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| **IPS Foundation Launches the IPS Education Equity Fund To Meet the Social, Emotional and Academic Needs of Students** |

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| April 10, 2020 - Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) is proactively working to ensure that the inequities its students face daily - in the community, at home and in the classroom - don't continue into the 2020-21 school year, even in the midst of current school closures due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19).  In a district where 65 percent of students qualify for free and reduced services, inequities become even more exacerbated during a national health crisis such as COVID-19. While the physical return to school is still uncertain, it is a given that students, staff and their families will have experienced unpredicted social and emotional strains during this public health crisis. Additionally, one of the most glaring inequities is the current lack of resources to implement full e-learning for all IPS students.  The district's current Home Learning Plan is a hybrid education approach that includes paper packets for students in Grades K-8 and e-learning for Grades 9-12. Lack of resources creates a digital divide that potentially puts students at a significant learning disadvantage.  The IPS Foundation has launched the IPS Education Equity Fund to help eradicate these inequities. The fund is designedto complement local relief efforts, including the recently launched city-sponsored Indianapolis E-Learning Fund - of which IPS is a part of - and to expand the capacity of IPS to meet the needs of students, staff and families who are disproportionately affected by COVID-19.  **The IPS Education Equity Fund focuses on:**  **Rapid Response:** Quick distribution of funds will be prioritized to meet the district's evolving needs of students and families who are disproportionately affected by COVID-19.  **E-Learning:** Funds raised through the city-sponsored Indianapolis E-Learning Fund will be focused on device and internet accessibility. The IPS Education Equity Fund will cover any gaps necessary to launch and sustain 1:1 device and internet access and support districtwide teacher training.  **Recovery and Return:** Funds will be used to provide additional resources for trauma-informed education, secondary trauma, mental health, physical wellness and transition planning for the return to classrooms.  "Tackling even just part of this list requires tremendous financial support, and we need to do all of this and more. That's why this fund is so critical," said IPS Superintendent Aleesia Johnson. "School closures will have a negative impact on low-income families who disproportionately lack access to technology, internet service, food, childcare and healthcare services. Many of these families are black and brown. Our district's commitment to a Racial Equity Mindset makes it imperative that the collective 'we' make immediate plans to support all of our students and families."  We are grateful for the initial support of this fund by the following sponsors: Salesforce, Chiefs for Change, American Health Network, APEX Benefits, Healthcare Initiatives Inc., and UnitedHealthcare.  "We're proud to partner with Indianapolis Public Schools to support e-learning initiatives which are incredibly important during these uncertain times," said Syam Nair, executive vice president of Technology at Salesforce. "It's critical that our communities work together to ensure students and families in need are supported and can continue to learn throughout this school year."  To make a gift online, go to [www.ipsfund.org](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001MhpNCfLJjh38RV2nIe_x47edxSFFWVW9WQpghyEbzANDZM5hPiKAUuzau7KkiZBh-kxNpmjZ567qNZ-Qr39n63ZvTAUT1roDEb9Q6b8ILzMOZ5IWheva-_ijb5UNnSKXzmukjz_Xrszt6jjSm7rwBcaOHYoWDQLvWmBsNa8xZkQ=&c=cYFvNAXJBab-eOV6u_El0I4o6T88PiDBZaYpuISf8c0cbvVKgB2ECw==&ch=y0TjcLgil5U4309PV-R_rxIiIiYh69a2karxZjcoqfIDVSnKbd4ISg==) or contact the IPS Foundation team:  Stephannie Bailey | sbailey@ipsef.org | 317.979.7469  Kelly Karbowicz Riley | kriley@ipsef.org | 440.622.4947        ### |