



**EASTSIDE COMMUNITY LEARNING  
CENTER FOUNDATION  
IN SUPPORT OF EASTSIDE CHARTER SCHOOL**

**“EVERY CHILD WILL LEARN”  
THE CASE FOR SUPPORT  
2014-2015**



# EASTSIDE COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER FOUNDATION

**“EVERY CHILD WILL LEARN”**

Dear Friends, Families and Supporters,

The EastSide Community Learning Center Foundation (EastSide Learning Center) seeks, develops and manages programs that provide enriching educational, cultural and athletic opportunities for children and adults within the greater East Lake and Riverside neighborhoods of northeast Wilmington, Delaware. EastSide Charter School, the primary activity of the Learning Center, is striving to provide a quality education for children who are culturally, economically and socially at risk. A central goal of the School is to educate children in a safe, nurturing environment that enables every student to excel both academically and socially. To ensure success, EastSide is focusing on structure, consistency, and academically rigorous programming toward developing students’ determination, a passion for learning, and an appreciation of personal skills and effort. EastSide students are expected to “Strive for Excellence, Succeed with Integrity, and Soar Beyond Expectations”.

The valuable work taking place at EastSide Charter would not be possible without the incredible support of dedicated individuals and a generous philanthropic community that has enabled our School to grow into one of Delaware’s most influential charter schools and one of the state’s shining examples of school culture and innovation. We thank all our supporters for their contributions towards our mission.

Sincerely,



Charles S. McDowell, Esq.  
Chairman of the Board



Lamont W. Browne, Ed.D.  
Head of School/Principal

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	3
EastSide Charter School’s mission, vision and history.....	3
Mission Statement.....	3
Vision Statement.....	3
School History.....	3
EastSide’s Goal of Becoming a Full Service Community School.....	4
Community and School Demographics.....	4
School Demographics.....	4
Community Demographics.....	4
Achievement Gap.....	5
Tremendous academic Progress from 2011-2014!.....	5
2014-2015 and Beyond.....	8
Eastside Early Learning Academy.....	9
Goals in Early Learning Expansion.....	9
Rationale for Expansion.....	9
Early Learning Expansion Performance Indicators.....	10
2013-2014 Results.....	11
Overview of Expansion Plans.....	11
Funding Needs.....	12
EastSide Charter School.....	12
Ongoing Operating Needs: Supporting Unfunded Supplemental Educational Programs.....	12
EastSide Charter School Capital Needs.....	12
Infrastructure/Deferred Maintenance Needs.....	13
Early Learning Academy.....	14
Capital Expansion Costs.....	14
Supplemental Operating Costs.....	14
APPENDIX A.....	16
EastSide’s Academic Record.....	16
EastSide’s Strategic Operating Plan.....	17
EastSide’s academic features and initiatives.....	17
EastSide’s school climate features and initiatives.....	18
EastSide’s management and facilities features and initiatives and community connections.....	18
APPENDIX B.....	20
EastSide Pledge.....	20
APPENDIX C.....	21
EastSide’s Funding Needs for Operations; Supporting Unfunded Educational Programs.....	21
Small Classes/Teacher Pay Equity.....	21
Pre-k Scholarship program.....	21
Pre-k teacher pay equity.....	22
School/curriculum design and alignment.....	22
One Teach for America Corps Member.....	22
Universal Free Breakfast and Lunch.....	22
Academic Tutorial Program.....	23
Summer Academic Enrichment Academy.....	23
Academic Based Field Trips and in-school activities.....	23
Instrumental Music Program.....	24
After School Athletic Program.....	24
Communities in Schools.....	24
Mentoring program.....	24
Community Service Days.....	25
Fundraising and Foundation Operations.....	25
Total Unfunded Supplemental Educational Programs.....	25
APPENDIX D.....	26
Fundraising.....	26



## **INTRODUCTION**

This is EastSide Charter School's 2014-2015 Case for Support of our students. Since we launched EastSide's "Every Child Will Learn" campaign, the School has received tremendous support from more than 30 foundations, 29 businesses, and 350 individuals. These contributions have allowed us to make great progress to effectively educate and develop our students into becoming successful life-long learners. Grants help fund our various essential unfunded supplemental education programs, our capital renovation needs and the expansion of our Pre-K program that are important to the overall advancement of our students. More specifically, the funding ensures that our students will have access to a quality facility and a quality education that they deserve.

## **EASTSIDE CHARTER SCHOOL'S MISSION, VISSION AND HISTORY**

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of EastSide Charter School is to educate children in a safe, caring and nurturing environment so that they can excel academically and socially. We believe that all children are capable of mastering content standards and meeting social expectations when they have thorough understanding, adequate time and appropriate support. Students are viewed as individuals and every effort is made to accommodate each child's unique gifts and talents.

### **Vision Statement**

The vision of EastSide Charter School is to develop and sustain an academic community in which every direct stakeholder - teachers and staff, students and their parents - consistently model lifelong learning, selflessness, and self-respect. Each of these stakeholders take full advantage of every learning opportunity and through this continual learning process, our teachers and students will learn more about themselves, improving upon and maximizing their knowledge, skills, and overall productivity and effect on the school community and our broader society. By learning to work in collaboration with their teachers and peers, our students will develop a strong sense of self respect, self-reflection, sense of independence, and sense of right and wrong. Upon leaving the EastSide community our students will have the character, knowledge, skills and self- and societal awareness to determine their own personal and professional destiny.

### **School History**

EastSide Charter School opened its doors in 1997 on North Thatcher Street in a small, former community center leased from the Wilmington Housing Authority. In early 2005, after a competitive selection process, the City of Wilmington awarded EastSide the nearby, recently-vacated, Martin Luther King Elementary School, a 69,000 square foot building built in 1962. Relocation to the MLK School site occurred in time for the beginning of the September 2005 school year.

EastSide is the first charter school in the country to be founded in cooperation with a public housing authority, and located within its property; it is also the first elementary charter in Delaware. It is situated adjacent to the low income neighborhoods of East Lake and Riverside of northeast Wilmington.



East Lake has undergone an economic redevelopment which brings hope to a community previously notorious for drugs, alcohol abuse, and violent crimes. There are pending plans for redevelopment of Riverside as well.

A central goal of the School is to educate children in a safe, nurturing environment that enables every student to excel both academically and socially. To ensure success, EastSide is focusing on structure, consistency, and academically rigorous programming toward developing students' determination, a passion for learning, and an appreciation of personal skills and effort.

During the school year 2014-2015, EastSide expects to enroll 475 students from Pre-K through Grade 8.

### **EastSide's Goal of Becoming a Full Service Community School**

Since its opening in 1997, EastSide's Board of Directors has had the vision of creating a full service community school – a community learning center whose programming would influence the lives not only of the students who attend the School but also all others living in the greatly underserved neighboring areas of East Lake and Riverside.

