

Building Our Future *Together*

First State Montessori Academy
Capital Campaign – Phase 3





MISSION

The mission of the First State Montessori Academy is to create successful, contributing, life-long learners in a FREE MONTESSORI public educational program for students in Kindergarten through 8th grade.

First State Montessori Academy provides parents and students with an authentic, time-tested, Montessori education in a public school. We have seen firsthand that the creation of a Montessori public school in New Castle County, DE improves student learning, allows for greater choice for parents, and serves as a model for alternative approaches to education by providing a proven and innovative teaching and learning environment.

Dear Friends of FSMA,

Nearly five years ago, we embarked on a historic effort—the founding of First State Montessori Academy. The faith of many and the need for this type of education to be available as a free public offering, contributed to the power of a Montessori education being made available to hundreds of children in Delaware. Today, its incredible impact is seen daily in our halls, by our families and on the landscape of Delaware education.

FSMA is building on this strong foundation - adding Middle School and growing to more than 600 students. Last summer, we began extensive renovations to our Upper School building to develop an inviting Montessori environment that meets FSMA's exacting standards and allows students to experience joyful learning, while enriching them not only as learners, but individuals. Our commitment to personalized education extends to our planning efforts, as we have thoroughly outlined several stages of expansion and renovation.

As a charter school, FSMA receives no public funding for any of its facilities. This means that the school must pay for its two buildings—the rent, maintenance, and renovations—on its own. Yet, strong financial stewardship has enabled FSMA to lease the Upper School without taking on debt. Moreover, FSMA plans to self-fund a large portion of the total \$2 million renovation budget.

In the past few years, FSMA has renovated many spaces in both the Lower and Upper School – creating a Lower School movement space, creating large classrooms, updating bathrooms, partially soundproofing the gym and adding bleachers, adding an art space with a kiln, updating wiring and technology, updating sprinkler systems, as well as our biggest project – building out the entire third floor of the Upper School.

We are reaching out to you as your values align with ours. Plus, our children and families, now and in the future, will greatly benefit from all you are able to offer. With all you now know about FSMA, before you decide on the amount of your gift, please consider the importance of our school's mission, the impact FSMA has on so many children today and will have for many years to come, not to mention, the returns FSMA brings to the larger community.

As you look through this packet, I am confident you will be delighted by our plans. We are not only building classroom walls but also transforming the students' experience and journey at First State Montessori Academy and beyond.

Thank you for your consideration,

Courtney Fox

Head of School

A Little History...

Since its opening in 2014, First State Montessori Academy has experienced tremendous growth. Enrollment has increased from 278 students to almost 600 students, and we have doubled our footprint in the city by acquiring a second building. In the upcoming years, we will grow to almost 650 students.

We are excited about the opportunity to design the right learning spaces in our new building. FSMA has carefully assessed and prioritized our needs, in a deliberate process that involved working with other schools, researching innovative learning environments, and identifying what spaces our new Upper School curriculum will demand.

Already Completed...

Phase 1 – Completed 2017	Phase 2 – Completed 2018
Total Cost - \$270,000	Total Cost - \$970,000
Renovated Gym – sound panels/bleachers/ basketball and volleyball courts Created Instrumental Music Room Created Science Lab Updated Sprinkler System Technology Upgrade	Build out 15,000 square feet of space (Upper School 3 rd Floor) – floors, walls and ceilings Create art room with kiln Create conference rooms Add phone system, technology and wiring

Next Projects and Needs...

Phase 3 – 2019	Phase 2 – Future Ideas
Total Cost – estimated \$500,000	Total Cost - ???
Add Lockers to 1 st and 2 nd Floor of Upper School (lockers already acquired through a donation) Reconfigure classrooms to accommodate final number of classrooms for total students Update flooring in Upper School Update flooring in hallways of Lower School Create STEM Lab	Update Lower School Playground Increase number of Smartboards

The DESIGN:

After carefully analyzing the needs and plans, we have developed a plan to address the current and future needs of FSMA. FSMA is utilizing the incredible talents of Fearn Clendaniel Architects to create spaces that align with our Montessori mission in a cost-efficient way. FSMA classrooms are being designed to meet the recommended square footage of the American Montessori Society's guidelines, as well as be spaces with natural light and natural finishes.

