

2026 Annual Report

ELEVATE 215

July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

Dear Friends and Partners,

Philadelphia's public schools are making progress. More students are graduating, and more schools are demonstrating meaningful academic growth. Over the last decade, Philadelphia's graduation rate has risen from 72% to 79%, and in 2025, nearly three in four schools exceeded statewide expectations for growth in reading.

This progress is no accident. It reflects the efforts of educators and school leaders making intentional decisions about instruction, coaching, and student support—and staying focused on what works.

At Elevate 215, our role is to identify effective practices, learn from them, and invest in bringing them to more students. This year, we supported **20 schools serving 12,238 students** and helped **over 26,000 students** apply to their preferred schools.

These pages bring to life the people, practices, and partnerships behind our city's progress.

From schools improving student achievement to initiatives developing future educators and helping families access quality schools, these stories show what's possible when we invest in effective practices and learn from one another.

The progress is real, but our work is far from finished.

We invite you to join us in building on this momentum to create a Philadelphia where every student has access to a quality school.

Gratefully in service,

Kate Houstoun
Chair, Board of Directors

Stacy Holland, Ed.D.
Executive Director



Creating Citywide Impact

Across Philadelphia, schools are demonstrating meaningful academic growth, aspiring educators are finding pathways into teaching, and families are accessing the information and resources they need to choose schools.

Elevate 215 is helping drive this progress by investing in effective practices, connecting partners, and improving the systems that support student success.

Our work focuses on four strategies:



1

Creating the Conditions for Progress

Bringing together elected leaders and community partners to advance a shared understanding of student learning and create the conditions for quality schools to thrive.

2

Building on Practices That Work

Investing in schools that consistently produce learning gains for students to accelerate growth, support teacher effectiveness, and foster a positive school culture.

3

Growing the Educator Pipeline

Strengthening the teacher and leadership pipelines by coordinating recruitment, development, and retention efforts in publicly funded Philadelphia schools.

4

Educating and Connecting Families to School Options

Empowering families to make informed school choices by providing clear, user-friendly information and developing modern enrollment tools and resources.

1 Creating the Conditions for Progress

At Elevate 215, our core belief is that lasting improvement in public education requires a data-driven strategy and rigorous research to guide our investments and actions. As part of our broader mission to transform educational outcomes, we first study student performance to measure progress and pinpoint where targeted investments are most urgently needed.

This year, we launched a new series of Equity Reports designed to examine different dimensions of system performance over time. The first publication in this series, the Citywide Student Learning Report, establishes a foundational baseline to align civic dialogue and coordinate action across Philadelphia.

Citywide Student Learning Report

What will it take to ensure every Philadelphia student has access to an excellent education? Answering that question starts with understanding student learning today and using that knowledge to inform future action.

In 2026, Elevate 215 and the Philadelphia Equity Alliance released the first Citywide Student Learning Report, examining academic outcomes across Philadelphia's district and charter schools. The findings show meaningful progress:

- *In 2025, a strong majority of schools exceeded statewide growth expectations in reading and in math. Similar results have been sustained over six years, though overall achievement remains below state averages.*

Read the full report →



Beating Expectations

74%
of public schools

exceeded statewide expectations for student growth in reading in 2025.

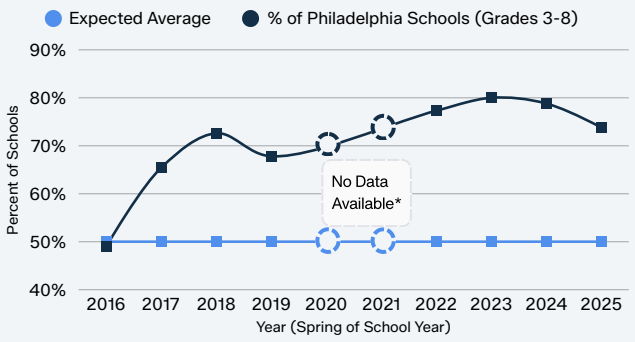
70%
of public schools

exceeded statewide expectations for student growth in math in 2025.

