

# 2018|19

# Annual Report

Growing Scholars into Leaders



# EMERALD ACADEMY





# A Message from the President

Dear Valued Partner,

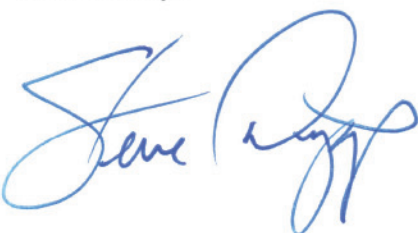
As the county's first and only public charter school I am tremendously encouraged by the progress made to date. We knew when we started this process that it would be a marathon and not a sprint, and I thank you for joining us as we continue to make strides toward putting each scholar on a successful path.

You will see through these pages the academic progress that our scholars are making and how the achievement gap is closing with each passing day. I am most encouraged by our third grade reading scores from this past year showing that we ranked 17th out of 49 Knox County elementary schools in third grade reading, which is a key metric for long-term academic success. Additionally, this group outperformed the Knox County and state of Tennessee averages in the percentage of third graders reading on or above grade level.

Something else that I am proud of is the commitment of our scholars and parents. In the 2018-2019 school year, Emerald Academy had a lower rate of chronic absenteeism than the district: 12.7 percent of Emerald Academy scholars were chronically absent, compared to 15.8 percent of Knox County students.

I'm pleased with the gains we've made, and I anticipate that we will see even more growth during the 2019-2020 school year. Thank you for your commitment to education and for believing with us that we can change the trajectory for these urban learners.

Sincerely,



**Steve Diggs**

President, Emerald Charter Schools

# Our Mission

Emerald Academy's mission is to grow scholars into leaders by creating the best learning culture for city students to develop the skills, habits and values for success in high school, college and life.







# Our Goals

- 1** Scholars will read at or above grade level.
- 2** Every scholar will be ready for high school and on their way to a 4-year college.
- 3** Emerald Academy will rank in the top 5% of all schools in Tennessee.

# What Makes Us Unique?







## Only Charter School in Knoxville

We are the first and only charter school in Knoxville. We are working every day to close the achievement gap for scholars and alter the trajectory of urban youth.



## Longer School Day and Longer School Year

Scholars who attend Emerald Academy from kindergarten through eighth grade receive two more years of schooling than a student in a traditional public school.



## Two Teachers Per Classroom

Each classroom in the lower school has two licensed instructors per classroom, making the teacher to student ratio 15:1.



## College Bound

Emerald Academy is a college-preparatory school, and we are focused on preparing scholars for high school and then the college of their choice. Each classroom is even named after a Historically Black College or University, SEC university or Ivy League school.



## Technology is a Part of Instruction

Each upper school classroom has one technology device per scholar. These resources will allow for a personalized and responsive learning experience for scholars. Scholars in the lower school have one technology device for every three scholars.

# A Path to Success

## High School and

Trinity Phillips is a freshman at Fulton High School and has been pleasantly surprised at how smooth the transition has been from middle school.

She attended Emerald Academy from 6th to 8th grade and has recognized how well it prepared her for high school. "My favorite thing about Emerald Academy is the curriculum. It has been much easier at Fulton because of the preparation I had during middle school. All the college prep courses and quarter assessments really prepared me for high school."

The teachers at Emerald Academy truly invested in Trinity's life, which is a reason why she is so secure and confident at Fulton.







“They helped me a lot with work. For me, I need to have face-to-face talks, so my teachers would come to me individually and even let me stay after school so that I could be tutored. They gave me every opportunity to succeed, and it really prepared me for high school.”

Being at Emerald Academy not only prepared Trinity for high school but communicated to her that college is just around the corner. “It helped me get into the mindset that I will go to college. I want to be a culinary chef. I am thinking about going to Duke, UCLA, Florida State, or the University of Tennessee because they all have strong culinary programs.”

Trinity’s mom, Denise Phillips, also appreciated the college-bound culture of Emerald Academy. “Knowing that she had teachers who cared if she went to college meant so much. It was something we hadn’t experienced before. I wish I had attended Emerald Academy in middle school.”

Through different community service opportunities offered by Emerald Academy, Trinity was also educated about the value of service. While volunteering at the Love Kitchen and KARM, she learned about serving others and doing positive things in her community.



# The Impact of Quality Education





As Emerald Academy finished its fourth year in spring 2019, scholars continued to make significant progress as state test results showed the highest achievement levels in the school's history:

The school's TNReady achievement score improved by an entire letter grade.

Emerald Academy's average scores on the Algebra I and Geometry end-of-course assessments – taken by seventh and eighth grade scholars – exceeded the average for all test takers in Knox County Schools (KCS) as well as the state of Tennessee.

