

# Business Insider

## Bill Gates is doubling down on education with a \$1.7 billion investment in public schools

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- **Bill and Melinda Gates have pledged to commit \$1.7 billion over the next five years to bolstering public education in the US.**
- **The money will get divided into three buckets: public school curriculum, "big bets," and charter schools.**
- **The investment is the largest the Gateses have made since entering the education space 17 years ago.**

Billionaire philanthropist Bill Gates is investing \$1.7 billion over the next five years to bolster public education in the United States.

In a speech delivered to the Council of the Great City Schools, the former CEO of Microsoft outlined his foundation's plan to standardize public school curricula, improve teaching quality, assist charter schools, and and collect better data to guide future changes.

"Education is, without a doubt, one of the most challenging areas we invest in as a foundation," Gates said in the speech, which was transcribed in a Gates Notes blog post. "But I'm excited about the shift in our work and the focus on partnering with networks of schools."

Roughly 60% of the funding will go toward supporting "the development of new curricula and networks of schools that work together to identify local problems and solutions," Gates said. A large chunk of those problems involve schools that are effectively segregated based on race.

Another 25% will go toward "big bets" — programs that could change public education over the next 10 to 15 years. (Gates did not point any specific innovations in his speech.)

The final 15% will address the sector of charter schools, which Gates believes are vital for helping kids with moderate to severe learning disabilities receive a high-quality education.

Gates, along with his wife Melinda, have been investing in education since 2000. The lessons they've learned in the 17 years since, Gates said, now compel them to evolve how they fund education around the US.

"Our role is to serve as a catalyst of good ideas," he said, "driven by the same guiding principle we started with: all students — but especially low-income students and students of color — must have equal access to a great public education that prepares them for adulthood."