79%
graduation rate

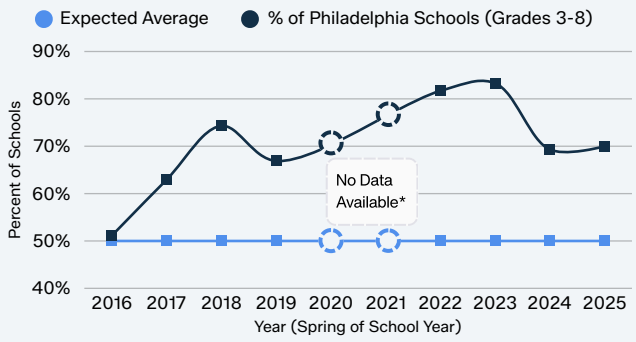
Nearly 4 in 5 Philadelphia students now graduate from high school, up from 72% in 2016.

Philadelphia Schools Exceeding Growth Expectations in English Language Arts



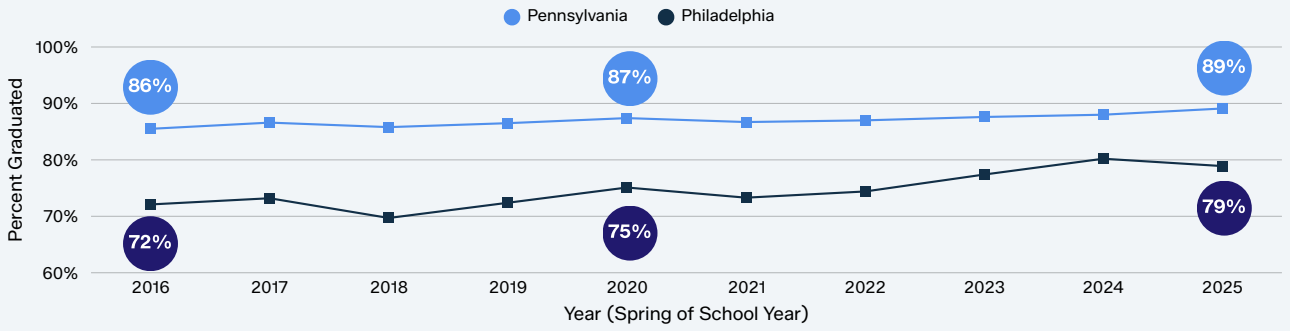
Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education; School District of Philadelphia

Philadelphia Schools Exceeding Growth Expectations in Math



Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education; School District of Philadelphia

Graduation Rate for Philadelphia & Pennsylvania (4-Year)



Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education & School District of Philadelphia

**Data was not collected during the COVID-19 pandemic.*

2 Building on Practices That Work

Philadelphia's students deserve schools where they can reach their full potential. Elevate 215 uses a rigorous, data-informed approach to identify schools delivering exceptional outcomes for historically underserved students and learn from the practices driving their success. During the 2026 academic year, Elevate 215 invested $2.9M to support 20 schools (district and charter), serving over 12,238 students throughout the city.

To improve the academic performance of Philadelphia schools, we invest in:

