



FOUNDATION
ACADEMIES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Carol Norris-Smith
carol@essentialmessagellc.com
(267) 394-0152

Princeton Community Leaders Champion Quality Education in Trenton

Foundation Academies' Mission, Achievements Attract Widespread Support

Princeton, NJ – In a community dedicated to quality education and achievement, prominent Princeton residents are partnering with a Trenton charter school to ensure opportunity is not defined by zip code.

Foundation Academies (FA), a K-12 public charter school educating more than 1,200 students, ranks in the top 15% of all New Jersey public schools, with a graduation rate exceeding the statewide average. The school is dedicated to equipping students to excel in learning and empowering them to lead purpose-filled lives. One hundred percent of FA seniors are accepted into college.

For Howie Powers, a Princeton Day School trustee, former history department chair and soccer coach, the academic excellence and opportunity at FA sparked his interest. But his experience as a mentor turned interest into action.

"I experienced the school through the eyes of a student," Powers said. "I went to all the concerts and soccer games and I would take him to dinner once a month. The focus on the kids is the guiding star. They are at the center and they feel it."

The student Powers mentored through the Give Something Back program is now a college graduate working in New Jersey with an environmental advocacy group. Since meeting NAME, Powers has served as the chair of the Friends of Foundation Academies (FOFA) and now is a member of the FA Board of Trustees.

Longtime FA supporter Melanie Clarke, former Executive Director of Princeton Symphony Orchestra, was introduced to the school early in its history, in 2009-2010. She says, "I was on the board of The Lawrenceville School for 10 years and I understand what it takes to run a great school. I see it happening at FA. Over the years I have been so impressed with the problem-solving that goes on to address the needs of the scholars." The school's approach to education includes extended school days, an extended school year and extensive summer programming. In addition, it provides three meals/day, so that scholars can focus on their classes and extracurricular activities. Clarke currently serves on the FOFA Board.

Lance Liverman, former Princeton Council member, calls himself a good friend of FA. He has high praise for FA CEO Sheria McRae's energy and joy focused on providing education equity to children in Trenton. He also is eager for the new high school campus (on the site of the former Horsman Doll Factory) to open its doors and welcome students in August 2026. Liverman says, "I am hoping to see even more youth being exposed to our programs, an expansion of our curriculum dealing with A.I. and continuing to expand our STEM program."

FOFA board member Tony Klockenbrink is also the President of 101 Fund, which provides needs-based college scholarships to graduates of Princeton High School. He echoes Liverman's sentiments, saying, "I am continually impressed by the talent, enthusiasm and commitment I experience with both the FA staff and student base." He looks forward to the students having access to a state-of-the-art library, a spacious and well-equipped music and theater facilities and a weight room when the new high school opens in August 2026.

Marc Brahaney, president of Lasley Brahaney Architecture + Construction and former board member of Princeton Day School, expresses why he and his wife are avid supporters of FA. "Sue and I have always believed the quality of the education a child receives makes a tremendous difference in how that child's life unfolds. That is why we enthusiastically support Foundation Academies."

These are just a few of the community and business leaders who are actively involved in supporting Foundation Academies. The school is attracting positive attention and support from an increasing number of individuals, organizations and even state agencies.

Synergy between the Princeton community and Foundation Academies includes a partnership with the Princeton Battlefield Society on a research exhibition Feb. 20-21, 2026 at Morven sharing the hidden roles of Black soldiers in the pivotal Battles of Trenton and Princeton for the 250th anniversary of US independence, and a special evening Feb. 26, 2026 with Princeton University scholar Dr. Eddie S. Glaude Jr. commemorating the 100th anniversary of Black History Month.

Find out more about how these Princetonians and others are helping shape the future of urban education. Please contact Carol Norris-Smith at carol@essentialmessagellc.com to arrange personal interviews.