



## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **What is Grace Academy?**

- Grace Academy is a private all-girls middle school in Hartford. As a college preparatory school, it serves underprivileged urban girls from Hartford. Grace Academy is tuition-free for all students.
- Grace Academy is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that is completely funded by corporate sponsors, foundations, grants, and individual donors who want to make a difference. We stretch every dollar and depend on a team of volunteers and AmeriCorps teaching fellows who train here with experienced teachers. Students' families also play a key role in helping at the school.

### **How big is Grace Academy? How do students get enrolled?**

- Grace Academy is an intentionally small school. The school is at full capacity with 65 students in grades 5-8. We admit only 17 new girls each year, hand-picked after a 3 week summer program for 4<sup>th</sup> graders. We look for girls who show work ethic and desire. We are not an academic test-in school. Most girls come from public schools with scores significantly below grade level. Our goal is to harness their potential and help them grow into amazing, well-rounded students.

### **What makes Grace Academy unique?**

- The school day lasts from 7:30am until 5:00pm. This allows for extended reading and math blocks and a curriculum rich with arts and music classes. After the academic day, all students spend an hour in a quiet study hall doing homework. Then all students participate in clubs or sports to gain exposure to extracurricular activities (e.g., robotics, dance, music, rowing, squash, soccer, etc.).
- To keep the learning environment going outside the school year, Grace Academy has a mandatory 4-week summer program with academic mornings and afternoon field trips.
- After graduation, our alumnae receive eight additional years of tailored programs: preparing them for high school, supporting them while they're there, and then preparing and supporting them through college. This means alumnae come back to Grace Academy for skill-building workshops, SAT prep, college boot camp, and for college visits. They also have access to professional mentoring, career guidance and internship opportunities.
- Lastly, Grace Academy works with each family of our alumnae to help them apply for financial aid so that their daughters can go on to private high schools and colleges. When alumnae receive partial scholarships and the family can't cover the tuition gap or need help paying for supplies or transportation, Grace Academy helps with "last dollar" funding to ensure our alumnae can continue their higher education.

### **Is Grace Academy a religious school?**

- We are an interfaith school. We teach world religions and foster students' spiritual growth with a strong focus on values and social-emotional skills. During our first 10 years, our location has been on the campus of South Church, however, we embrace and celebrate students from all faiths.

### **Does your model work?**

- Our standardized test data shows class averages moving from below grade level to outperforming students nationwide by 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Most of our students go on to attend top private, parochial, and boarding schools in the area (e.g., Concord Academy, Loomis Chaffee, Westminster, Northwest Catholic, etc.). In our first 10 years, 97% of our alumnae have graduated from high school and our first class of alumnae are currently Juniors in college. We are transforming lives through education and breaking the cycle of urban poverty in Hartford.