



friends of
**CHESTER
ARTHUR**
elementary



2015-2016 Annual Report

Friends of Chester Arthur

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elementary

FoCA

2015-2016 FoCA Board

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Kimberly Newman

Mission

Friends of Chester Arthur (FoCA) is a volunteer-led 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that is committed to engaging our neighborhood public school—Chester A. Arthur, community partners and families to:

- Facilitate involvement and engagement with the school;
- Promote and celebrate the successes at Arthur;
- Provide tools and resources for the school to improve educational opportunities for Arthur's students and neighborhood children; and
- Foster an engaging, safe and robust learning environment for Arthur's students.

Vision

The Friends of Chester Arthur's vision is to:

- Support Arthur as an anchor for our diverse community and a top choice for all families; and
- Serve as a model for how to engage the community in supporting neighborhood public education across Philadelphia.

Core Values

- Transparency and inclusion;
- Responsibility in stewardship of funds;
- Responsive support to school leadership, staff, students, and home/school needs;
- Adaptability in our role as the needs of Arthur change; and
- Mutual engagement between the community and school.

Community Support & Partners

University City Science Center • The William Penn Foundation • Wells Fargo • OCF Realty • SOSNA • Christian Street YMCA • Drexel University's Eat.Right.Now. Program • OLIN Landscape Architects • American Society of Civil Engineers • Dancing Classrooms • Astral Artists • Pennsylvania Ballet • Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) • Girls on the Run • SALT Design Studio • Marshall Dennehey Law Firm • US2020 Pilot STEM School • University of Pennsylvania's CityStep Program • Children's Literacy Initiative • Walnut Street Theatre • The Lenfest Foundation • Playworks • AmeriHealth Caritas Partnership • Shiloh Baptist Church • Governor Ed Rendell • Mayor Jim Kenney • Representative Jordan Harris • Councilman Kenyatta Johnson • Ballet X • Girls Inc. • & more.





A Note from FoCA President, Ivy Olesh

FoCA's Board has been reflecting on everything that has been accomplished at Arthur in the last 3 years that Principal Newman has been the school's leader--the school's redesign plan to move to a model of inquiry-driven and project-based learning; an innovative learning lab and schoolyard currently under construction in the yard behind the school; a comprehensive after-school program for middle school students to provide them with extracurricular programming and academic help; a comprehensive STEAM learning environment with 1:1 technology school-wide and a maker space; a comprehensive, k-8 STEM education program; multiple after-school programs; the list goes on and on.

We often attribute many of FoCA's successes to the fact that we work so closely with Principal Newman and the school's leadership team which gives us an awareness of the school's strategic priorities. We view a large part of our role to be helping to provide the resources in order for the school to achieve great things and expose children to the wonders of learning. Within that scope, we focus our attention on the things we can truly impact. Those things include: making school an enjoyable experience through access to innovative programming and extracurriculars and clubs; improving students' opportunities through access to technology, new curriculum and software to make learning fun and relevant; supporting school culture through Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS); and supporting messaging and improvements that continue to solidify Arthur as not just an anchor for our neighborhood but a fantastic choice for all families with school-aged children who reside here.

We are thrilled to see that through a true partnership of school, home, community and beyond, we are collectively able to accomplish great things. This year in particular, we saw this symbiotic relationship hit a stride. It has been a breakthrough and record-breaking year in so many respects. Chester Arthur has seen improvement in student attendance and growth in enrollment with more students each year registering for kindergarten and with students consistently self-reporting at higher rates their satisfaction with their educational opportunities, FoCA has been able to engage more supporters and funders, setting a fundraising record with over \$100,000 raised last year, not counting the money raised for the schoolyard project. The strides that have been made under Principal Newman's leadership have been truly remarkable.

Now that a strong foundation has been laid at Arthur, FoCA will continue to line up amazing opportunities that reinforce the school's strategic priorities and complement them by continuing to support the school as a community asset. We know that we can't do that alone. We need Arthur's Village to maintain the momentum. Thank you for all of your help thus far. We look forward to continuing, together, to improve the educational opportunities for the children who live in our neighborhood.

Ivy Olesh, *President FoCA*

News & Notes

FoCA NIGHT OUT

The 2016 FoCA Night Out was the most successful yet, raising close to \$60,000. Proceeds support foreign language programs, building upgrades such as new air conditioners in classrooms, upgraded technology, and new partnerships/programming. Please mark your calendars for the 2017 FoCA Night Out which will be held on March 18, 2017 at Trinity Center for Urban Life.

LENFEST FOUNDATION GRANT

Arthur was honored with a generous \$60,000 grant from the Lenfest Foundation to support robust and innovative after-school programming for students in grades 5-8, including STEM/Makerspace programming, after-school tutoring & enrichment, athletic & leadership activities through Playworks, drama & the arts through Walnut St. Theater and more. 70% of students are participating in at least one club.

ANNUAL APPEAL

Our 2015 Appeal raised over \$12,000 which supports FoCA's general operating budget and contributes to direct classroom support including field trips, upgrades, new materials & innovative learning software.

SWCC 5K

FoCA again played an integral role in organizing the neighborhood race. The run brought in over \$18,000—twice the amount of the previous year. Proceeds support schoolyard maintenance, sports & athletic programming.

