







# A NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Emerald Academy's 2020-2021 school year was one that will not be soon forgotten. While much planning goes into the launch of each academic year, the preparation needed to serve scholars in person and virtually was significant.

Because of the diligence of our scholars, families, and faculty, we not only completed the school year but did so while achieving landmark growth on statewide testing, as well as being recognized as Charter School of the Year.

This annual honor is given by the Tennessee Charter School Center to an exemplary performing school whose creativity and out-of-the-box efforts have not only made an impact on the education of its students but also have the potential to change the landscape of public education as a whole.

Moving forward, and to continue to achieve such impactful results, we must stay relentlessly focused on our mission to prepare urban scholars for the college of their choice and community leadership.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Emerald Charter Schools, thank you for being on the journey with us.

Sincerely,

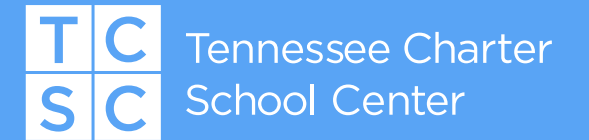
Steve Diggs  
President, Emerald Charter Schools







# CHARTER SCHOOL OF THE YEAR



Statewide testing data from 2020-2021 confirmed Emerald Academy is changing the trajectory of learning outcomes for urban youth and supporting dramatic academic gains among scholars.

For the first time in the school's history, Emerald Academy earned the highest possible level of growth in literacy, in numeracy and in the composite score of all tested areas. This resulted in scoring a Level 5 – the highest Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System score – across every single category. These results – and more below – contributed to Emerald Academy earning Charter School of the Year by the Tennessee Charter School Center.

“We are incredibly impressed by the strong academic growth and excellent student success taking place at Emerald Academy,” said Tennessee Charter School Center CEO Maya Bugg. “Each year, we aim to draw attention to and celebrate the public charter schools that are truly exceeding expectations for children, parents and the community. As Knoxville’s first charter school, Emerald Academy is breaking new ground and raising the bar on public education in East Tennessee.”

Across the state, charter schools serve more than 44,000 students in four cities: Knoxville, Chattanooga, Memphis and Nashville.

Additional achievement highlights include:

- **Emerald Academy tied with 13 other elementary schools in Knox County for the top growth scores, out of 51 public elementary schools across the district. Only one other middle school in Knox County achieved the highest growth in each area – Farragut Middle School.**
- **All teachers who taught in tested subject areas achieved at least Level 3 growth, indicating that their scholars made a minimum of one year’s academic progress in one year, with numerous teachers scoring at Level 4 and 5, indicating growth of more than one school year in one academic year.**

These data include all Emerald Academy scholars in 2020-2021: those attending the school in person, and those participating on the school’s virtual learning platform offered during the COVID-19 pandemic.



**BECAUSE OF YOU:** *Emerald Academy received the highest grade in school history on the state report card.*





# AN INVESTMENT IN SCHOLARS

When Tiffany and Derrick Hill enrolled their daughters, Danielle and Davayla, for kindergarten at Emerald Academy, they weren't quite sure at first about the long day – 7:45 a.m. to 4 p.m. But now they wouldn't have it any other way.

Danielle, in fifth grade, and Davayla, in fourth grade, excel at school. "My girls want to meet the standard that Emerald Academy sets for them. They are being raised to achieve and to enjoy those hours. The high bar is preparing them for success," said Mrs. Hill.

What stands out is Emerald Academy's investment in its scholars. "It has been absolutely amazing. Emerald Academy is like family," she said.

Mrs. Hill points to the strong academics. The girls particularly enjoy art, music, reading and math. Teachers notified her that Danielle reads on the middle school and high school grade levels. Danielle and Davayla like to compete in math drills at home.

"Last year, Danielle received the Founders' Award, the highest award for her grade level. It is based not just on academics, but overall. It melted my heart. This year, they both got Director's Awards. They are confident in themselves, thanks to the school."

And Mrs. Hill appreciates updates sent by the school daily, often through the "ClassDojo" app. She can use the app to reach anyone on the faculty.

"I can connect to the school director, teachers and the girls' cheerleading coach. A teacher may send a link to show how math is done," she said.

