



ESPERANZA
ACADEMY

ESPERANZA
64
STUDENTS

ESPERANZA
224
ALUMNI

GIRLS
ALL
OF COLOR

GRADUATE
100%
HIGH SCHOOL

ENROLL IN
77%
COLLEGE



READY TO

Rise

2024

WHAT WE DO

Our model answers the call to reimagine what urban education can be.

We counter the systemic, institutional, and social barriers inherited by our students with opportunity, affirmation, and support.



Transformative Justice actively disrupts the school-to-prison pipeline through restorative justice techniques.



Culture of STEM integrates math and science learning across the school to change the narrative of “who’s good” at these subjects.



Music Therapy counters the negative neurological and emotional effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences.



Community Wealth centers the values, beliefs, and traditions of the local community in the everyday experiences of our students.



Graduate Support is a 12-year commitment to place each student in high school and support them as first-generation college students.

To serve our community more fully, we must grow.

Core beliefs guide our work

1. We believe that learning and growth happen in a community of justice.
2. We believe that creating high-quality learning opportunities for black and brown children is anti-racist.
3. We believe that access to foundational and critical literacies in reading, writing, and math is a right.
4. We believe that building relationships breaks down walls and challenges bias.
5. We believe that music therapy supports social, emotional, and cognitive well-being.
6. We believe that honoring cultural wealth helps students thrive.
7. We believe that a long-term commitment to the educational journeys of our students helps them disrupt the cycle of poverty.
8. We believe in the power of community to support and lift our students and their families.
9. We believe that teachers are central to this work and we can't do it without them.
10. We believe that there is immense power in being a girl.



READY TO *Rise*

Esperanza Academy is embarking upon the most ambitious fundraising campaign in our history, one that will elevate every girl that walks through our doors. In order to provide our students with the ideal space to realize their hopes and dreams, we invite you to join this vital Capital Campaign to:

- Create an inspiring new space to support historically underserved students in critical thinking and communication, creativity and exploration, collaboration, and leadership.
- Expand our innovative and time-tested program to serve more students and families, starting at an earlier age.
- Increase our wrap-around support of graduates, closing opportunity gaps and addressing the unique needs of first-generation students.
- Plan to scale components of our model, like music therapy and restorative justice, to broaden the impact of our work on a local, state, and national level.
- Attract and retain teachers who are gifted educators committed to social justice and antiracist practices.
- Establish broad and deep partnerships with community organizations that will help us rise together.

Esperanza Academy is a tuition-free, all-girls, middle school, built on justice and centered in joy. We celebrate, support, and inspire each student to embrace their brilliance. Our program empowers girls to redefine what is expected of them, to counter societal limitations, and to take on challenges that will positively impact the trajectory of their lives in Lawrence, MA and beyond.



THE PROBLEM

Most urban schools are bare-bones programs focused on standardized test preparation, ultimately failing to educate the students they serve. Because of systemic racism, communities of color, and girls in particular, are at greater risk of experiencing fewer qualified teachers, inferior infrastructure, and less access to high-quality curriculum. Through our innovative programming, we have fundamentally reimagined what urban education can look like—and it's working. However, our long-term impact is constrained by our physical location. Simply put, we have outgrown our building. The layout and limited space of our school means that even the most creative solutions can't accommodate the demand to serve more students starting at an earlier age.



OUR SOLUTION

We've created a school carefully designed to serve the needs of low-income urban students well. Now we are ready to expand our impact. Moving to a new location will allow us to add a lower school to our middle school. By growing our one-of-a-kind, tuition-free, all-girls model to begin in Kindergarten, we will catch students earlier in life and have more time to move them through our program and out of poverty. The future Esperanza Academy will also include an expanded Graduate Support Center that supports our alumni through high school, college and early entry into the workforce. A new space will allow us to increase programming and services so as to ensure higher levels of student success with broad and deep community engagement.



OUR VISION

We won't let poverty win. Our vision reimagines how education can move children out of the generational poverty cycle and into fulfilling futures. Our plans will transform lives, our city, our state, and our nation by transforming Esperanza into a model for what urban education should be.

READY TO *Rise*

Our time-tested, innovative program is an evidence-based, replicable model that can scale nationally.



