



# The SEED School of Wisconsin

*A Public, Urban Boarding School, honoring the legacy of Marty Stein*

**October 15, 2008**

We know that Wisconsin's urban areas face tremendous challenges. The loss of manufacturing jobs, family breakdown, illiteracy, juvenile crime, and an epidemic of teen pregnancy have created a seemingly unbreakable cycle of poverty.

The SEED Foundation believes that every child has potential and, given the proper support and resources, can go to college and live the American Dream.

Too many children face obstacles like homelessness, live in families wracked by alcohol or drug dependency, or have parents missing due to incarceration. Although students who live in stable homes and safe neighborhoods can be served by existing resources – quality public schools and by before- and after-school programs – there are some children who need more. The SEED School of Wisconsin is designed for these children.

SEED is a publicly-funded, privately-constructed urban boarding school which will build upon the success of SEED schools in urban areas like Baltimore and Washington, DC. The proposed school would provide the nurturing, 24-hour environment of caring support and safety needed by kids in danger of dropping out of school and would help get those students on the path to college. The SEED model is a proven success.

Partnering with students and their families, SEED takes sixth graders who are years behind and moves them through a quality remedial program. They are then caught up in reading, math, and other subjects, and learn the studying, social, and life skills needed in a rigorous college-prep environment. In high school, students are prepared to succeed in college.

Although the state's existing schools are doing the best they can, in Milwaukee, too few are deemed college-ready. By contrast, in public SEED schools, 98 percent of students have been accepted to four-year colleges and 72 percent of SEED graduates have earned college degrees or are progressing toward graduation. SEED's 24-hour environment eliminates truancy, ensures children receive proper nutrition, ensures both academic and social support, and keeps students on track to graduate on time.

Our children and families deserve better. With a reasonable public investment and with school facilities built using private philanthropy, we can reach those children and help them succeed.

It's time to believe in our ability to change for the better. But we can't do it without you.



## Why INVESTING in SEED makes SENSE

### *The Economic Logic of the Proposed Public, Central-City SEED Boarding School*

Taxpayers in Milwaukee annually invest almost \$14,000 per student. The results include:

- One-third of male students of color in Milwaukee's public schools graduate; only three percent of those who graduate are deemed "college-ready;" only about 45 percent graduate overall;
- Wisconsin's central-city eighth graders *rank at the very bottom* of all U.S. states on combined writing, reading, and math scores; and
- Rising rates of teen pregnancy rates – costing taxpayers approximately \$80,000 per teen birth.

Given these results, the \$14,000 annual investment equates to a cost to taxpayers of almost \$31,000 for every high school graduate and more than \$75,000 a year for each college graduate. We can do better!

We know there are wonderful teachers and parents making every effort to succeed, and a regular school day is enough for most students. For many others, before- and after-school programs and mentoring, athletics, or meal programs help fill their needs. But some students need more.

Consider The SEED School of Wisconsin as part of the solution: like the challenging population described, most students at existing SEED schools arrive two years or more behind their grade level and come from a single- or no-parent household mired in poverty. Some are homeless, many have an incarcerated family member – yet *SEED's success shows that these students can succeed in college and beyond.*

SEED brings essential wrap-around services under one roof to support the academic and social success of each student. And at a public cost of less than \$35,000 per student, SEED is cheaper than traditional day schools when measured per college graduate.

If other societal costs are considered – an end to brushes with the law, the near-elimination of teen pregnancy, breaking generational cycles of dependency, and moving from social-aid recipient to taxpaying citizen – the economic logic is clear: it's not whether we can afford to bring a SEED school to Milwaukee – it's whether we can afford *not* to.

The SEED School of Wisconsin is part of the solution. You are part of the solution.