

ACHIEVE

10
YEARS

IMPACT REPORT

2024-2025

A DECADE OF DIFFERENCE

Looking Back. Moving Forward.
Achieving Together.





“At Achieve Miami, we have a front row center seat to positively impact lives of students. We know that by investing in our students, we are investing in our future.”

Leslie Miller Saiontz

MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER

Ten years ago, Achieve Miami was born from a simple but powerful belief: that education could bridge divides, unlock untapped potential, and forge a better Miami. Today, I'm deeply grateful for how far we've come together.

Achieve has now served over 15,000 students in more than 45 communities throughout South Florida. Those numbers represent thousands of lives transformed and families empowered as they watch their children build brighter futures.

This year brought tremendous growth. Our weekly afterschool program, Achieve Music, saw a 42% increase in enrollment, with many students excited to return for a new year of creative exploration. Families witness firsthand how the arts do more than enrich education. They ignite imagination, deepen understanding, and reveal the potential that young students are still discovering.

Our high school students continue to thrive, with 100% of our Achieve Scholar students accepted to college or technical schools. Because our students are also our teachers, we listened and responded by launching our Career Pathways program in 2024, helping students pursue opportunities aligned with their unique strengths and dreams.

We've also completely reimagined the program that started it all. Achieve Saturdays is now Achieve SPARK: Succeeding with Purpose, Athletics, Reading and Kindness. Beyond expanded academic programming, SPARK now offers a soccer component supported by FIFA. In Spring 2026, we'll host our first-ever Achieve World Cup, bringing together all SPARK students for an end-of-year celebration that truly embodies our mission to bridge communities and create meaningful connections.

Although the teacher shortage continues to challenge our schools, our response has been powerful. Through our Teacher Accelerator Program (TAP), we've now trained over 400 teachers! We remain committed to ensuring that the next generation of students gets the teachers they need and deserve.

As we look toward the next decade, I'm filled with hope and determination. The challenges our students face are real, but so is their resilience. And with you by our side, there's no limit to what we can achieve together.

Here's to ten years of impact, and to what comes next.

Leslie Miller Saiontz



Our Mission

Achieve is an education innovator in action, improving student outcomes by leveling the playing field, tackling systemic challenges, and empowering success.

We envision a brighter future for Miami, powered by education, mentorship, opportunity, and cross-community connection.

Our Values

We create solutions.

We tackle systemic challenges with innovative programs that address real needs in education.

We empower communities.

We bring people together across different neighborhoods and backgrounds to build meaningful connections.

We champion equity.

We level the playing field so every student has access to the future they dream of, with the resources and support they deserve.

We unlock opportunity.

We open doors to education, mentorship, and pathways that transform lives and broaden horizons.

We lead with excellence.

We draw on a decade of proven impact and deep community knowledge to drive meaningful change.