The extensive facilities of the former MLK School, such as the gymnasium, auditorium/theatre, cafeteria and playing fields, can enable EastSide to become a foundation of enrichment within the community. The Board has named the entire facility "EastSide Learning Center," an important change that more accurately reflects the founders' original concept for the School. At the same time we established an affiliated 501(c)(3) foundation, East Side Community Learning Center Foundation, to own our land and buildings, to manage our extra-curricular community activities and to conduct supporting fund raising.

### **Community and School Demographics**

#### **SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHICS**

EastSide Charter School educates approximately 475 students from grades Pre-K to 8. 92% of the student body is African American and 8% of students are Hispanic/Latino. 87% of the student body qualifies for federally free and reduced meals based on their family income. Approximately 20% of EastSide students are classified as special needs and have an Individualized Educational Plan.

#### **COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS**

EastSide, located in the East Lake and Riverside neighborhoods in northeast Wilmington, derives its student population from one of the most high need communities in the entire state. The table on the next page compares some key indicators at EastSide with Delaware averages.



Indicator	EastSide Community	State Average	Difference
High School Graduates	66.9%	87.7%	<b>20.8% fewer</b> high school graduates
Unemployment	21.6%	6.2%	<b>15.4% more</b> unemployment
Single Mother Families	54.9%	13.7%	<b>41.2% more</b> single mothers
Average Household Income	\$19,992	\$60,119	<b>\$40,197 lower</b> household income
Total Poverty	49.5%	11.5%	<b>38.0% more</b> total poverty
Child Poverty	61.2%	16.9%	<b>44.3% more</b> child poverty

### ACHIEVEMENT GAP

Minority students and students who come from poverty face a significant academic achievement gap. The gap that many EastSide students face is outlined as:

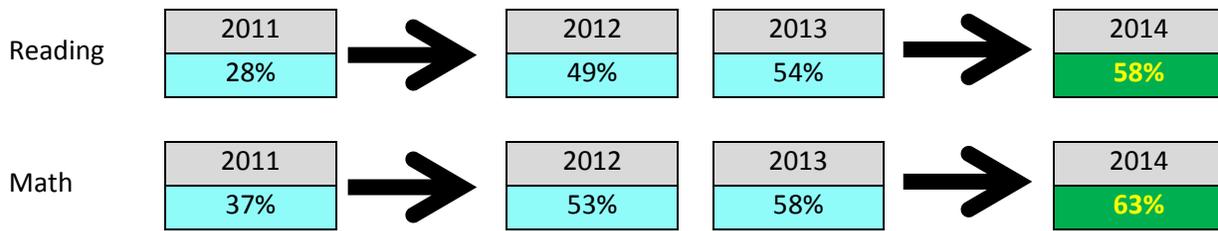
- 75% of students within the state of Delaware graduate high school on time, however only 64% of students who qualify for free and reduced meals graduate on time
- African American and Hispanic students have the lowest rate of on-time graduation in Delaware, nearly 15% lower than the rate for white students
- Only 55% of students who qualify for free and reduced lunches in Delaware go on to college, 16% below the state average
- 60% of African American students who graduate from high school go on to college, 11% below the state average
- Nationally, only 14% of all college students are African American, compared to 63% white students

### TREMENDOUS ACADEMIC PROGRESS FROM 2011-2014!

The initiatives that started three years ago have paid off immensely as demonstrated by the School's accelerated rate of academic improvement and achievement. EastSide has now achieved "Adequate Yearly Progress" (AYP) for four straight years, the percentage of our students scoring proficient or better has increased dramatically and our growth has significantly outpaced the improvement demonstrated by all students statewide and by all low income students statewide. Impressively, while 87% of EastSide students are classified as low income and 20% are classified as special education, over 75% of our students met their academic growth goals in 2013-2014 according to Department of Education indicators.

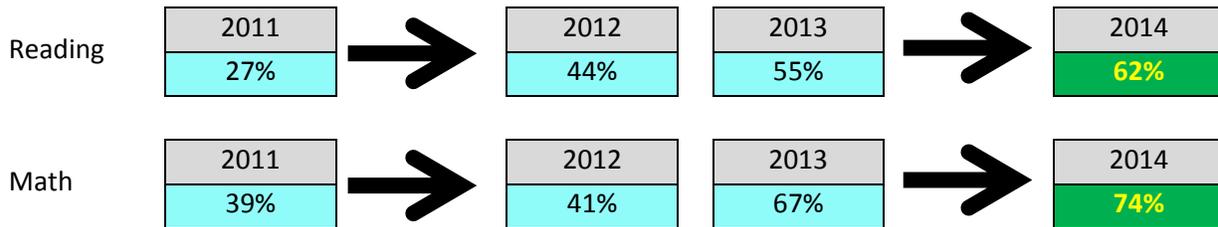
The graphics on the next page show the percentage of students scoring proficient or better on state mandated (DCAS) exams at EastSide over the past four testing cycles. EastSide students have made a 30 point growth in reading and a 26 point growth in math proficiency over this period.

### Percent of Students Testing "Proficient" or Better



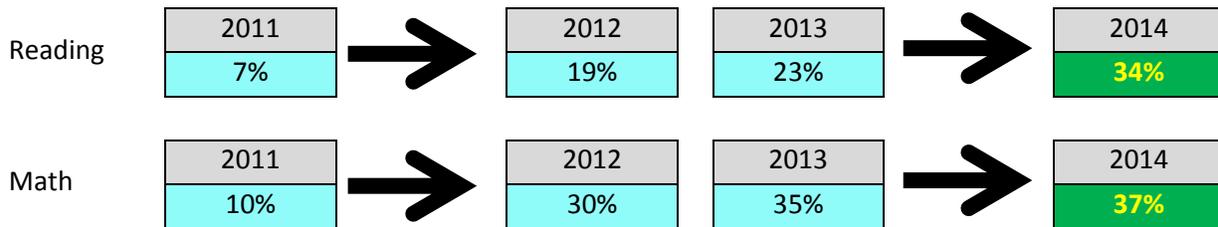
In addition to measuring proficiency, the State also tracks student performance throughout the year via annual growth goals. The graphics below show the percentage of students meeting their annual growth goals on DCAS exams at EastSide over the past four testing cycles. EastSide students have made a 35 point growth in reaching these goals in each reading and math in the past four years.

