

Education Realty Trust, Inc.
Form 424B5
September 20, 2011

Filed Pursuant to Rule 424(b)(5)
File No. 333-161493

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT
(To prospectus dated September 10, 2009)

\$50,000,000 Common Stock

We have entered into an equity distribution agreement with KeyBanc Capital Markets Inc., the Sales Agent, relating to shares of our common stock, par value \$0.01 per share, offered by this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, pursuant to a continuous offering program. In accordance with the terms of this equity distribution agreement, we may offer and sell shares of our common stock having an aggregate offering price of up to \$50,000,000 from time to time through the Sales Agent.

Sales of shares of common stock, if any, under this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus may be made in transactions that are deemed to be at-the-market offerings, as defined in Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the Securities Act, including sales made by means of ordinary brokers transactions, including on the New York Stock Exchange, or NYSE, at market prices or as otherwise agreed to with the Sales Agent. The Sales Agent is not required to sell any specific number or dollar amount of common stock, but the Sales Agent will make all sales using commercially reasonable efforts consistent with its normal trading and sales practices on mutually agreed upon terms between the Sales Agent and us.

The shares of our common stock to which this prospectus supplement relates will be offered and sold through the Sales Agent, over a period of time and from time to time, in transactions at then-current prices. The Sales Agent will be entitled to compensation that will not exceed 2.0% of the gross sales price per share for any shares of common stock sold through it. In connection with the sale of the shares of common stock on our behalf, the Sales Agent may be deemed to be an underwriter within the meaning of the Securities Act, and the compensation of the Sales Agent may be deemed to be underwriting discounts or commissions.

Our common stock is listed on the NYSE under the symbol EDR. The last reported sale price of our common stock on the NYSE on September 19, 2011 was \$9.29 per share.

Investing in shares of our common stock involves risks. See Risk Factors beginning on page S-2 of this prospectus supplement and on page 3 of the accompanying prospectus and the risk factors discussed in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q and other information that we file from time to time with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the SEC.

Neither the SEC nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

KeyBanc Capital Markets

The date of this prospectus supplement is September 20, 2011.

TABLE OF CONTENTS**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	Page
Prospectus Supplement	
<u>About This Prospectus Supplement</u>	<u>S-1</u>
<u>Forward-Looking Statements</u>	<u>S-1</u>
<u>Risk Factors</u>	<u>S-2</u>
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	<u>S-4</u>
<u>Additional Federal Income Tax Considerations</u>	<u>S-4</u>
<u>Plan of Distribution</u>	<u>S-11</u>
<u>Legal Matters</u>	<u>S-12</u>
<u>Experts</u>	<u>S-12</u>
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	<u>S-12</u>
<u>Incorporation of Certain Information by Reference</u>	<u>S-13</u>
Prospectus	
<u>About This Prospectus</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Forward-Looking Statements</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>The Company</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Risk Factors</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Consolidated Ratio Of Earnings To Fixed Charges</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Use Of Proceeds</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Description Of Capital Stock</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Description Of Debt Securities</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Description Of Depositary Shares</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>Subscription Rights</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>Book Entry Procedures and Settlement</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>Federal Income Tax Consequences of Our Status as a REIT</u>	<u>22</u>
<u>Plan Of Distribution</u>	<u>37</u>
<u>Legal Matters</u>	<u>38</u>
<u>Experts</u>	<u>38</u>
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>Incorporation Of Certain Documents By Reference</u>	<u>39</u>

You should rely only upon the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. We have not, and the Sales Agent has not, authorized any other person to provide you with different or additional information. If anyone provides you with different or additional information, you should not rely upon it. We are not, and the Sales Agent is not, making an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where such offer or sale is not permitted. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein or therein is accurate only as of the respective dates of these documents. Our business, financial condition, liquidity, results of operations, funds from operations, or FFO, and prospects may have changed since those dates.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

This document is in two parts. The first part is comprised of this prospectus supplement which describes the specific terms of this offering and certain other matters relating to us. The second part, the accompanying prospectus, contains a description of our common stock and provides more general information about securities we may offer from time to time, some of which does not apply to this offering. To the extent that the information contained in this prospectus supplement differs or varies from the information contained in the accompanying prospectus or documents previously filed with the SEC, the information in this prospectus supplement will supersede such information.

This prospectus supplement is part of a registration statement that we have filed with the SEC relating to the securities offered hereby. This prospectus supplement does not contain all of the information that we have included in the registration statement and the accompanying exhibits and schedules in accordance with the rules and regulations of the SEC, and we refer you to the omitted information. It is important for you to read and consider all information contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus in making your investment decision. You should also read and consider the additional information incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. See [Where You Can Find More Information](#) in this prospectus supplement.

All references to we, our, us, EDR and the Company in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus mean Education Realty Trust, Inc. and its consolidated subsidiaries, except where it is made clear that the term means only Education Realty Trust, Inc.

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

Our disclosure and analysis in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents that are incorporated by reference herein and therein contain forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or the Exchange Act. Forward-looking statements provide our current expectations or forecasts of future events and are not statements of historical fact. These forward-looking statements include information about possible or assumed future events, including, among other things, discussion and analysis of our future financial condition, results of operations and FFO, our strategic plans and objectives, cost management, occupancy and leasing rates and trends, liquidity and ability to refinance our indebtedness as it matures, anticipated capital expenditures (and access to capital) required to complete projects, amounts of anticipated cash distributions to our stockholders in the future and other matters. Words such as anticipates, expects, intends, plans, believes, seeks, estimates and variations of these words and other expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. These statements are not guarantees of future performance and are subject to risks, uncertainties and other factors, some of which are beyond our control, are difficult to predict and/or could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or forecasted in the forward-looking statements.

