

## MEDIA ALERT

### AIU Receives \$1.5 Million from Local Foundations for School District COVID-19 Recovery Efforts

The funding, from six area foundations, will be used to help school districts respond to COVID-19 educational challenges.

**PITTSBURGH, June 24, 2020** – The Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU) has been awarded a combined \$1,525,000 from six area foundations to support the region’s school districts as they respond to and recover from a variety of COVID-19 educational challenges. Thanks to the generosity and vision of our foundation partners, public educators will be able to build capacity within their districts through:

- Targeted professional learning
- Access to nationally recognized experts
- Subscriptions to instructional platforms and virtual content
- Program evaluation
- Virtual webinar rooms
- Student learning devices

Foundation Name	Amount	Purpose
Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation	\$150,000	Address Learning Loss
The Grable Foundation	\$150,000	Address Learning Loss/Student Devices
The Heinz Endowments	\$200,000	Student Devices
Henry L. Hillman Foundation	\$750,000	Professional Learning/Virtual Content/Partnerships
The Pittsburgh Foundation	\$75,000	Student Devices
Richard King Mellon Foundation	\$200,000	Professional Learning/Virtual Rooms/Program Evaluation
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,525,000</b>	

When school buildings were closed in March, districts were forced to quickly transition to remote learning with little or no preparation. While some districts, and some teachers, were better prepared than others, all agree that there are significant gaps in capacity to provide virtual instruction, especially for vulnerable students and families.

AIU Interim Executive Director Rosanne Javorsky said that foundation support is crucial to the regional initiative that will help school districts reinvent and reimagine education.

“Since school buildings closed in March, public school leaders in our region have actively collaborated in an environment of mutual respect to meet the challenges of the COVID-19 virus. While the AIU sincerely thanks its foundation partners for their generosity, we are mindful that we are just one part of a much larger effort to support students, families, educators and school district leaders and to move our region forward,” she said.

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A regional education leader, the AIU provides more than 130 programs and services, and seeks to enhance education throughout the greater Pittsburgh region, one of the priority areas of the Richard King Mellon Foundation.

“We applaud the Allegheny Intermediate Unit for its efforts to build great virtual learning capacity in the region, particularly for the students who have the greatest need,” said Sam Reiman, Director of the Richard King Mellon Foundation.

The work also dovetails with the mission of the Henry L. Hillman Foundation, which is to inspire, invest in, and leverage great ideas and initiatives for outcomes that improve the quality of life in Pittsburgh and southwestern Pennsylvania.

“The pandemic has required educators and education leaders to quickly deploy new technologies and pedagogies in response. More than ever before, our children’s futures depend on the ability to innovate new, creative solutions rooted in teaching fundamentals—particularly those children in communities that have been historically underfunded. We are encouraged by the AIU’s collaborative and strategic approach to support educators at this critical time and their specific focus on advancing equity,” said Lisa Johns, Vice President of Finance, Henry L. Hillman Foundation.

Further media queries can be directed to Sarah McCluan at 412.394.3472 or [sarah.mccluan@aiu3.net](mailto:sarah.mccluan@aiu3.net).

#### **ABOUT THE AIU**

An educational service agency, the Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU) is part of Pennsylvania’s public education system and serves schools, children, youth and families in suburban Allegheny County. Among the largest of Pennsylvania’s 29 intermediate units, the AIU employs more than 1,200 educators, administrators and support staff, with an annual budget exceeding \$150 million.

#### **ABOUT THE RICHARD KING MELLON FOUNDATION**

Founded in 1947, the Richard King Mellon Foundation is the largest foundation in southwestern Pennsylvania. The Foundation’s 2019 endowment was \$2.7 billion and its Trustees in 2019 awarded 172 grants totaling \$129 million, focused on the Foundation’s strategic priorities: economic development, education, environmental conservation and human services.