TEN

YEARS

OF
IMPACT

15,000+

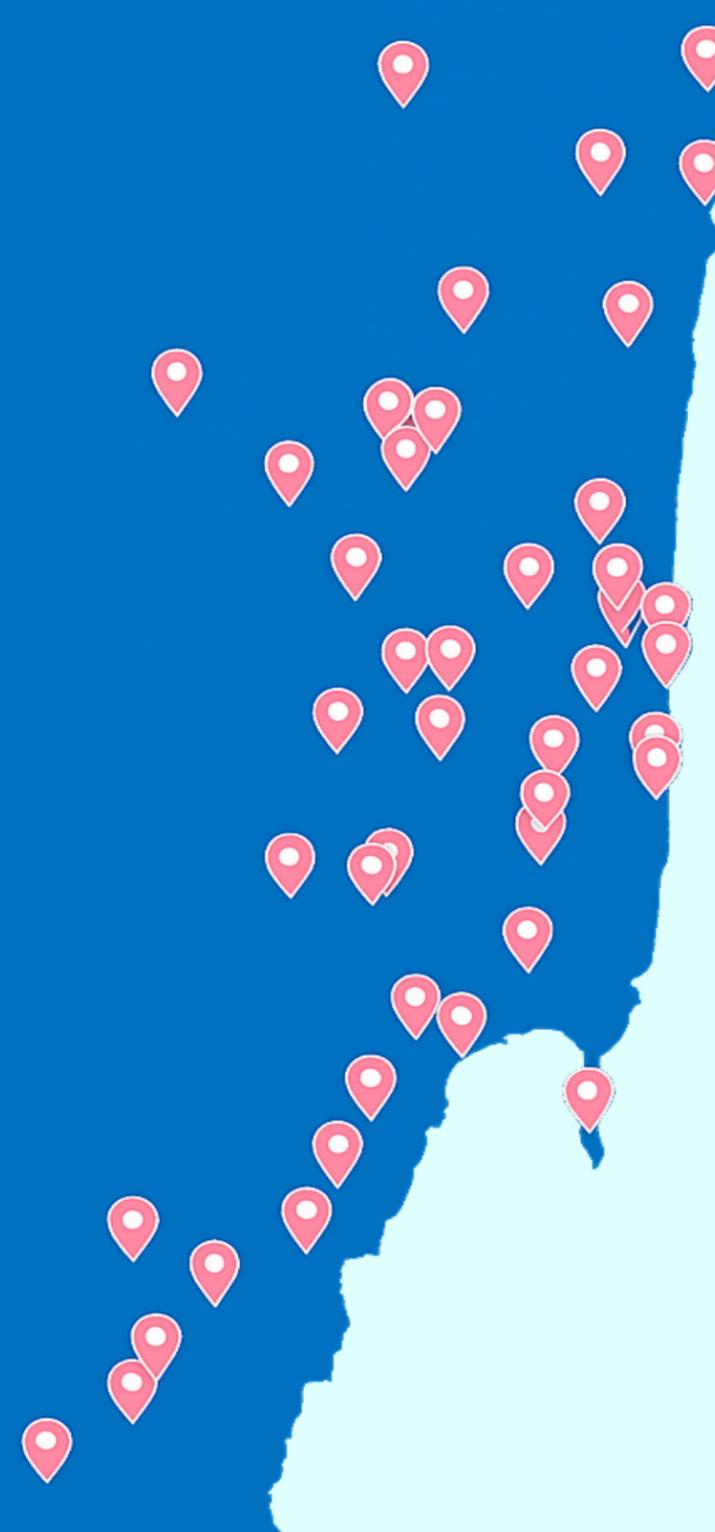
Students
Impacted

45+

Communities
Served

260+

Schools
Reached



IMPACT MAP

Every pin on this map tells a story.

Over the past decade, Achieve has woven itself into the fabric of communities across Miami-Dade County and beyond.

From Homestead to North Miami, from Liberty City to Coral Gables, these locations represent more than just program sites; they mark the places where thousands of students discovered their full potential, where educators found their calling, and where barriers between communities came down.

Each pin is a testament to the power of showing up, connecting across differences, and believing that every zip code holds incredible talent waiting to be unlocked.

DECADE OF MEMORIES

[CLICK HERE](#) to dive into a decade of memories, milestones, and moments that made it all possible!



Achieve Saturdays & Junior Advisory Board

“I learned what it’s like to have someone look up to you and view you as a role model.”

Big Buddy Volunteer

Achieve Saturdays is the original Achieve Miami program and the heartbeat of our mission. Launched in 2015 as a grassroots initiative to support literacy in Title I schools, it has grown into a vibrant, twice-a-month program that pairs elementary “Little Buddies” with high school “Big Buddies” for tutoring, enrichment, and meaningful cross-community connection. What began with just 12 students on a Saturday morning now serves thousands of students each year across five sites throughout Miami.

Early on, it became clear that many of our Big Buddies were ready for greater leadership development. The Junior Advisory Board (JAB) was established as a space for these standout high school students to help shape the future of Achieve Miami while developing key leadership and teamwork skills.