### Percent of Students Meeting Annual Growth Goals



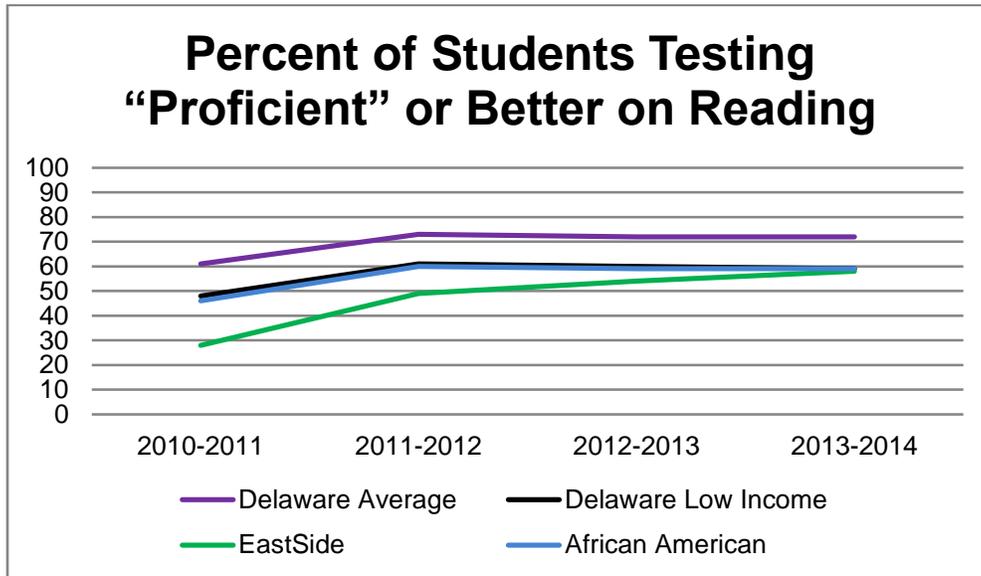
As is referenced above, nearly 20% of EastSide students are classified as special education. Four years ago these students were some of the lowest performing students at the school. The graphics below show the 27 point growth special education students have made in reaching both reading and math proficiency over a four year period.

### Percent of Special Education Students Testing "Proficient" or Better

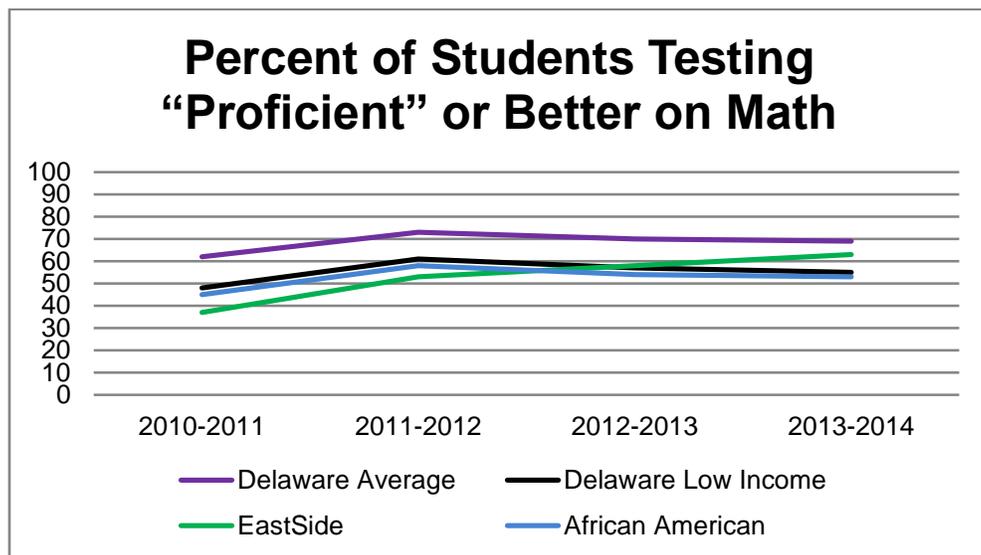


The two graphs below compare the growth at EastSide with Delaware’s overall average as well as the statewide average for all low income and African American students.

In reading, EastSide **has grown by 31 points** since 2010-2011, compared to an 11 point growth statewide and 12 points in low income growth statewide. While the State in general has not seen growth since 2011-2012, EastSide has continued to grow. **Significantly, EastSide has decreased the achievement gap from 33 points in 2010-2011 to 14 points in 2013-2014, a 19 point reduction!**



Finally, in math, EastSide has grown by 26 points since 2010-2011, compared to a 7 point growth statewide and 7 points in growth statewide by all low income students. EastSide has surpassed the low-income averages and is fast approaching state averages. **Significantly, EastSide has decreased the achievement gap from 25 points in 2010-2011 to 6 points in 2013-2014, a 19 point reduction!**



## 2014-2015 AND BEYOND

The 2013-2014 school year represented a remarkable period at EastSide and expectations are high that the 2014-2015 school year will see continued growth. There have been a number of developments that attest to the recognition that EastSide is making great progress and has become a leader in working with high needs students in our community:

- The Delaware State Board of Education named Dr. Browne as one of five Outstanding School Leaders in February of 2014 signifying the tremendous gains taking place at EastSide and the hard work and outstanding results fostered under Dr. Browne's leadership.
- EastSide hosted U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, Delaware Governor Jack Markell, and Delaware Secretary of Education Mark Murphy in April 2014 to highlight EastSide's success and participation in the Delaware Talent Co-operative through the national Race to the Top program. Secretary Duncan, Governor Markell, and Secretary Murphy left EastSide impressed with the School's remarkable progress in recent years, the culture of professional development enabled by School leadership and the dedication of the teachers in delivering high quality education to one of the State's most underserved populations.
- EastSide led a collaboration of four Wilmington charter schools to implement the Teaching Excellence Framework, a rigorous teacher evaluation and professional development model. These are the only schools in Delaware implementing an alternative teacher evaluation model which has better prepared our teachers to provide top-level instruction on a daily basis. This model is one of the core components of our School's continued success.
- EastSide retained 94% of non-graduating students for the 2014-2015 school year (the highest performing inner city charters around the country achieve about 90% retention)
- EastSide retained 86% of its staff for the 2014-2015 school year. Another year with very low staff turnover attests to the strong culture of professional development and the commitment towards our staff.
- EastSide was named one of the Delaware News Journal's Top Workplaces in 2014. The nomination was submitted by one of our teachers and staff surveys on workplace satisfaction backed our beliefs that creating a positive workplace leads to a positive impact in the classroom.
- EastSide was named to the Delaware State Education Association's school spotlight for the month of March, highlighting the academic progress made over the past three years.
- the Delaware Department of Education chose EastSide leaders to join a small delegation to visit a high performing charter school in New Jersey;
- For the second consecutive year the Delaware DOE invited an EastSide principal to attend a National Principals Academy. Middle School Assistant Principal Rebeccah Forrest completed initial training in New Orleans this summer and will continue training throughout the school year.
- EastSide was chosen for the third consecutive year to host a principal intern in a special Delaware leadership training program sponsored by Innovative Schools.
- EastSide's newly reintroduced Pre-K program was awarded a STAR Level 5, the highest quality rating by the State regulators, during its first year.

- In July a Summer Academic Enrichment Academy was held focusing on those students who could benefit from more time on task and on newly entering students to help them orient to EastSide Charter.

