



MAASAI EDUCATION FOUNDATION

WINTER 2024 NEWSLETTER

MEF 2023 #GivingTuesday/December Matching Fundraiser was a Huge Success! Thank You to All Our Generous Donors!!!!



Our goal was \$40,000 to cover 25% of the Engaruka English Medium Primary School's (EEMPS) 2024 operating costs. We easily blew past this goal and received \$81,607.95 in donations and pledges. In addition, we received \$15,250 in matching funds and pending corporate matches. The total amount raised is \$96,858 with \$49,320 going to 2024 school sponsorships/operating funds and the remaining \$47,538 going towards construction of the new boys' dormitory. We also picked up 11 new sponsorships from Betsy; Bridgette and Bob; Debbie and Mary Leigh; Ginny; Lori and Scott; Lori, Michael and Fran; Marissa; Nina; Randy and Paula; the Blacksburg Junior Women's Club, and Zeena and Siddeek. Thank you new sponsors!

2023 Year in Review and Early 2024 Accomplishments, Theo Dillaha, MEF Board Chairperson:

- We now have 277 children at EEMPS in pre-school through 7th grade and we are now a complete primary school.

Grade	Total	Female	Male	Unknown
Nursery	35	21	14	
I	45	23	22	
II	38	20	17	1
III	37	14	22	1
IV	33	13	20	
V	37	21	16	
VI	23	16	7	
VII	29	16	13	
Total	277	144	131	2

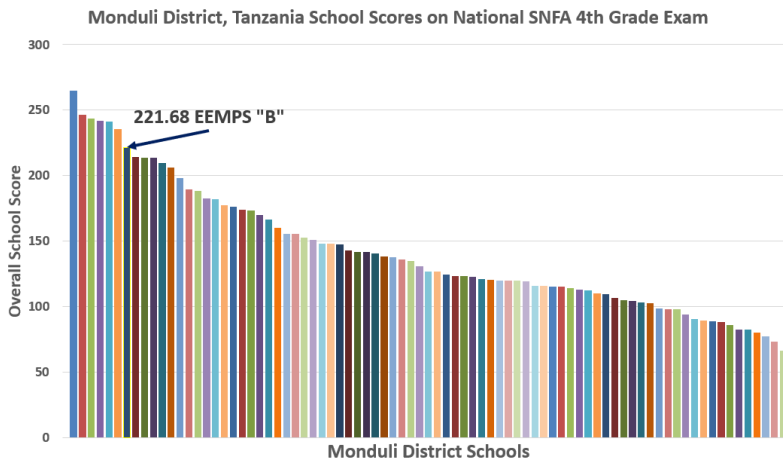


2023 4th Grade SNFA Results

Playground Time

Martha, EEMPS school manager, with current 7th grade girls in 2018

- In October of 2023, our 38 fourth graders took the 4th grade national SNFA exams. The school's academic score on the exam ranked 7th out of 81 primary schools in the district and the school received an overall grade of "B". Congratulations to the EEMPS 4th grade students and EEMPS teachers!



- Construction started in February 2024 on a two-classroom addition to the TX Foundation Pre-School Building and a new boys' dormitory. The two-classroom addition is being funded from sources other than MEF. The boys' dormitory construction is being funded by MEF and MEF provided the school with \$94,126.50 to start construction in January 2024.

The boys' dormitory will consist of three wings with bathroom facilities, each wing housing 40 to 45 boys. The total cost of the boys' dormitory is \$188,253 and we need to raise an additional \$26,137 to complete construction by July 2024.



Classroom addition to TX Pre-School Building

Classroom addition walls

MEF portion of boys' dormitory

Boys' dormitory construction

Message from Martha, EEMPS Manager: As we navigate through another inspiring academic year, I am thrilled to share the incredible impact your generosity has had on our school community. Your support has been instrumental in shaping the future of our students, and I am excited to update you on the latest developments.



- Thanks to your contributions, our students are excelling academically. Whether it's through innovative teaching methods, state-of-the-art resources, or extracurricular opportunities, your support is creating an environment where learning knows no bounds. Recently the Ministry of Education announced the grade four national examination results. We were ranked 7th out of 81 schools in the district.
- With support from Thomas Neils, two additional classrooms are being added to the TX Pre-School building. The foundation, flooring, walls and roofing have been completed and we hope to be able to use the new rooms within the next month or so.
- An NGO from Europe visited the school and performed maintenance on the playground previously constructed by Service without Borders in 2022. They also constructed a climbing tower, which is very popular with the students.
- The school vegetable garden has been a great success in providing students nutritional food, reducing school food expenses, and providing educational opportunities for the students. Caring for the garden demands regular attention and care. Students learn the importance of responsibility as they water, harvest, and nurture the plants. The school garden has also improved the school's menu. The students enjoy eating fresh vegetables that they have nurtured themselves. It is a rewarding experience that not only enhances their physical well-being but also fosters an appreciation for the journey of food from the soil to the plate.
- An avocado orchard behind the Crane Classroom has been planted and will soon be drip irrigated. The orchard was funded and started by Service without Borders during their 2023 service-learning trip to the school. We are hoping to identify other locations around the school for additional school vegetable gardens, fruit tree orchards and fields for corn, beans, etc.
- The school livestock herd currently consists of seven dairy cows and more than one hundred goats and sheep. The livestock provide the children with milk and more than 175 lbs (80 kg) of meat per month. Through the livestock our children practice livestock rearing as part of their cultural heritage and extracurricular activities.
- One of our newest initiatives has been providing our older students with email so that they can communicate with the Service without Borders pen pals and their sponsors. Currently students in grade 3 and above have access to email. The simple act of writing emails and sharing thoughts, dreams, and stories has created bonds that bridge the gap between different cultures and backgrounds of our students and their sponsors and pen pals.
- Our school is not just a place of learning; it is a hub for community development. With your support, we have been able to expand our outreach programs, reaching more families in need and making a positive impact on the wider community. As way of benefiting from the ongoings rains, we have donated hundreds of tree seedlings to surrounding community members to bring the school community together for a common cause, fostering a sense of unity and shared responsibility for the environment and help mitigate climate change effects.
- Our 7th graders will graduate from primary school next December. The school had a parent meeting in late December 2023 and one of the issues the parents raised was the need for a quality secondary school (grades 8 to 11). The parents and school made a commitment to start planning and raising funds to construct two classrooms for a secondary school, which would open in January 2025.