Now, as we enter our second decade, we’ve reimaged our flagship program as **Achieve SPARK: Succeeding with Purpose, Athletics, Reading, and Kindness**. This refreshed vision delivers expanded programming and introduces a FIFA-supported soccer component.



Achieve Summer

“My experience with Achieve Summer was nothing short of empowering and intentional. The effort behind this program is evident and I am grateful to have been a part of it.”

Teacher



Achieve Summer transforms the summer months into a time of learning, growth, and exploration, making it one of Achieve’s most impactful programs. Launched in 2016, it was designed to combat summer learning loss and provide students with meaningful academic and social experiences.

Over six weeks, elementary, middle, and high school participants engage in project-based learning, mentorship, and enrichment activities designed to spark curiosity and build confidence. High school students and paid interns grow as leaders, while educators receive professional development in a collaborative, joyful environment. What began at just one school has grown into a dynamic, multi-site program that nurtures connection, creativity, and growth. Thanks to our collaboration with FIFA, the program has expanded to include soccer programming and now incorporates healthy snacks and meals to support student wellness.

Achieve Summer continues to evolve as a powerful blend of high-impact learning and joyful discovery, ensuring that students return to school energized, inspired, and prepared to thrive.



Achieve Scholars

“I’ve come to feel part of something greater than myself – a beautiful, supportive community that truly fosters connection, growth, and a shared sense of purpose.”

Achieve Scholar

Achieve Scholars prepares Title I high school students for success in college, careers, and beyond. Founded in 2017 as the College Readiness Cohort (CRC), the program offers individualized academic counseling, ACT/SAT tutoring, and year-round workshops covering college applications, scholarships, FAFSA completion, and personal statement writing. Scholars also develop key professional and soft skills, including financial literacy, digital proficiency, leadership, and effective communication. Participants engage in service projects, mentorship opportunities, and paid internships that foster confidence and provide real-world experience.

By combining academic guidance, leadership development, and personalized support, Achieve Scholars equips students to navigate the transition to college or other post-secondary pathways and thrive academically, personally, and professionally.



Achieve Music

“Arts programs are almost non-existent in the public school systems today, so to have an organization like Achieve Miami is wonderful because it allows our kids to discover talents and gifts that they didn’t know they possessed.”

Parent

Achieve Music has been instrumental—literally and figuratively—in Achieve’s 10-year journey. Founded in 2017 at Holmes Elementary, the program was born from a simple yet powerful idea: students shouldn’t just watch music performances, they should experience music by learning to create it themselves.

Over the years, Achieve Music has grown into a dynamic after-school program providing instruction in band, voice, percussion, and music theory. Students gain more than technical skills, they build confidence, focus, creativity, and a sense of belonging through ensemble collaboration and performance.

With students returning year after year, Achieve Music has opened doors for hundreds of young musicians across Miami. The program will continue expanding opportunities for students to grow, express themselves, and thrive through the power of music.



Achieve Club

Achieve Club connects students from over 70 high schools across Miami-Dade County, providing opportunities to engage in leadership, service, and mentorship experiences.

Formally launched in 2020, Achieve Club members mentor elementary students as “Big Buddies,” organize hands-on service projects, and participate in workshops and volunteer opportunities that build leadership, problem-solving, and advocacy skills. Students also connect with peers from diverse backgrounds, broadening their perspective on community challenges. The program nurtures a strong sense of responsibility and civic engagement, helping students find their voice and make an impact.

Through regular events and collaborative initiatives, Achieve Club fosters meaningful connections that extend beyond school walls and into the broader Miami community.

“Achieve has helped me grow and become a more outgoing leader. I step-up to lead others instead of waiting for others to lead me.”

Big Buddy Volunteer

Achieve Alumni & Career Pathways

Following high school, our Achieve Scholars transition into Achieve Alumni, which offers ongoing support to students navigating the challenges of college and other post-secondary pathways. Alumni receive academic guidance, career coaching, and access to networking opportunities, helping them succeed at every step.