## **EASTSIDE EARLY LEARNING ACADEMY**

### **Goals in Early Learning Expansion**

A long range goal of EastSide Charter is to reduce or eliminate the need for philanthropic support of our operating programs. Our plan to accomplish this includes:

1. Growing our enrollment so that we receive more government funding and operate more efficiently
2. Improving our students' academic performance so that we do not need to fund as many supplemental education programs.
  - Improving academic performance will also permit us to have larger classes, thus accommodating more students in the same space and therefore with minimal incremental additional cost.

An important element of our plan to accomplish these two objectives has been the expansion of our Pre-K services through the EastSide Early Learning Academy that will serve up to 66 four and five year old students each year. This expansion will address our objectives:

1. Expanding the size of Pre-K students immediately increases the number of students EastSide serves in early childhood education.
2. Retaining these Pre-K students for subsequent grades at EastSide, the School will eventually increase the number of students in each grade over time.
3. Reaching students at an earlier age, EastSide will have a more dramatic impact on their learning experiences. This will ensure that EastSide students are at grade-level proficiency at an earlier age and improve our students' academic performance over time.

### **Rationale for Expansion**

Most of our students arriving for Kindergarten are significantly behind their more affluent peers because of substantial deficiencies in their home neighborhood environment. Not only are they significantly deficient in linguistic and computational skills, equally importantly are their severe deficiencies in socio-emotional development. It may be surprising to learn that our most challenging discipline issues have arisen with the youngest children at EastSide. We believe we can greatly enhance the chances for academic and social success of our students by enrolling them in our high quality Pre-K program. With a year's experience in such a program these students will arrive for Kindergarten much more "ready to learn," intellectually, socially and emotionally.

Research shows that Pre-K experience enhances a child's social and cognitive development. The Pre-K program at EastSide provides students with opportunities to learn persistence when working at tasks, direction following, and listening skills. Our curriculum emphasizes teaching early literacy and math through a variety of activities and projects. Students have opportunities to learn skills involving the alphabet and numbers and expand their knowledge while increasing their vocabulary.

According to the Partnership for Success, “High quality early learning, especially for children at risk, has been shown to significantly improve early literacy, language and math skills and to decrease special education placements by nearly 50% through second grade and reduce grade repetition by up to 33% through eighth grade.” ([www.partnershipforsuccess.org](http://www.partnershipforsuccess.org)). See also <http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Pre-kindergarten/Pre-Kindergarten>.

An additional financial benefit of the Early Learning Academy will be early identification of any learning disabilities. Government funding for special education students depends on an evaluation having been done by the September 30 student count date. For logistical reasons, it is often not possible to properly evaluate a newly arriving K student by September 30. This can deprive the School of the additional funding that is needed to pay for the services that are required when the learning disability is later properly identified. Specifically, the School is required to provide extra services for these students however, due to the lack of an accurate count by September 30<sup>th</sup>, we do not receive the government funding necessary to pay for these services.

### **Early Learning Expansion Performance Indicators**

Following are the performance indicators and targets we have chosen to evaluate the success of our early learning expansion.

	<b>Performance Target</b>	<b>Selection Rationale</b>
1.	Retain at least 90% of the Pre-K class in the K program	This pipeline of students builds the future culture of the school at an earlier age and leads towards financial sustainability
2.	80% of students Kindergarten ready assessed by Kindergarten Readiness test (Teaching Strategies Gold)	Providing students with interactive and challenging tasks at an early age will prepare them for the demands of future grades
3.	Decrease the number of special education K students who are not properly identified before the September 30 student count date	Decreasing this number will give the school a greater ability to secure funding (and thus services) that is tailored to the needs of these students
4.	Maintain the Pre-K’s academic performance so that they are on grade level by the end of the Kindergarten year and each year thereafter	Children who are ready for Kindergarten will have a greater chance of succeeding academically up to and through high school

## 2013-2014 Results

During the 2013-2014 school year, EastSide reintroduced a small Pre-K program serving 22 students. Because our existing space was fully utilized, we divided our library in half with a non-permanent partition to create a temporary Pre-K room. This initial reintroduction offered the School the opportunity to begin the process of licensing and obtaining a STARS quality rating.

The STARS program rates early childcare programs on a scale of 1 to 5 based on a series of environmental as well as instructional indicators. The rating is then used to determine the level of financial support each provider receives from the state for each child who participates in the Purchase of Care program (child care for low-income working families). The higher the STAR rating, the higher the financial rate of support, and the greater ability of the program to offer sustained, quality services.

The EastSide Pre-K program was officially designated a STAR Level 5 at the end of May. EastSide is the first charter school in Delaware to participate in this program and the first public school to receive a STAR 5 designation! Achieving the STAR level 5 rating in such a short period of time is truly a remarkable achievement.

During 2013-2014, the Pre-K program also had the following outcomes:

- 95% of Pre-K students passed our Kindergarten readiness exam and are considered, “ready to learn” at grade level
- 100% of Pre-K students are currently enrolled for Kindergarten at EastSide for 2014-2015

## Overview of Expansion Plans

The Pre-K program is set to expand into the new EastSide Early Learning Academy facility, which will open in September 2014. The Academy will have three classrooms and a multi-purpose room. The Academy will be accredited with a STAR level 5, maximizing Purchase of Care reimbursements. A well-qualified Director of Early Child Education has recently been hired and the program will be staffed by six teachers (2 per classroom).

Since our current facilities have reached near-maximum capacity, the Academy will be housed in modular units that will be placed in the open space next to our auditorium. The Academy will be a free standing self-sufficient facility. As further detailed below, the start-up capital costs for the Early Learning Academy are more than \$800,000.

### Rendering of the Early Learning Academy



## FUNDING NEEDS

Funding is a critical issue for charter schools in Delaware. While charter schools receive essentially the same government per student operating funds allocation, we do not receive any government funding for capital facilities. Thus, in order to obtain and maintain our buildings, we have to rob our operating funds and/or seek philanthropic support. In addition, since our students need so many more academic and socio-emotional services than the typical traditional school student, our funds are already stretched to meet these needs. Below is a list of our current operating and capital needs. More information is contained in Appendix C.

