

# ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP REPORT

March 2016



EASTERN CHRISTIAN  
SCHOOL



## EASTERN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

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**Design & Layout** - Justin Van Dyke '07

**Photography** - Justin Van Dyke '07

**Printer** - Len Wynbeek '84

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## NOTES

The Annual Stewardship Report is a publication of The Foundation for Eastern Christian School. The purpose of this publication is to share the accomplishments of the past year, the vision for the coming year, and financial/stewardship information.

# Welcome to Eastern Christian School's FIRST ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP REPORT

The Boards of Directors (Operating and Foundation), the administrators, the faculty, the staff, and all of the volunteers at Eastern Christian School recognize the enormity of the responsibility to which we are called. We are stewarding much more than simple financial assets. We have been called to the mission of Eastern Christian School. The success of this mission means lives will be changed for eternity. Not just the lives of the thousands of students that have graduated from Eastern Christian School, but the lives of the millions of individuals that those students have touched and will touch in their lifetimes.

We humbly accept the privilege of being called to serve at Eastern Christian. With the support of you, our ministry partners, we believe this is MISSION POSSIBLE.

The purpose of The Annual Stewardship Report is to update you in several areas of mission progress:

- We want you, our partners in ministry, to know that we take our fiscal responsibility very seriously. To that end, we have included a link to the auditor's report for 2014-2015 as well as the proposed budget for 2015-2016.
- We want you to be a part of the exciting things that are happening here at Eastern Christian School. On the following pages you will find the State of the School report from Tom Dykhouse, Executive Director and Head of School, as well as reports from each campus Administrator.
- We want to honor you, our ministry partners. To that end, you will find a listing of the individuals, businesses, churches, and others who have generously supported the mission of Eastern Christian School in the last year.

I hope that you find this Annual Stewardship Report informative. Thank you for partnering with us. My prayer is that through God's continued blessing and your continued partnerships we will continue to say: MISSION POSSIBLE!

**David A. Visbeen**

Executive Director of the Foundation for Eastern Christian School



## Mission Statement

By providing an excellent academic curriculum, offering a variety of extra-curricular activities, and assembling a caring, culturally diverse community, we, with support of parents and local churches, empower students from Christian families to develop their gifts within the context of a Reformed Christian worldview so that they can act as Christ's transforming agents in a global society.

## Statement of Belief

As a Reformed educational institution, we believe that God is sovereign over all creation. We make a connection to God's claim in every subject, not just in biblical studies or chapel; in all behavior, including language, dress; and in all attitudes, including those toward others and toward property. The overall purpose of an Eastern Christian education, shaped by this Reformed perspective, is to encourage students to use their heads, hearts and hands for God and to use discernment to create a worldview that is formed through the lens of faith.

The Eastern Christian graduate is prepared to be a person of Christian vision and influence and seeks to contribute cooperatively and responsibly to God's mission of renewing all of creation.

## A History of Blessing... a Future of Promise!

On February 23, members of our school community gathered at Eastern Christian High School for our 2016 Annual Meeting. During the course of that meeting, we took time to look back on the many blessings received by our school community since last year's annual meeting, to look forward to the plans being made for the year ahead of us, and to think about our stewardship of the mission that has been entrusted to us for a time such as this.