While supporting our alumni who transition to college, we also recognize that higher education takes many forms. Our understanding that college isn't the only path to a fulfilling career inspired our most recent program launch in 2024: Career Pathways. This program prepares high schoolers for life after graduation by providing opportunities to explore careers, build essential workplace skills, and gain hands-on experience. Through internships and professional development workshops, students strengthen their career readiness skills.

Together, these programs empower young adults to achieve long-term academic and professional success.

I've learned so many things about careers and life that I personally wouldn't have learned without Achieve Miami.”

Achieve Alumni

Teacher Accelerator Program (TAP)

We're on a mission to address the nationwide teacher shortage by creating innovative pathways to the profession and providing professional development that empowers educators, ensuring that every student has a qualified teacher in the classroom.

"This is about more than just filling the shortage- it's about redrafting the narrative around the teaching profession."

Jasmin Calin-Micek, Senior Director of Programming for TAP



2022

2025

Launched in 2022, the Teacher Accelerator Program (TAP) is Achieve's bold response to the national teacher shortage. In partnership with local universities, TAP offers a streamlined pathway for college seniors and career changers to enter the classroom through foundational coursework, paid summer training, ongoing mentorship, and professional development. By investing in future educators and equipping them with the skills, support, and confidence to succeed, TAP is helping to build a more sustainable, passionate, and well-prepared teacher workforce. In just a few short years, it has become a community-powered model for what's possible in teacher recruitment and retention.

IMPACT

400+

Teachers trained since 2022

461% ↑

Increase in teachers trained compared to year 1

273+

Teachers hired since 2022

200+

Candidates completed the program in 24-25

210 HRS

Of professional development for each candidate

40+

Clinical classroom teaching hours per candidate

FY REVENUE

TOTAL REVENUE: \$2,446,472

FY EXPENSES

TOTAL EXPENSES: \$2,305,762

FY 24-25 FINANCIALS



*Unaudited financial data as of October 1, 2025

The Achieve Effect



Tyquez Griffin

Achieve Scholar & Summer Intern
Booker T. Washington High School
Class of 2027

“Try it out. Don’t be afraid. It might seem scary at first, but once you get into it, it’s like you’re part of another family.”

Tyquez began his journey with Achieve as a quiet Little Buddy, unsure of himself. Through our programs, he came out of his shell and discovered his voice. As he grew into his roles as Achieve Scholar, Big Buddy, and Summer Intern, he found purpose in guiding younger students the way others once guided him.

Most recently, Tyquez led a summer project focused on temporary housing to help people get back on their feet. From an elementary school student who needed support to a young leader creating solutions for his community, Tyquez embodies what Achieve makes possible: a place to grow, belong, and pay it forward.

For Amanda, fashion became the key to unlocking confidence. At an Achieve Junior Advisory Board event, she noticed Achieve Scholars heading to college fairs without professional attire. It wasn’t potential they lacked, it was access.

Amanda created the Best Look Forward event to equip Scholars with the clothing and skills to “dress for success.” With support from partners like Aventura Mall, Macy’s, and H&M, the event has transformed small details into life-changing opportunities. Amanda recalls: **“I knew this was about so much more than clothes, it was about giving students the confidence to walk into any room and know they belong.”**



Amanda Ellman

Former Junior Advisory Board (JAB) Member
Account Coordinator
Bacchus Agency

Educators Empowered



Dr. Andre Jackson

TAP Program Coordinator
Assistant Principal
Miami Jackson Senior High School

“You always want to leave something better than you found it, and Achieve has definitely left Miami in a better place.”

Andre joined Achieve in 2018, but it is through the Teacher Accelerator Program (TAP) that he’s made his greatest impact. He joined the program in its first summer, and quickly distinguished himself as a standout leader.

Today, as a Program Coordinator, he has helped build TAP’s summer program into a thriving model, developing staff, leading coaching teams, and mentoring the next generation of teachers.

Beyond TAP, Andre serves as an esteemed Assistant Principal at Miami Jackson Senior High School.