Service Without Borders (SWB) Update: SWB is a student organization at Virginia Tech that volunteers in communities around the world. Working with MEF, SWB students have worked at EEMPS 5 times since 2017. SWB will return to the school this May to assist with construction of the boys' dormitory and give students and teachers computer lessons. Ten students and two MEF board members will work at the school for two weeks.

EEMPS Visit and Safari: This coming May, there will be a second visit to the school and safari for five MEF donors. They will spend three nights at the school and visit the Tarangire and Serengeti National Parks and Ngorongoro Crater during a six-day safari. The cost is approximately \$2,700 plus airfare. Similar trips are possible in the future or we can help you arrange your personal trip. No MEF funds are used on these trips. If you are interested or want more information, please email maasaieducationfoundation@gmail.com.

Student Spotlight: Ndanapi Killel Meleji was in our 1st pre-school class in 2018. She did so well in pre-school that she skipped right to 2nd grade the next year. Now she is a 7th grader and will move on to secondary school in 2025. Her sponsors are Karen Scalf-Benham and Brian Benham of Blacksburg, Virginia. Message from Ndanapi: *"To my dearest sponsors and the Maasai Education Foundation, I want to express my deepest gratitude for your incredible support throughout my educational journey. Your sponsorship has not only enabled me to pursue my dreams but has also opened doors to a world of possibilities. From the early days of learning to read to the challenges of Grade 7, your support has been my guiding light. Thank you for believing in me, for investing in my education, and for being the pillars of support that have allowed me to stand tall in the pursuit of knowledge. Your generosity has not only impacted my life but has contributed to the growth and success of EEMPS and the whole Masai community. I am truly grateful for the opportunities you have provided, and I carry your support with me as I continue to reach new heights"*.



School Photos:



Construction of new playground tower



Students harvesting vegetables from school garden



EEMPS teaching staff



Our 7th grade ladies

How to Help: There are many ways that you can help.

- **Student Sponsorships:** A student sponsorship is \$700 per year and covers a child's tuition, fees, clothing, room and board, medical care, etc. You can also provide partial support for a child. Sponsors receive updates on their child.
- **Donations:** General donations go towards school operating costs or facilities construction. We will hopefully complete construction of the school by 2026. Remaining facilities that are needed include a small administration building and some staff housing so that we can attract the best teachers. In 2024, we need to raise an additional \$26,000 to complete construction of the boys' dormitory and an additional \$30,000 in sponsorship/operating funds to meet our 2024 goals. To donate via credit card, click [HERE](#).
- **Corporate Match:** Many corporations match the donations of their employees to charitable organizations. We currently receive over \$15,000 in corporate matching funds annually from corporations such as Altria, Apple, GE, and Verizon. Please check and see if your donations are eligible for a corporate match. If you have questions about corporate matches, please contact us.
- **Corporate Giving Programs:** The Kroger family of companies (Kroger, Ralphs, Dillons, Smith's, King Soopers, Fry's, QFC, City Market, Owen's, Jay C, Pay Less, Baker's, Gerbes, Harris Teeter, Pick 'n Save, Metro Market, Mariano's) and some other merchants will donate a percentage of your purchases to a charity if you them as your preferred charity? If you know of other companies that do this, please let us know. Email us and we'll help you set this up with Kroger.
- **Vehicle and Boat Donations:** Supporters have donated two cars to us in the past that they no longer used. It is incredibly easy. Just contact us and we'll recommend a vehicle donation service. Then you fill out a one-page form, the service picks up the car and sells it at auction, and you get credit for a charitable donation.
- **eBay Sales:** Did you know that you can designate all or a portion of eBay sales to charity? When you do so, eBay waives the percentage of the fees that you donate. For example, if you sell something for \$20 and designate all the funds for a charity, eBay will waive all your transaction fees. If 50% is designated for charity, 50% of fees are waived.
- **Maasai Education Foundation Amazon Wish List:** Items for the school will be delivered on our next trip. Donated items are charitable donations and tax deductible. <https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/6ADPF403U0A2>
- For more information on any of the above, please email maasaieducationfoundation@gmail.com.

HOW TO DONATE

BY CHECK: Send checks payable to the Maasai Education Foundation, 345 Woods Lane, Newport, VA 24128.

BY CREDIT CARD (with no fees):

<https://www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/2457198>

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MEF, PLEASE VISIT

<https://maasaieducationfoundation.org> or

<https://www.facebook.com/MaasaiEducationFoundation/>

Email: maasaieducationfoundation@gmail.com

Text: 540-922-2971



Engaruka English Medium Primary School