The SOLUTION:

The FSMA leadership team has identified solutions for the dreams and needs of the school, pertaining to the renovation of two floors of the Upper School. To make this a reality, it is imperative we continue our capital campaign. The most effective way of doing this is to appeal to our community – both our families and our Delaware neighbors.

It is vitally important that everyone in our community become involved in this commitment.

The general Capital Campaign titled "Building Our Future Together" started on November 1st, 2016 and in the first year quietly raised over \$600,000.

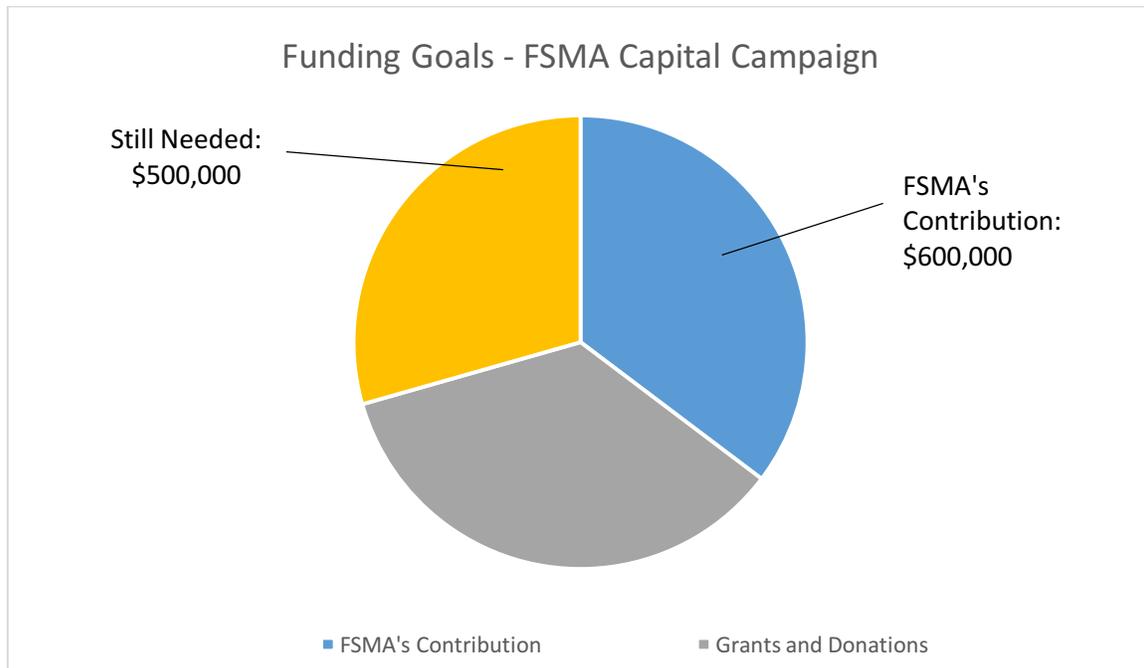


Project Future Costs: \$500,000

FSMA has already self-funded over \$600,000 in our first two phases and needs your support to finish the final phase of our renovation plan.

FSMA believes we are making an **incredible impact on education** in Delaware which is why we are reaching out beyond our own families. We have chosen to locate in downtown Wilmington and support local businesses every day. From Wilmington Library to the Community Education Building to local theatres, our students are connected to local resources every day and **FSMA provides jobs to almost 100 people.**

Beyond our impact on the local community, we feel strongly that the spirit of giving goes both ways. As a part of the education landscape in Delaware, we are hopeful that everyone sees the importance of making our schools better and feels the need to contribute to this incredible cause. In a time when the state is cutting programs and budgets for Delaware public schools, it is essential that the community comes together to help fill the gap. ***Your investment in our children today will not only have an immediate impact, but will also impact our state long-term as these will be the children who will be working here very soon.***



As a charter school, FSMA receives **no public funding for its facilities.** Therefore, the school is completely responsible for financing this ambitious expansion and renovation project, which will allow FSMA to serve students all the way through eighth grade.

