



4/25/2016

San Rafael City Schools District  
310 Nova Albion Way  
San Rafael, California 94903

Dear School Board Members:

We are delighted to share with you our support of Ipso Schools, a recipient of our NewSchools: Invent 2016 planning grant of \$150,000. During our most recent grant challenge, we received many applications from new schools across the United States, and Ipso was one of 11 schools we ultimately selected. During our selection, we used the following investment criteria to make our decisions:

- *Serve a significant number of underserved students*  
We invest in ventures with a mission grounded in transforming preK-12 public education, with a special focus on underserved students.
- *Embrace an Expanded Definition of Student Success and Hold All Students to High Expectations*  
Mastery of academic knowledge and skills in literacy and math is critical to student success, but we also know that students must develop in many other ways if they are to pursue their most ambitious dreams.
- *Reimagine, Redesign, and Recreate the Student Experience*  
Innovation can and should take many forms, and our innovative schools portfolio will include an array of approaches. Given our emphasis on the student experience, however, we are particularly interested in supporting schools that deeply integrate personalization and student agency throughout their designs.
- *Aspire to Replicate and/or Pursue Other Means of Scaling Impact*  
Our long-term goal is to have a catalytic impact on student success nationally, so we focus on ventures with aspirations to expand their impact significantly over time by growing their organizations and/or influencing the work of others.
- *Have Strong Leadership Teams*  
We seek new and existing ventures led by mission-driven leaders who demonstrate passion, personal integrity and the ability to execute and get results.
- *Demonstrate a Commitment to Diverse Leadership*  
Our ventures must demonstrate a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion. One way that this will show up is through a focus on closing the racial/ethnic demographic gaps between the students they serve and their senior leadership teams and boards.
- *Pursue Financial Sustainability*

We are ultimately interested in achieving impact at scale and it is impossible to scale models that rely on philanthropy to close a structural deficit. To that end, we look for ventures with a plan for achieving sustainability at scale through public or earned revenue.

- *Plan Appropriately and Remain On Track*  
Every team we support must have an ambitious vision to transform PREK-12 education, but they must also have the ability to turn that vision into reality. As schools advance through the planning stages, they must prove to us that they are prepared to launch successfully to be eligible for continued support.

Our team evaluated Ipso Schools' application, and based on their high scores, we strongly recommended them for funding, and awarded them a Planning grant for the 2016-17 school year. We're very excited to have them as part of our cohort and have great faith in their team's vision and strength to execute on that vision.

Ipso Schools is currently a finalist for the Catapult: Launch grant in the amount of \$200,000-\$400,000. NewSchools: Launch applications will be reviewed in March 2017 and awarded at the end of April. We believe Ipso is a strong candidate for this grant and our team will be supporting their leadership team with the completion of the grant application over the next few months.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liz Arney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Liz Arney  
Partner