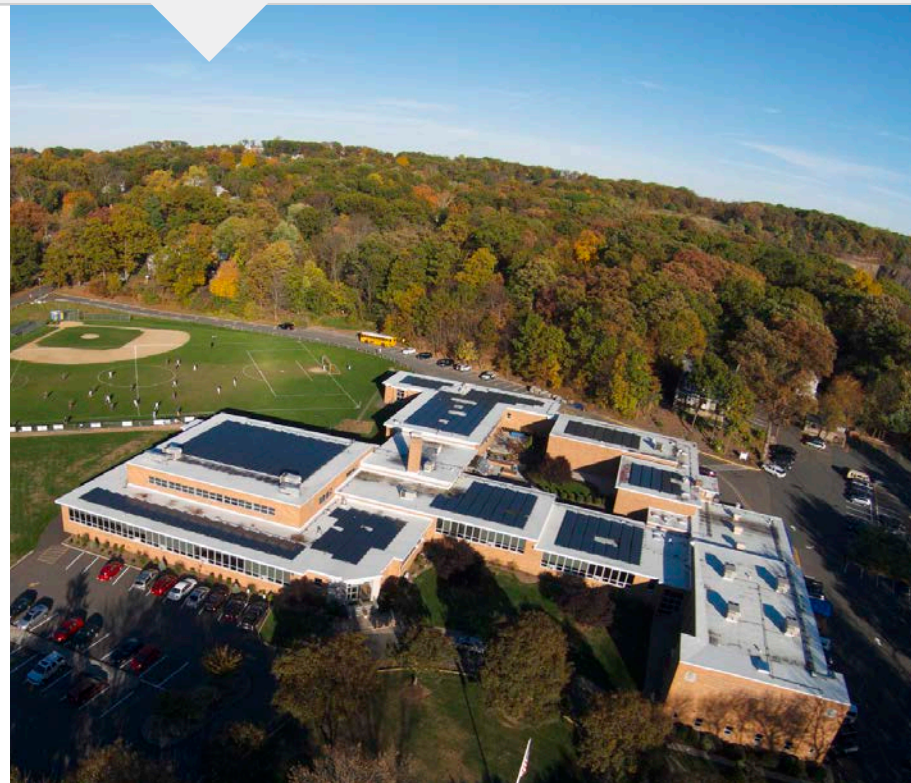
The assembled parents and Association members in attendance looked at three topics:

- The Lord's rich blessings on the plans that Eastern Christian has put in place
- The wonderful opportunities that still lie ahead of our school
- The critical importance of the continued unwavering commitment that our community has provided for the last 123 years

### A History of Blessings

Eastern Christian School has witnessed incredible blessings on the plans that it has put into place over the last ten years in virtually every area of our school's life. In particular, we have witnessed tremendous blessing in the areas of enrollment growth, program development, and community support.

Our current enrollment is 774 students - 715 in kindergarten through 12th grade, and 59 in our preschool program. We were blessed to begin the year with 759 students, and so we have experienced significant growth during the course of the school year as more families have made



the decision to enroll their children in this Christian learning community. As a point of reference, we ended last school year with 705 students. In other words, we have added 69 students - approximately three full classrooms of new students - during the course of just the last eight months!

Eastern Christian School has continued to receive recognition from national and state educational groups for its commitment to excellence in academics, the arts, and athletics. During the last year we have been recognized as a National School District of Character, one of only three school districts in the nation to receive this recognition. We have been recognized as one of the top 50 Christian High Schools in America, and also received an award from the American Scholastic Mathematics Association for academic excellence.

We have received numerous awards for our highly acclaimed arts program including first place in the Passaic County Film Festival, first place from the American Scholastic Press Association for the *EC Times*, seven awards for our vocalists and instrumentalists at the Dorney Park music competition, and a new found spirit of competition from our award-winning, integrated K-12 athletic program.

We have received a wonderful level of community support throughout the year, ranging from a large and enthusiastic turnout for the ten events comprised in our First Annual Homecoming, the large and enthusiastic crowds of fans of all ages at our community soccer and basketball nights, and the wonderful blessing of financial support from our incredibly loyal and generous donors and from our supporting businesses - ditto and Eagle Solar.

### A Promising Future!

Just as we have received incredible blessings in our past, we believe that the Lord holds out a promising future for Eastern Christian School.

We are projecting a 2016-17 enrollment of 816 students - 726 students in kindergarten through 12th grade and 90 students in our preschool program. This projected enrollment represents an increase of 121 new students - or approximately six classrooms full of new students - in the course of just the last two years. And we continue to work to expand access to Christian education to more families through our innovative Variable Tuition program, our Early Decision Enrollment program, and our newly introduced Continuous Enrollment process.

We are enhancing our academic program with an array of new courses, ranging from Anatomy & Physiology, Honors Physics, Robotics, French, and a Vo-Tech track at the high school level to a dramatically expanded range of preschool options on our elementary school campus. We are excited that we have reached an



agreement with our friends at Pilgrim Church in Paramus to open a satellite preschool program on their campus to supplement the nearly full program on our Midland Park campus.

