

# I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

Date 9/5/18

## Contact Information

Organization Name: West Chester Friends School  
Address: 415 North High St., West Chester, PA 19380  
Phone: 610-696-2962  
Website: <http://www.wcfriends.org>  
Year Incorporated: 1836

Executive Director Name: Brian Fahey  
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Board of Directors Chair Name: David Wickard  
Primary Contact Name: Pam Sapko  
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Has your nonprofit ever applied to the Community Foundation? Yes \_\_\_ No X Not Sure \_\_\_  
Has your nonprofit ever received funding from the Community Foundation? Yes \_\_\_ No X Not Sure \_\_\_  
\_\_\_ Donor Advised Fund(s) \_\_\_ Fund for Chester County \_\_\_ Don't know/Not sure

## Field/s of Interest:

\_\_\_ Arts, Culture & Humanities      \_\_\_ Environment/Animal Welfare      X Education  
\_\_\_ Health      \_\_\_ Human Services      \_\_\_ Religion

## Organization Information:

**Geographic Area Served** (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served):

Chester County

**Describe Population Served and Annual Number of People Served:**

Playschool through Grade 5 (ages 3 - 11); 150 students

## Mission:

The West Chester Friends School mission is to build upon the strengths of the School's tradition and philosophy in order to:

- meet the needs of our children
- celebrate those talents that are within each of our students
- develop the whole child through a comprehensive educational program

We stress the importance of self-discipline, community responsibility, respect for the dignity of all people, and the settling of differences through peaceful means.

## Proposal Summary:

***West Chester Friends School provides tuition assistance to over 50% of the students annually. Funding is needed for scholarships, and for capital improvements, such as gym improvements and HVAC upgrades.***

**Annual Budget** \$ 3,040,500 \_\_\_\_\_ 25 \_\_\_ # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

\_\_\_ 77 \_\_\_ % of budget for program expenses      \_\_\_ 15 \_\_\_ # of Board Volunteers

\_\_\_ 20 \_\_\_ % of budget for administrative expenses      \_\_\_ 100+ \_\_\_ # of Active Non-Board Volunteers

\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ % of budget for fundraising expenses      \_\_\_ 1,000+ \_\_\_ # of Volunteer Hours

100 % total

## Top 3-5 funding sources:

Tuition, Corporate and individual grant support through EITC and OSTC, annual giving, annual auction

**Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation:** \$ 3,000 \_\_\_\_\_

## II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

*Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.*

### 1. Organization's history, goals, key achievements and distinctiveness

#### History

Founded in 1836, West Chester Friends School (WCFS) was established in accordance with the Friends' long-standing concern for education. The School is located in the heart of West Chester on historic Quaker Hill, its four buildings nestled between the West Chester Monthly Meeting House and the Hickman Home. As the oldest continuously operating school in the borough, WCFS maintains an important place in Chester County's rich history and vibrant present. Today, the campus remains peaceful and welcoming, honoring its historic architecture and open space while making contemporary improvements.

Operating on this site for over 180 years, WCFS continues the tradition of providing young people with the vital foundation they require as they become contributing members of our community and citizens of the world. Important connections continue with the school's neighbors as classes often walk to utilize local resources including museums, art galleries, historical sites and municipal buildings.

#### Goals

WCFS's mission is to build upon the strengths of the School's tradition and philosophy in order to:

- Meet the needs of our children
- Celebrate those talents that are within each of our students
- Develop the whole child through a comprehensive educational program.

Dedicated exclusively to the education of children in preschool through fifth grade, WCFS provides students with the essential foundation they require to become lifelong learners, contributing members of their community and citizens of the world. Children are prepared for lives of impact and caring leadership through an enriched, experiential curriculum taught in the context of Quaker values, including integrity, service and stewardship.

Diversity is at the heart of the WCFS experience, bringing broad access and connection to the School's program and community. We welcome families of all faiths and affiliations to our school community. We experience that a school populated by children from a variety of cultural, religious and socioeconomic perspectives creates a rich learning environment that is beneficial for everyone.