Forward-looking statements involve inherent uncertainty and may ultimately prove to be incorrect or false. You are cautioned not to place undue reliance on forward-looking statements. Except as otherwise may be required by law, we undertake no obligation to update or revise forward-looking statements to reflect changed assumptions, the occurrence of unanticipated events or actual operating results. Our actual results could differ materially from those anticipated in these forward-looking statements as a result of various factors, including, but not limited to, the national economy; the real estate industry in general and in our specific markets; legislative or regulatory changes, including changes to laws governing REITs; our dependence on key personnel whose continued service is not guaranteed; availability of qualified acquisition and development targets; availability of capital and financing; rising interest rates; rising

insurance rates; impact of ad valorem and income taxation; changes in generally accepted accounting principles; construction costs that may exceed estimates; construction delays; lease-up risks; inability to obtain new tenants upon the expiration of existing leases; and the potential need to fund tenant improvements or other capital expenditures out of operating cash flow.

This list of risks and uncertainties, however, is only a summary of some of the most important factors and is not intended to be exhaustive. You should carefully review the risks described under Risk Factors beginning on page_S-2 of this prospectus supplement and under the caption Item 1A. Risk Factors of our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K. New factors may also emerge from time to time that could materially and adversely affect us.

S-1

TABLE OF CONTENTS

RISK FACTORS

Your investment in shares of our common stock involves substantial risks. In consultation with your own financial and legal advisers, you should carefully consider, among other matters, the factors set forth below as well as under the caption "Item 1A. Risk Factors" of our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement, and the accompanying prospectus and other information that we file with the SEC before deciding whether an investment in shares of our common stock is suitable for you. If any of the risks contained in or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus develop into actual events, our business, financial condition, liquidity, results of operations, FFO and prospects could be materially and adversely affected, the market price of our common stock could decline and you may lose all or part of your investment.

We may be unable to invest a significant portion of the net proceeds of this offering on acceptable terms.

Delays in investing the net proceeds of this offering may impair our performance. We cannot assure you that we will be able to identify any collegiate housing communities, development opportunities or other investments that meet our investment objectives or that any investment that we make will produce a positive return. We may be unable to invest the net proceeds of this offering on acceptable terms within the time period that we anticipate or at all, which could harm our financial condition and operating results.

Moreover, we will have significant flexibility in investing the net proceeds of this offering and may use the net proceeds from this offering in ways with which investors may not agree or for purposes other than those contemplated at the time of this offering.

Volatility in the capital and credit markets could materially and adversely impact us.

The capital and credit markets have been experiencing extreme volatility and disruption, which has made it more difficult to borrow money and/or raise equity capital. If current levels of market disruption and volatility continue or worsen, we may not be able to obtain new debt financing or refinance our maturing debt on favorable terms or at all. In addition, our future access to the equity markets could be limited. If we cannot access capital or we cannot access capital upon acceptable terms, we may be required to liquidate one or more investments in properties at times that may not permit us to realize the maximum return on those investments, which could also result in adverse tax consequences to us. Any such financing or refinancing issues could materially and adversely affect us. Moreover, this market turmoil and tightening of credit have also led to an increased lack of consumer confidence and widespread reduction of business activity generally, which may adversely impact us, including our ability to acquire and dispose of assets and continue our development pipeline.

The volatility in the capital and credit markets may also have a material adverse effect on the market price of our common stock. As with other public companies, the availability of debt and equity capital depends, in part, upon the market price of our common stock and investor demand, which, in turn, depends upon various market conditions that change from time to time. Among the market conditions and other factors that may affect the market price of our common stock is the market's perception of our current and future financial condition, liquidity, growth potential, earnings, FFO and cash distributions. Our failure to meet the market's expectation with regard to any of these or other items would likely adversely affect the market price of our common stock, possibly materially. We cannot assure you that we will be able to raise the necessary capital to meet our debt service obligations, pay dividends to our

stockholders or make future investments necessary to implement our business plan, and the failure to do so could have a material adverse effect on us.

This offering is expected to be dilutive.

Giving effect to the issuance of common stock in this offering, the receipt of the expected net proceeds and the use of those proceeds, we expect that this offering will have a dilutive effect on our FFO per share and Core FFO per share. The actual amount of dilution cannot be determined at this time and will be based upon numerous factors which are currently not known to us.

S-2

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Future sales or issuances of our common stock may cause the market price of our common stock to decline.

The sale of substantial amounts of our common stock, whether directly by us or in the secondary market, the perception that such sales could occur or the availability for future sale of shares of our common stock or securities convertible into or exchangeable or exercisable for our common stock could materially and adversely affect the market price of our common stock and our ability to raise capital through future offerings of equity or equity-related securities. In addition, we may issue capital stock or other equity securities senior to our common stock in the future for a number of reasons, including to finance our operations and business plan, to adjust our ratio of debt to equity, to satisfy obligations upon the exchange of partnership units in the Operating Partnership and the University Towers Partnership or for other reasons.

The market price of our common stock may fluctuate significantly.