Following the completion of a major overhaul of our Midland Park campus last year, we are continuing to improve our facilities with critically important investments in school security on all three campuses, continued technology upgrades, and an ongoing program of redecoration of classrooms and public areas, especially on our Wyckoff and North Haledon campuses.

**An Unwavering Commitment to our Mission!**

Achieving these opportunities requires commitment. In 1893 our forefathers built our first school on Amity Street in Paterson out of a sense of commitment and a belief in the mission of our school. In the 1950's and 1960's, we built all three of our current schools within just an eleven year period. Our school community has never been short on commitment, and achieving the possibilities that lie ahead of us will require the continuation of that unwavering commitment.

The 2016-17 operating budget approved by our members totals \$10.9 million, an 8% increase over our operating budget for the current year. Our community support in the form of donations, the contributions from our supporting businesses and endowment fund will contribute \$2.1 million, or 19% of our total budget - an amount that benefits each and every family served by our school.

We are proposing an increase in our staffing to support our expanded enrollment and enhanced program. And we are continuing to provide fair and equitable compensation for our faculty and staff. In addition, we are expanding professional development opportunities for our faculty and staff members who desire to obtain master's degrees that will help to improve their professional skills and practices.

In conclusion, Eastern Christian School has been incredibly blessed by a loving God who holds the mission of our school in His hand! We have a bright future ahead of us and sincerely appreciate your continued commitment to our mission and your continued prayers on behalf of Eastern Christian School.

**Thomas G. Dykhouse**  
Executive Director and Head of School



EASTERN CHRISTIAN  
RECOGNIZED AS A NATIONAL  
DISTRICT OF CHARACTER

## Elementary School

Eastern Christian Elementary School is having a great school year. Our enrollment increased this year to the point where three grade levels are almost at full capacity. The number of families participating in Early Decision Enrollment this year indicates that our enrollment will increase again next year.

This summer we completed our fourth phase of renovations in the elementary school. In 2012, we renovated our Primary Program Wing and moved our preschool classes into the elementary building. In 2013, we renovated our staff and student bathrooms. Our major renovation was completed in 2014 including new doors, windows, floors, boilers, clocks, intercom and paint in classrooms and hallways. In 2015, we installed new windows and carpeting in the media center. We painted the walls and added custom furniture. Additionally, we ordered more computers to accommodate our growing classes.

Our elementary school technology goal is to have one iPad for every two students in grades K-4 and six iPads in each preschool classroom. Our PTO is very involved in our fundraising efforts through various sales and activities. This year, the PTO ran a highly successful Touch A Truck event which raised several thousand dollars and served as a marketing event for Eastern Christian School.

In September of 2016, we plan to open a satellite preschool in Pilgrim Church in Paramus. We look forward to extending our excellent preschool program to include more students. We hope those students will then transition to our elementary school beginning in kindergarten.

**Sandra Bottge**  
Principal, Eastern Christian  
Elementary School



## Middle School

Eastern Christian Middle School had a fantastic start to the 2015-2016 school year! Despite seeing several wonderful families move away from the northern New Jersey area, we also saw an increase in the number of new families joining the community. On the first day of school, we welcomed over 40 new students, for an overall increase in the middle school of 23 students. The majority of these new students entered ECMS in the 8th grade (+21 students) and in the 6th grade (+15 students). The expanded class in 8th grade gave us the opportunity to introduce an exploratory class in the students' Encore rotation, learning about logic, literature, technology, and rockets throughout the school year.

Our 5th graders were welcomed to the Middle School community during a three-day orientation. Students were challenged to look inside and discover their own strengths, discovering how they fit into the community as a part of the Middle School. At the same time, our 7th and 8th grade students were presented with the opportunity to put their strengths into practice by signing up for a new leadership class. This class was designed to train students for leading their peers during our small group bible studies. Forty students accepted this challenge and were accepted into the class, and are now meeting twice weekly to learn leadership principles and prepare for small group time.

