

East Lawrence Neighborhood Association

P.O. Box 442393
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February 28, 2022

Douglas County Natural & Cultural Heritage Grant Program
1006 New Hampshire Street
Lawrence, Kansas 66044

Re: Grant Proposal for documentary film *These are the Schools in My Neighborhood*

Dear Grant Program Committee Members,

The East Lawrence Neighborhood Association (ELNA) is a non-profit civic association representing the residents and property owners of the East Lawrence neighborhood. From its earliest days, East Lawrence has been a richly diverse low- and moderate-income community, with a strong social and cultural fabric. New York School has been an essential part of the fabric of East Lawrence, since its founding over 150 years ago in 1869. As one of the oldest continually operating public schools in Kansas, it is widely recognized as an excellent Title 1 school, highly responsive to the individual needs of its students. Located at the center of the neighborhood, New York School is the beating heart of our neighborhood, where generations have learned not only their academics, but what it is to be part of a community. New York School alumnus Langston Hughes wrote of this in his poem "The Kids in School With Me."

ELNA was thrilled to learn that Marlo Angell is proposing to make a film about the important role of historic schools in Lawrence's oldest neighborhoods. In East Lawrence, we are quite familiar with the work of this talented film maker, who has made films about the Wishing Bench and the La Yorda settlement. Marlo Angell's films are well researched, riveting to watch, and inclusive of voices that are too rarely included in representations of local history and culture. With potential school closures still very much a possibility for next year, it is critical to document these community assets while they are still operational. We cannot imagine anyone better suited to do this. ELNA enthusiastically supports this proposal for full funding!

Sincerely,

Barry M. Shalinsky
President, on behalf of the ELNA Board

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785-330-5067 (voice and text)