School Capacity

- Strengthening schools showing evidence of improving student academic outcomes

School Growth

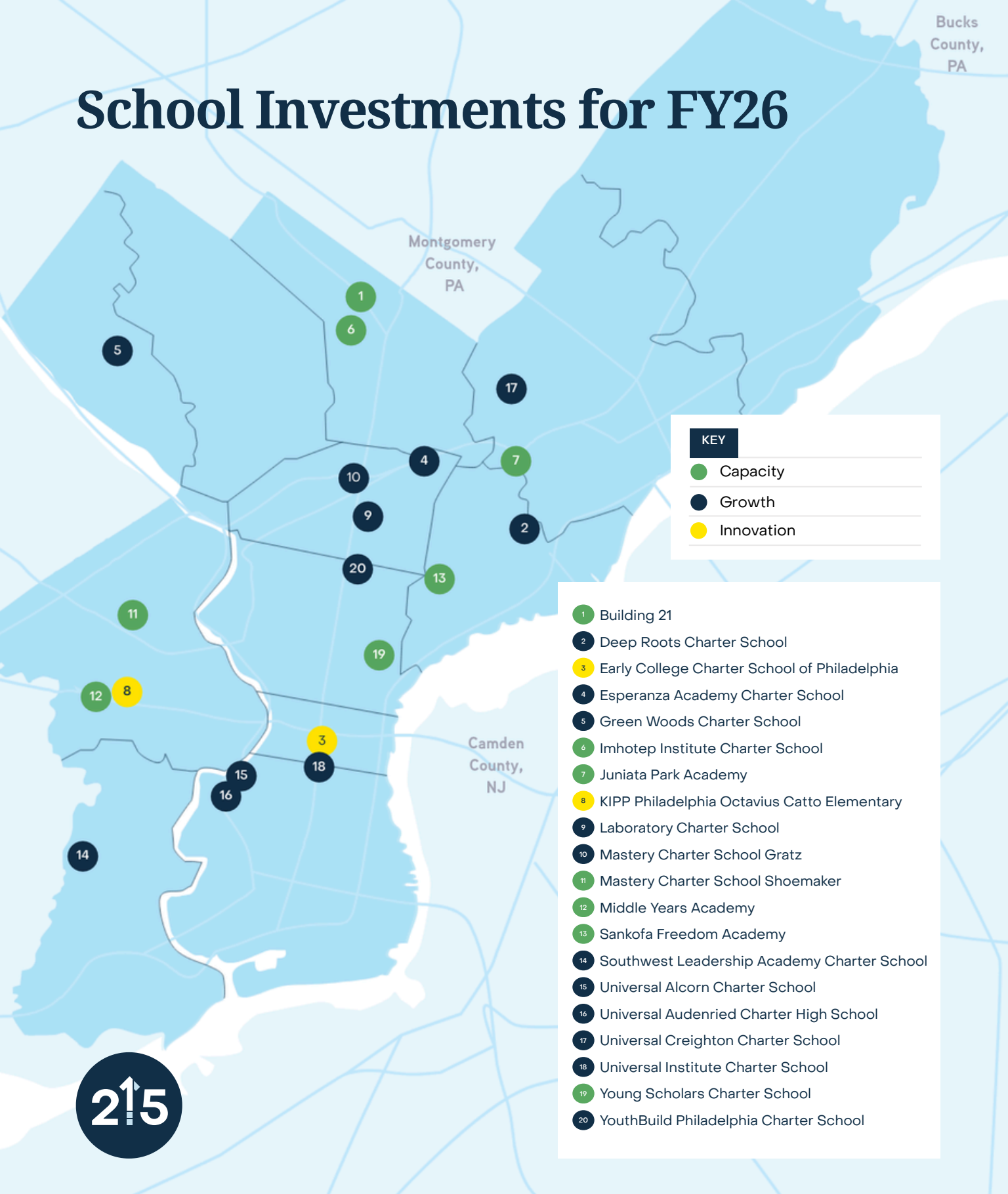
- Expanding proven schools to create more quality options for students

School Innovation

- Launching new schools grounded in strong academic models and community need



School Investments for FY26



KEY

- Capacity
- Growth
- Innovation

1. Building 21
2. Deep Roots Charter School
3. Early College Charter School of Philadelphia
4. Esperanza Academy Charter School
5. Green Woods Charter School
6. Imhotep Institute Charter School
7. Juniata Park Academy
8. KIPP Philadelphia Octavius Catto Elementary
9. Laboratory Charter School
10. Mastery Charter School Gratz
11. Mastery Charter School Shoemaker
12. Middle Years Academy
13. Sankofa Freedom Academy
14. Southwest Leadership Academy Charter School
15. Universal Alcorn Charter School
16. Universal Audenried Charter High School
17. Universal Creighton Charter School
18. Universal Institute Charter School
19. Young Scholars Charter School
20. YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School

Featured Story

Imhotep Institute Charter High School

Turning Math Strategy Into Results

At Imhotep Institute Charter High School, leaders entered the 2025–26 school year focused on a clear challenge: improve math outcomes for students.