The MS continued its technology focus with an expansion of Dell Chromebooks, adding 65 new units this year. This provided enough computers for every student to have access to a Chromebook at any given time. Additionally, we have added an additional position, Educational Technology Specialist, to support both our students and teachers in the learning process through the use of technology for instruction.

The MS Make A Difference Program (MAD), which provides service learning opportunities for our students, kicked off in the fall with the Raging Ramapo Race - a parable performed by three of our very own (and very talented) MS teachers. Students will continue to serve our local communities in the areas of childhood illnesses, homelessness, disabilities, and poverty in conjunction with four local ministries. These service learning projects continue to provide our students with the opportunity to exercise their faith and engage the needs of the world around them.

**Daniel Lazor**  
Principal, Eastern Christian Middle School





## High School

Eastern Christian High School has enjoyed an exciting year. Not only has the high school enrollment increased for the fifth consecutive year, but we have experienced enhancements to our facilities, growth in our programs, and recognitions of our students' accomplishments.

Students arrived back to school in September to freshly painted hallways. They could enjoy a beautiful garden at lunch time or from the classrooms overlooking the courtyard. Former computer labs were transformed into bright spaces with flexible high-quality classroom furniture that would encourage the space to conform to the teaching and learning that needs to happen in a 21st century classroom. The technology courses were relocated to a room adjacent to the Media Center, so that area of the school can serve as a hub for equipment, support and supervision. The technology infrastructure was upgraded significantly to support the needs of a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) high school environment.

The high school kicked off its new Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) program. In addition to challenging students who are gifted in these areas with a rigorous integrated program, we have been able to enhance our course offerings in STEAM areas. This year, for the first

time, we offered Statistics and Robotics classes, and Anatomy & Physiology and Honors Physics will be added to next year's offerings. All students are able to take these additional electives.

Our school and students have been recognized for their work in a variety of areas. In addition to being recognized as a 2015 National School District of Character, we were named one of the 50 Top Christian High Schools in America (TheBestSchools.org). In the arts, a team of our students won the Passaic County Film Festival Grand Prize for "Discover. Learn. Live". Our Honors Choir, Band and Orchestra took 1st and 2nd place awards in the Music Dorney Park Competition. In the humanities, our students won state recognition for their History papers, and The EC Times won 1st place in the American Scholastic Press Association. In math, our math club students took 1st place in the ASMA International Math Competition and in the Trig Star Competition.

Exciting things are ahead for the high school as we look forward to building on this strong foundation.

**Ruth Kuder**  
Principal, Eastern Christian  
High School





The Accounting Firm of SAXBST has completed the audit for 2014-2015. The Auditor’s Report is available for review at [www.easternchristian.org/audit](http://www.easternchristian.org/audit)

The following 2016-2017 Budget Proposal was presented at the Annual Meeting of the Eastern Christian School Association for approval. It is presented here for information.

	2015-2016	2016-2017
<b>Revenues</b>		
Tuition and Fees	\$7,896,287	\$8,551,170
Foundation for EC	\$936,500	\$975,000
Endowment Fund	\$450,000	\$450,000
Supporting Activities	\$614,968	\$700,995
Transportation	\$230,000	\$270,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$10,127,755</b>	<b>\$10,947,165</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Educational Program	\$6,311,474	\$6,708,316
Facilities	\$884,505	\$955,977
Foundation for EC	\$474,060	\$505,114
Association	\$2,025,690	\$2,293,545
Transportation	\$432,026	\$484,212
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$10,127,755</b>	<b>\$10,947,165</b>

Notes:

1. Tuition calculations for 2015-2016 were based on enrollment of 734 students; actual enrollment is 770. Tuition for 2016-2017 is based on 816 students.
2. The Foundation for ECSA Revenues represents fundraising activities including The Annual Fund, The Business Drive, and Events (i.e. golf outing, auction, etc). In addition, The Foundation is responsible for endowment fund, grants, capital campaigns, planned giving, etc. For 2014-2015 those areas of responsibility brought an additional \$640,000.
3. Supporting Activities includes ditto of North Jersey, Eagle Solar, Eagles Camps, and rental of facilities.
4. Association Expenses include salaries and benefits, general operating expenses, interest expense, as well as all costs associated with loan payments, insurance, unemployment, and uncollected tuition.

