



Schools, Supplies & Service

September 12, 2017

Over the summer the COPE Executive Board engaged in an extensive strategic plan. This effort was initiated by the Evanston Community Foundation who gave us a Root 2 Fruit grant for this purpose. As a result, we have made some big decisions:

1. It was determined that the current programming of COPE is too broad and the work and financial strength is unsustainable with the current environment. A key element of any non-profit is to ensure sustainability in order to continue its programming. Therefore, to meet this goal we decided that our efforts should be focused on a single program.
2. Over the next five years COPE will build our school supply program to support D65 and D202 students. COPE's mission is to ensure students at Evanston public schools have the supplies needed to be successful.
3. Unfortunately, this means COPE's furniture and food efforts will no longer be supported by COPE. The furniture program will continue with COPE until December 2017, and then will likely transition to Family Promise located in Evanston. In 2018, please note that the contact for furniture will probably be Tracy Lawson-McKeithen, Family Promise Network Director, at (847) 475-4500 and Kevin Bond at (847)-361-2605 for referrals.
4. The monthly grocery program will cease and the Saturday food distribution program will continue through October 2017, with distributions at Oakton school on the following Saturdays at 11:30am, September 30th and October 14th and 28th. If another community partner is not identified then the program will be transferred to Faith Temple who currently shares in the alternating Saturday pickups with COPE. Faith Temple provides groceries to families every Monday. We are currently pursuing another community partner to continue this food program as it currently exists. In the meantime, please share these dates with D65 families with food insecurities.
5. Our Stuff the Bus event will likely be transformed into a Stuff the Bus with school supplies event. We are actively discussing what this might look like and we are open to community partners.
6. For those of you who have been doing wonderful, independent projects at your schools, thank you! Your work is so appreciated. Going forward, talk to your PTA about those programs to see if they want you to continue running them under their umbrella. Continue to do that great work! We just won't be able to house you under the name "COPE."

Thank you for all your support over the last several years. Your efforts, time and energy have made an important impact in the way we build relationships with our neighbors. We hope you will continue to be a proud supporter of COPE.

We invite you to join in our plan to build a strong and sustainable school supply program supporting the Evanston public schools. Our first meeting to rollout the plans is Monday September 25th at 7pm at Curt's Café on Central Street in Evanston – hope to see you there. We are seeking volunteers for fundraising, marketing, communications, and school supply drive involvement.

Thank you!

The COPE Executive Board

Juliet Bond, Rachel Niemann, Rebecca Parmet, Tiffany Rice, Kim Stanton, and Latasha Triplett