Third grade scholars who attended Emerald Academy since kindergarten had higher TNReady outcomes than newer scholars who had previously attended traditional public schools. This also held true for eighth grade scholars who entered Emerald Academy as sixth graders. In short, the longer scholars are at the school, the more significant improvement in the academic outcomes.

Emerald Academy third graders outperformed the KCS district average as well as the average for the state of Tennessee for elementary schools in English Language Arts (ELA). More than 41 percent of Emerald Academy third graders are reading at or above grade level, compared to 38.7 percent of KCS third through fifth graders.

Additionally, Emerald Academy third graders performed in the top third of all KCS elementary schools in reading, ranking 17th of the district's 49 elementary schools.

*I want our scholars and their families to know that their hard work is paying off. This is an important first milestone, but it is only the beginning of the future success of urban scholars at Emerald Academy.*

**Lauren Moore**  
Interim School Director

# Faculty Profile

## Carlissa Martin



Carlissa Martin, Dean of Curriculum and Instruction, is a Knoxville native who is passionate about closing the education gaps that exist between the urban and non-urban youth in Knox County.

She didn't originally plan on a career in education, rather, Carlissa wanted to be an attorney. It was during her time job shadowing a lawyer who advocated for children that she saw how she could serve Knoxville youth and help them with their education.





When considering joining the team at Emerald Academy four years ago, she was impressed by the school's rigor. She now works closely with the teachers to help ensure they are using the best educational methods to teach scholars.

***“I was really bought in to the curriculum at Emerald Academy. It was unlike anything I had seen in other schools. We provide a tremendous amount of support for scholars, and I think it sets them up for success wherever they go.”***

Building meaningful relationships with parents is important to her so that when challenges arise, a foundation already exists between the teacher, scholar and parent.

Carlissa is incredibly proud of the progress of current scholars and looks forward to seeing them succeed in years to come.

# Why My Sons Atten





# d Emerald Academy

As a single mother of five boys, Nyamah Karmue knows what it looks like to meet challenges and overcome them through diligence and hard work. She is instilling those life lessons in her boys, and Emerald Academy re-emphasizes those values.

Her family lives in Lonsdale, and her sons Daniel, JJ and Jeremiah are current Emerald Academy scholars. Nyamah's oldest son, Deron, is an Emerald Academy alumnus and a freshman at Central High School.

Nyamah says Emerald Academy invests in the boys' lives and meets their academic needs.

***“Last school year, JJ’s teacher took extra time to tutor him in math. His grades went up because of that extra help. She volunteered to tutor him every Thursday during the spring semester.”***

Nyamah is thankful for the individualized guidance and attention that the teachers give the scholars. Each of her boys has improved in various subjects at Emerald Academy and are all dedicated to working hard in their classes.

Deron – the freshman at Central – is an honor student, and Nyamah accredits that to his hard work and the preparation Emerald Academy provided.

Looking toward the future, Nyamah says, “My youngest son is two years old, and he will be an Emerald Academy scholar!”



Because of generous financial investments, our scholars, many of whom lack access to safe places to play around their homes, now have their own playground to enjoy every day.

The longer school day at Emerald Academy gives recess an increased level of importance for our scholars. The American Academy of Pediatrics makes the following claim: "Cognitive processing and academic performance depend on regular breaks from concentrated classroom work. That applies equally to adolescents and to young children."



Representatives from Faith Promise Church attended the unveiling of the Emerald Academy Playground of Promise sign. The sign lists donors who gave specifically to the playground project.



# Because of You



A second capital project that was funded because of the generous support of the Timken Foundation and grant dollars from the state of Tennessee, was a new roof for Emerald Academy. The school, which operates in the Historic Moses School Building in Mechanicsville, needed a new roof to ensure the safety of our scholars and to maintain an environment conducive to learning.

The roof had become a major distraction to learning as classes frequently had to move rooms due to leaks coming through the ceiling. Our new roof has alleviated this lost learning time and is allowing us to continue to meet unmet student needs in the Knoxville community.

A new roof also allows also us to maintain the viability of this 100-year-old building and its historic integrity. The Moses School was built in the early 20th century and was one of the first African American institutions in Mechanicsville. Emerald Academy continues to celebrate the culture and heritage of the urban neighborhood in which it exists.

# 2018|19

## Financial Report

**Total Revenue: \$5,256,812**

**Public Funding: \$4,375,647**

**Contributions: \$675,467**

**Grants: \$202,000**

**Miscellaneous: \$3,698**

**Total Expenditures: \$4,549,943**

**Personnel Related: \$3,337,702**

**Transportation & Services: \$494,137**

**Operations & Maintenance: \$420,978**

**Supplies & Materials: \$236,271**

**All Other: \$60,855**





## Emerald Charter Schools

# Board of Directors

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