A Message from Terry Nauck, Chair of the Friends of Breakthrough Schools Board

The last year has been a monumental one for the students, teachers, staff, and families in the Breakthrough network. Breakthrough has made history with the passage of the first school levy in sixteen years, a levy that also saw a small portion going to high-quality charter schools for the first time in Ohio’s history and perhaps in the country. For the second year in a row, our students’ academic performance made Breakthrough the highest-rated network of charter schools in Ohio. And, we saw ninety-nine students graduate from the halls of Breakthrough schools and begin their journey as Breakthrough alumni, our largest class yet. Our partnership with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District has grown even stronger, and the number of our community partnerships, even greater. We have attracted national attention to Breakthrough and our city-wide education efforts.

Reviewing last year, it is clear that Breakthrough, with the support of our funders and friends, continues to fulfill its mission to dramatically transform the educational landscape in Cleveland. And, on behalf of the board of directors, I want to personally thank our funders and friends for believing in the promise of a high-quality education and our schools’ ability to provide it. It is only with the support of the community that Breakthrough can continue to build a strong, efficient network of high-performing schools and deliver on its mission. With the tremendous opportunity before us in Cleveland comes additional challenges as well. Now is the time to make every second count, just like our students do in the classroom every day. Let us feel the same urgency as our teachers do to transform the lives of every student who walks through our schoolhouse doors. In 2012-2013, we were able to reach almost 2,000 students and it was my privilege and honor to lead the Friends of Breakthrough Board in support of that work. But, I also eagerly look forward to seeing how the network will grow and develop to fulfill its aspirational vision of 20 schools by 2020, serving 7,000 students.

It is Breakthrough’s history of achievement, the significant support of our funders and friends, and our talented teachers and school leaders that will continue to drive our success. Together, we are creating something extraordinary: the opportunity for all children, regardless of zip code or pedigree, to receive a high-quality, college preparatory education. Let us continue to work together to show the city, the state, and the country that all children can learn – if we provide them with a high-quality school to attend. And that is happening, right here in Cleveland, right here at Breakthrough Schools.

Terry Nauck
Chair of the Friends of Breakthrough Schools Board

A Message from Michael Cristal, Chair of the Breakthrough Schools Board

Educational excellence has been a tradition in our schools for over a decade. Yet, it has only been in the last three years that the Breakthrough schools have looked to the Breakthrough support team for operational and business services. Together, as a network, we have continued that path to excellence, working to create and sustain cost efficiencies, supporting school leaders, and raising Breakthrough’s national profile.

The adage “We can do more together than we can apart,” is representative of the last year at Breakthrough. Through the dedication and hard work of every member of the Breakthrough team, from teachers to school leaders to the support staff, Breakthrough continues to be the highest-rated network of public charter schools in the state. Our nine schools, together, continue to change public education in our city for the better. And, together, we have reinforced the notion that every child can learn.

As board chair of the Breakthrough Schools Support team I am gratified by our progress as a network. I have great respect for the tremendous efforts of our teachers, school staff and leaders, and our Breakthrough support team. As we move towards our collective vision of a free, high-quality education for every child throughout Greater Cleveland, Breakthrough will continue to serve as a community leader. Together, we are contributing to a community we can all be proud of for many years to come.

Michael Cristal
Chair of the Breakthrough Schools Board

Friends of Breakthrough Schools

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- Chris Spurio, President, CBIZ Financial Services
- Ron Stepanovic, Partner, Bakewell Partners LLP
- William Vogelgesang, Chief Executive Officer and Founder, Candlewood Partners, LLC
- John Zitomer, President, Friends of Breakthrough Schools

Financial Information

- Income: Philanthropic and Grant Operating Revenue $3,078,357
- Expense: Philanthropic and Grant Capital Revenue $3,578,322
- Earned Income $1,678,440
- Total Revenue $8,335,149

- Total Expenditure

- Friends of Breakthrough Operating Expenses $2,471,000
- Capital Balance Sheet $2,872,781
- Capital Expenditures $3,342,752
- Capital Expense (P&L) $871,752
- Capital Balance Sheet $2,471,000
- Friends of Breakthrough Operating Expenses $769,664

