

**Renewing our schools** *so that every student can graduate and gain the skills they need to thrive in a complex global economy, takes creativity and rigor. It takes impassioned teachers and principals—who have experienced that magical moment when a student “gets it” and becomes excited about the future. But educators can’t do it alone. They need a roadmap and support along the path—to break through the many challenges and transform their schools to a place where what students take away is authentic, useful, relevant and lasting.*

## THE LEGACY

When educators and business partners banded together to establish the first career academy 47 years ago, they made a promise to 25 young men—to get them to graduate with skills for a trade. These students were ranked the lowest academically and were considered the most likely to drop out. They were thought to be destined to fail.

The “founding” teachers invented a new way of teaching—a career-connected approach. This meant experimenting with new ways of breaking through to young people, developing cross-discipline curriculums, making the classroom student-centric, not teacher-centric. They did this with little more than a strong vision, creativity and what some would have said was an unreasonable amount of optimism.

At the end of the first year, the students’ attendance rate had risen from 50% to 95%. They were thriving, participating in class and learning a trade. This was the beginning of the academy model—a platform that is being used in schools across the United States.



# THE PRINCIPLES IN ACTION

*Schools that succeed* have teachers that take ownership of the process of change and engagement. When teachers feel supported to experiment, to try out new ideas, and to bring their own unique offering into the classroom, the school culture takes on a life of its own. It becomes a place where change is embraced and everyone in the building is empowered to be and do his or her best.



*Schools that succeed* don't have prepackaged experts helicoptered in to "fix" schools. They build the capacity for professional development from within. In short, they have teachers leading other teachers. While this framework takes more time to build, it's a powerful idea because every neighborhood, every school, every class, every relationship has its unique set of challenges.

*Schools that succeed* have strong support for their teachers and principals. Philadelphia Academies, Inc. helps each partner school navigate through the change process. Because we have intimate knowledge of our schools, our expertise is hands-on and right-on relevant. We can adapt our guidance and tap resources in a way that is unique to their situations, opportunities and challenges.



# Our Reach *in* 2014

## PARTNER SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES

- Abraham Lincoln High School\*
- Roxborough High School \*
- South Philadelphia High School
- Horace Howard Furness High School
- Parkway West High School
- Jules E. Mastbaum High School
- Swenson Arts and Technology High School
- Benjamin Franklin High School
- George Washington High School
- Kensington International Business High School

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\*Wall-to-wall Academy school

## CAREER AREAS

- Business and Technology
- Communication and Arts
- Environmental Science
- Health and Life Science
- Horticulture
- Hotel, Restaurant, Travel and Tourism
- Law
- Urban Education

# Reflections on Ideas & Change

## *Lisa Nutter*

The way I see it, part of our job is to lead people to more “ah ha!” moments. These are moments where a spark of an idea actually lights up a part of our brain and we know we’ve had a breakthrough in our thinking. These moments can be life changing. We can see it in the eyes of the kids when they experience it—when they “get it.” And we see it in teachers when first-hand experience of how the academy model can work helps them spark their own imaginative ideas. The interesting thing about this is, scientists have found that we typically have more “ah ha!” moments when our brain has downshifted—when listening to music, taking a shower, in the middle of the night. That’s why it’s so important to create time during the day for collaboration and creativity. Something that schools don’t typically work into the school day for teachers and students.



## *Brett Vance*

Teachers come into this work because they believe they can make a difference. All too often we see teachers become disengaged and pessimistic, and that ultimately affects students’ lives. When a school first begins the process of changing to an academy model, you have to pull a lot of skeptical people along. But when just one teacher fully “gets it”, you see amazing things start to happen. The whole school culture and outlook changes. And, the teacher’s mindset and optimism become contagious.

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# Reflections on Ideas & Change

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## Jennifer Cardoso

When our school partners realize we want to build an innovation to suit them—rather than have them learn to accommodate the next great idea—their eyes get big and they get quiet. They can't quite believe it! At that point they are hooked... It begins to be about how they see things and what they believe is needed. I introduced the idea of a professional learning group to the vice principal of one of our all-academy schools. The idea was still in its early stages when I asked for her input on how we could mold the learning group to suit the school and the needs of the teachers there. She is now an enthusiastic advocate who has pushed the project forward.



## Jay Vazquez

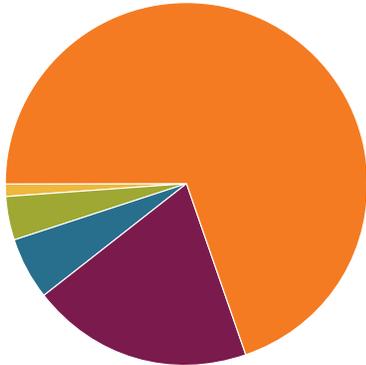
In a previous job as a teacher, I had an experience that showed why the career academy model—with an emphasis on relationships—works so well in shaping a young person's future. I had a student who had reached 9th grade but was barely literate. I could see he had already given up on himself and he was ready to drop out of school. So one day, his English teacher and I sat him down and told him, if he was willing to put in the work, we would help him improve his grades. While we placed the responsibility of his education squarely on his shoulders, we let him know that we were there for him. Our tutoring took a lot of after-school hours, but he slowly turned it around. In the end, he knew we believed in him.

## Marquis Coates

When teachers become completely invested in the process of changing their school to an academy model, they are no longer just someone working with the model. Ownership transforms them into champions and stewards of the model and they themselves become the new innovators.



# INCOME SOURCES



**TOTAL INCOME: \$3,317,879**

- CORPORATIONS & FOUNDATIONS: \$2,313,525
- CONTRACT REVENUE: \$659,980
- EVENT INCOME: \$182,960
- PERFORMANCE BASED & EARNED INCOME: \$127,745
- MISCELLANEOUS: \$33,670

## PARTNERS IN BUILDING 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY SKILLS & Creating Transformational Education.\*

### LEADERSHIP PARTNERS

(\$100,000+)

- Aramark Charitable Fund
- Middleton Family Fund
- PECO – An Exelon Company
- Pennsylvania Convention Center Authority
- Philadelphia Youth Network
- United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey
- William Penn Foundation

### PLATINUM PARTNERS

(\$50,000+)

- ACE
- Comcast
- Independence Blue Cross
- Sunoco
- Wells Fargo

### GOLD PARTNERS

(\$20,000+)

- Bank of America
- Citizens Bank
- Dow Chemical
- Jeff and Jean Griffiths
- Philadelphia Trading Company

### SILVER PARTNERS

(\$10,000+)

- Auto Dealers CARing Fund
- Bank of New York
- JP Morgan Chase
- Lincoln Financial Group
- Patricia Kind Family Foundation
- Philadelphia Energy Solutions
- PNC Bank
- US Airways

### FRIENDS OF THE ACADEMY

(\$5,000+)

- Ford Motor Company
- Giant Food Stores
- Henkels & McCoy PEI, INC.

\* Fiscal Year 2014-2015 listings.

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