The market price of our common stock may fluctuate significantly in response to many factors, including:

actual or anticipated variations in our operating results, FFO, Core FFO, cash flows or liquidity;
change in our earnings estimates or those of analysts and any failure to meet such estimates;
changes in our dividend policy;

publication of research reports about us, the collegiate housing industry or the real estate industry generally;
increases in market interest rates that lead purchasers of our common stock to demand a higher dividend yield;
changes in market valuations of similar companies;

adverse market reaction to the amount of our outstanding debt at any time, the amount of our maturing debt in the near and medium term and our ability to refinance such debt and the terms thereof or our plans to incur additional debt in the future;

additions or departures of key management personnel;
actions by institutional stockholders;
speculation in the press or investment community;

the realization of any of the other risk factors included in, or incorporated by reference to, this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus; and

general market and economic conditions.

Many of the factors listed above are beyond our control. Those factors may cause the market price of our common stock to decline, regardless of our financial performance and condition and prospects. It is impossible to provide any assurance that the market price of our common stock will not fall in the future, and it may be difficult for holders to resell shares of our common stock at prices that they find attractive, or at all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

USE OF PROCEEDS

We expect to use the net proceeds from any sales of shares of common stock resulting from this prospectus supplement for general corporate purposes, which may from time to time include funding or partially funding the acquisition or development of collegiate housing communities, the improvement of collegiate housing communities or the repayment of debt.

KeyBank National Association, an affiliate of the Sales Agent, is a lender under our \$95 million senior secured revolving credit facility. We may use proceeds of this offering to repay debt, including amounts that we may borrow in the future under our senior secured revolving credit facility. The affiliate of the Sales Agent that is a lender under this facility may receive a portion of any proceeds from the offering used to repay amounts outstanding under the facility.

ADDITIONAL FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSIDERATIONS

As described more fully in the accompanying prospectus, we have elected to be taxed as a REIT under Sections 856 through 860 of the Code and applicable Treasury Regulations, which set forth the requirements for qualification as a REIT for federal income tax purposes. In the opinion of Bass, Berry & Sims PLC, we qualified to be taxed as a REIT for our taxable years ended December 31, 2008 through December 31, 2010 and our organization and current and proposed method of operation will enable us to continue to qualify as a REIT for our taxable year ended December 31, 2011 and thereafter. Investors should be aware that Bass, Berry & Sims PLC's opinion is based on customary assumptions, is conditioned on certain representations made by us as to factual matters, including representations regarding the nature of our properties and the future conduct of our business, and is not binding on the Internal Revenue Service, or IRS, or any court and speaks as of the date issued. In addition, Bass, Berry & Sims PLC's opinion is based on existing federal income tax law governing qualification as a REIT, which is subject to change, possibly on a retroactive basis. Moreover, our continued qualification and taxation as a REIT depend on our ability to meet on a continuing basis, through actual results, certain qualification tests set forth in the federal income tax laws. Those qualification tests involve the percentage of income that we earn from specified sources, the percentage of our assets that falls within specified categories, the diversity of our stock ownership, and the percentage of our earnings that we distribute. While Bass, Berry & Sims PLC has reviewed those matters in connection with the foregoing opinion, Bass, Berry & Sims PLC will not review our compliance with those tests on a continuing basis. Accordingly, no assurance can be given that the actual results of our operations for any particular taxable year will satisfy such requirements.

The following discussion, which supplements the discussion under the heading "Federal Income Tax Consequences of Our Status as a REIT" in the accompanying prospectus, is a summary of certain additional federal income tax considerations regarding (i) certain distributions of our common stock and (ii) the acquisition, ownership and disposition of our common stock. This discussion does not address all aspects of taxation that may be relevant to particular investors in light of their personal investment or tax circumstances, or to certain types of investors that are subject to special treatment under the federal income tax laws, such as insurance companies, tax-exempt organizations (except to the limited extent discussed below under "Taxation of Tax-Exempt Stockholders"), financial institutions or broker-dealers, non-U.S. individuals and foreign corporations (except to the limited extent discussed below under "Taxation of Non-U.S. Stockholders") and other persons subject to special tax rules. Moreover, this summary assumes that our stockholders hold our stock as a capital asset for federal income tax purposes, which generally means property held for investment. The statements in this section are based on the current federal income tax laws, are for general

purposes only and are not tax advice. We cannot assure you that new laws, interpretations of law, or court decisions, any of which may take effect retroactively, will not cause any statement in this section to be inaccurate.

We urge you to consult your own tax advisor regarding the specific tax consequences to you of acquisition, ownership and disposition of our common stock and of our election to be taxed as a REIT. Specifically, you are urged to consult your own tax advisor regarding the federal, state, local, foreign, and other tax consequences of such acquisition, ownership, disposition and election, and regarding potential changes in applicable tax laws.

S-4

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Certain Distributions of Our Common Stock

IRS guidance permits certain distributions made by a publicly-traded REIT that (i) are declared before 2013 with respect to a taxable year ending before 2012 and (ii) consist of both cash and its stock, to be treated as dividend distributions for purposes of satisfying the annual distribution requirement applicable to REITs. Based on that guidance, if we satisfy certain requirements, including the requirement that at least 10% of the total value of any such distribution consists of cash, the cash and our stock that we distribute will be treated as a dividend, to the extent of our earnings and profits. If we make such a distribution to our stockholders, each of our stockholders will be required to treat the total value of the distribution that each stockholder receives as a dividend, to the extent of each stockholder's pro-rata share of our earnings and profits, regardless of whether such stockholder receives cash, our stock or a combination of cash and our stock. For a general discussion of the federal income tax consequences to our stockholders on the receipt of dividends, see below, [Taxation of Taxable U.S. Stockholders](#), [Taxation of Tax-Exempt Stockholders](#) and [Taxation of Non-U.S. Stockholders](#).