THE CASE FOR GROWTH

The research is irrefutable, the sooner you can educate a child the better. Our academically rigorous extended-day and extended-year model supports our fifth through eighth graders in their journeys of self-discovery. But poverty has a grip on these girls long before they enter our middle school. We need to support their families starting earlier in order to really have a chance at reshaping the predetermined trajectory that growing up in poverty creates.



Our expansion will happen in phases



READY TO *Rise*

Our current enrollment does not adequately meet the needs of our community or reflect the potential of our model. To provide more students and families with the opportunity to flourish, we need to grow.



WHO WE SERVE

We serve students and families dealing with economic hardship, past traumatic experiences, and a reliance on inadequate public systems. Moving to a new location and expanding our programming to serve more students, will make our revolutionary model accessible to a wider array of Lawrence girls and enhance the educational experience for everyone.



NOW

Children from fifth through eighth grade

SOON

Expand to Kindergarten to reach students at a critical stage in development



NOW

Alumni in high school and college

SOON

Expand psychological, academic, and financial support to early career stage



NOW

Music therapy to help students meet social, emotional, and academic goals

SOON

Expand individual and group support services to include movement therapy and art therapy

READY TO *Rise*

Our creative and culturally-responsive approach helps children become more like themselves instead of more like everyone else.



OUR NEW HOME

Lawrence families deserve a resource-rich, vibrant school where their children can thrive— a just and inclusive student-centered place with thoughtful community partnerships. In addition to dynamic classrooms that advance academic excellence, our plans prioritize a series of carefully curated spaces that set Esperanza apart.

- Large lower school and middle school classrooms designed for creativity and critical thinking
- A Science Lab ready for hands-on experiments
- Dedicated Music and Arts spaces for creative expression
- A Test Kitchen for community engagement
- A Bodega for no-cost essential items
- A Graduate Success Center for robust alumni programming
- A stocked library with plenty of cozy places to get lost in a book
- Office Suites, including a conference room and welcome area
- Wellness and Movement space
- Safe outdoor areas for learning and playing
- Faculty collaboration space

When we take the energy of Esperanza and empower it with up-to-date facilities and room to grow, it will lead to girl power the likes of which the world has yet to see.



FOCUS AREAS



Nutrition



A vibrant cafeteria and gathering space in the heart of the school that centers healthy choices

A bodega for no-cost groceries and pantry supplies

A community Test Kitchen for nutrition education and cultural connectedness



Music and Art

Music Therapy services, for individuals and groups

Art Therapy modalities incorporating painting, drawing, printmaking, and sculpture

A recording space for exploring oral histories and imaginative storytelling

Graduate Success



Workshops and programming from financing college to choosing a major

A quiet area to study and work

A resource library and computers loaded with software



STEM

A makerspace for tinkering and engineering

Curriculum resources for topics like coding, circuits, robotics, and 3D-modeling

Laboratory space for experiments and hands-on learning

Wellness



Space to calm, energize, or re-focus students

Meditation area for rest and guided instruction

Movement space for yoga, dance, and athletics

Outdoor Learning and Play



Structured and unstructured areas that encourage learning and play

Safe spaces that draw students and teachers outside and promote mental health

Places for all-weather recess and after-school programming

The future Esperanza Academy is being expertly planned, designed, and built by an amazing team!



“ Esperanza Academy is undertaking the transformation of an old mill area into a new home for the school. It is a journey in which students and faculty are exploring their relationship with place and the school community as a whole is seeking to understand how to create a place that not only embodies justice but becomes a platform to deepen their commitment to it.

Liz Ogbu, Designer and Spatial Justice Activist
Studio O leverages design to address systemic harm and foster environments that support people’s capacity to thrive.



When working with Esperanza, it immediately becomes clear this is a community centered in celebration; the celebration of cultural wealth, the celebration of communal strength, and the celebration of girls and women. It is a joy and honor to reflect this celebration in the design of a new school, to hear the stories and voices of the students and have the opportunity to co-create a space that elevates them.

Naomi Levine, Project Architect
Flansburgh Architects is driven by a belief that the quality of our surroundings has a direct influence on the quality of our lives.



“ While this new building will consist of hundreds of tons of steel and thousands of square feet of walls, floors, and finishes, it will also be built with countless decisions made, numerous options considered, and various sequences and schedules assessed – all to determine the best possible result for the Esperanza community.