With years of experience performing and teaching, Ms. Carquez says that discovering Achieve Miami reignited her passion for music education. Now in her fourth year at Lake Stevens Elementary, she witnesses daily transformations as students unlock their potential. **“It’s like magic,” she reflects. “When they realize ‘Yes, I can do it,’ it’s so beautiful.”**

A lifelong musician and conductor of two Miami community choirs, she teaches students that a community works best when it works like an orchestra—together. Some of her fifth graders have been with her since second grade, and one of her most memorable moments came when one of those students told her, “The best day of my life is when I am making music here in your class.”



Anaida Carquez

Achieve Music Teacher
Lake Stevens Elementary School

Partners With Purpose



Rebecca Fishman Lipsey

Founding Board Member
President & CEO, The Miami Foundation

“One of the most unique things about Achieve is the way they unite people across lines of difference,” Rebecca says.

Rebecca has been part of Achieve since before it had a name. She believes Achieve’s success lies in its constant evolution, always responding to community needs. That responsiveness, she explains, is what keeps the work meaningful and what makes the impact last.

And now, as Achieve celebrates 10 years, Rebecca is inspired by its future ahead. “It’s powerful to see people continue solving problems side by side who otherwise might never be in the same room.”

Since 2020, Helios Education Foundation has been a cornerstone partner in Achieve Miami’s growth. When President and CEO Paul Luna first connected with Achieve, he immediately felt the passion behind the mission. **“You could feel the commitment,”** he recalls.

With Helios’s support, we expanded our Achieve Scholars program from three to ten schools, transforming the trajectory for thousands of students across Miami-Dade County.

In 2024, Helios deepened their commitment by investing in the Teacher Accelerator Program (TAP). This strategic partnership has been integral to building TAP, helping train over 400 educators and creating a scalable solution to South Florida’s critical teacher shortage.



Paul Luna

Foundation Partner
President & CEO, Helios Education Foundation



Quick Quotes



“As a career changer, I wouldn’t have pursued teaching without this program. I have felt so supported. They’ve made me excited to pursue my new career path.”

TAP Teacher



“We’re truly making an impact and having a hand in changing the lives of these kids for the better.”

Big Buddy Volunteer

“My favorite part of Achieve Summer was how our big buddies helped us with work and showed us how to do the right thing.”

Little Buddy

“I learned so much about myself and truly found myself through Achieve Miami. I know what I want and am determined to succeed in the future because of Achieve.”

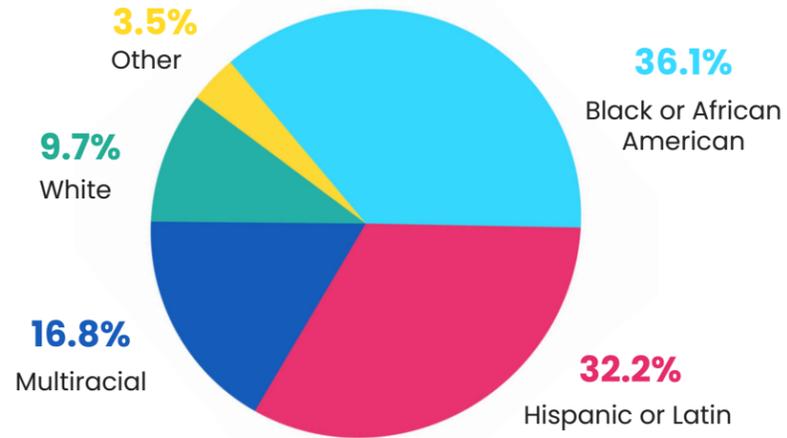
Achieve Scholar



STUDENTS SERVED

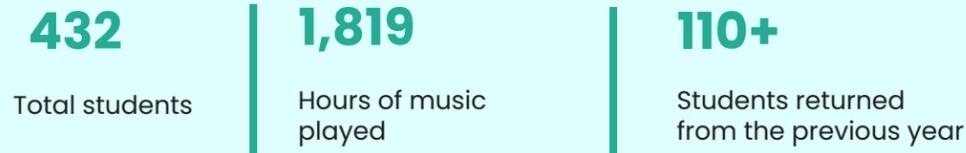


STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS



ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

ACHIEVE MUSIC



ACHIEVE SPARK



ACHIEVE SUMMER



HIGH SCHOOL & ALUMNI PROGRAMS

ACHIEVE SCHOLARS



VOLUNTEER WORK



ACHIEVE ALUMNI



JUNIOR ADVISORY BOARD (JAB)



