

Walton Foundation giving \$8 million to Rhee's StudentsFirst — plus 2012 donations

By Valerie Strauss, Updated: May 1, 2013

The [Walton Family Foundation](#) is giving \$8 million to Michelle Rhee's StudentsFirst to add to the scores of millions of dollars it hands out each year to support the public education reform agenda of Walton family members.

The foundation [says that in 2012](#), it handed out more than \$158 million in funding for K-12 education reform initiatives focused on expanding charter schools and voucher programs. The big 2012 winners were (and you can see the whole list below):

- Charter Fund Inc. \$14,900,000
- Teach For America (National) \$11,445,000
- KIPP Foundation \$8,374,000
- D.C. Public Education Fund, \$5,919,229;

The \$8 million to StudentsFirst is a new donation that will be awarded over two years, the foundation said [in this release](#). It says that the money will allow Rhee's advocacy group — which has been involved in more than 15 states in trying to enact corporate-based school reform over the past few years — to “expand its impact.”

The Walton Family Foundation is one of the three big family education philanthropies that have been donating big sums to drive specific education reforms; the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#) and the [Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation](#) are the other two. The Walton family, which founded and runs Wal-Mart, gives the most money to initiatives involving the school choice movement, such as vouchers and charter schools.

In 2011, [the foundation gave](#) more than \$159 million in 16 metropolitan areas around the country to promote school choice. And it committed to giving \$49.5 million to Teach For America over five years to double its teaching corps and \$25.5 million over the same period to the KIPP charter school network to double the number of students it educates.

The amounts of money that wealthy philanthropists and private foundations have been donating to K-12 school reform has played a big role in shaping state and federal public education policy. This concerns critics who say that there is no public accountability when private donors put up money for programs of their choosing. Of course, public officials could refuse to take it, but they don't.

There is particular concern among critics about money from the Walton family, in part because it has been successful in driving changes in its competitors.

Here are the list of education organizations that received money from the foundation in 2012, according to the foundation's Web site:

K-12 Education Reform Grants in 2012

<u>Systemic K-12 Education Reform</u>	\$158,142,809
Shape Public Policy	\$60,920,186
Create Quality Schools	\$72,970,575
Improve Existing Schools	\$23,599,839
Research and Evaluation	\$652,209
Shape Public Policy:	Amount
50CAN, Inc	\$1,650,000
Agudath Israel of America, Inc.	500,000
Alliance for School Choice, Inc.	1,700,000
American Center for School Choice	125,000
American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research	182,103
Americans for Prosperity Foundation	325,000
Arizona Charter Schools Association	586,475
Arizona School Choice Administration Corporation	100,000
Association of American Educators Foundation	512,000
Association of Missouri Charter Schools	326,300
Barry Goldwater Institute for Public Policy Research	200,000
Beacon Center of Tennessee	75,000
Bellwether Education Partners	185,000
Black Alliance for Educational Options	1,114,200
Brookings Institution	666,968
California Charter Schools Association	5,000,000
Center for Education Reform	809,209
Center of the American Experiment	25,000
Charter School Partners	314,000
Children First Fund- The Chicago Public School Foundation	478,380
Colorado League of Charter Schools	245,000
Colorado Nonprofit Development Center	175,000
Colorado Succeeds	100,000
Commonwealth Foundation for Public Policy Alternatives	25,000
Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now Inc.	450,000
Douglas County School District	300,000
Editorial Projects in Education	250,000
Education Pioneers	547,928
Education Reform Now, Inc.	500,000
Education Sector Inc.	220,000
Education Trust- West	360,000
Education Writers Association	100,000