### EastSide Charter School

#### ONGOING OPERATING NEEDS: SUPPORTING UNFUNDED SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Small classes/Teacher pay equity/Performance and attendance bonuses	\$ 160,000
Pre-K Scholarship Program	\$ 70,000
Pre-K Teacher Pay Equity	\$ 147,000
School/Curriculum Design and Alignment	\$ 35,000
1 Teach for America Corps member	\$ 5,000
Universal free breakfast and lunch for all students	\$ 30,000
Academic Tutorial Program for 70+ students	\$ 15,000
Summer Academic Enrichment Academy	\$ 70,000
Academic Based Field Trips/In-School Activities	\$ 50,000
Instructional Music Program	\$ 10,000
After school Athletic Program	\$ 20,000
Communities in Schools (2 casework counselors)	\$ 60,000
Mentoring Program	\$ 21,000
Community Service Days	\$ 5,000
Fundraising and Foundation operations	\$ 75,000
<b>Total Annual Needs for Supplemental Education Operating Programs</b>	<b>\$ 773,000</b>

#### EASTSIDE CHARTER SCHOOL CAPITAL NEEDS

Install fire sprinklers	\$ 645,365
Bathroom ADA renovations	\$ 525,000
Elevator	\$ 176,000
HVAC upgrades (replace A/C window units with integrated HVAC system)	\$ 1,151,716
Replace window systems throughout	\$ 800,000
Electric upgrades (replace light fixtures and electric panels throughout)	\$ 1,070,675
Interior renovations (modernize classrooms, including flooring and ceilings)	\$ 1,405,630
<b>Subtotal Deferred Maintenance; Capital Upgrades*</b>	<b>\$ 5,774,386</b>

\*Cost would be \$350,000 less if all done as a single project

## INFRASTRUCTURE/DEFERRED MAINTENANCE NEEDS

Charter schools in Delaware receive no government funding for capital. Although we acquired the former Martin Luther King School in 2006 for “free”, it is a 1960’s era facility and came with an \$8.7 million deferred maintenance burden. Since that time our very generous philanthropic supporters have contributed about \$8.1 million which has been applied as follows:

Deferred maintenance	\$ 3,100,000
Supplemental education programs	\$ 2,050,000
New capital projects*	\$ 2,200,000
Scholarship Fund**	\$ 400,000
Communications, fundraising, Foundation operations	\$ 350,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 8,100,000</b>

\*Targeted grants to improve library, computer room, playing fields, outdoor recreation areas, gymnasium, cafeteria, auditorium and security systems

\*\*Targeted grant to establish an endowment fund for scholarships for graduating 8th graders to attend a New Castle County independent high school

Our remaining list of deferred maintenance and other facility upgrades has an estimated cost of \$5,774,386. These capital improvements are necessary to maintain a vibrant, efficiently operating and Code compliant facility.

In the course of our capital upgrades during the last 7 years, the Wilmington Department of Licenses and Inspections has been understanding of our financial situation and has been somewhat lenient in not requiring us to upgrade the entire facility to current Code requirements. We believe we have a safe facility with minimalist comfort and attractiveness but it is not energy efficient and it does not compare in comfort and attractiveness to modern traditional district schools. We believe that we could achieve substantial energy efficiencies and great enhancements to the students’ and staff’s learning/working environment by replacing 1960’s era leaky window systems (\$800,000) and noisy, inefficient window air conditioning units with a modern, integrated HVAC system (\$1,151,716) and by renovating classrooms, hallways and bathrooms to improve the lighting and otherwise modernize the appearance of the School (\$2,476,305). However, we have gotten to the point where the L&I Department will not permit us to make any renovations aimed at energy efficiency, comfort or attractiveness without first meeting certain current building code requirements – starting first with installing a sprinkler system (\$645,000) and meeting accessibility requirements in the bathrooms (\$525,000) and by installing an elevator (\$176,000).

Accordingly any funds applied to capital projects will be applied first to the new Early Learning Academy and next to these Code required improvements so that we can then get to the energy saving and building comfort and attractiveness improvements that will save us operating costs and improve the learning/working environment for students and staff.

## Early Learning Academy

### CAPITAL EXPANSION COSTS

There is a large capital budget associated with the expansion of the Early Learning Academy. The breakdown of these costs and funds raised to date are listed below.

- Purchase and install 4 Modular Units	\$ 320,359.00
- Site Work, etc.	\$ 321,407.00
- General Conditions	\$ 109,212.00
- Furnishings, Supplies & Materials	\$ 45,722.00
- Architect/Engineering	\$ 27,675.00
- Building Renovations	\$ 19,781.00
<b>Total Start Up Capital Costs</b>	<b>\$ 844,156.00</b>
<b>Grants received to date</b>	<b>\$ 704,300.00</b>
<b>Additional capital funds needed</b>	<b>\$ 139,856.00</b>

### SUPPLEMENTAL OPERATING COSTS

Our Pre-K is largely funded by the State's subsidy for childcare for low income working parents (Purchase of Care or POC). The POC subsidy is based on the "market rate" for Pre-K programs and on the STARs quality rating of the program. EastSide's Pre-K has the highest 5 STAR rating which means that the subsidy payment to us is 102% of the "market rate". However, our program is much more expensive than the "market rate" because it is totally integrated with our K-8 program; our Pre-K staff have the same qualifications as our K-8 staff (whereas the more typical Pre-K program only employs high school graduates as teachers); and our Pre-K staff is paid on the same salary scale as our K-8 staff. Moreover, even though the POC program contemplates that parents will make a co-pay on a sliding scale, many of our parents struggle to make this co-pay, further reducing the revenue we receive. Finally, parents are eligible for the POC subsidy only if they are employed. If a parent loses his/her job during the school year, we lose the POC payment but as a matter of policy we continue to serve the child in our Pre-K. The budget on the next depicts the Early Learning Academy's operating deficit.

**Operating Revenue:**

- Private (Family Contribution)	\$ 32,670.00
- State POC	\$ 289,913.58
- Expected Loss of Private Pay	\$ (19,602.00)
- Expected Loss of POC	\$ (57,982.72)

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<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$ 244,998.86</b>
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**Operating Expenditures:****Salaries**

- Teachers	\$ 117,232.50
- Para professionals	\$ 82,215.00
- Director/Instructional Coach	\$ 27,500.00

<b>Other Employment Costs</b>	<b>\$ 89,751.38</b>
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**Learning Materials**

- Professional Development	\$ 2,000.00
- Field Trips	\$ 1,000.00

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<b>Expenditures Before General Overhead</b>	<b>\$ 319,698.00</b>
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<b>Operating Deficit Before Gen Overhead</b>	<b>\$ 74,699.00)</b>
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<b>General Overhead Allocation</b>	<b>\$ 222,663.00</b>
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<b>Operating Deficit After Gen Overhead</b>	<b>\$ (297,363.02)</b>
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## APPENDIX A

### EastSide's Academic Record

EastSide had early success when it was a small school with grades K-4. However, when the School expanded in size and to older grades, the academic record declined. Beginning in 2008, the Board took aggressive action to reverse that slide. We made changes in leadership and the academic program and took other steps designed to improve the school climate. In addition, taking advantage of the extensive facilities of the former MLK School, such as the gymnasium, auditorium/theatre, cafeteria and playing fields, we devoted resources to becoming a full service community school.

The actions taken began to bear fruit in the 2009-2010 year when the School achieved "Adequate Yearly Progress" ("AYP") in Reading and came very close in Math. AYP is the rating under the federal "No Child Left Behind" regulations that determines if a school is making adequate progress toward 100% of its students testing at least "proficient". Fewer than 50% of Delaware schools achieved AYP in 2009-2010.