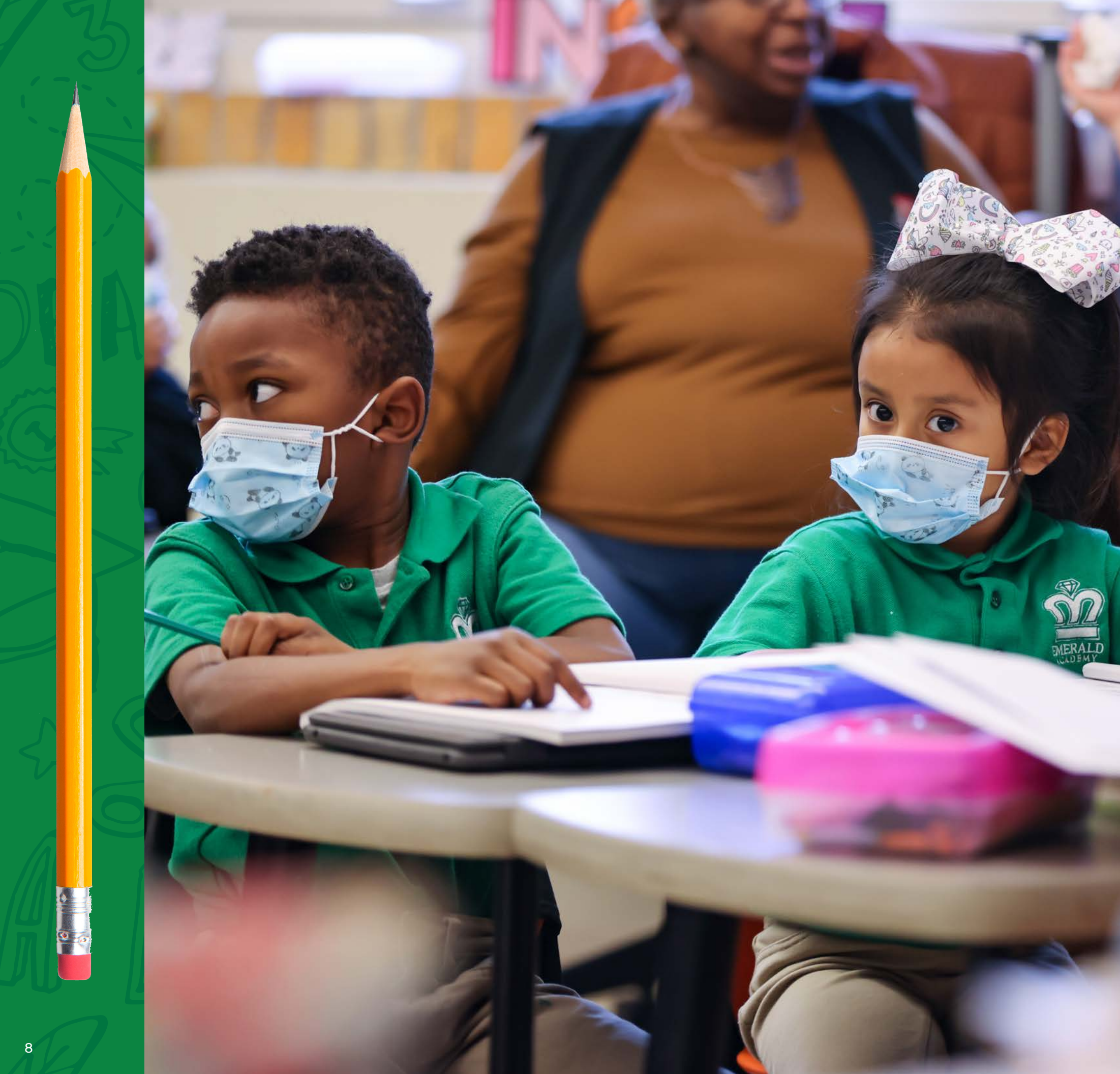
She appreciates Emerald Academy's early emphasis on college. "My girls know the names of colleges they see at school, and it starts a conversation. They will say, 'Where is that? What type of school is it?'"

Even the uniforms are a plus, she said – easy and stress-free. Best of all: "When Danielle received the Founders' Award, she got a sweater with the Emerald Academy logo on it. She worked hard for it, and now she wears that sweater every day."



**BECAUSE OF YOU:** *More scholars are entering high school prepared for advanced math classes than their peers in the district, based on their proficiency in eighth grade math.*





## OUR MISSION

Emerald Academy's mission is to prepare urban scholars for the college of their choice and community leadership.

## OUR GOALS

### **Long-Term Goal**

- By 2025, Emerald Academy will be a reward school, as measured by Tennessee's revised accountability system.

### **Near-Term Goal (2021-2022)**

- *Growth:* 70% of scholars will meet their growth goals on the NWEA MAP assessment.
- *Achievement:* A majority of scholars will perform on grade level.

## OUR VALUES

### **High Expectations**

- We believe everyone can achieve.

### **Excellence**

- We keep learning so we can be the best.

### **Respect**

- We treat others the way we want them to treat us.

### **Teamwork**

- We work together.