#### Key Achievements

WCFS students consistently performs strongly on achievement tests, meeting and exceeding scores from independent and high performing public schools.

WCFS alumni lead lives of impact and caring contribution, taking with them the Quaker values they were steeped in at WCFS, the skills they need for creative collaboration and conflict resolution, and a sense of responsibility to the community. They enroll in a great variety of middle and high schools, colleges and universities; a range that speaks to the unique light in each of them.

Alumni have become writers, musicians and physicians, social workers, teachers, actors, attorneys, accountants and even a train conductor. They own businesses and are also public servants; practicing their professions internationally and in their hometown communities.

The school has 25 teachers with a student: teacher ratio of 6:1 (the national average is 13:1). The average class size is 15 students (the average in Pennsylvania is 21.2). 65% of our faculty members have advanced degrees. Approximately 55% of our families participate in a Flexible Tuition Program, providing an average of \$5,000 support per family.

WCFS is accredited as a private academic school by the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools (PAIS), the agency chartered by the Department of Education to accredit independent schools across the Commonwealth. Full-scale evaluations occur every ten years and include an extensive self-study and an evaluation by a visiting team of education professionals based on over 100 standards. WCFS's last evaluation was completed in 2017-2018.

### Distinctiveness

WCFS is an independent Quaker elementary school, focusing exclusively on the Preschool through Grade 5 student population. WCFS students learn in the context of Quaker values, including respect for one another, self-discipline, peaceful conflict resolution, and responsibility to the community.

Children are taught an enriched, preparatory curriculum, supported by the arts and technology. Our innovative curriculum includes: STEM studies, Smart Table and Makers Space, an early childhood outdoor classroom, interdisciplinary literature and history, music, Spanish, studio art and art history, mindfulness training, raised bed gardens, resident hens, an intergenerational program with the Hickman Home, and learning partnerships with West Chester University, Kennett Symphony, Chester County Historical Society, and Echo Hill Environmental School.

Children attending WCFS enjoy learning in lively classrooms where teachers guide them through an enriched, integrated curriculum of language arts, social studies, science and math. Students also participate in special areas of study including: library, art, music, technology, Spanish, service learning, health and guidance, mindfulness, Quakerism, and physical education. They can participate in early and after school care. After school activities including: sports, makers, knitting, yoga, chess, MakerSpace, running and fitness clubs, chorus, band, math and business clubs, dance, and strings.

WCFS is committed to ensuring that all members of the school community, including children, families, faculty, staff, and volunteers are accepted, included, respected, embraced, and celebrated. We improve WCFS through our diversity; inclusion is everyone's responsibility. Our graduates dependably say "this is the school that you wish you had attended" or "this was the school that made the greatest difference in my life".

## **2. Funding request**

- **Description of key initiatives**
- **Specific needs and issues to be addressed**
- **Why it is important to fund this now**

WCFS seeks funding to continue to provide need-based scholarship support to enable continued expanded diversity among students and to reduce the need to direct operating funds to tuition assistance.

Careful stewardship, debt management and conscientious use of existing resources have allowed WCFS a long period of financial stability and full enrollment. Still, the steady, significant increase in the number of families with financial need, and a growing increase in the amount of needed assistance mean that more financial aid is supported through the operating budget. This growing percentage has potential impact on every aspect of the School's program, and must be addressed through both immediate and long-term solutions.

Scholarship contributions are transformational, bringing increased access to students and important sustainability to the school. And whether annual or endowed, the legacy of a gift to scholarship is tremendous.

WCFS also seeks to make upgrades to its campus facilities, including the gym which is frequently used by the community and an HVAC upgrade.

In-kind support is also gratefully welcomed.

## **3. How impact and results will be demonstrated**

With increased focus on soliciting scholarship grants, we'd like to reduce the demand for flexible tuition on our operating budget by \$25,000/year so those funds can be redirected to faculty support and campus upgrades. WCFS carefully tracks its operating support, tuition discount ratios, and financial trends. Thorough review of regular financial statements and annual audits ensure that prudent financial decisions are made for both short and long term stability of the school.