Educators for Excellence	156,602
EdVoice Institute for Research and Education	400,000
Families Empowered	400,000
Families for Excellent Schools, Inc.	218,000
Florida Charter School Alliance	168,345
Foundation for Excellence in Education	1,000,000
Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, Inc.	465,000
Friends of Choice in Urban Schools	737,434
George W. Bush Foundation	159,000
Georgetown University	1,634,419
Georgia Charter Schools Association Inc.	840,000
Georgia Family Education and Research Council, Inc.	100,000
Georgia Public Policy Foundation	135,000
GREAAT Schools Inc	193,400
GreatSchools Inc.	4,300,000
Harvard University	454,790
Hispanic Council for Reform and Educational Options	292,000
Illinois Network of Charter Schools	1,023,000
Illinois Policy Institute	50,000
Independence Institute	40,000
Indiana Public Charter Schools Association Inc.	392,529
Institute for Innovation of Public School Choice	265,845
Institute For Justice	525,568
James Madison Institute for Public Policy Studies, Inc.	40,000
John K. Maclver Institute for Public Policy, Inc.	75,000
LA Voice	100,000
Los Angeles Parent Union	2,521,369
Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools	586,280
Mackinac Center	50,000
Michigan Association of Public School Academies	426,085
Marquette University	289,468
Massachusetts Charter Public School Association	350,000
MICAH Project	152,500
Milwaukee Charter School Advocates	235,027
Morehouse College	300,000
National Alliance for Public Charter Schools	1,250,000
National Conference of State Legislatures	147,500
National Council on Teacher Quality	25,000
National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices	225,000
National Public Radio	1,400,000
National Right to Work Legal Defense and Education Foundation	83,333
New Jersey Charter Public Schools Association	354,161
New Schools for Chicago	220,000
New Schools for New Orleans Inc.	1,229,570
New York Charter Schools Association	725,000

Newark Charter School Fund	1,875,000
NewSchools Venture Fund	1,100,000
Nova Southeastern University Inc	25,000
Oakland Community Organizations	200,000
Ohio Alliance of Public Charter Schools	382,706
Pahara Institute	500,000
Parents for Educational Freedom in North Carolina	600,000
Partnership for Los Angeles Schools	193,780
Pennsylvania Coalition of Public Charter Schools	150,000
People Acting in Community Together	200,000
Philanthropy Roundtable	115,000
PICO National Network	200,000
Pioneer Institute, Inc.	211,150
Public Education and Business Coalition	164,026
Reason Foundation	75,000
Regents of the University of Colorado	65,756
Rhode Island Mayoral Academies	500,000
School Choice Indiana	320,000
School Choice Ohio	605,000
School Choice Wisconsin	300,000
Show-Me Institute	25,000
Silicon Valley Community Foundation	250,000
Stand for Children Leadership Center	343,402
Stand for Children Leadership Center (Indiana affiliate)	278,189
Stand Up	300,000
Step Up for Students	644,000
Students for Education Reform	250,000
StudentsFirst Institute	2,000,000
Success Academy Charter Schools	1,000,000
Tennessee Charter Schools Association	268,126
Texas Charter Schools Association	725,000
Texas Public Policy Foundation	25,000
Thomas B. Fordham Institute	650,000
United Negro College Fund, Inc.	1,490,523
University of Arkansas Foundation Inc	329,125
University of Notre Dame	384,228
University of Washington Foundation – Center on Reinventing Public Education	700,000
Urban League of Greater New Orleans	491,300
Women in Government Foundation	100,088
Shape Public Policy Total	\$60,920,186
Create Quality Schools:	Amount
4.0 Schools	\$646,467
Academy 360	250,000
Academy for Global Citizenship Charter School	250,000

ACE Charter High School	250,000
Amandla Charter School	250,000
Apple Academy Charter Public Schools	250,000
ARC4H Academy	250,000
Arizona Autism Charter Schools, Inc.	30,000
Aurora Collegiate Academy Charter School	220,000
Better Learning Communities	220,000
Bridges Public Charter School	30,000
Brighter Choice Foundation	945,000
Brilla College Preparatory Charter School	250,000
Building Excellent Schools, Inc	3,240,050
Building Hope	1,800,000
Camino Nuevo Elementary No. 3	250,000
Carmen High School of Science and Technology	333,333
Carpe Diem Collegiate High School – Meridian Campus	250,000
Catalyst-Maria Charter	220,000
Central Queens Academy Charter School	250,000
Challenge Foundation Academy	30,000
Charter Fund, Inc.	14,900,000
Charter School Growth Fund – Louisiana	2,000,000
Children's Scholarship fund	8,212,000
Christel House DORS	220,000
Christian Musical Skill Center dba The Performing Arts Conservatory	30,000
Christopher House Charter School	220,000
City Year Inc	773,000
Collegiate Academy 1	250,000
Collegiate Academy 2	250,000
Colorado Nonprofit Development Center	40,000
Columbus Collegiate Academy – West Campus	220,000
Cristo Rey Network	920,000
DC Preparatory Academy	199,000
DC Scholars Academy	250,000
Delta Charter School of Math, Science and Technology	30,000
Democracy Prep III Charter School	250,000
Downtown Charter School, Inc.	250,000
Downtown Denver Expeditionary School	250,000
Educational Enterprises, Inc.	1,225,000
Empower College Prep	220,000
ENCORE Academy	250,000
Exalt Education	267,500
Excel Academy Charter School – Boston II	250,000
Excel Academy Public Charter School	250,000
Excellent Education Development, Inc.	250,000
Fannie C. Williams Charter School	250,000
Future is Now: New Orleans Charter School	250,000