Advisory Board

- Jeanette Grasselli Brown, Director of Corporate Research, SP America (retired)
- David Gunning, Vice Chair, Cause Classics, Natural Resources, Incorporated (retired)
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- Mark Elliott, Owner, BoardLink Services LLC
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- Richard Pace, President, Cumberland Development LLC
- Erid Rosenbaum, Independent Non-Profit Organization Management Professional
- John Sinnenberg, Chairman and Managing Partner, Cuyun Group Partners
- Rosemary Weltman, Community Volunteer

- Michael Cristal, President, Friends of Breakthrough Schools
In just its second year, Friends of Breakthrough Schools (Friends) has achieved extraordinary success in securing significant and meaningful support of Breakthrough Schools. Serving the network’s almost 2,000 students in 2012-2013, Friends encouraged supporters of our schools to donate, advocate, and volunteer. Those supporters, acknowledging the critical importance of providing a high-quality, college preparatory education to Cleveland’s children, gave of their time, energy, and means, doing their part to transform the educational landscape of our city.

Friends kicked off the year with a comprehensive development plan to meet the challenge of raising $6.7 million dollars to close the per pupil funding gap caused by the inequitable funding of Breakthrough’s public charter schools. Friends also worked towards its new school development initiative, Breakthrough Vision 2020. Building Cleveland’s future, with a Phase 2 goal to raise $4 million dollars over two years.

Through a combination of the network’s fundraising events, the engagement and cultivation of new and repeat individual and corporate donors, and an aggressive grant-seeking and major gifts plan, Friends raised the funds necessary to meet the network’s operating and capital needs in 2012-2013.

• Successfully opened three new schools, growing the network from 1,400 students to nearly 2,000 students across nine schools.
• Celebrated the grand opening of three renovated buildings housing three new schools and one new flagship school. Friends hosted dedication ceremonies to applaud some of the Breakthrough Vision 2020 Campaign’s significant supporters. Breakthrough students will walk by decorative plaques honoring The Lubrizol Foundation, Saint Luke’s Foundation, The Cliffs Foundation, and the Eaton Charitable Fund for years to come.
• Achieved outstanding academic results. Breakthrough students, on average, outperformed their peers in Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, and across Ohio in every subject.
• Successful graduation rates at Mercyhurst University and two E Prep alumni received nearly full tuition scholarships to attend. Seven alumni were given scholarships awarded by Cliffs Natural Resources ranging from $1,000 to $6,000.
• Attracted national attention. Friends hosted visits and school tours with program officers from national foundations focused on education reform, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Laura and John Arnold Foundation, and the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation.
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Breakthrough Schools (Breakthrough) continued its partnership with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD), the mayor’s office, the city’s business community, local foundations, the Cleveland Teachers Union and local families to promote the passage of Issue 7, the local tax levy. In November 2012, for the first time in sixteen years, the 15 mil school levy passed in Cleveland. And, for the first time in the history of Ohio, a small portion of that levy was designated for high-quality charter schools partnering with CMSD. Breakthrough was both proud and honored to be part of this historical legislative effort on behalf of Cleveland’s children.

Friends also joined a state-wide coalition of high-quality charter supporters, including KIPP Columbus, the Thomas Fordham Foundation, Students First, and United Schools Network. This group was instrumental in advocating for the protection of the budget allocation for Governor Kasich’s Straight A Fund. This fund will make available a total of $250 million in discretionary state funds for qualified applicants in 2013 to 2015, including public charter schools.

With Breakthrough’s growing federal discretionary grant portfolio, Friends has committed to an increased level of federal advocacy to protect that funding stream and the interests of high-quality charter management organizations (CMOs) in general, and advocate for legislation favorable to additional federal funding in the future. Friends joined the KIPP Foundation and other high-performing CMOs to establish a coalition for this purpose. In this last year, the coalition has published a white paper, “More of a Good Thing, Growing the Nation’s Best Charter Schools, Progress and Opportunities,” that has been distributed to legislators and thought partners. The coalition also participated in two days “On the Hill” event.”

