



January 25, 2012

Please Give to the 2011–2012 Elysian Charter School Annual Appeal
It's only takes \$1 to show your support.

Dear Friends of Elysian Charter School:

Fifteen years ago, a group of families who were looking to create a progressive education model and improve the quality of living in Hoboken for families met in Church Square Park and came up with the idea of starting a charter school, the likes of which had never been seen before in Hudson County.

This group, called the Mile Square Families, envisioned a school with outstanding teachers, motivated leadership and exceptional community commitment. Elysian Charter School was born from this vision and today our progressive school delivers these benefits and more to 288 children from Hudson County and beyond.

As a public school, the majority of Elysian's funding comes from municipal tax monies from the districts our students reside in, however, the amount of money that is allocated to Elysian is different from each district. The amount is calculated by the Department of Education and is based on a funding formula developed by the NJ State Legislature, not the local Hoboken School District.

All students enrolled in Elysian must first register in his/her home district and then that district transfers that student to Elysian. The home district then sends a check to Elysian for 90% of the state-determined minimum per-pupil spending. However, all the other money that the district receives does NOT get passed along to Elysian (e.g. transportation and adjustment aid, Abbott money).

The result of this, according to the New Jersey Department of Education, is that the Hoboken School District received \$24,092 of taxpayer funds per pupil in 2009-10 (last year data is posted), but Elysian Charter received only \$17,536 per pupil. **That's a loss of \$6,556 for each student, meaning we receive only 72% of the total amount of funding per student.**

In addition, we have to pay the rent (\$300,000 annually) for our two facilities—Rue and Demarest—out of our operating budget because like most charter schools, we are not afforded separate funding for facilities from taxpayer money. This means all repairs, improvements, replacements and construction comes out of our educational funding.

So how do we do so well with 28% less funding than a traditional public school? We run everything on a lean budget, with all of our expenditures focused on instruction and other needs of the children. For example, there is no assistant principal. Our teachers and other staff members have not seen a raise this year even as some of their costs (e.g. healthcare) have gone up. Parents and other community members often donate to the school—including time, materials and money. There is a culture in our school where everyone gives beyond what is required to ensure that our singular focus on the students is the prime motivation.

In addition, each year, the Friends of Elysian holds an **Annual Appeal Campaign** to help our teachers and administrators plug the gaps that hit the school's operating and facilities budget.

Elysian needs your annual appeal contributions now more than ever to help our administrators and teachers continue to improve on our quality programming, instruction and culture and remain one of the highest achieving charter schools in the State.

The bottom line is that without your support, many of the programs, activities, and educational enrichments that make Elysian Charter so special simply cannot exist.

We recognize that families have different financial capabilities and times are tough, but please know **it only takes \$1 to participate in the Annual Appeal and show your support.** This year's Appeal goal is \$50,000 and to date we have already exceeded the \$10,000 mark thanks to a group of committed, regular donors. Our Appeal is accepting donations until May 1, 2012.

There are two easy ways to contribute to the Annual Appeal. You can mail your tax-deductible check (or credit card) payment, payable to the "Friends of Elysian Charter School," along with the enclosed donation card. Or you can visit our secure website at **www.friendsofelysian.org** and make your credit card donation through our secure online site. There you can also learn how you can lead your employer to a matching donation.

Being a "friend" of the Elysian Charter School, you know the positively different benefits your child and your family receives. We thank you for showing your support for our school and helping Elysian continue to be a model of educational success in the State of New Jersey.

Sincerely,



Grace Leong and Deborah Lewis
2011–2012 Co-Chairs, Friends of Elysian

P.S. All 2011–2012 Annual Appeal donors will be recognized on the Friends of Elysian website. If you prefer to make your gift anonymously please indicate this preference on the enclosed card or email us at friends@ecsnj.org.