With support from Elevate 215's Capacity Building Grant, the school invested in a comprehensive approach to strengthen math instruction and student support.

Imhotep added dedicated instructional coaching, established shared expectations for effective math instruction, introduced standards-aligned materials, and used daily assessments to identify where students needed additional support.

Students also received more learning time through before-school, after-school, and Saturday programming.



Grant Results

71%

Teacher Satisfaction

Teachers expressed satisfaction with the implementation of the Student-Centered Coaching Model

8.9

Percentage-Point Increase in Math

Nearly quadrupling proficiency in math in one year, from 3.1% in 2024–25 to 12% in 2025–26.

> **"Our progress in mathematics came from creating consistency for our teachers, providing students with additional opportunities to learn, and building a culture where we celebrated growth while continuing to push toward higher expectations."**
>
> — Dr. Jury Segers, Principal, Imhotep Institute Charter High School

Featured Story

Young Scholars Charter School

Advancing Student-Centered Learning

At Young Scholars Charter School, leaders made an intentional decision to refocus on what matters most for students: rigorous curriculum, high-quality instruction, and academic achievement. Throughout the process, Principal Lauren Byrd kept the school focused on one guiding question: Will this help students succeed?

With support from Elevate 215, Young Scholars strengthened its academic program through new research-based curricula, intensive teacher coaching, a redesigned schedule, and targeted tutoring. Using beginning-of-year Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) data, the school identified students within reach of proficiency and provided an additional session of math instruction twice each week. Teachers tracked student progress throughout the year, using data to adjust support and keep students moving toward proficiency.

The approach is producing measurable results, including significant growth in math proficiency. Young Scholars will use its Elevate 215 grant to apply lessons from its math strategy to reading instruction.



Grant Results

68%

Student Achievement
The percent of *students who met individual math growth goals on assessments.*

8

Percentage-Point Increase in Math
Growing proficiency in math from 1% in 2024–25 to 9% in 2025–26.

> **“Real improvement starts with the willingness to reflect, adapt, and stay focused on what students need most. We’re proud of the work our educators and students are doing together every day, with support from Elevate 215, to create better outcomes and brighter futures.”**
>
> — John Amenda, CEO, Young Scholars Charter School

3 Growing the Educator Pipeline

Every student deserves prepared, supported educators. Building a sustainable workforce means meeting today's staffing needs while expanding Philadelphia's long-term talent pipeline.

Elevate 215 leads the Philadelphia Citywide Talent Coalition, coordinating partners to recruit aspiring educators, expand pathways into teaching, and improve retention across district and charter schools.

Key Results

88.4%

Teachers Retained

Retention of Philadelphia teachers increased more than four percentage points from 84.1% last year.

87%

Program Completion

Paraprofessionals who successfully earned their teaching credentials and are now gainfully employed as teachers.





53 Organizations. One Shared Vision.

Through the Talent Coalition, Elevate 215 is connecting schools, preparation programs, and civic partners to tackle educator workforce challenges no organization can solve alone.

Featured Story

Inspiring the Next Generation of Teachers

Philadelphia high schools are creating pathways for aspiring educators to earn up to 15 college credits, gain classroom experience, and learn from mentor teachers while preparing for careers in education.

In October 2025, 250 students from nine district and charter schools gathered at Temple University for Philadelphia's first Youth in Education Summit.

Organized through the Philadelphia Citywide Talent Coalition, the Summit connected aspiring educators with peers and education leaders while exposing them to pathways into the profession—helping cultivate Philadelphia's pipeline of future teachers.