Randy Catlin, COO
Windover Construction is an award-winning firm dedicated to advancing the way construction projects are conceived and built.



The passion with which Esperanza Academy drives its vision is contagious, and we are honored to help them increase their reach within the community by improving and expanding the current learning facilities. The team is excited to see the plans come to life for the current and future Esperanza Girls.

Kristi Mynhier, Senior Project Manager
Scalora Consulting Group is an owner-representative focused on meeting schedules and budgets in the most efficient way possible.



READY TO *Rise*

Imagine a school where learning and growth happen in a community centered in justice and joy. A place where girls feel emboldened to bring their full identities into the classroom, find their voice, and embrace their brilliance. A space where students create a roadmap to their dream lives through emotional well-being and academic excellence. Esperanza Academy is this place.

SOON OUR SPACE WILL REFLECT OUR VISION

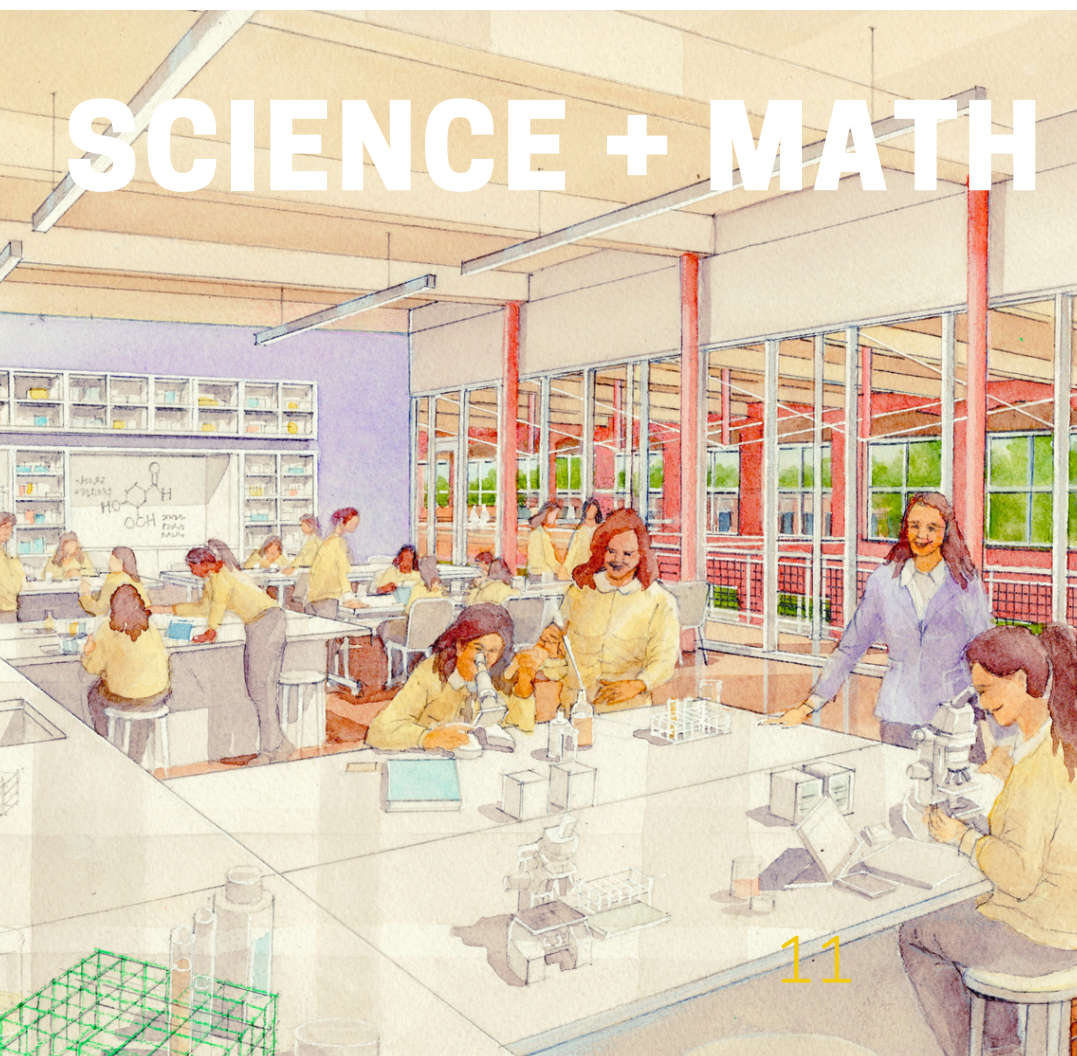


MUSIC + ART



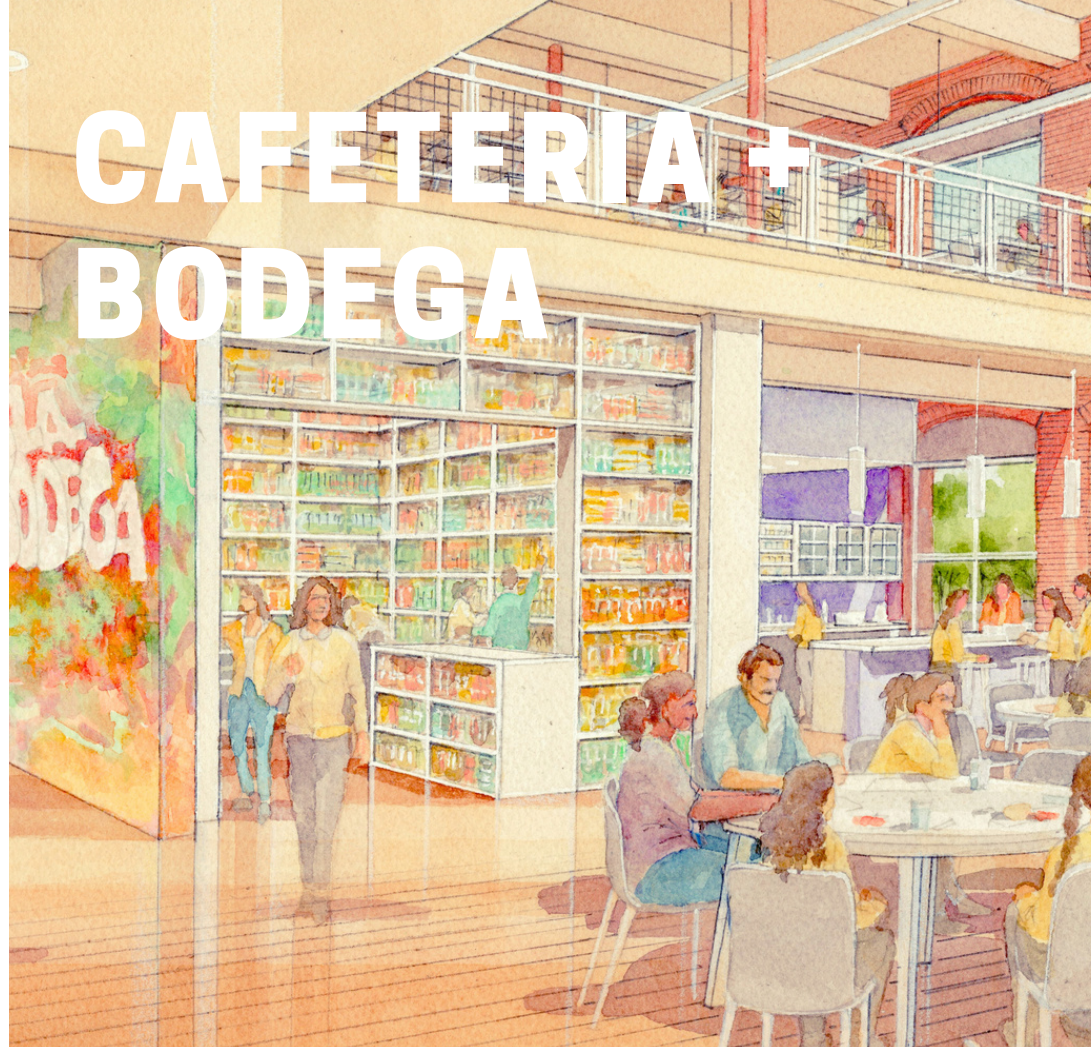
Music and art are a transformative part of our student experience. In the new space, enhanced music and arts programming will include Music Therapy services for individuals and groups including students, graduates, and families, and Art Therapy and Instruction. We are also creating a student-curated Museum to celebrate marginalized voices and the history of immigrant women.