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With the school building renovations continuing to accommodate the growth of our schools, hundreds of volunteers from local companies including Lubrizol and Jo-Ann Stores, donated hours of time, and in some cases, many supplies to help clean, paint, landscape, restore, and furnish the buildings. Volunteers also supported our network through monitoring and tutoring our students throughout the year. Together, along with our board and committee members, Breakthrough’s volunteers donated thousands of hours to the network each year.

Friends is grateful for the corporate and individual support that impacts the lives of our students for the better, one student at a time.
The McWilliams/Piraino Family Foundation announced its $1 million commitment to Building Cleveland’s Future. Attendees were able to hear a broadcast at the event.

The Fowler’s support of Breakthrough’s ongoing success has not only galvanized Cleveland, but also attracted national attention. In recognition of this accomplishment, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan recorded a special message for the Mayor that was broadcast at the event.

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Because of their visionary support, Breakthrough Schools is providing a brighter future for Cleveland's children and transforming education in our city.

**student spotlight**

Demitria, an alumna of a Breakthrough School, was one of only sixty high school students in Cleveland to be named a National Merit Scholar last year. Demitria, after graduating from Breakthrough School, was one of only sixty high school students in Cleveland to be named a National Merit Scholar last year. Demitria, after graduating from a Breakthrough school in 2009, went on to attend Harvard University. Her story is a testament to the impact that Breakthrough Schools can have on students' lives.

Because of their generous support of our growing network of high-quality, college preparatory schools, Breakthrough Schools is able to provide scholarships to students who need them. We are grateful for the support of our donors and look forward to continuing to provide a brighter future for Cleveland's children.
student spotlight

Demetria, an alumna of a Breakthrough School, was one of only sixty high school students in Cleveland to be chosen as a Cleveland Foundation College Now Scholar last year. This distinction recognized her as one of the top sixty high school seniors in the city. After graduating from a Breakthrough school, Demetria went on to the Cleveland School of Medicine on the John Hay campus where she prepared herself for college. After being accepted at the University of Michigan, Wittenberg College, Howard University, and Ohio Northern University, Demetria chose to attend Howard because of its strong program. Breakthrough looks forward to having Dr. McNeese continue to be involved in the Breakthrough alumni network and help guide other students to make smart choices about their future.

"Breakthrough instilled a drive in me that has propelled me into a bright and promising future."
2nd Annual Golf Outing

Held at the Mayfield Country Club, the Friends of Breakthrough Golf Outing was a tremendous success with over 100 participants. Many thanks go to our presenting sponsor, BakerHostetler, and the many other corporate sponsors who helped to support this event. Friends congratulated Andy McElhaney, Ken Hirsh, Paul Woznicki, and Scott McRill, representing The Lenihan School, for placing first among all the participating teams. The outing raised over $36,000 for our schools and introduced dozens of new friends to Breakthrough’s mission and vision.

Breakthrough Bash 2013

For the second year, Friends hosted its Bash in support of the network’s students and the year’s annual fund theme: Renewing Neighborhoods, Developing Minds. Close to 600 guests packed the room at Windows on the River to honor Cleveland’s mayor, Frank G. Jackson and his efforts on behalf of the city’s youth. The Mayor’s efforts in support of the Cleveland Plan have not only galvanized Cleveland, but also attracted national attention. In recognition of this accomplishment, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan recorded a special message for the Mayor that was broadcast at the event.

An exciting live auction raised funds in support of the new schools development initiative, Breakthrough Vision 2020: Building Cleveland’s Future. Attendees were able to hear from Breakthrough student musicians in the El Sistema@ event. The Char and Chuck Fowler Family Foundation announced its $1 million commitment to the network. The Foundation’s generosity and commitment to Breakthrough’s vision and mission was truly inspiring, as is the Fowler’s support of Breakthrough’s ongoing sustainability efforts.

