



Latin American Community Center New Castle Site

In June of 2021 the LACC began leasing an auxiliary site in New Castle as a part of the agency's Education Expansion Project. In order to build the new Infant and Toddler Center, the LACC had to demolish a small building that housed two preschool classrooms. The LACC Early Development Center (EDC) elected to lease a site in New Castle in order to continue to provide services to families displaced by the construction, who for the most part were from the 19720 zip code.

In addition to providing services for the families in the EDC, we were able to use the site to offer a 10-week Summer Camp in July of 2021 to support the entire family. Based on a need identified by Colonial School District, we started offering before and after school care. Unfortunately, the owner sold the building and once again, we find ourselves in need of a facility to meet the demand for LACC services in Zip Code 19720.

In the short amount of time that the agency has been in New Castle we have seen a high demand for our services. Demand has been further heightened by the YMCA ending before and after school programming at the neighboring Carrie Downie and New Castle Elementary Schools. This has led both of these schools to lean on the LACC to fill the need for before and after school programming. Additionally, the New Castle Latino population is rapidly growing. Latinos represented 1% of New Castle's population in 2010. As of 2019, that number has grown to 6%. Currently 22% of students in the Colonial School District are Latino. As the Latino population in New Castle continues to increase, demand for LACC services will also increase.

Due to this demand and current program successes, the LACC has decided to acquire a new permanent site in New Castle. After an extensive search, the LACC has selected a property located at 239 Christiana Road in New Castle. In looking for a new site, one of our priorities was ensuring the space was located in the Colonial School District as we have already built a strong relationship with the district and they regularly refer families to LACC programs. Because of the LACC's track record of providing high quality bilingual educational services to preschoolers with diagnosed disabilities, referrals from the Colonial School District have increased.

The property is in Colonial School District, but borders the Christina School District, which has also experienced an increase in the Latino population. This has the added benefit of giving the LACC the opportunity to offer bilingual services to families in both districts.

The LACC has procured a lease to purchase agreement that provides the LACC with the option to purchase the building and its 10.61 acre property within thirty-six (36) months from the signing of the lease for \$2,450,000.00. This provides the LACC sufficient time to secure the capital needed to make this investment and ensure this site becomes a permanent fixture of LACC programming.

Upon signing the lease agreement, the first step of the project will be to retrofit the space for preschool. Retrofitting will be done in two phases. The LACC has a goal of completing phase one of renovations in the summer of 2022 so that the site can open at the start of the 2022-2023 school year. This is important so that the families from the current site and on the waiting list can be served at the completion of Phase 1. Phase 2 of construction will continue during operations