In the 2010-2011 year the School continued its positive growth by achieving AYP in both Reading and Math. This was a significant achievement, but, despite this positive growth, because the State re-centered the measurement of "proficiency" in 2009-2010, almost 2/3 of our students still tested below "proficiency". Despite this progress, the Board decided that the academic growth was not coming fast enough. Thus, in the spring of 2011, we embarked on a search for a new school leader who had the experience, talent, and drive to make EastSide a top quality educational institution.

In April of 2011, after an extensive search, we announced the hiring of a new Head of School, Lamont W. Browne, Ed.D. Dr. Browne has returned to Delaware where he attended the University of Delaware and received his undergraduate, masters and doctorate degrees. After a brief career in banking, he taught math at A.I. duPont Middle School for several years before moving to serve as the Principal at the Boys' Latin Charter School of Philadelphia and then the Henry Edmunds School within the School District of Philadelphia. Dr. Browne has brought an enormous energy and determination to enable children to succeed in our EastSide community. Most importantly, at every step in his career he has demonstrated the ability to move his students substantially ahead.

Dr. Browne has brought with him a "myopic focus on instructional excellence" in the K-8 classrooms. This means, among other things, a significant upgrade in the quality of our staff and a paring back of programs that are not critical to the core mission of our K-8 school. In order to attract more highly qualified instructional staff and leaders, three steps were taken in the 2011-2012 year to make EastSide Charter a more appealing place to work:

1. Improvement in the compensation structure so that we are now competitive with the neighboring traditional school districts
2. Revision of the school calendar to shorten the overall academic year from 11 months to 10 months (while still maintaining more school days by shortening the school vacation periods and still retaining more class hours than traditional school districts by lengthening the school day)



3. Providing for every Friday to be a half day of classes leaving the other half day for teacher professional development and planning. In addition, Dr. Browne makes every effort to assist teachers/staff in their own personal career development.

Dr. Browne also initiated a number of new strategies to support the teaching staff and to create a new esprit among the students and their families:

- The school’s leadership team begins the school year in July planning for the year
- The teaching staff starts school in early August with a week of professional development and planning; and
- The academic year for students begins in mid-August with two weeks of half days, with the remaining half days reserved for further professional development and planning by staff.

Much of the activity with the students during those first two weeks is concentrated on “this is the way we do things at EastSide”. This new way includes homework every night, strict adherence to new school uniforms, timely attendance, and consistent enforcement of proper school behavior. Parent open houses are also used to impress these new rules upon parents. Also, four times during the year there is a day devoted to community service by all students and staff with the Middle Schoolers going into the community and the Lower Schoolers participating in projects in and around the school.

Dr. Browne and his leadership team begin the school day at 7 am greeting students and parents as they arrive for school and end the day with a good bye as they are leaving at 4 pm. Free breakfast (and lunch) is available and served to all students. During the school-wide morning announcements, teachers recognize students’ good achievements and behavior with “Shout Outs.” A new EastSide pledge is recited in unison during the morning announcements as well (See Appendix B). Additionally, as part of a new focus on separating the Middle Schoolers (Grades 5-8) from the Lower Schoolers (Grades K-4), the Lower and Middle Schoolers have different uniforms and they have separate Assistant Principals assigned with responsibility for those respective units. Within the Middle School a separate 5th Grade Academy, with distinctive uniforms, has been created to assist those students with that transition year.

## **EastSide’s Strategic Operating Plan**

We believe that public education is the key to turning around our failing inner city neighborhoods. Providing a high quality education is the primary opportunity for significant, regular, sustained and effective contact with kids from these communities. It is the opportunity to provide a vision for a successful future in life and to provide the tools to get there. A successful program requires extensive and concentrated contact with the students and treatment both for educational deficiencies and socio-emotional issues:

### **EASTSIDE’S ACADEMIC FEATURES AND INITIATIVES**

- Longer school day (8:00 am - 4:00 pm)
- Longer school year (191 days, starting in mid-August and ending in mid-June)
- Smaller classes (typical class 20; overall teacher/student ratio: (1:15))



- Middle School Principal, Lower School Principal and Dean of Students serve as special support and coaches for the teachers; all of the academic administration being focused on driving instruction in the classroom
- Homework every night
- Four days a week book club class to promote literacy and interest in reading for all middle school students
- Free afterschool tutoring for the students most in need of essential reinforcement
- Teachers operate in “Professional Learning Communities” that meet 1-2 times weekly
- Half day Fridays reserved for staff professional development and planning
- Aggressive recruiting of teachers with a demonstrated record of success
- Teach for America corps teachers have been a part of our faculty since 2009
- A coaching/mentoring model teacher evaluation program that involves classroom observations (unannounced) every 2-3 weeks which are videoed and followed by a review session focusing on tips to improve the very next day.
- Incentive compensation to reward teachers for exceptional student academic advancement and for perfect or near perfect attendance
- Full day Pre-K and Kindergarten
- Summer Academic Enrichment Academy

#### **EASTSIDE’S SCHOOL CLIMATE FEATURES AND INITIATIVES**

- School uniforms required (different uniforms for Middle Schoolers, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Academy and Lower Schoolers)
- Parents commit to attend quarterly teacher conferences to receive report cards
- Free breakfast and lunch for all students
- Strict adherence to consistently applied rules; staff performs as “One Band, One Sound”
- Extensive counseling services (Dean of Students heads a School Climate Committee consisting of 4 counselors and a Student Support Specialist, plus a school nurse; 20% of our students receive socio-emotional counseling)
- Strong sense of community with an emphasis on celebrating student and teacher success
- More than 100 members of the business community come to the School for once a week, 45 minute mentoring sessions with 25% of our students

#### **EASTSIDE’S MANAGEMENT AND FACILITIES FEATURES AND INITIATIVES AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS**

- 21 member, highly dedicated Board representing broad cross section of the community overseeing School operations through the work of active committees
- Experienced professional management of academic, financial and administrative operations
- Consistent, balanced budget operations
- 5 acre campus containing 70,000 sq. ft. 1960’s era public elementary school and community center facility including 3+ acres of playgrounds and athletic fields