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**Leadership**  
We gratefully acknowledge that one hundred percent of Board Members (Operating and Foundation) contributed to The Annual Fund.

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If you have named EC in your estate plan and wish to be added to this list, please contact the Foundation Office at 973.427.9294

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**Every gift to Eastern Christian School is important. Each year we receive a variety of gifts in a variety of sizes. Donations are generally given towards specific fund raising efforts.**

**[www.easternchristian.org/giving](http://www.easternchristian.org/giving)**

## **The Annual Fund**

Every year, each member of our community -- current parents, alumni, parents of alumni, grandparents, faculty/staff, and others -- are asked to participate in The Annual Fund. These gifts are crucial to Eastern Christian School's operating budget, helping to bridge the gap between tuition and the actual cost of education.

## **Scholarship**

Gifts are raised each year to fund Variable Tuition, helping more families have access to an academically excellent, Christ-centered education.

## **The Angel Fund**

When student families are in crisis, The Angel Fund makes it possible for students to remain in school without additional financial pressure to the family. The Angel Fund is used in the event of a death, major illness, loss of employment or other crisis.

## **The Endowment Fund**

Each year, The Endowment Fund of Eastern Christian School makes a significant contribution to the operating budget.

- **Memorials:** Many gifts are received in memory of family members and friends. These gifts are generally applied to the Endowment Fund.
- **Honorariums:** Friends and family often mark special events in the lives of loved ones by making a gift in their honor. These gifts are generally applied to the Endowment Fund.
- **Bequests:** The most significant contributions to The Endowment Fund have been through the estates of past supporters.

## **Capital Campaigns and Major Gifts**

We routinely have needs that cannot be met through the operating budget. When these needs arise, Capital Campaigns and Major Gift solicitations are organized to fund those expenses.

## **Planned Giving**

In addition to current gifts (cash, checks, credit cards), Eastern Christian accepts a variety of other gifts and will work with you to facilitate these gifts:

- A bequest in a will or living trust is a common planned gift. This is a simple way to make what could be your most significant and lasting gift to Eastern Christian School. Bequests usually become part of the Endowment Fund unless otherwise specified.
- **Stocks, Bonds, and Securities:** Gifting appreciated stocks, bonds, and securities can provide tax advantages for the donor while maximizing the gift to Eastern Christian School.
- **IRA's 401K's and Life Insurance:** Designate Eastern Christian School as the beneficiary of your retirement account. Your gift is tax free.
- **IRA Charitable Rollover:** Recently signed into law, the IRA Charitable Rollover allows individuals over the age of 70½ to donate up to \$100,000.00 directly from their IRA without treating the distribution as taxable income.
- **Charitable Remainder Trust:** A gift of real estate in a charitable remainder trust will help you avoid capital gains taxes while ensuring that you receive income for the rest of your life.
- **Charitable Gift Annuity:** A CGA will provide an immediate tax deduction while providing income for the life of the donor(s).
- **Named Endowment:** Major donors may wish to consider a Named Endowment. Established during your lifetime or through your estate plan. A specific area of interest (i.e. scholarship, sciences, athletics, facilities, etc.) may be selected and an grant is given each year from the fund to that area of interest.

**The Foundation for Eastern Christian School is able to assist you with any of these giving opportunities.**

For more information, call 973-427-9492.

# UPCOMING EVENTS



**March 11, 2016**  
**Scholars Dinner**  
Arcola Country Club  
Paramus, NJ

**April 21, 2016**  
**Auction Gala**  
Indian Trail Club  
Franklin Lakes, NJ

**May 16, 2016**  
**Spring Golf Outing**  
Black Bear Golf Club  
Franklin, NJ

**October, 2016**  
**Athletic Boosters  
Golf Outing**  
Wallkill Golf Club  
Middletown, NY

**October 21-23, 2016**  
**Homecoming/EC5K**

**November, 2016**  
**EC Fashion Show**  
Date and Location TBD

**February 1, 2017**  
**Athletic Boosters Beefsteak**  
The Brownstone  
Paterson, NJ



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