvanize  CTP  Global Tax Network  IDOC  nwea  OverOps

Vendor Partners

Staples  Lakeshore  School Specialty  Really Good Stuff  LEE & LOW BOOKS  BECKER'S  akj  fluX express  Kaplan
Our Team

Leadership Team

Ann Ruhr Pifer, Executive Director
Chuck Stroud, Chief Operating Officer & SVP of Finance
Carolyn Aberman, EVP, Corporate Sponsorships & Brand Marketing
Melissa Hruza, Director of Marketing & Corporate Sponsorships
Austin Hagle, Program Manager

Staff

Alex Aberman, Account Director
Sarah Beam, Program Assistant
Kirsten Fedorowicz, Outreach & Marketing Assistant
Sarah Fowler, Account Manager
J Gold, Program Coordinator
Ezra Horton, Donor Communications Coordinator
Ryan Jordan, Technology Project Manager
Devon Karbowski, Marketing Manager
Zach Stoebner, Graphic Designers
Travis Wycsiak, Graphic Designers

Board of Directors

Board Officers

Jen Swanson, Chair
Founder & Principal,
Jen Swanson LLC

Matt Johnson, Vice Chair
Director, Technology,
West Monroe Partners

Julie Krueger, Secretary
Americas Staffing Director,
Google

Kurts Strelnieks, Treasurer
Vice President, Commercial
Lender, Union Bank & Trust

Board Members

Ami Miesner Anderson
VP Brand Marketing and
Performance, Tenet Healthcare

Dale Robinson Anglin
Program Director, Youth,
Health & Human Services
Cleveland Foundation

Ashley Gobert
Management Consultant
Dynamic, Healthcare

Jeff Gray
Partner, PriceWaterhouseCoopers LLP

Rahoul Ghose
Chief Information Officer,
ECMC Group

Erik Huckle
Senior Product Manager,
AI Platform, Sailpoint

Jordan McGowan
Former National Director of
Business Development;
Commercial & Corporate
Baking, Wealth Management,
U.S. Bank*

Martha Phelps
Partner, Davis, Wright Tremain

Patrick Strother
Founder and Chief
Marketing Officer,
Strother Communications Group

Neeley Tamminga
CEO, Distill

Ryan Vernosh
Principal, Maxfield Elementary
School
Since 1998, AdoptAClassroom.org has adopted 225,000 classrooms, serving 5.5 million students.