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS

Our board implemented a new donor management system, hired a professional accountant, updated bylaws, received pro bono council for the schoolyard project, added new board members & committees, and updated marketing materials and collateral.



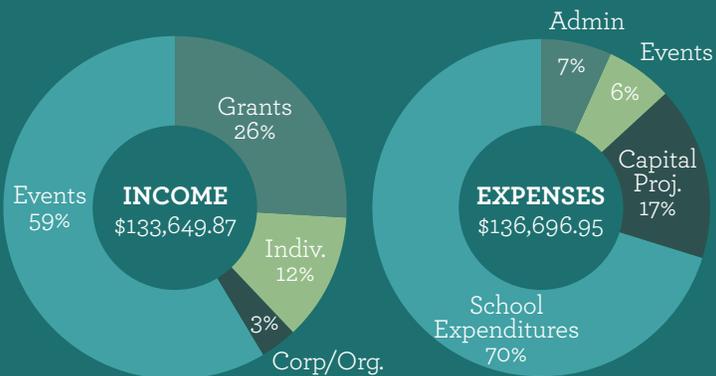
Arthur's New Playground & Learning Lab



With the support of Arthur, our institutional partners and community members like you, FoCA has worked to convert the once barren asphalt lot into an outdoor, interactive educational oasis for Arthur students and a sustainable, green space for our community. Construction on the Arthur Schoolyard is nearly complete! The finished Schoolyard will serve as a place for teachers to implement an inquiry-driven model of teaching, a place for Arthur students to apply STEM learning and to learn about green stormwater infrastructure and practices, and an active community space where both students and members of the larger community can gather and engage in structured and unstructured play all while feeling more connected to our neighborhood school.

FoCA Financials

We're again thankful for the support of individuals, organizations, and philanthropic organizations.



\$1,100,000

William Penn Foundation

\$232,000

Stormwater Management Incentives Program grant through Philadelphia Water Department

\$175,000

Direct support from School District of Philadelphia

\$110,000

Neighborhood Transformation Initiatives Grant from Councilman Johnson

\$25,000+

from the community

A Note from Arthur's Principal

I truly can't believe that I'm in my fourth year as Principal of Chester Arthur! And, I'm honestly more excited than I've ever been. I spent the summer working as a Neubauer Fellow which is a selective program that works with high-performing school leaders to provide quality professional development that refines and augments leadership skills in order to help us lead our schools to higher levels of learning. I learned more about defining a vision for student success, building effective teams and coaching for results, and applying entrepreneurial principles to school leadership for the benefit of students.

Since Arthur was named a Redesign School by the School District of Philadelphia 2 years ago, we've been working diligently to implement our plan for an inquiry-driven, project-based learning environment at Arthur. Our wonderful teachers and staff have worked closely with consultants who have led professional development sessions and now they will have the opportunity to work with The College of New Jersey to assist them in creating rigorous curriculum to be used in our outdoor learning environment: The Arthur Schoolyard. Everyone is so excited!

I am very proud of everything that has been accomplished so far while I acknowledge that we still have improvements to make. We're thrilled that students are showing up to school excited to learn, have opportunities to engage their creativity and pique their curiosity, and are exploring new extracurriculars to ensure they leave Arthur as more well-rounded citizens of our neighborhood, city and world. And based on the fact that over the past 3 years more than 95% of graduating 8th graders are getting into the high school of their choice, I know we are doing our part in preparing them for a successful future.

Thank you for all of your support. We truly can't do it alone. Without our team of Arthur cheerleaders--teachers, staff, families, partners and the community--we would never be able to expose our students to the wonders of learning and the doors that a good education will open for them.



Kim Newmann, *Principial, Chester A. Arthur*

2015-2016 By the Numbers

+24.8% increase

In PSSA science scores. 3rd best in Pennsylvania!

8 ways to get involved

Community Events & Outreach Committee, FoCA Night Out Host Committee, Little FoCA, Schoolyard Maintenance & Capital Projects Committee, Fundraising Committee, FoCA Board, Volunteer, or Donor.

4 schoolyard clean-ups

where the community comes together to weed and water plantings and cleanup the Schoolyard.

844 Facebook likes

an increase of over 300 from last year

542 Twitter followers

an increase of over 100 from last year

225+ people

attended the annual FoCA Night Out with approximately \$60,000 raised.

400+ t-shirts

sold and purchased for Arthur students

12 FoCA board meetings

attended by our 12 member Board of Directors.

50+ committee meetings

ranging from committee and board meetings, meet-ups, events, open houses, and cleanups.

Here's How YOU Can Help

We've made a great deal of progress but still need your help to keep up the momentum at Arthur. Here are a few ways you can help bring the vision to life:

1. MAKE A DONATION

2. CONNECT US

- Host an event so we can get the word out
- Introduce us to potential supporters

3. JOIN OUR COMMITTEES

4. STAY IN TOUCH

Website FriendsOfChesterArthur.org

Facebook FriendsOfChesterArthur

Email ArthurSchoolGroup@gmail.com

Twitter @FoCA_Philly

Visit 2000 Catharine St. Phila, PA 19146



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What makes Chester Arthur a good school are the teachers. Our teachers have our best interest at heart. They are supportive and are there when we need them. They make sure that we're not just learning about lessons in the classroom, but outside the classroom, as well. At times they are tough on us, but it's because they want the best for us.

Chester Arthur sixth-grader