SCIENCE + MATH



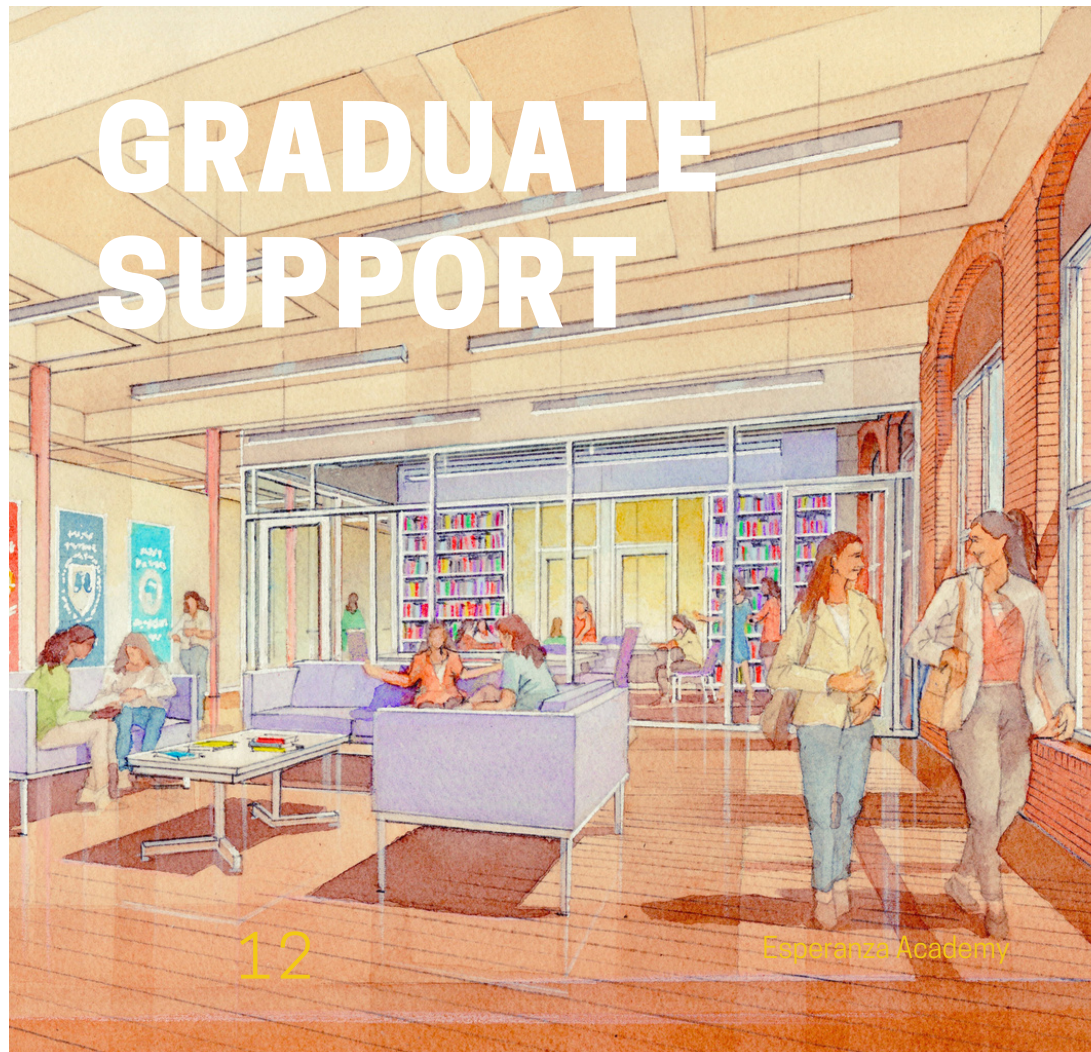
We believe igniting a spark in our students for STEM fields will build a better world for all of us. A new facility will help our students discover who they can become and build confidence through experience. A laboratory space for experiments, and makerspace for engineering, will be supported with curriculum resources for science and adjacent topics like coding, circuits, and 3D-modeling.