A special thank you goes to our presenting sponsors: Cliffs Natural Resources Inc., The Lubrizol Corporation, PNC Bank, and The Shelly L. and Mark J. Saltzman Philanthropic Fund, a fund of the Jewish Federation of Cleveland.

New Initiatives

In 2012, Friends of Breakthrough seized the opportunity to apply for funding from the U.S. Department of Education Teacher Incentive Fund grant competition. Seven of Breakthrough’s nine schools chose to join the Breakthrough grant consortium. Together, they committed to developing and refine their teacher and principal evaluation systems, design and implement a performance-based compensation and career pathways system for teachers and principals, improve educator recruitment and selection, and refine professional development opportunities to support the new system. In October 2012, The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) granted Breakthrough a five year, up to $10.3 million award in support of its application.

Project work commenced immediately upon notification of the grant. A project structure was designed and implemented and work teams were created. Partnering with The New Teacher Project and the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, academic leaders, Breakthrough staff, and teachers have made significant progress on the project during the course of the 2012-2013 school year. All participating schools have completed the refinement of their model-specific teacher evaluation systems and they have been approved by the school boards. In addition, significant progress was made by June 2013 to begin the design of the performance-based compensation system for teachers. The entire project team looks forward to rolling out the new evaluation system and communicating the teacher compensation and career pathways design for network feedback in 2013-2014.

To capitalize on the critical work being done under the Teacher Incentive Fund grant, Friends is seeking support for school leadership development. This model leaders, along with Breakthrough and Friends staff have worked together to create a compelling and relevant project for funding that focuses on incentivizing and supporting school leaders. If funded, Breakthrough would gain additional funds for professional development of model and school leaders, creating/refining an evaluation system and a performance-based compensation system for school leaders, and the creation of the Principal Fellows at Breakthrough program to fully train and develop emerging leaders one year prior to them serving as a founding principal in a Breakthrough school.

The Charter School Program grant funds continue to be an important source of revenue for the network’s new schools. They rely on the funds to purchase equipment and supplies, and pay for professional development for their expanding grades and growing teaching staff.
Breakthrough Schools (Breakthrough) continued its partnership with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD), the mayor’s office, the city’s business community, local foundations, the Cleveland Teachers Union and local families to promote the passage of Issue 7, the local tax levy. In November 2012, for the first time in sixteen years, the 15 mil school levy passed in Cleveland and, for the first time in the history of Ohio, a small portion of that levy was designated for high-quality charter schools with CMSD. Breakthrough was both proud and honored to be part of this historical legislative effort on behalf of Cleveland’s children.

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Friends is grateful for the corporate and individual support that impacts the lives of our students for the better, one student at a time.

Donors

Lynn and Herman Freeman
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James Gardner Sr.
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Anne Thomas
Jason Thorn
Jane Tish
Isabel Truettewe
Paul Tuttle
Dale and Monica Vernon
Joseph Vacarco
Lisa Vukic
Chris Waldron
David Wasserstrom

Donor Acknowledgment

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• Graduated 99th grade students from Entrepreneurial Preparatory School (@ Prep), and The Intergenerational School, and, with the help of the Breakthrough Through College department, propelled them to enrollment in a combination of independent, public, and parochial high-performing, college preparatory high schools.
• Assisted alumni with obtaining college scholarships. Breakthrough partnered with Ohio Northern University and two 5 Prep alumnae received nearly full tuition scholarships to attend. Seven alumnae were given scholarships awarded by Cliffs Natural Resources ranging from $1,000 to $6,000.
• Attracted national attention. Friends hosted visits and school tours with program officers from national foundations focused on education reform, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Laura and JohnArnold Foundation, and the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation.
• Capitalized on Breakthrough’s city-wide reputation as an education reform leader in northeast Ohio resulting in the most successful teacher recruitment season in Breakthrough’s history, hiring over 85 new teachers, with a diversity rate of more than 35%.
• Consolidated its school boards by model in response to a favorable change in legislation. This will effect greater efficiencies in board governance and enable decision-making on the model level.
• Embarked on a significant project to refine and improve the network’s human capital management system, funded by the Teacher Incentive Fund grant.

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