CAREER PATHWAYS



LEADERSHIP & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

OUR TEAM



ACHIEVE LEADS



Achieve Miami's year-round professional development helps teachers earn Master Plan Points toward their 120-point certification renewal requirement. Our programming offers specialized training in literacy and student-centered learning that meets the requirements set forth by Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

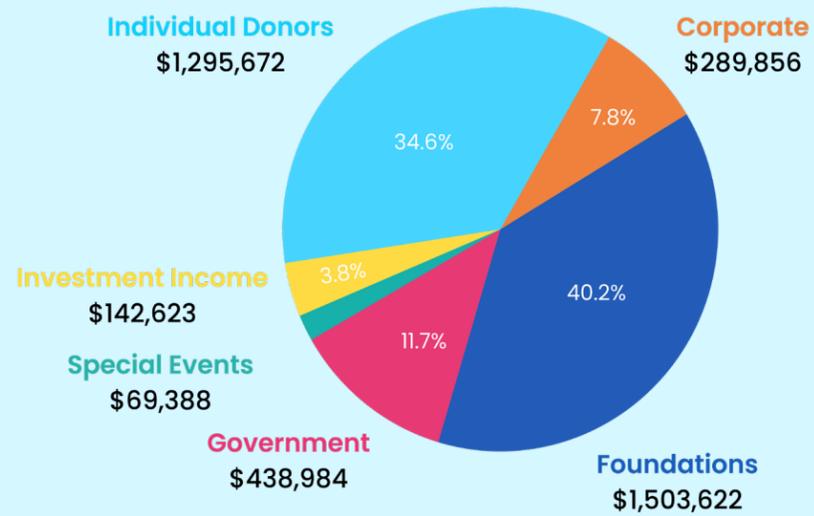
Achieve Miami's 2024-2025 Financial Summary

2015

2025

FY REVENUE

TOTAL REVENUE: \$3,622,706



A DECADE OF FUNDRAISING

\$22,419,474

TOTAL FUNDS RAISED OVER 10 YEARS

FY EXPENSES

TOTAL EXPENSES: \$2,644,957



Behind every student success story is a community of believers. Achieve's programs thrive thanks to the unwavering dedication of our board members, staff, volunteers, and generous donors. This year, we reached a historic revenue milestone, amplifying our ability to expand access to educational opportunities for students across our beloved Miami-Dade County.



THE NEXT DECADE

Building Tomorrow's South Florida

What began as a weekend literacy program in a single school has sparked a decade of impact, strengthening Miami-Dade County and shaping the course of countless students' lives. Imagine the possibilities ahead: thousands more teachers entering classrooms with confidence and purpose, tens of thousands of students discovering their potential through mentorship and music, literacy and leadership.

Our vision extends far beyond what we've accomplished. We see Achieve deepening its roots throughout Miami-Dade while expanding our reach across Broward County and beyond. We envision Saturday mornings filled with even more cross-community connections, summer programs that span the region, and a Teacher Accelerator Program that becomes a national model for addressing educator shortages.

The next decade will bring new challenges, but also unprecedented opportunities to bridge divides, unlock potential, and prove that when we invest in education and each other, entire communities rise. Together, we're not just building better schools, we're building a better South Florida, one student, one teacher, one connection at a time.



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OUR TEAM

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THANK YOU!

TOGETHER WE DREAMED, PLANNED, AND ACHIEVED.

Thank you for helping us enrich, empower, and encourage the students who need our help the most.

AJNFF

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