Grants/Foundations: From the beginning, a number of local philanthropic organizations and companies have contributed to FSMA's growth. We are extremely grateful for this support.

Here are some of the local groups that have made recent grants to FSMA:

Big Fish Educational Foundation	\$5,000
Buccini Pollin Group	\$15,000
Crystal Trust Foundation	\$50,000
Longwood Foundation	\$300,000
Sallie Mae Foundation	\$5,000
Schell Foundation	\$15,000
Verizon	\$12,500
Welfare Foundation	\$50,000
THIS COULD BE YOU!	Please give generously

THIS IS WHERE YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!

Your support for this capital campaign will have a lasting impact: it will help increase the number of Delaware children who benefit from the excellent public Montessori education that FSMA provides on a tuition-free basis. Your gift will help ensure that for many years to come Delaware children experience joyful learning in an inviting, carefully developed Montessori environment. These children will be well prepared as lifelong learners ready to become engaged, responsible, contributing members of the Delaware community and future work force.

SUGGESTIONS for GIVING:

Online Giving: You can make a tax-deductible contribution right now by going to www.firststatemontessori.org and clicking on the **Giving** tab.

Commemorative Gifts: Purchase a leaf or an acorn on FSMA's Giving Tree with your preferred monetary bracket. Visit our website to purchase your leaf and let us know what you would like inscribed on it. This is a great way to leave your mark on FSMA forever and show your commitment to the incredible educational opportunity our school affords Delaware children. It is also an opportunity to remember or honor loved ones, share a favorite quotation, or write words of inspiration for future generations.

Naming Opportunities: When you fund the renovation of an entire learning space, FSMA will recognize your generous gift by placing your name (or the name of a person you wish to honor) outside the door along with a note of gratitude. Naming opportunities include:

Science Lab: \$50,000	Music Room: \$30,000
Art Room: \$20,000	Gymnasium \$75,000

Matching Gifts: If you work for a company that matches gifts, you can double your gift by following your employer's matching contribution procedures. Please contact your human resources office for eligibility information and to obtain a matching gift form. Companies that we know have a matching program include:

- Bank of America
- Chase
- CitiGroup
- State Farm
- Verizon

United Way: The gift that keeps on giving may be made through United Way contributions when you designate FSMA #12883

Amazon: Designate FSMA as your preferred beneficiary of the AmazonSmile Program

We continue to be grateful for the absolutely wonderful environment that you have created for all the children.

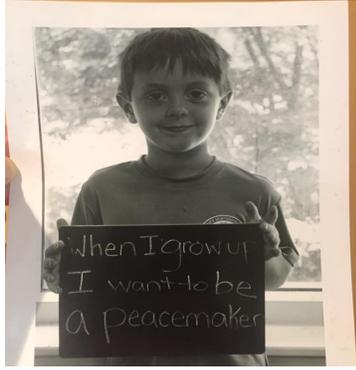
*They are not just learning academics, they are also learning how to work both independently and collaboratively, to respect themselves and others, to be accepting, encouraging, and supportive. They are learning to be good human beings, which is just as important as reading, writing, and math. **I truly believe that what you do helps to make the world a better place.***

~A current FSMA parent

What Can You Expect From Us?

- **Commitment:** FSMA will continue to provide a tuition-free, authentic Montessori program as a public school option for all children in Delaware
- **Growth:** The expansion of a strong, innovative school in downtown Wilmington
- **Academic Excellence:** Did you know?
 - Overall, our state-wide test results show that we are making strong gains in all areas. **In a comparison to last year's data, the average grade level increase was 12% with gains as much as 23%.** These are strong increases, especially when compared to the state averages which showed little to no gains from last year to this year.
- **Giving Back:** Our students and staff will continue to look for opportunities to give back to our community and support our local businesses
- **Responsive Teaching:** FSMA will continue to deliver a high-quality education to fit the diverse needs of our student body
- **Community Relations:** We continually reach out to nearby neighborhoods and increase awareness about Montessori and FSMA
- **Personal Investment:** FSMA will build on its strong parent involvement and engagement at all grade levels
- **Stewardship:** FSMA prides itself on sound financial management.







Thank you for your consideration!

First State Montessori Academy

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