Taxation of Taxable U.S. Stockholders

For purposes of our discussion, the term [U.S. stockholder](#) means a holder of our common stock that, for federal income tax purposes, is:

a citizen or resident of the United States;

a corporation (including an entity treated as a corporation for federal income tax purposes) created or organized under the laws of the United States, any of its states or the District of Columbia;

an estate whose income is subject to federal income taxation regardless of its source; or

any trust if (1) a U.S. court is able to exercise primary supervision over the administration of such trust and one or more U.S. persons have the authority to control all substantial decisions of the trust or (2) it has a valid election in place to be treated as a U.S. person.

If a partnership, entity or arrangement treated as a partnership for federal income tax purposes holds our common stock, the federal income tax treatment of a partner in the partnership generally will depend on the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. If you are a partner in a partnership holding our common stock, you are urged to consult your tax advisor regarding the consequences of the ownership and disposition of our common stock by the partnership.

Distributions. As long as we qualify as a REIT, distributions made out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits that we do not designate as capital gain dividends or retained long-term capital gains will be dividend income to taxable U.S. stockholders. A corporate U.S. stockholder will not qualify for the dividends-received deduction generally available to corporations. Dividends paid to a U.S. stockholder generally will not qualify for the tax rates applicable to qualified dividend income. Legislation enacted in 2003, 2006 and 2010 reduced the maximum tax rate for qualified dividend income to 15% for tax years 2003 through 2012. Without future Congressional action, the maximum tax rate on qualified dividend income will increase to 39.6% in 2013. Qualified dividend income generally includes dividends paid by domestic C corporations and certain qualified foreign corporations to U.S. stockholders that are taxed at individual rates. Because we are not generally subject to federal income tax on the portion of our REIT taxable income that we distribute to our stockholders, our dividends generally will not constitute qualified dividend income. As a result, our REIT dividends generally will be taxed at the higher tax rates applicable to ordinary income. The highest marginal individual income tax rate on ordinary income is 35% through 2012. Without future Congressional action, the maximum individual income tax rate on ordinary income will increase to 39.6% in 2013. The federal income tax rates applicable to qualified dividend income generally will apply, however, to our ordinary REIT dividends, if any, that are (1) attributable to qualified dividends received by us prior to 2013 from non-REIT

corporations, such as any taxable REIT subsidiaries, or (2) attributable to income recognized by us prior to 2013 and on which we have paid federal corporate income tax (e.g., to the extent that we distribute less than 100% of our taxable income). In general, to qualify for the reduced federal income tax rate on qualified dividend income under such circumstances, a U.S. stockholder must hold our stock for more than 60 days during the 121-day period beginning on the date that is 60 days before the date on which

S-5

TABLE OF CONTENTS

our stock becomes ex-dividend. In addition, certain individuals, estates and trusts will be subject to a 3.8% Medicare tax on dividend income recognized after 2012.

Any distribution we declare in October, November, or December of any year that is payable to a U.S. stockholder of record on a specified date in any of those months will be treated as paid by us and received by the U.S. stockholder on December 31 of that year, provided that we actually pay the distribution during January of the following calendar year.

Distributions to a U.S. stockholder which we designate as capital gain dividends generally will be treated as long-term capital gain, without regard to the period for which the U.S. stockholder has held our stock. See Capital Gains and Losses below. A corporate U.S. stockholder may be required to treat up to 20% of certain capital gain dividends as ordinary income.

We may elect to retain and pay federal corporate income tax on the net long-term capital gain that we receive in a taxable year. In that case, to the extent that we designate such amount in a timely notice to our stockholders, a U.S. stockholder would be taxed on its proportionate share of our undistributed long-term capital gain. The U.S. stockholder would receive a credit or refund for its proportionate share of the federal corporate income tax we paid. The U.S. stockholder would increase its basis in our common stock by the amount of its proportionate share of our undistributed long-term capital gain, minus its share of the federal corporate income tax we paid.

A U.S. stockholder will not incur federal income tax on a distribution in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits if the distribution does not exceed the U.S. stockholder's adjusted basis in our common stock. Instead, the distribution will reduce the U.S. stockholder's adjusted basis in our common stock, and any amount in excess of both its share of our current and accumulated earnings and profits and its adjusted basis will be treated as capital gain, long-term if the stock has been held for more than one year, provided the stock is a capital asset in the hands of the U.S. stockholder.

U.S. stockholders may not include in their individual federal income tax returns any of our net operating losses or capital losses. Instead, these losses are generally carried over by us for potential offset against our future income.

Taxable distributions from us and gain from the disposition of our common stock will not be treated as passive activity income; and, therefore, U.S. stockholders generally will not be able to apply any passive activity losses, such as, for example, losses from certain types of limited partnerships in which the U.S. stockholder is a limited partner, against such income. In addition, taxable distributions from us and gain from the disposition of our common stock generally will be treated as investment income for purposes of the investment interest limitations. We will notify U.S. stockholders after the close of our taxable year as to the portions of the distributions attributable to that year that constitute ordinary income, return of capital and capital gain.