- Board has raised over \$8.1 million since 2005 to subsidize the academic program, improve the facilities, establish scholarships for graduates, and expand Pre-K services through the Early Learning Academy
- Roger Crozier Scholarship Program established in the fall of 2009, which provides scholarships for graduating 8<sup>th</sup> graders to attend Sanford, Wilmington Friends, St. Mark's, Tatnall or another of the area's independent schools
- Playgrounds and athletic fields renovated with \$600K + in special grants
- Another \$600K in special grants funded gymnasium/locker room renovations
- Community service by students and staff. Each calendar quarter there is a day devoted to community service with the Middle Schoolers (accompanied by staff) going into the community and the lower schoolers participating in projects at the school
- EastSide's extensive Mentoring Program brings more than 100 persons from Wilmington businesses and churches for once a week sessions with our students
- Communities in Schools, a national organization whose Delaware affiliate now has two counselors at EastSide who work with the School's counselors to assist students and their families with social, parenting and psychological issues, and brokers the services of other community social service organizations
- Community use of facilities. To maximize the use of the School's renovated playing fields, recreation areas and gymnasium, EastSide strives to expand its use of these facilities for athletic activities involving our students and other neighborhood kids. The plan is for the athletic fields and gym to be used year round. EastSide's other facilities are available to churches and other community organizations for meetings and other activities

## APPENDIX B

### EastSide Pledge

- I *am* a contributing member of the EastSide Community.
- I *believe* that I can succeed in life with respect, integrity and humility.
- I *believe* that it is my right and my responsibility to be the best version of myself at all times.
- I *will* respect myself, my classmates and my teachers every day.
- I *believe* that I control my destiny and my actions today will affect my life tomorrow.
- I *believe* I am a Soaring Eagle because there is no limit to the heights I can reach.

*I know I will succeed because I believe in the EastSide Way*

## **APPENDIX C**

### **EastSide's Funding Needs for Operations; Supporting Unfunded Supplemental Education Programs**

EastSide's ability to create dedicated learners depends on a highly structured academic program during extended school hours and other special programs and services. Following is a list of the programs and services that depend largely on private gifts and grants to meet their annual cost:

#### **SMALL CLASSES/TEACHER PAY EQUITY**

**\$160,000**

Because EastSide offers so many additional programs and also has a population that is in more need than that of many other schools, we stretch our budget to do as many things as possible. Also because we have smaller classes than traditional school districts we receive less funding per classroom. This means less money to pay staff. As a result, in the past we have paid our teachers less than neighboring school districts, while at the same time asking them to teach a longer day and a longer year. To make our compensation more competitive with other area schools, Dr. Browne reworked staffing and the budget to direct an additional philanthropy funding to teacher compensation. This permitted increased salaries, bonuses for exceptional student academic performance and for perfect or near perfect attendance, and stipends for taking on additional administrative leadership responsibilities. Now our compensation structure is competitive with the neighboring school districts. Like most public schools, EastSide offers teachers up to 7 days off a year for illness or personal reasons. However, to encourage attendance, EastSide pays a bonus for not taking those days off. The end result is that funds that would otherwise go to paying substitutes goes to teachers with exceptional attendance records, thus improving teacher compensation and reducing the number of days classrooms are led by substitutes.

#### **PRE-K SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

**\$70,000**

The Early Learning Academy is providing high quality early childhood education to one of the most high needs communities in Delaware. As a public school EastSide receives government funding support and does not charge tuition for grades K-8. However, government education funding is not provided for Pre-K so we have to charge families a monthly fee for this program. The State does have a program that subsidizes childcare for low income working parents (Purchase of Care or POC). The POC program contemplates that parents will make a co-pay on a sliding scale; however, many of our parents struggle to make this co-pay. Finally, parents are eligible for the POC subsidy only if they are employed. If a parent loses his/her job during the school year, we lose the POC payment but as a matter of policy we continue to serve the child in our Pre-K. For both of these reasons we have to provide substantial "scholarship" aid to Pre-K parents.

### **PRE-K TEACHER PAY EQUITY**

**\$147,000**

Our Pre-K program is much more expensive to operate than the typical pre-K program because it is totally integrated with our K-8 program; our Pre-K staff have the same qualifications as our K-8 staff (whereas the more typical Pre-K program only employs high school graduates as teachers); and our Pre-K staff is paid on the same salary scale as our K-8 staff. This adds a significant cost to our operations but it is critical to the strategy of our Early Learning Academy.

### **SCHOOL/CURRICULUM DESIGN AND ALIGNMENT**

**\$35,000**

EastSide is in the midst of re-designing its curriculum and better aligning itself with the Common Core in efforts to better prepare our students. As a part of this shift, EastSide is partnering with Expeditionary Learning, a national leader in experience-based learning. As a part of this partnership, Expeditionary Learning will provide intensive teacher training and assist school leadership in the re-design of school curriculum. On-Site consultants from Expeditionary Learning will guide the school transformation and participation in national training institutes will give our staff the tools needed to implement the improved teaching methods. These initiatives will help transform EastSide and further improve academic performance on state proficiency tests.

### **TEACH FOR AMERICA**

**\$5,000**

2014-2015 will be EastSide's sixth year of a partnership with Teach for America, a nationally renowned program that recruits highly talented college graduates to commit to teaching for two years in some of the most challenging school environments in the country. TFA corps members do not come out of traditional education programs but rather attend a special TFA Academy in the summer before their first assignment and receive special counseling and mentoring throughout the year. The Delaware Department of Education has accredited the TFA program as an alternative way to achieve teacher certification in the State. TFA has become so popular in recent years that about 10% of the graduating classes of the Ivy League colleges apply. TFA has 10 applicants for every one spot that it has available. One unique aspect of the TFA Corps members is that a key qualification to be accepted into the program is that the applicant must have faced and overcome some substantial hardship or challenge. This greatly increases the chances of their success in challenging school environments. In order to participate in this program we pay TFA \$5,000 per year for each TFA corps member.

### **UNIVERSAL FREE BREAKFAST AND LUNCH**

**\$30,000**

Great educational programs are not effective if students are unable to concentrate. Kids need to have a nourishing breakfast in order to be ready to learn. Many of our students were coming to school without such sustenance so we started providing a free nutritious breakfast to all in 2008 and that has had a very positive effect on students' ability to stay on task in the morning classes. Such a large percentage of our students (87%) are eligible for free or reduced cost meals under federal programs, it is less expensive for us to offer



free breakfast and lunch to all to avoid the administrative cost of collecting partial payments from some students and filing the necessary reports with the federal government. Nevertheless, we spend about \$30,000 a year to subsidize this program.

### **ACADEMIC TUTORIAL PROGRAM**

**\$15,000**

Approximately 70 of the lowest-performing students in the School are identified for an extra hour of after school academic instruction in small groups two days a week. In addition this program will also be offered to all students, providing enrichment programming for our stronger performing students. EastSide's full-time faculty will provide the tutorial assistance and earn a stipend for the additional work. Gifts to this program will fund the teacher stipends and will allow the School to expand the program to more students on more days.

### **SUMMER ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT ACADEMY**

**\$70,000**

EastSide operates a 4 week summer enrichment academy for selected students whom the faculty identify as most in need of and most likely to benefit from such a program. These students are most at risk of sliding backwards over the summer and in need of continuing academic stimulation. Also included are those students who were right on the cusp of testing proficient on state mandated exams. This program has been very successful as the academic performance of the School has continued to progress in recent years. The program was recently expanded to include all new, incoming students (to assist them in learning the "EastSide Way"), all rising 5th graders (to assist them in transitioning to the 5th Grade Academy), and all rising 6th graders (to assist them in transitioning to Middle School).

