

Texas Empowerment Academy Charter School

Llyas Salahud-Din, Chief Development Officer

AUSTIN, TEXAS



100% high school graduation rate | 100% college acceptance rate
100% students of color



A New Narrative

“The ongoing narrative has always been that African American youth are not thriving academically, socially, and emotionally. Texas Empowerment Academy (TxEA) was started to change that narrative by raising strong children through a nurturing, stimulating, and stable learning environment,”

explained Llyas Salahud-Din, Chief Development Officer. With a 25-year track record of successful academic outcomes, TxEA offers robust theater arts and social emotional learning programs and prioritizes parent involvement. “It’s like a family here. We nurture not just the students but ongoing relationships with the parents too.” Inspired by the school’s programming and the visible joy of its student body, Llyas Salahud-Din joined TxEA in 2019 to launch and grow the school’s philanthropic efforts.

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“Parents choose TxEA because they want their children to be in a space where they can be challenged and praised. In addition, the teachers and staff mirror the student population.” Serving 100% students of color, TxEA prides itself on the fact that 92% of its teachers identify as Black. This is a stark contrast to the national average of 7%. As TxEA’s student waiting list quickly grew, the need to expand became apparent.

Part of the Team

In 2021, TxEA connected with Civic Builders, which provided an \$18 million Facilities Investment Fund loan and partnered with Local Initiatives Support Corporation who provided a co-senior loan for another \$10 million to finance 74% of the construction of an 82,000 square foot building. “Since we first connected, the Civic team has always been available to talk to us by phone or email. The guidance has been amazing.” The Civic team collaborated with TxEA through every step of developing a new facility. “We chipped away at the process on a weekly basis until we got to the finish line. They provided as much support as we needed. It felt more like a partnership and a team effort than just another vendor - we really felt like they were rooting for us.”

An Opened Door

The two-story facility will include upgraded classrooms with new technology, a cafeteria, gymnasium, theater arts room, and numerous acres of outdoor space. The impact for TxEA, which had been leasing from a small church building, will be transformative. “We’ll be going from being packed in to being able to finally breathe. It’s our own home.” The new building’s additional classrooms will grow TxEA’s student capacity to 800 (an 116% increase from their current 370 students), enabling them to expand their impact. “We’re at capacity now and we have had to turn people away. Now we can say ‘our doors are open and we have more room to serve you.’ It will allow us to show families that they have an option for their children to pursue a solid education.”