Dispositions. A U.S. stockholder who is not a dealer in securities generally must treat any gain or loss realized on a taxable disposition of our common stock as long-term capital gain or loss if the U.S. stockholder has held such stock for more than one year, and otherwise as short-term capital gain or loss. In general, a U.S. stockholder will realize gain or loss in an amount equal to the difference between (i) the sum of the fair market value of any property and the amount of cash received in such disposition and (ii) the U.S. stockholder's adjusted tax basis in such stock. A U.S. stockholder's adjusted tax basis in our stock generally will equal the U.S. stockholder's acquisition cost, increased by the excess of undistributed net capital gains deemed distributed to the U.S. stockholder over the federal corporate income tax deemed paid by the U.S. stockholder on such gains and reduced by any returns of capital. However, a U.S. stockholder must treat any loss on a sale or exchange of our common stock held by such stockholder for six months or less as a long-term capital loss to the extent of capital gain dividends and any other actual or deemed distributions from us that such U.S. stockholder treats as long-term capital gain. All or a portion of any loss that a U.S. stockholder

realizes on a taxable disposition of shares of our common stock may be disallowed if the U.S. stockholder purchases other shares of our common stock within 30 days before or after the disposition. In addition, certain individuals, estates and trusts will be subject to a 3.8% Medicare tax on capital gains recognized after 2012.

S-6

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Capital Gains and Losses. The tax-rate differential between long-term capital gain and ordinary income for non-corporate taxpayers may be significant. A taxpayer generally must hold a capital asset for more than one year for gain or loss derived from its sale or exchange to be treated as long-term capital gain or loss. The highest marginal individual income tax rate currently is 35% (which rate, absent Congressional action, will increase to 39.6% in 2013). The maximum tax rate on long-term capital gain applicable to U.S. stockholders taxed at individual rates currently is 15% (which rate, absent Congressional action, will increase to 20% in 2013). The maximum tax rate on long-term capital gain from the sale or exchange of section 1250 property (i.e., generally, depreciable real property) is 25% to the extent the gain would have been treated as ordinary income if the property were section 1245 property (i.e., generally, depreciable personal property). We generally may designate whether a distribution that we designate as capital gain dividends (and any retained capital gain that we are deemed to distribute) is attributable to the sale or exchange of section 1250 property. The characterization of income as capital gain or ordinary income may affect the deductibility of capital losses. A non-corporate taxpayer may deduct capital losses not offset by capital gains against its ordinary income only up to a maximum annual amount of \$3,000. A non-corporate taxpayer may carry forward unused capital losses indefinitely. A corporate taxpayer must pay tax on its net capital gain at federal corporate income tax rates, whether or not such gains are classified as long-term capital gains. A corporate taxpayer may deduct capital losses only to the extent of capital gains, with unused losses carried back three years and forward five years.

Taxation of Tax-Exempt Stockholders

Tax-exempt entities, including qualified employee pension and profit sharing trusts and individual retirement accounts and annuities, generally are exempt from federal income taxation. However, they are subject to taxation on their unrelated business taxable income. Although many investments in real estate generate unrelated business taxable income, the IRS has issued a ruling that dividend distributions from a REIT to an exempt employee pension trust do not constitute unrelated business taxable income so long as the exempt employee pension trust does not otherwise use the stock or shares of beneficial interest of the REIT in an unrelated trade or business of the pension trust. Based on that ruling, amounts that we distribute to tax-exempt stockholders generally should not constitute unrelated business taxable income. However, if a tax-exempt stockholder were to finance its acquisition of our common stock with debt, a portion of the income that it received from us would constitute unrelated business taxable income pursuant to the debt-financed property rules. Furthermore, social clubs, voluntary employee benefit associations, supplemental unemployment benefit trusts, and qualified group legal services plans that are exempt from taxation under special provisions of the federal income tax laws are subject to different unrelated business taxable income rules, which generally will require them to characterize distributions that they receive from us as unrelated business taxable income.

Finally, in certain circumstances, a qualified employee pension or profit-sharing trust that owns more than 10% of the value of our stock must treat a percentage of the dividends that it receives from us as unrelated business taxable income. Such percentage is equal to the gross income we derive from an unrelated trade or business, determined as if we were a pension trust, divided by our total gross income for the year in which we pay the dividends. Such rule applies to a pension trust holding more than 10% of the value of our stock only if:

the percentage of our dividends that the tax-exempt trust must treat as unrelated business taxable income is at least 5%;

we qualify as a REIT by reason of the modification of the rule requiring that no more than 50% of our stock be owned by five or fewer individuals that allows the beneficiaries of the pension trust to be treated as holding our stock in proportion to their actuarial interests in the pension trust; and

either:

one pension trust owns more than 25% of the value of our stock; or

a group of pension trusts, of which each pension trust holds more than 10% of the value of our stock, collectively owns more than 50% of the value of our stock.

S-7

TABLE OF CONTENTS

As a result of limitations included in our charter on the transfer and ownership of our stock, we do not expect to be classified as a pension-held REIT, and, therefore, the tax treatment described in this paragraph should be inapplicable to our stockholders. However, because shares of our common stock are publicly traded, we cannot guarantee that this will always be the case.

