



Bill Gates announced a massive investment in public education

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Billionaire Bill Gates is investing big time in public education.

At the Council of the Great City Schools conference in Cleveland Thursday, Gates announced a hefty \$1.7 billion investment from his foundation.

Midway through his keynote address (the video of his speech is embedded above and starts around the 19-minute mark) he vowed to improve public education with a focus on low-income students and students of color.

Over the next five years, Gates said the investment would mostly go toward developing new curricula and building "networks of schools." He's hoping data-driven systems will help students, teachers, and districts learn what's working and what's not. He cited successful programs already implemented at schools that helped students discover college options and English language learners catch up to their peers.

He said he feels like classroom lesson plans and curricula are underfunded, so that's where he wants to push money. He wants to give teachers more resources to teach and get everyone caught up to standard levels.

Other portions of the money will go toward special-needs students and charter school programming — about 15 percent of the total. He didn't go too much into specifics but talked a lot about data and research.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has already put \$3.4 billion toward public education, according to the *Washington Post*.

Gates spoke about helping with education over the past 17 years. "U.S. education is without a doubt one of the most challenging areas for our foundation," he said. "It takes a long-term commitment ... looking at the data, applying that to ourselves, as well."