Key Results

250 **High School Students**
Participated in Philadelphia's first Youth in Education Summit.

9 **Teacher Pathway Programs**
Philadelphia has education-focused Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs across district and charter schools.

> **"Before the event, I wasn't as sure, but after seeing all these people and hearing all their voices and thoughts, it cemented that [becoming a teacher] is really what I want to do."**
>
> — Meli Jimenes-Jaques, student at Olney High School (*on right in photo*)

4 Educating and Connecting Families to School Options

Creating more quality schools is only part of the equation. Families also need systems that make it easier to explore their options, apply, and enroll in their preferred schools.

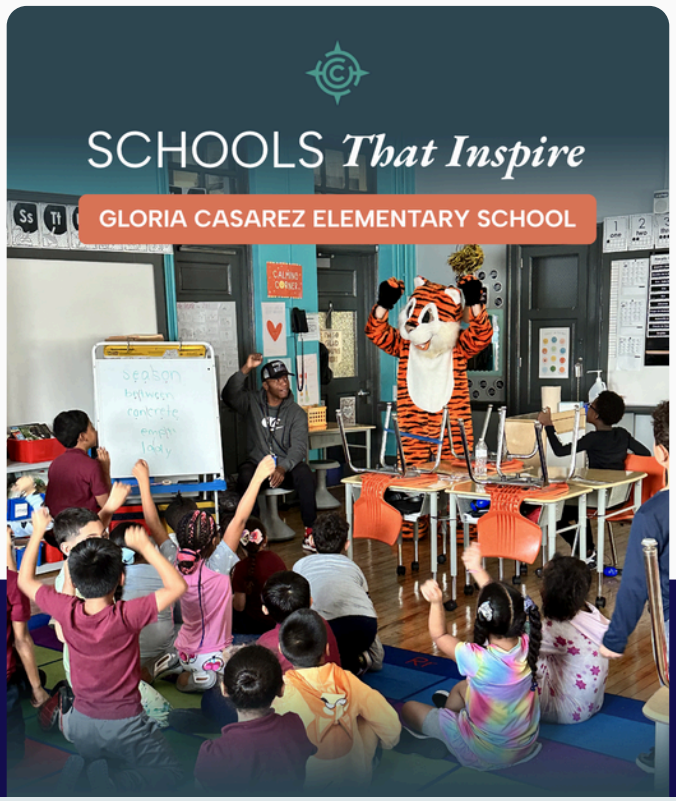
Through our work with school systems, community organizations, and public agencies, we know what helps families navigate school choice. Thanks to our sponsors, Elevate 215 is able to:

Inform Families

Philly Schools Compass
⇢ A clear, trusted online resource for comparing **455 schools** in the Greater Philadelphia area. **Over 70,000 families** use this tool to explore educational options.

Schools That Inspire
⇢ Stories that showcase outstanding schools and the learning experiences they provide.





Connect Families

K–12 Philly School Fair
⇢ A citywide event that connected **5,600 attendees** directly with **over 155 schools** and enrollment resources.

Apply Philly Charter
⇢ A common application system that served **over 26,000 students** and processed over 1**19,000 applications** to **79 charter schools**. A new Rank & Match process improved students' chances of receiving offers from their preferred schools.

PHILLY SCHOOLS COMPASS
SCHOOLS That Inspire
K–12 PHILLY SCHOOL FAIR
apply PHILLY CHARTER

Featured Story

Connecting Students to Their Preferred Schools

Yolonda, a Northeast Philadelphia parent with an incoming kindergarten student for the 2026–27 school year, began her school search with questions about how to find the best school for her child and secure a seat. After researching her options, Yolonda identified MaST Community Charter School as the preferred choice for her son, Emmanuel. She knew the application process was competitive and wanted to make sure she understood how to navigate it.

Yolonda attended the K–12 Philly School Fair, explored the **new Apply Philly Charter (APC) Rank & Match system**, and participated in live Zoom sessions for families. Together, these resources gave her the information she needed to confidently navigate the process and apply to her preferred school.