Taxation of Non-U.S. Stockholders

For purposes of our discussion, the term non-U.S. stockholder means a holder of our common stock that is not a U.S. stockholder, a partnership (or an entity treated as a partnership for federal income tax purposes) or a tax-exempt stockholder. The rules governing federal income taxation of non-U.S. stockholders, including nonresident alien individuals, foreign corporations, foreign partnerships, and other foreign stockholders, are complex. This section is only a summary of certain of those rules.

We urge non-U.S. stockholders to consult their own tax advisors to determine the impact of federal, state, local and foreign income tax laws on the acquisition, ownership and disposition of our common stock, including any reporting requirements.

Distributions. A non-U.S. stockholder that receives a distribution that is not attributable to gain from our sale or exchange of a United States real property interest, or a USRPI (discussed below), and that we do not designate as a capital gain dividend or retained long-term capital gain will recognize ordinary income to the extent that we pay such distribution out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits. A withholding tax equal to 30% of the gross amount of the distribution ordinarily will apply unless an applicable tax treaty reduces or eliminates the tax. A non-U.S. stockholder generally will be subject to federal income tax at graduated rates, however, on any distribution treated as effectively connected with the non-U.S. stockholder's conduct of a U.S. trade or business, in the same manner as U.S. stockholders are taxed on distributions. A corporate non-U.S. stockholder may, in addition, be subject to the 30% branch profits tax with respect to any such distribution. We plan to withhold federal income tax at the rate of 30% on the gross amount of any distribution paid to a non-U.S. stockholder unless either:

a lower treaty rate applies and the non-U.S. stockholder submits an IRS Form W-8BEN to us evidencing eligibility for that reduced rate;

the non-U.S. stockholder submits an IRS Form W-8ECI to us claiming that the distribution is effectively connected income; or

the distribution is treated as attributable to a sale of a USRPI under FIRPTA (discussed below).

A non-U.S. stockholder will not incur tax on a distribution in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits if the excess portion of such distribution does not exceed such non-U.S. stockholder's adjusted basis in our common stock. Instead, the excess portion of such distribution will reduce the non-U.S. stockholder's adjusted basis in our common stock. A non-U.S. stockholder will be subject to tax on a distribution that exceeds both our current and accumulated earnings and profits and the non-U.S. stockholder's adjusted basis in our common stock, if the non-U.S. stockholder otherwise would be subject to tax on gain from the sale or disposition of our common stock, as described below. See Dispositions below. Under FIRPTA (discussed below), we may be required to withhold 10% of any distribution that exceeds our current and accumulated earnings and profits. Although we intend to withhold at a rate of 30% on the entire amount of any distribution (other than a distribution attributable to a sale of a USRPI), to the extent that we do not do so, we may withhold at a rate of 10% on any portion of a distribution not subject to withholding at a rate of 30%. Because we generally cannot determine at the time we make a distribution whether the distribution will exceed our current and accumulated earnings and profits, we may withhold tax on the entire amount of any distribution. However, a non-U.S. stockholder may obtain a refund of amounts that we withhold if we later determine that a distribution in fact exceeded our current and accumulated earnings and profits.

For any year in which we qualify as a REIT, the Foreign Investment in Real Property Tax Act of 1980, or FIRPTA, may apply to our sale or exchange of a USRPI. A USRPI includes certain interests in real property and stock in corporations at least 50% of whose assets consist of interests in real property. Under FIRPTA, a non-U.S. stockholder is taxed on distributions attributable to gain from sales of USRPIs as if such gain were effectively connected with the conduct of a U.S. trade or business of the non-U.S. stockholder. A non-U.S. stockholder thus would be taxed on such a distribution at the normal capital gains rates applicable

S-8

TABLE OF CONTENTS

to U.S. stockholders, subject to applicable alternative minimum tax and a special alternative minimum tax in the case of a nonresident alien individual. A non-U.S. corporate stockholder not entitled to treaty relief or exemption also may be subject to the 30% branch profits tax on such a distribution.

If shares of our common stock continue to be regularly traded on an established securities market in the United States, capital gain distributions to a non-U.S. stockholder that are attributable to our sale of real property will be treated as ordinary dividends rather than as gain from the sale of a USRPI, as long as such non-U.S. stockholder did not own more than 5% of our outstanding common stock any time during the one-year period preceding the distribution. As a result, non-U.S. stockholders owning 5% or less of our common stock generally would be subject to withholding tax on such capital gain distributions in the same manner as they are subject to withholding tax on other distributions. If shares of our common stock cease to be regularly traded on an established securities market in the United States or if a non-U.S. stockholder owned more than 5% of our common stock any time during the one-year period preceding the distribution, capital gain distributions to such non-U.S. stockholder in respect of our common stock that are attributable to our sales of USRPIs would be subject to tax under FIRPTA, as described in the preceding paragraph.

If a distribution is subject to FIRPTA, we must withhold 35% of such distribution that we could designate as a capital gain dividend. A non-U.S. stockholder may receive a credit against its tax liability for the amount that we withhold. Moreover, if a non-U.S. stockholder disposes of our common stock during the 30-day period preceding a dividend payment, and such non-U.S. stockholder (or a person related to such non-U.S. stockholder) acquires or enters into a contract or option to acquire our stock within 61 days of the first day of the 30-day period described above, and any portion of such dividend payment would, but for the disposition, be treated as a USRPI capital gain to such non-U.S. stockholder, then such non-U.S. stockholder will be treated as having USRPI capital gain in an amount that, but for the disposition, would have been treated as USRPI capital gain.