### **Commitment**

- We press on, even when it gets hard.





# INDIVIDUAL CARE MARKS FAMILY'S EXPERIENCE AT EMERALD ACADEMY

Elvyn and Pamela Davidson chose Emerald Academy for their sons, Benjamin, 13, and Miles, 5, because they had a good feeling about the school.

Elvyn Davidson said the boys are thriving in the individual attention and high-quality academic instruction they receive. "Our experience has been amazing. The care, concern and communication have been superior," said Mr. Davidson.

Their story at Emerald Academy began two years ago, when Benjamin, now an eighth grader, began sixth grade at the school.

"We moved him to Emerald Academy about two months into the school year. He was attending school somewhere else, and he wasn't happy."

Things were good at Emerald Academy from the start. "The change was amazing. Benjamin likes science and engineering. The teachers at Emerald Academy facilitated that love, and the attention and communication gave him no option but to excel."

And Miles, who began kindergarten in fall 2021, is soaking up knowledge every day. Woven into his curriculum are the things he loves best, like dinosaurs, Bigfoot trucks, and Blaze and the Monster Machine books.

Davidson describes a well-rounded experience at Emerald Academy for both boys that includes high academic standards, incentives for excellence, and daily communication with parents. He loves that the awards that competitive Benjamin has won recognize good character as well as achievement.

In fact, Benjamin and Miles are carrying on an important family tradition. They are the grandsons of the late, distinguished physician, Dr. E.V. Davidson, the first Black surgeon in East Tennessee, and his wife, Esther, a nurse. The boys inherited a legacy that values education.

***"I love that the expectation at Emerald Academy is set from the beginning that you are going to college and that the classrooms are named for colleges. It makes kids know early that college is a viable option."***

**FUN FACT:** The Dr. E.V. Davidson Community Center in East Knoxville is home to an indoor pool where city youth and families can take swim lessons and enjoy open swim sessions offered by Emerald Youth Foundation, Emerald Academy's sister organization.



**BECAUSE OF YOU:** *Scholars did not experience the extensive learning losses demonstrated by their peers across the district and state, and instead realized learning gains across several grades in reading and math.*





# SUCCESSFUL CHANGE HELPS GUIDE THE FUTURE

While the achievements of 2020-2021 are to be celebrated, they were a result of much hard work and willingness to change and be flexible.

Physical education, art, music and recess are still offered weekly to scholars, with scheduling adjustments made that now provide time in Emerald Academy's new library, where small groups of scholars gather daily to read and more easily digest the text they're learning. And thanks to a grant from Truist for additional reading supplies, every Emerald Academy scholar is working to read one million words by the end of the current school year and earn the right to be in the "Millionaires' Club."

Additional intervention is being provided in fifth through eighth grades for scholars who need extra academic assistance to stay on track, and scholar coaches proactively meet with students twice per week who are struggling behaviorally.

Emerald Academy remains committed to meeting the following goals for the 2021-2022 school year:

- **Growth: 70% of scholars will meet their growth goals on the NWEA MAP assessment.**
- **Achievement: A majority of scholars will perform on grade level.**

You can stay up to date on the success of Emerald Academy scholars at [emeraldacademy.org](http://emeraldacademy.org) and on social media (**Twitter @EmeraldScholars** and **Facebook.com/EmeraldScholars**).



**BECAUSE OF YOU:** *Emerald Academy is unequivocally the top-performing urban middle school in Knoxville, based on the percentage of scholars performing at or above grade level.*





# WHO WE SERVE

**429**  
**SCHOLARS**



**87%**  
of Scholars Live in  
City Neighborhoods

## RACE/ETHNICITY



**YOUR SUPPORT HAS BEEN CRITICAL THIS PAST YEAR AND WILL REMAIN SO IN THE DAYS AHEAD.**

## 2020-2021 FINANCIAL REPORT

**Total Revenue** **\$6,322,380**

<b>Public Funding</b>	\$5,071,282
<b>Contributions &amp; Grants</b>	\$1,249,606
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	\$ 1,492

**Total Expenses** **\$5,052,176**

<b>Personnel</b>	\$3,686,910
<b>Transportation &amp; Services</b>	\$ 528,364
<b>Supplies and Materials</b>	\$ 606,322
<b>Depreciation</b>	\$ 183,226
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	\$ 47,354

*At June 30, 2021, fiscal year-end, Emerald Charter Schools' assets included \$1,643,877 in cash and accounts receivables.*

**BECAUSE OF YOU:** *Emerald Academy scholars in kindergarten through fifth grades consistently performed near the top of all urban elementary schools across Knox County.*







**EMERALD**  
**CHARTER SCHOOLS**

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