Emmanuel was offered a kindergarten seat at MaST through the school's lottery and started there in August 2026. Yolonda now encourages other parents to explore their options, attend events like the K–12 Philly School Fair, and use APC's Rank & Match system to help find the right school for their children.



> **"Apply Philly Charter was great because it made the process easier to understand and I was able to get my questions answered when I needed help."**
>
> — Yolonda Blue

Apply Philly Charter Results

119,388 Applications

26,697 Applicants

41% of applicants received at least 1 seat offer

53% of applicants who received a seat offer received one from their #1 school choice

8% reduction in applicants placed on waitlists with the new Rank & Match system

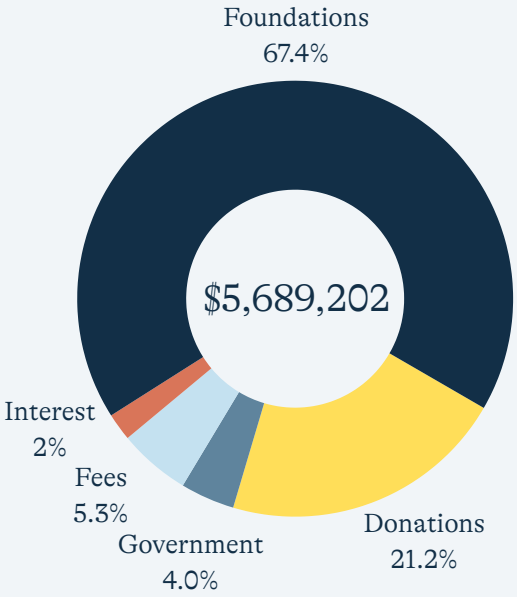
Financials for FY26

July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

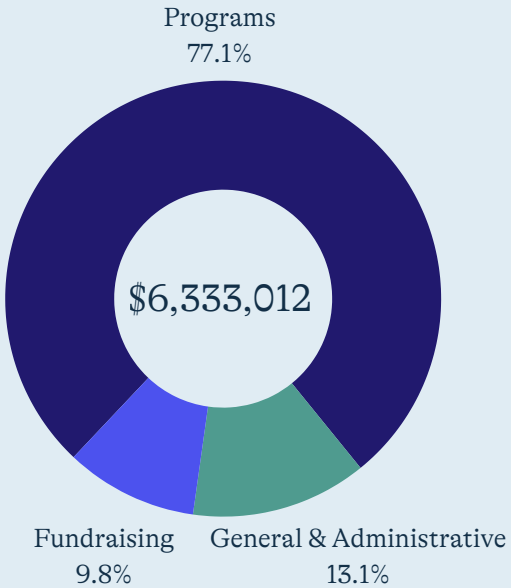
Net Assets - Beginning of the Year	$5,522,354
Revenue	$5,689,202
Expenses	$6,333,012
Net Assets - End of the Year*	$4,878,544

**In FY26, Elevate 215 used funds raised in prior fiscal years to support planned investments in schools and educator initiatives and ended the year with a decrease in year-end net assets.*

REVENUE



EXPENSES



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**Denotes board member*

Join this growing community supporting the schools and educators our city needs!
Contact development.team@elevate215.org

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Thank you for your service!
(Board members who concluded their service in fiscal year 2026)

- Colin Kelton
- Ben Persofsky, Former Board Chair
- Dr. Sean Vereen

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Philadelphia, PA 19109
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ELEVATE 215

Philadelphia schools are showing what is possible when educators have the resources and support to put effective practices into action. With continued philanthropic investment, Elevate 215 can help more schools strengthen instruction, expand pathways into teaching, and make it easier for families to find and access quality schools. Join us in bringing what works to more Philadelphia students.

Donate

Make a gift today to support schools, educators, and students

Participate

Partner with us to drive systemic change in education

Advocate

Champion policies that ensure equitable access to high-quality learning

