

COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Excellent, Affordable Christian Education

May 11, 2025

Dear Members of the CCA Community,

Some of you may be following the local dispute over which entity will receive the Charlottesville property that was home to the Federal Executive Institute, a 14-acre property with five buildings that was used by the government as a training facility for federal workers. Since President Trump closed the facility this year, there is a governmental process where a qualified educational institution can receive the property, likely at no cost, provided that the institution can operate and maintain the property for 30 years.

We did not share this information at the time because we didn't want to get anyone's hopes up, but CCA also applied for the property. As we understood the application and decision process, we felt that we had certain advantages based on the criteria that could help us to acquire it. For example, a K-12 school should have an advantage over a post-secondary institution, and a school with demonstrated hardship and lack of opportunity for other facility options should have an advantage over an institution with appropriate facilities. We also had to have a plan for how we could use all parts of the property. You probably aren't aware of all the projects I have been working on over the last few years, but this property appeared to be the answer to our needs for all those programmatic goals. Below is a short list of what we have been planning programmatically that could have been supported by acquiring the FEI property.

- We desire a partnership with Christian colleges to provide a place for student teachers seeking licensure to complete their practicums. This would require housing, and FEI has one building that is almost entirely hotel rooms. Having housing could also help in recruiting qualified teachers, a significant need for significant future growth.
- We have planned a multi-pathway high school, which we are launching with the addition of ninth grade next school year. There are plenty of appropriate classrooms for our standard and dual-enrollment (college-level) classroom needs. There is a large shed-like building and part of another building that would be appropriate for the vocational education programs we have been developing.
- Only a small piece (reading and math intervention for elementary students) of the special education program that we started four years ago has been implemented due to lack of space. The FEI property has plenty of appropriate space to grow and develop that priority.

- There is easily enough space for 500 students, and elementary and secondary grades could be in separate buildings on the same property.
- There is an athletic building that would resolve our current need for indoor PE space on rainy and cold days.
- While not a current priority, there would be sufficient space at FEI to develop a preschool program, a goal stated in our founding documents.

On April 30, we received our rejection letter stating that of the three applicants (U.Va., Charlottesville City Public Schools, and CCA), Charlottesville City Public Schools demonstrated the most need for the property and the ability to fund and maintain it. Obviously, this was disappointing news, and we understood that CCA could not compete with the financial resources available to U.Va. and the public schools. However, the idea that we had not demonstrated a greater need was clearly false, and I requested a corrected letter acknowledging the actual reason(s) for denial, which I never received. Though greatly disappointed, we accepted the decision knowing that God in His wisdom opens and closes the doors He desires to accomplish the goals He has for us. We were quite surprised last Friday, then, to read the news that the Department of Education had re-evaluated the public schools and U.Va.'s applications and decided to remove the property from the public schools and to give it to U.Va. This led to some questions. Was CCA's application re-evaluated, and if not, why not? If the application process worked as we understood the written policies and procedures to indicate, shouldn't CCA have been given the property as a K-12 school with a demonstrated need over a postsecondary school with no clear need for the space? The decisions, the reversal, and the obvious omission of CCA's application in government communications regarding a reported re-evaluation caused confusion.

Yesterday, our Board of Directors met to decide if and how we should respond to this strange turn of events. Given the false public narrative that only Charlottesville City Public Schools and U.Va. were applicants and given our desire for clarification on the government's decision-making process, our board decided to share publicly our reasons for attempting to acquire the Federal Executive Institute property. Since I have accepted an invitation from Rob Schilling to join his radio show tomorrow to discuss the application for FEI, I wanted to share this information with you first to avoid further confusion within our school community.

I want to be clear that sharing this information is NOT about:

- having sour grapes that we didn't get the property. We are confident that God will supply what we need to complete His purposes in His ways in His timing.
- joining the very public, ugly fight between CCS and U.Va. We will not fight anyone over a piece of property; it is not God-honoring to tear each other apart over stuff.
- hoping to get FEI. We have no expectation that the decision will be changed or that we will get another review.

Instead it IS about:

- wanting assurances that we lost fair and square by being told clearly and accurately why we didn't meet the criteria. We would like to communicate with the Secretary of

Education, Linda McMahon, to make sure that she knew about our application and that we received a fair evaluation. By sharing our story publically, there may be someone who can help us reach her.

- and MOST IMPORTANTLY, this is an opportunity to share the amazing vision that God has given CCA to serve children from all socio-economic, ethnic, and educational backgrounds. His vision is so big (and expensive) and so critical for our community that we need partners to make it possible. The public firestorm over FEI has provided a platform where sharing CCA's vision and barriers may get the attention of future partners that God may use to fulfil parts of His plan that we cannot currently implement.

Please pray for God to be glorified as we move forward.

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