

Paige Academy



**PAIGE
ACADEMY**

FOUNDED: 1970
CURRENT ORGANIZATION BUDGET: \$1,796,400
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Investment Opportunity

Paige Academy seeks to raise \$1M to renovate one of its historic Victorian buildings as the cornerstone of a three-year plan to expand the school's capacity and impact. The renovation project will allow the school to create three modern classrooms, hire 10 new teachers, increase teacher pay by 10% annually to better align with market rates, and enlarge its student body by 35%. This strategy will mark the school's 50th anniversary and set the stage for a new generation of organizational leadership.

Born of the Freedom Schools movement, Paige Academy is a unique, independent early childhood education and elementary school located in historic Roxbury Highlands. The school provides children from birth to grade six with rigorous and exploratory arts, science, and nature-focused education and cultural programming in a nurturing environment.

- Toxic stress from poverty, racism, and inequity limit healthy brain development in children and can affect their school performance and overall life outcomes.
- Research finds that Black, Latino, and Indigenous students perform worse on nearly every educational measure valued by U.S. schools.
- Students of color perform best when they identify with caregivers, teachers, and role models who value their cultures. However, while 86% of Boston Public Schools students are nonwhite, just 38% of BPS teachers are people of color.

Through its focus on providing a culturally resonant curriculum and a unique learning environment grounded in the principles of Kwanzaa, the Academy meets the needs of all children, including those from diverse Boston families who may otherwise feel marginalized in traditional school settings.

Three-Year Goals

- Secure \$1M of donor and foundation support to renovate a Victorian building with technology-enhanced classrooms.
- Hire 10 additional teachers
- Raise teacher salaries by 10% annually to recruit and retain high quality teachers
- Increase student enrollment by 35% to over 220 per year

Ways to Invest

FINANCIAL

- \$1M in gifts from donors and foundations for capital campaign, qualifying the school to apply for a \$1M matching grant
- \$60,000 funds a full-time teacher with benefits
- \$15,500 partially funds a student's annual tuition
- \$1,000 supports a teacher's annual professional development

IN-KIND

- Curriculum development expertise
- Marketing and events support
- Computer lab technical assistance
- Projector
- Landscaping and grounds maintenance

Leadership & Governance

The Board of Directors is comprised of Paige Academy's founders, Dr. Angela and Brother Joe Cook, who are pioneers of the concept "cultural resonance" in elementary and nursery school settings. They are joined by six educators, civic leaders, business professionals, and community members who contribute expertise in nursery to higher education, politics, government, arts, and culture. The Board meets monthly during the year, with the exception of summers.

Currently, the organization is preparing for a leadership change. The founders' daughter Paige Brooks-Cook, who attended the school as a child and has worked at the Academy as a teacher, will assume the role of Executive Director in 2020. Paige is a graduate of Spelman College and Wheelock College. She has also taught in Ghana and China.

PAIGE ACADEMY'S MODEL



A HEALTHY START TO LIFE

Students at Paige Academy are nurtured and taught in a dynamic learning environment that is steeped in "cultural resonance" and enhanced by community. Cultural resonance emphasizes the heritages, histories, experiences, and interests of students and their families. As a result, students develop a multicultural, global worldview. This is reinforced by the teachers at the Academy, 92% of whom are people of color and who collectively speak 17 languages.

The school's village-like setting and holistic approach of encompassing the whole child have transformed thousands of Boston children's lives. In traditional school settings, some students have been viewed as having behavioral problems or as having learning disabilities. At Paige Academy, teachers focus on each child's assets and provide age-appropriate care and instruction. As a result, students are eager to learn, explore, and express themselves.

The school offers programming at the following levels:

- Infants: Birth to 15 months
- Toddlers: 15 months to 3 years of age
- Preschool: 3 to 5 years of age
- Kindergarten: 5 to 6 years of age
- Secondary Class: Grades 1 to 3
- Junior Class: Grades 4 to 6
- After School and Summer: 5 to 12 years of age

Paige Academy centers its work on healthy brain development during a child's most formative years. Research shows that the first 2,000 days (birth to 5 years) are the most critical time for brain development. During this period, children form visual, language, reasoning, and motor skills. They develop socio-emotional bonds with parents, caregivers, and peers. These early experiences contribute to children's self-image and worldview and significantly impact their ability to be successful in the future.

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At Paige Academy, there is a community- and family-like atmosphere. I know that teachers and staff genuinely care for students and want the best for them.

FORMER PARENT

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There are not enough words to actually describe what Paige Academy means to me. From the age of three months, the school instilled in me culture, love, principles, and my roots. Paige Academy is education, love, and family! I am grown now with my own children and am proud to say that my children are the second generation to go to Paige Academy. We continue to be guided, enlightened, and loved by our Paige Family.



GIA ROBINSON

Alumna and Mother of 5th grader

Key Investors

- BPS PRESCHOOL EXPANSION GRANT
- CHILD CARE CHOICES OF BOSTON
- MA DEPARTMENT OF EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE
- MA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Partners

- BOSTON CHILDREN'S MUSEUM
- COOPER COMMUNITY GARDENING AND EDUCATION CENTER
- FIRST CHURCH OF ROXBURY
- MUSEUM OF SCIENCE
- NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY
- TIMOTHY SMITH NETWORK
- WHITTIER STREET HEALTH CENTER

THE PAIGE ACADEMY MODEL

Independent Progressive School—The Academy offers Boston families a choice for providing children with experiential and culturally rich learning. Teachers present rigorous curricula across multiple subject areas, including Language, Math, Science, Music, Visual Arts, Drama, and Yoga.