### **ACADEMIC BASED FIELD TRIPS AND IN-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

**\$50,000**

An important part of a young person's education is introduction to the world outside of their own neighborhoods. Many of our children live in circumstances where they do not get the broadening experiences of visiting museums, historical sites and other culturally enriching venues. Therefore, we strive to make up for this deficiency by providing numerous field trips to sites such as the Franklin Institute, the Grand Opera House, Hagley Museum, Brandywine Zoo, Camden Aquarium, Longwood Gardens, Philadelphia Zoo and the Delaware Nature Society. Field trips of this nature are easily incorporated into the curriculum.

Additionally, EastSide holds numerous extra-curricular events throughout the school year that enrich each student's experience. Academic pep-rallies are held quarterly to reward high-achieving students and prepare students for upcoming tests and major assignments. End of year celebrations, promotion ceremonies and other events are held to honor student and class achievements. While these events may seem small in importance, they play an important role in motivating student achievement while building a common school culture through shared experiences.



### **INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAM**

**\$10,000**

Instrumental music programs are disappearing throughout the country. The vision of the EastSide Charter String Program is to provide exposure to cultural arts, instruments to students in need, musical instruction, and music theory and ensemble training to students who have a sincere desire to learn and perform. Students will learn a broad genre of music from J.S. Bach to James Brown. String lessons began in 2011 at EastSide Charter. Our amazing String Ensemble performs several times during the year including performances throughout the school year and at the year ending academic awards ceremony. A music enrichment program can provide growth in many areas of performance with improved music skills, confidence and leadership. If we do not level the “playing” field for our students, they will not become the musicians or music educators of tomorrow.

### **AFTER SCHOOL ATHLETIC PROGRAM**

**\$20,000**

After School Athletic Programs have been shown to help students excel academically in the classroom by creating a learning experience outside the classroom that enables students to grow and mature as well as build self-esteem. Through the discipline instilled by dedicated coaches and the spirit of good sportsmanship from interaction within a game, students have opportunities to work as a team, grow as leaders and become more resilient and flexible adults. EastSide Charter seeks to offer a variety of different athletic based programs for our students such as cheerleading/dance squad, boys’ and girls’ basketball, flag football, track, and girls’ volleyball. The costs of the program include pay for coaches and officials, transportation, uniforms, and other equipment and supplies.

### **COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS**

**\$60,000**

Communities in Schools is a national organization which works with schools to facilitate connections with needed community resources to help students learn, stay in school, and prepare for life. EastSide has a partnership with the Delaware affiliate of CIS pursuant to which CIS provides two associates on-site who maintain a case management and services program for students identified by EastSide as needing social and behavioral counseling dealing with anger management, conflict resolution, decision making, personal ethics, organizational management and goal setting.

### **MENTORING PROGRAM**

**\$21,000**

EastSide has a long standing partnership with Barclays, Capital One and other corporate partners in Wilmington that participate in the School’s mentoring program. Over 100 employees from various Wilmington businesses work one-on-one to mentor an EastSide student during weekly, 45 minute mentoring sessions aimed to build



character and academic skills. The funding needs associated with the mentoring program include the salary of the Mentoring Coordinator and the cost of various field trips and activities that occur throughout the year.

### **COMMUNITY SERVICE DAYS**

**\$5,000**

Community service not only improves our community it builds personal character. Starting in 2011-2012 all EastSide students have participated in quarterly Community Service Days on the last day of each marking period. Middle School students go into the community to be a part of a service project that reinforced the importance of pride in one's self as well as the greater good of the community. On the same day our lower school students learn about community service and work on different projects on the school campus. Funds for this project cover transportation, t-shirts and other supplies needed to complete the different projects.

### **FUNDRAISING AND FOUNDATION OPERATIONS**

**\$75,000**

The Foundation operates with a lean staff of one Development Director who manages the publication of periodic School newsletters, reports and other external communications, public relations, major grant writing, the annual fund solicitation, facilities renovation projects and third party facilities use.

### **TOTAL UNFUNDED SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

**\$773,000**

## APPENDIX D

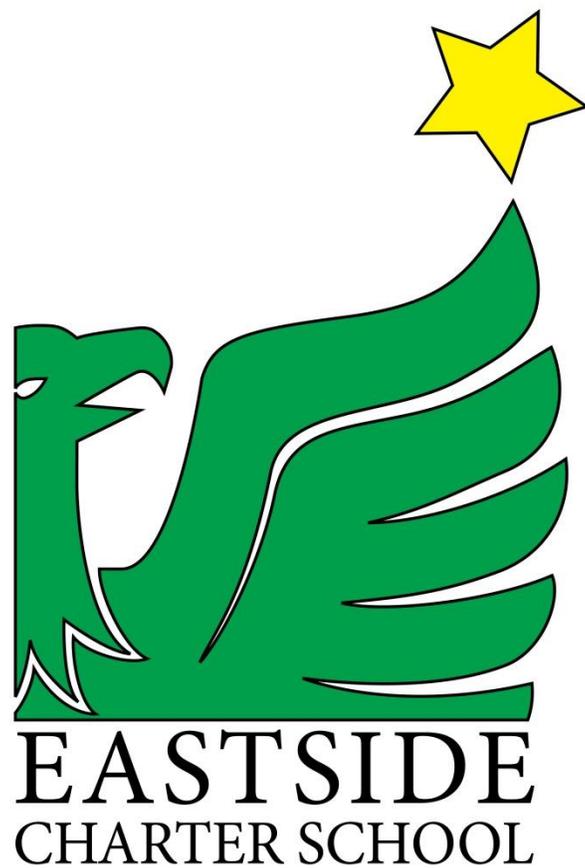
### Fundraising

Charter schools in Delaware receive no government funding for capital. Although we acquired the former Martin Luther King School in 2006 for “free”, it is a 1960’s era facility and came with an \$8.7 million deferred maintenance price tag. In addition, government funding is not sufficient to provide the supplemental education programs needed by our student population.

Therefore, since 2006 we have had an ongoing campaign to raise funds to address that deferred maintenance, to make other capital improvements and to subsidize the various supplemental education programs provided to our high needs students and which are not funded by the government. As detailed elsewhere in this Case for Support, during that time our very generous philanthropic supporters have contributed about \$8.1 million.

The fundraising through June 30, 2014 can be summarized as follows:

\$ 5,259,768.11	33 Foundations and other non-profits
\$ 1,883,764.94	34 Businesses
\$ 109,000.00	Government grants
\$ 447,398.59	Board members
\$ 399,722.02	Other individuals
<hr/>	
\$8,099,653.66	Total



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