

## **Project Abstract**

Nueva Esperanza, Inc. (“Esperanza”), a Hispanic, faith-based community development corporation located in the low-income Philadelphia neighborhood of Hunting Park, respectfully requests that the United States Department of Education Charter Schools Program (CFDA 84.282E) consider a grant of \$1,250,000 over five years to assist in the expansion of our highly successful Esperanza Academy Charter School from grades 6-12 to include the elementary grades K-5.

Esperanza Academy Charter School (EACS) was founded in 2000 as a high school, and in 2012, it was expanded to include a middle school. Over the last 17 years, EACS has proven to be an exceptional institution, taking a student body with real socio-economic challenges and achieving academic success on measures from standardized test scores to attendance to graduation to college matriculation.

Now, we are excited to fill out our K-12 pipeline by gradually adding the elementary grades to EACS. During the current academic year (2017-18), we began this process by launching a first grade with 138 students. We will maintain this size for the next two years, before constructing a new elementary school building that will enable us to expand to a full K-5 student body. A grant from the U.S. Department of Education Charter Schools Program would help us prepare for this period of tremendous expansion.

Once EACS has a complete K-12 pipeline, we are confident that our academic success will only increase. By starting with the youngest students, we will be able to ensure that they are learning on grade level right from the beginning of their academic careers. Right now, most students entering our middle school are well below grade level in their basic language arts and math skills. In a few years, students will enter our middle school well-prepared and ready to learn.