Dispositions. Non-U.S. stockholders may incur tax under FIRPTA with respect to gain realized on a disposition of our common stock since our common stock will constitute a USRPI unless one of the applicable exceptions, as described below, applies. Any gain subject to tax under FIRPTA will be treated in the same manner as it would be in the hands of U.S. stockholders subject to alternative minimum tax, but under a special alternative minimum tax in the case of nonresident alien individuals.

Non-U.S. stockholders generally will not incur tax under FIRPTA with respect to gain on a sale of our stock, however, as long as, at all times during a specified period, we are domestically controlled, i.e., non-U.S. persons hold, directly or indirectly, less than 50% in value of our outstanding stock. We cannot assure you that we will be domestically controlled. In addition, even if a REIT is not domestically controlled, a non-U.S. stockholder that owned, actually or constructively, 5% or less of the outstanding common stock of such REIT at all times during a specified testing period will not incur tax under FIRPTA on gain from a sale of such common stock if shares of such common stock are regularly traded on an established securities market. Because shares of our common stock are regularly traded on an established securities market, we expect that a non-U.S. stockholder that has not owned more than 5% of our common stock at any time during the five-year period prior to such sale will not incur tax under FIRPTA on gain from a sale of our common stock.

A non-U.S. stockholder generally will incur tax on gain from a disposition of our stock not subject to FIRPTA if:

the gain is effectively connected with the conduct of the non-U.S. stockholder's U.S. trade or business, in which case the non-U.S. stockholder will be subject to the same treatment as U.S. stockholders with respect to such gain; or the non-U.S. stockholder is a nonresident alien individual who was present in the U.S. for 183 days or more during the taxable year and has a tax home in the United States, in which case the non-U.S. stockholder will incur a 30% tax on its capital gains.

Information Reporting Requirements, Backup Withholding and Certain Other Required Withholding

We will report to our stockholders and to the IRS the amount of distributions that we pay during each calendar year, and the amount of tax that we withhold, if any. Under the backup withholding rules, a

S-9

TABLE OF CONTENTS

stockholder may be subject to backup withholding (at a rate of 28% through 2012 and 31% thereafter, absent Congressional action) with respect to distributions unless the stockholder:

is a corporation or qualifies for certain other exempt categories and, when required, demonstrates this fact; or provides a taxpayer identification number, certifies as to no loss of exemption from backup withholding, and otherwise complies with the applicable requirements of the backup withholding rules. A stockholder who does not provide us with its correct taxpayer identification number also may be subject to penalties imposed by the IRS. Any amount paid as backup withholding will be creditable against the stockholder's income tax liability. In addition, we may be required to withhold a portion of capital gain distributions to any stockholders who fail to certify their non-foreign status to us.

Backup withholding generally will not apply to payments of dividends made by us or our paying agents, in their capacities as such, to a non-U.S. stockholder provided that such non-U.S. stockholder furnishes to us or our paying agent the required certification as to its non-U.S. status, such as providing a valid IRS Form W-8BEN or W-8ECI, or certain other requirements are met. Notwithstanding the foregoing, backup withholding may apply if either we or our paying agent has actual knowledge, or reason to know, that the holder is a U.S. person that is not an exempt recipient. Payments of the proceeds from a disposition or a redemption of our stock that occurs outside the U.S. by a non-U.S. stockholder made by or through a foreign office of a broker generally will not be subject to information reporting or backup withholding. However, information reporting (but not backup withholding) generally will apply to such a payment if the broker has certain connections with the U.S. unless the broker has documentary evidence in its records that demonstrates that the beneficial owner is a non-U.S. stockholder and specified conditions are met or an exemption is otherwise established. Payment of the proceeds from a disposition of our stock by a non-U.S. stockholder made by or through the U.S. office of a broker generally is subject to information reporting and backup withholding unless the non-U.S. stockholder certifies under penalties of perjury that it is not a U.S. person and satisfies certain other requirements, or otherwise establishes an exemption from information reporting and backup withholding.

Backup withholding is not an additional tax. Any amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules may be refunded or credited against the stockholder's federal income tax liability if certain required information is furnished to the IRS. Stockholders should consult their own tax advisors regarding application of backup withholding to them and the availability of, and procedure for obtaining an exemption from, backup withholding.

For taxable years beginning after December 31, 2013, if certain disclosure requirements related to U.S. accounts or ownership are not satisfied, a U.S. withholding tax at a 30% rate will be imposed on dividends received by (i) U.S. stockholders that own their stock through foreign accounts or foreign intermediaries and (ii) certain non-U.S. stockholders. In addition, for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2014, if certain disclosure requirements related to U.S. accounts or ownership are not satisfied, a U.S. withholding tax at a 30% rate will be imposed on proceeds of sale in respect of our common stock received by (i) U.S. stockholders that own their stock through foreign accounts or foreign intermediaries and (ii) certain non-U.S. stockholders. If payment of withholding taxes is required, non-U.S. stockholders that are otherwise eligible for an exemption from, or reduction of, U.S. withholding taxes with respect to such dividends and proceeds will be required to seek a refund from the IRS to obtain the benefit of such exemption or reduction. We will not pay any additional amounts in respect of any amounts withheld.