Gals the Girls Athletic Leadership Schools	30,000
GEE Edmonson Academy	250,000
Graham Primary School	220,000
Hennepin Elementary School	220,000
Hinds Feet Montessori School of the Arts, Inc.	30,000
IFF	248,886
Ingenuity Prep Public Charter School	250,000
International Preparatory Academy – MacDowell Campus	250,000
Intrepid Preparatory Charter School	220,000
JS Clark Leadership Academy	250,000
KIPP Foundation	8,374,000
Lafayette Preparatory Academy Charter School	250,000
Lighthouse Academies of Wisconsin, Inc	150,000
Local Initiatives Support Corporation	5,447,697
Low Income Investment Fund	150,000
Lutheran High School Association of Greater Milwaukee	59,000
Lutheran Urban Mission Initiative Inc.	375,000
Mastery School	250,000
Math and Science Preparatory Charter High	220,000
McDonogh 42	250,000
Mind Trust	500,000
Nashville Classical Charter School	220,000
New Leaders	800,000
NewSchools Venture Fund	612,500
Notre Dame Middle School	375,000
Oakland Academy Charter School	30,000
Pacific Charter School Development, Inc.	2,160,000
Partners for Developing Futures, Inc	565,000
Paul Public Charter School	250,000
Peoria Charter School Initiative	250,000
Phoenix Collegiate Academy	250,000
Pride and Promise Academy	30,000
Prodeo Academy	250,000
Purpose Preparatory Charter School	220,000
Rise Ko Hyang Middle School	250,000
Rise Together Ministries	30,000
Rocketship Education	225,000
Rowe Elementary Charter School	250,000
Santa Monica Boulevard Community Charter School	250,000
Schools For The Future Detroit	30,000
Schools That Can Milwaukee, Inc.	225,000
Seventh and Sourou Gentlemen's Academy	30,000
St. HOPE Public Schools	250,000
Starr Detroit Academy	250,000
Tennessee Charter School Incubator	707,331

The Excel Center at Franklin Road	250,000
The Friends of King School	250,000
The Montessori School of Englewood	220,000
The Savannah Classical Academy	250,000
Trevista ECE-8th Grade at Horace Mann	249,811
United Community Center, Inc.	180,000
University of Notre Dame	500,000
University Prep Science and Math Elementary School	220,000
UNO Charter School Network	500,000
Upper Mississippi Academy	250,000
West Side Summit	250,000
Westside Atlanta Charter School	30,000
Wisconsin Lutheran High School	150,000
Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation	475,000
Create Quality Schools Total	\$72,970,575
Improve Existing Schools:	Amount
Achievement Network, LTD	\$62,500
Arizona Charter Schools Association	150,000
California Charter Schools Association	1,150,000
Center for Better Schools	275,000
Charter Board Partners	177,750
DC Public Charter School Board	498,729
DC Public Education Fund	5,919,229
Denver Public Schools	218,750
Denver Scholarship Foundation	116,192
Illinois State Charter School Commission	100,000
Lutheran Urban Mission Initiative Inc.	60,000
National Association of Charter School Authorizers	1,750,000
New Teacher Project	1,000,000
Northwest Evaluation Association	42,500
Ohio Alliance of Public Charter Schools	34,190
Teach for America (National)	11,445,000
University of Notre Dame	400,000
Wisconsin Lutheran College	200,000
Improve Existing Schools Total	\$23,599,839
Research and Evaluation	Amount
Hoover Institution, Stanford University	\$151,334
University of Notre Dame	113,000
University of Southern California	147,935
University of Wisconsin – Madison	239,940
Research and Evaluation Total	\$652,209
K-12 Education Reform and Other Education Grants Total	\$158,142,80