Our Cafeteria, located in the heart of the new space, will bring the school together around hot breakfasts, nutritional lunches and delicious snacks. Our Community Test Kitchen will support relationship and skill building, center diverse cultural traditions, and offer hands-on learning for math and science. Our in-school Bodega will provide no cost and no stigma access to healthy food and family necessities, school supplies, and winter layers.



CAFETERIA + BODEGA

Our new Graduate Success Center will support expanded programming to help narrow opportunity gaps for our first generation students. Alumni will be welcomed back for workshops on everything from financing college to choosing a major. They can also take advantage of quiet spaces to study and our loaded resource library.



GRADUATE SUPPORT

OVERALL NEED



Construction **\$26 M**

Transformational capital support for the building renovation project.

Esperanza Fund **\$4 M**

Expansion readiness and operational support for strategic goals.

Raised to Date

\$26.1M

through pledges and challenge grants

Balance Needed*

\$3.9M

from individuals and foundations

* As of March 2024

READY TO *Rise*

This project is about more than bricks and mortar. It is an investment in lifting our community out of poverty.



THIS IS A PIVOTAL MOMENT



\$26.1M
pledged

toward
→

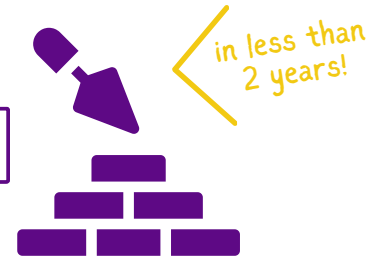
\$30M
goal



of total project budget
raised

from
EIGHT
INDIVIDUAL DONORS

and
SEVEN
FOUNDATIONS



ESPERANZA
HAS RAISED
\$36M

that's
18,255
GIFTS FROM
5,271
donors

all annual budgets
BALANCED

we have
ZERO
DEBT

1/3 DONORS have
supported us for
TEN+ years

READY TO *Rise* DONOR PROFILE



For more than thirty years our philanthropy, board work, and volunteering has primarily focused on a number of educational and environmental causes, predominantly at the local level as we feel this is where our efforts have the most meaningful impact.

We have been supporters of Esperanza Academy for more than a dozen years and have seen the school respond to the critical need for access to quality education as it shaped its identity and developed its innovative approach to urban education. The need for the kind of transformative impact the Academy has on our girls, their families, and their community of Lawrence is as necessary and compelling today as it was more than 15 years ago. The work Esperanza does in the areas of restorative justice, music therapy, and respect for the cultural identity of the girls and their families heals, motivates, and empowers – and it resonates deeply with us. The vision of this campaign to expand the school down to kindergarten will extend quality education to a level where it can most influence future success. An upgraded school facility, enhancing the faculty’s and staff’s capacity to provide the essential programming, is equally resonant.



This campaign is the most forward-looking and important undertaking for Esperanza since its inception. We have known and worked with every one of Esperanza’s Heads of School and we can say with confidence that Jadí’s dedication and motivation to take Esperanza to a level that is not only sustainable, but that also gives the girls their best chance to succeed is inspirational, and his determination is unmatched. This campaign will have an impact on these girls that is transformational in the most meaningful ways. Esperanza is assuredly changing lives and doing the hard work of breaking the cycle of poverty, and we are eager and grateful to be able to be a part of this effort.

Our total commitment is \$600,000. This is not only a “reach” gift for us, but it is by far the largest single commitment we have made to any organization – this cause is that important. If we find ourselves able, we will increase our financial commitment to the school and the campaign. We hope our support and enthusiasm for this campaign will encourage you to join us in making a “Ready to Rise” a reality.

Lucy Crocker Abisalih and Thomas C. Abisalih

READY TO *Rise*



In the Fall of 2023, we publicly launched the largest comprehensive fundraising effort in our school's history. With our talented students, dedicated teachers, and generous donors, Esperanza is nearly three-quarters of the way toward our Ready to Rise total project goal!



Jadi Taveras
Head of School

- 1** Meet with the Esperanza Team to discuss gift opportunities.
- 2** Make a connection. Your generosity can inspire others.
- 3** Visit EsperanzaAcademy.org/ReadyToRise for more stories.



Pati Fernández
Chief Development Officer



Peter Ramsey
Campaign Consultant

