

NEIGHBORHOODS OF GREATER LAURAVILLE AND HAMILTON ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL, CITY NEIGHBORS CHARTER SCHOOL AND ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Two public schools and a Catholic school provide three very different, strong school options to families in Greater Lauraville, a cluster of neighborhoods in northeast Baltimore featuring old Victorian houses and traditional rowhouses. Hamilton Elementary/Middle School serves 639 students in grades PreK-8 in Hamilton Hills; City Neighbors Charter School serves 198 children in grades K-8; and St. Francis of Assisi School in Mayfield serves Catholic and non-Catholic students in grades PreK-8.

Chosen by This Old House as “The Best Place to Buy an Old House in Maryland,” Greater Lauraville is home to a number of family-friendly venues, a children’s bookstore, a weekly outdoor market and restaurants and cafes. Lauraville’s Hamilton Hills neighborhood includes 12 Healthy Neighborhood target blocks. In 2009, the median sales price for a house in Greater Lauraville was \$168,900, up more than 200 percent from \$81,600 in 2000.

All three partnership schools are strong academically. At Hamilton last year, 87 percent of students met or exceeded state standards in reading on the Maryland School Assessment (MSA), up from 83 percent the previous year; 82 percent made the state grade in mathematics, up from 75 percent the year before. At City Neighbors, 88 percent of students scored proficient or advanced on the reading MSA, up from 85 percent the previous year; 67 percent scored proficient or advanced in math, up from 62 percent the year before. St. Francis of Assisi measures its students’ progress using a national norm-referenced achievement test, the Stanford 10. St. Francis’ students scored in the 65th percentile in reading and the 62nd percentile in math.

Hamilton’s principal comes out of New Leaders for New Schools, a nationally competitive principal recruitment and training program, and the school has an active parent organization with some 300 members who pay voluntary dues and participated in the development of the school’s curriculum, which focuses on the arts and environmental science. Hamilton also has an award winning band and orchestra. This grant will expand the school’s science programming, including a partnership with the Hamilton Crop Circle.

City Neighbors is also an arts-integrated school that follows the Reggio Emilia philosophy of allowing students to help direct their learning. Due to high demand, it opened a second school, City Neighbors Hamilton, in 2009-10. With this grant, the school is expanding its arts programming, in partnership with One World Cultural Arts Society.

St. Francis of Assisi has long been a Lauraville community anchor that is open to all faiths and follows a curriculum rooted in social justice and high academic standards. The school’s athletic program serves over 200 children from the community, many of whom are not enrolled at the school, in soccer, basketball, track, and baseball/softball. Parent and community volunteers run the program. With this grant, the school will expand its physical education programming.

The schools applied together with NOGLI for the Goldseker Foundation’s Neighborhood-School Partnership grant, pooling funds for joint activities and shared professional development that will strengthen the menu of school options available to families in Northeast Baltimore.

Partnership Contact: Mark Tough, Neighborhoods of Greater Lauraville Executive Director, 410-444-9188, mark@greaterlauraville.com.