Village Environment—The school has a 25,000-square-foot campus, which includes two Victorian houses, three community gardens, and two playgrounds. The natural environment serves as a laboratory for children to explore fruit trees, gardens, and farmyard chickens.

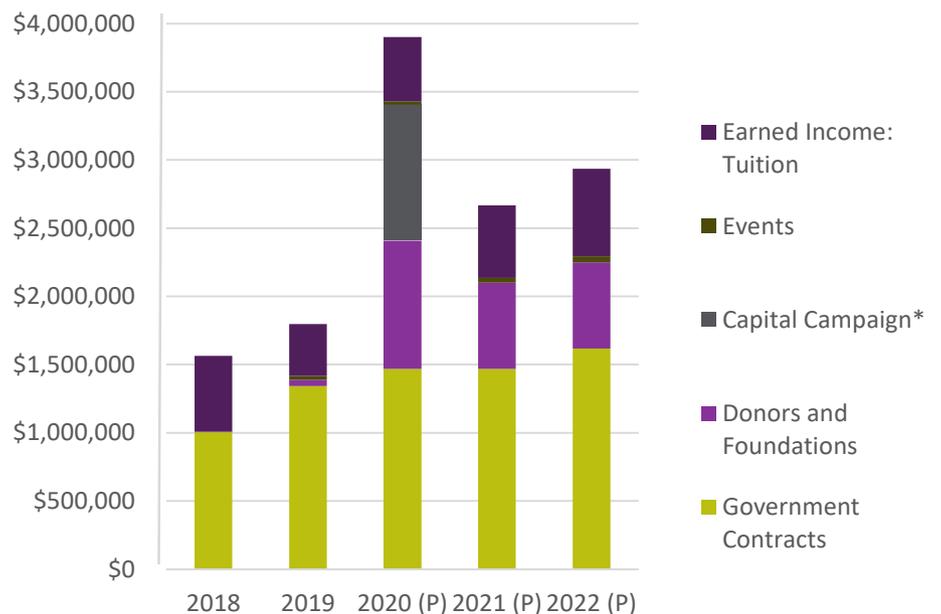
Seven Principles (“Nguzo Saba”)—The Seven Principles of Kwanzaa create a framework for developing civic- and community-oriented values and honoring African and Indigenous cultural knowledge and expression. The principles are: Unity, Self-Determination, Collective Work and Responsibility, Cooperative Economics, Purpose, Creativity, and Faith.

Legacy Strategy—As its 50th anniversary approaches, Paige Academy’s founders are preparing to transition school leadership to their daughter, Paige, who was named after the school and is a former Academy student and teacher. Paige is excited to build on the legacy started by her parents.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Through renovating its facilities, increasing the number of classrooms, and expanding its instructional staff, Paige Academy will enroll 35% more students and increase the proportion of private payers from 26% to 33% over the next three years. Due to gentrification, more middle-class families reside in Roxbury, which creates benefits and challenges for the Academy. Having access to families who can afford to pay tuition privately will provide the school with more unrestricted income and allow it to increase the number of scholarships available to low-income families.

Revenue by Source



*The reduction in revenue from FY20 to FY21 is due to the capital campaign.



Success Story: Adelfia Barros

When Adelfia Barros learned that her first child was going to be a boy, she immediately thought, “I want him to attend Paige Academy.” She felt it was important for him to go to a school that would embrace him and help him develop a positive identity.

Her son Lucious is now 2½ years old and enrolled in Paige’s toddler preschool classroom. Since being at the school, he has noticeably matured. He has developed socially and emotionally and has acquired advanced language and math skills for his age.

Adelfia is now expecting her second child, who will also be enrolled at the school. As a mother, Adelfia appreciates how Paige Academy fosters family and community bonds, uplifts African-American cultural values, and encourages children to be their best selves.



PROGRAM PERFORMANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

Below is a summary of the key measures that Paige Academy will track to demonstrate progress, create internal accountability, incorporate lessons learned, and adjust strategy as necessary.

	FY 2019	FY 2020 (P)	FY 2021 (P)
PROGRAM PERFORMANCE			
Number of enrolled students	188	208	221
Number of private paying, middle-class families with children enrolled	50	55	65
Number of full-time equivalent teachers	23	23	33
Number of revenue generating events	9	12	15
ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH/CAPACITY-BUILDING			
Implement Capital Campaign	Plan	Implement	Complete
Renovate school building with additional classrooms and playground	Plan	Design and Implement	Complete
Increase teachers’ wages	--	10%	10%
Total revenue*	\$1,796,400	\$3,902,192	\$2,666,481

*The drop in projected revenue from FY20 to FY21 is related to the capital campaign to be held in FY20.

SOCIAL IMPACT

As an independent, early childhood education institution, Paige Academy contributes to the self-determination and prosperity of Roxbury. For nearly 50 years it has provided low-income children and their families with an affordable, high quality, and culturally resonant early childhood and elementary education. Paige students have gone on to excel academically and to realize their dreams.

The school has used family satisfaction surveys, interviews with alumni, alumni grade tracking, feedback from its parents committee, parent teacher meetings, and student outcomes to measure, track, and improve its performance.

INDICATOR	2019
Families who re-enroll their children, annually	85%
Families who are satisfied with their child’s learning	99%
Families who feel the school’s cultural and community approaches enhance their child’s development	90%
Teachers with college certificates or degrees or who are enrolled in undergraduate and graduate level studies	78%
Tracked alumni who attended high school	98%
Tracked alumni who attended college	80%

