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## *Senate*

### IN CELEBRATION OF EAST SIDE CHARTER SCHOOL

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I rise today to celebrate the East Side Charter School in Wilmington, DE. Five years after opening their doors to some of the State's most economically and educationally disadvantaged children, they have amassed a record of meeting and exceeding expectations. The achievement gap is narrowing in the First State, and the East Side Charter School is leading the way.

Located in the middle of what is called the projects, in properties managed by the Wilmington Housing Authority on the east side of Wilmington, East Side Charter School is home to low-income students in grades K-3 who face unique challenges.

Over 80 percent of the students at East Side Charter School live in poverty. Most of the children live with only one parent, few of whom completed any college education. Many live in neighborhoods with high incidence of violence and crime, and some are without proper nutrition and health care.

But at this school, kids can come early and stay late. They have a longer school year. They wear school uniforms. Parents sign something akin to a contract of mutual responsibility. Teachers and administrators are given freer reign to innovate and initiate. The attendance rate is nearly perfect. Parents are given a better chance to help children fulfill their potential.

At this school the halls are filled with talented faculty, skilled supervisors, and dedicated staff. Principal Will Robinson

challenges students and empowers them to meet those challenges.

When the East Side Charter School started 5 years ago, the odds were stacked against its success. The school has flourished though, in spite of the daunting statistics. One of almost 200 public schools in the State of Delaware, from the wealthiest to those struggling the most, East Side Charter School was the only one in the last few years where every student tested met or exceeded our State's standards in math.

As Governor of Delaware, and now as Senator, I have shared with people across America the story of East Side's incredible success. I tell them about the teachers like Barbara Juraco, who daily demonstrate unparalleled commitment and patience, the support staff that's there when needed, the students who again and again exceed expectations, and the parents and family members who understand they have an obligation to be full partners in the education of their children. Together, they serve as an inspiration and an example to communities across the country.

Delaware is a small State, but we are building a growing record of achievement in public school education. Statewide, scores have again increased in all grades and across ethnic lines for reading and math, proving that we are closing the achievement gap.

Much of what we have accomplished in Delaware, and at the East Side Charter School, serves as a model for our Nation.

I rise today to offer my full support as future generations of students and educators at East Side Charter School ready to face the challenges of the 21st century and overcome them.