



**MillionReasons**  
To support Ann Arbor Public Schools

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# Ann Arbor Public Schools Educational Foundation

The Ann Arbor Public Schools Educational Foundation (AAPSEF) is today launching a community-wide campaign to raise funds for programs in the Ann Arbor Public Schools for the 2010/2011 academic year.

The AAPSEF cannot raise all of the funds -- \$20 million -- slated to be cut from the district budget next year. However, our goal is to continue to help fund programs that provide innovative and excellent educational opportunities for students in our schools.

## Strong Schools = Strong Community

This was reaffirmed most recently when for the second year in a row Forbes Magazine has selected Ann Arbor, Michigan, as the country's top college town. Among the numerous reasons cited, including museums, restaurants and affordable housing compared to other college towns, the article also references Ann Arbor's "top-notch public school system." To read the entire article, visit: <http://www.forbes.com/2010/03/05/college-sports-towns-lifestyle-sports-college-towns.html>

**Q: Why do we need this campaign *now*?**

A: The Foundation holds an annual fundraising campaign each year. But with the recent budget crisis in our schools, our board decided we needed a bolder, more far-reaching response. Spurred on by mid-year school funding cuts yet again, a group of concerned private citizens decided that this campaign should raise more money than ever before by asking people of Ann Arbor for more support than ever before. With everyone's help, we can keep our schools strong.

**Q: Why \$1 million? Who will support this campaign?**

A: The citizens of Ann Arbor have always supported public education – well above the national average. Our schools – and students – need this support now more than ever. We believe that concerned community members, parents, grandparents, alumni and citizens of the greater Ann Arbor area will take part in this campaign. It will take a lot of work and generous participation by all of us in Ann Arbor.

Receiving support from other foundations or area businesses is not a viable option right now. We have examined the likelihood of receiving large grants from other foundations (private/corporate/family). Most foundations now are directing their funds to programs for low income and minority students; Ann Arbor does not qualify. We have also investigated receiving large scale financial support from businesses. At this time most businesses are struggling to keep afloat and have cut back on philanthropic support. The best models for business engagement in public education take time and a commitment to building a relationship. With its limited resources, AAPSEF is not in a position to take this on at this time.

**Q: Why do we need private dollars to support programs in public schools?**

A: While programs in our public schools should be paid for by our taxes, unfortunately, this is not possible with the current economic climate. Our public schools are funded almost entirely by the state. This funding has been shrinking and will continue to decrease for years to come. For the 2010-2011 academic year alone, state budget woes are forcing the Ann Arbor Public Schools to cut \$20 million. Clearly, state funding is no longer adequate to support our programs. This budget crisis jeopardizes Ann Arbor's high standard of excellence and threatens to weaken the programs that set our community apart from others.

As a community, we have the choice. We can *wait* until the political and financial climate become more supportive, or we can come together and do something about it ourselves *right now*. The Educational Foundation has chosen the latter course, and we hope you will join us.

**Q: Are federal funds available to help us pay for the programs we need?**

A: Ann Arbor does not qualify for federal money through the "Race to the Top Campaign," which focuses on schools and districts not meeting minimum academic performance. There is virtually no money available to individual school districts from the federal government beyond that.

**Q: How much should I give?**

A: How much to give is entirely up to you. We welcome your donation.

*One consideration* is to give the amount you would have paid had the millage passed, which is "2 mills" or \$2 per \$1,000 of taxable value (please see table below). For example, if the taxable value of your home is \$150,000, you would donate \$300.

Home value (or more)	Taxable value	Suggested donation
\$150,000	\$75,000	\$150
\$200,000	\$100,000	\$200

\$250,000	\$125,000	\$250
\$300,000	\$150,000	\$300
\$500,000	\$250,000	\$500
\$750,000	\$375,000	\$750
\$900,000+	\$450,000	\$900+

A *second consideration* is to give the “average” contribution per pupil if you have a child in the schools. That amount is \$60 per year (\$5 per month, or about \$1 per week). We recognize that even this amount is impossible for some and suggest that those who are able consider a gift on behalf of those who cannot.

**Q: Can I designate my gift toward a certain fund?**

A: We have created four program areas to which you can designate your gift. They are: Arts & Humanities; Math & Science; Early Childhood Education (pre-K through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade); and College and Career Readiness. If you do not indicate a preference, your funds will be placed in the general fund and used where they are most needed. We welcome the opportunity to speak with you about ways in which you can meet your charitable objectives.

**Q: What if I want to give to something other than the programs identified in this campaign?**

A: Call us. There are many educational needs that still must be met.

**Q: Why should I give to the Ann Arbor Public Schools Educational Foundation when so many other causes need it just as badly?**

A: The Foundation supports all students in all schools - that's 16,000 Ann Arbor students per year. The goal of this campaign – our largest ever -- is to continue helping Ann Arbor provide our children with the finest education possible. And when you support the Ann Arbor Schools, you are also supporting our community as a whole. Strong public schools are the foundation of a strong community. By keeping our schools strong, businesses can recruit employees, people want to move here and property values are higher.

**Q. Will all of the funds raised be used in the next academic year?**

A. Yes. All funds we raise will be used during the 2010-11 school year.

**Q. What if I want to make a contribution to AAPSEF through the United Way or the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation?**

A. The AAPSEF fund at the Community Foundation is an endowed fund and you are more than welcome to make a gift to our named fund there. Please note that because this is an endowed fund, the AAPSEF will only receive a portion of the interest earned on the amount of the gift and contributions will not be counted as gifts towards this campaign. Gifts to United Way can be designated to the AAPSEF through your place of business or personally.

**Q. Will you be funding staff salaries?**

A. The AAPSEF funds programs in the Ann Arbor Public Schools, not individual staff. If staff members are part of a program, they are supported.

**Q. Are other districts doing about budget cuts?** A. All of us read almost daily about budget cuts in neighboring districts, throughout the state and across the country. Most recently the Kansas City, MO, school board voted to close half of their city schools. Schools in Michigan are eliminating busing, closing schools, instituting full pay-to-play for athletics and extra-curricular activities, and eliminating breadth and depth of programs. In Detroit, the announcement of 44 school closures next year, with 12 more the following two years, represents a full one-third of its schools. These budget concerns are real, and here to stay. But we can lessen the severe impact in Ann Arbor by joining together and supporting our schools through this campaign. The proposed closing of two schools in Ypsilanti represents a 20% reduction in school buildings for the next year.

**Q. How do I give to this campaign?**

A. You can make your contribution to the One Million Reasons campaign:

- \* on-line ([SupportAnnArborSchools.org](http://SupportAnnArborSchools.org)) paying by credit card or check
- \* send a check to the AAPSEF office
- \* call the AAPSEF to make a credit card contribution
- \* make a pledge through the United Way designating the AAPSEF
- \* call the office to arrange for a pledge contribution at intervals convenient for you with a draw from your checking account or credit card.

**Q. Where can I find more information?**

A. You will find more information about this campaign on our web-site. You may call the office at any time for updates, to ask questions, etc.

**Q. How can I get involved with the campaign?**

A. The most obvious answer is to make a contribution yourself. As important, though, will be talking about the campaign with neighbors, friends and colleagues. Consider hosting an informational meeting in your home or school, cocktail hour, etc.

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