Sunset of Reduced Tax Rate Provisions

Several of the tax considerations described herein are subject to a sunset provision. The sunset provision generally provides that for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2012, certain provisions that currently are in the Code will revert back to an earlier version of those provisions. Those provisions include provisions related to the reduced

federal income tax rates for taxpayers taxed at individual rates as to ordinary income, long-term capital gains and qualified dividend income, and certain other tax rate provisions described herein. The impact of this sunset is not discussed in detail herein. Consequently, prospective stockholders are urged to consult their own tax advisors regarding the effect of sunset provisions on an investment in our common stock.

S-10

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We have entered into an equity distribution agreement with KeyBanc Capital Markets Inc. pursuant to which we may, from time to time, issue and sell shares of our common stock having an aggregate offering price of up to \$50,000,000 through KeyBanc Capital Markets Inc. as our Sales Agent. The form of the equity distribution agreement has been filed as an exhibit to a current report on Form 8-K which is incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement.

The sales, if any, of shares of our common stock made under the equity distribution agreement may be made in transactions that are deemed to be at-the-market offerings as defined in Rule 415 under the Securities Act, including sales made by means of ordinary brokers transactions, including on the NYSE, at market prices or as otherwise agreed to with the Sales Agent. As an agent, KeyBanc Capital Markets Inc. will not engage in any transactions that stabilize the price of our common stock.

Under the terms of the equity distribution agreement, we also may sell shares to KeyBanc Capital Markets Inc. as principal for its own account at a price agreed upon at the time of sale. If we sell shares to KeyBanc Capital Markets Inc. as principal, we will enter into a separate terms agreement with KeyBanc Capital Markets Inc., and we will describe any such agreement in a separate prospectus supplement or pricing supplement.

We will designate the maximum amount of shares of our common stock to be sold through the Sales Agent on a daily basis or otherwise as we and the Sales Agent agree. Subject to the terms and conditions of the equity distribution agreement, KeyBanc Capital Markets Inc. will use its reasonable efforts to sell on our behalf all of the designated shares of our common stock. We may instruct the Sales Agent not to sell our common stock if the sales cannot be effected at or above the price designated by us in any such instruction. We or the Sales Agent may suspend the offering of our common stock by notifying the other.

The Sales Agent will provide written confirmation to us following the close of trading on the NYSE each day in which shares of our common stock are sold under the equity distribution agreement. Each confirmation will include the number of shares of our common stock sold on that day, the sales price of the shares sold and the compensation payable by us to the Sales Agent in connection with the sales. We will report at least quarterly in our periodic filings or, to the extent required by applicable law and SEC interpretations thereof, a prospectus supplement, the number of shares of common stock sold through the Sales Agent in at-the-market offerings and the net proceeds to us in connection with such sales of our common stock.

We will pay the Sales Agent a commission that will not exceed 2.0% of the gross sales price per share sold through it as our agent under the equity distribution agreement. The remaining sales proceeds, after deducting any transaction fees imposed by any governmental or self-regulatory organization in connection with the sales, will equal our net proceeds for the sale of the shares of our common stock.

Settlement for sales of our common stock will occur on the third business day following the date on which any sales were made in return for payment of the net proceeds to us. There is no arrangement for funds to be received in an escrow, trust or similar arrangement.

We estimate that the total expenses of the offering payable by us, excluding discounts and commissions under the equity distribution agreement, will be approximately \$200,000.

KeyBanc Capital Markets Inc. will act as Sales Agent on a reasonable efforts basis. In connection with the sale of common stock on our behalf, KeyBanc Capital Markets Inc. may be deemed to be an underwriter within the meaning of the Securities Act, and the compensation of KeyBanc Capital Markets Inc. may be deemed to be underwriting

discounts or commissions. We have agreed to provide indemnification and contribution to the Sales Agent against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act.

The offering of shares of our common stock pursuant to the equity distribution agreement will terminate upon the earlier of (i) the sale of all shares of our common stock subject to the equity distribution agreement, or (ii) termination of the equity distribution agreement upon occurrence of certain events.

S-11

TABLE OF CONTENTS

KeyBank National Association, an affiliate of the Sales Agent, is a lender under our \$95 million senior secured revolving credit facility. KeyBank National Association also acts as administrative agent and KeyBanc Capital Markets acts as co-bookrunner and co-lead arranger under this facility. We may use proceeds of this offering to repay debt, including amounts outstanding under our senior secured revolving credit facility. The affiliate of the Sales Agent that is a lender under our senior secured revolving credit facility may receive a pro rata portion of any proceeds from the offering used to repay amounts outstanding under such facility.

In addition, KeyBanc Capital Markets Inc. and its respective affiliates may, from time to time, engage in transactions with, and perform services for, us in the ordinary course of business for which they will receive customary fees and expenses.

LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of the securities offered pursuant to this prospectus supplement and certain other matters of Maryland law will be passed upon for us by Venable LLP, Baltimore, Maryland. In addition, the description of federal income tax considerations under the caption Federal Income Tax Consequences of Our Status as a REIT in the accompanying prospectus and under the caption Additional Federal Income Tax Considerations in this prospectus supplement is based upon the opinion of Bass, Berry & Sims PLC, Memphis, Tennessee. Certain legal matters in connection with this offering will be passed upon for the Sales Agent by DLA Piper LLP (US), Baltimore, Maryland.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements incorporated into this prospectus supplement by reference from the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2010, and the effectiveness of the Company's internal control over financial reporting have been audited by Deloitte & Touche LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, as stated in their report included therein, which is incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements have been so incorporated in reliance upon the report of such firm given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We are a public company and file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. You may read and copy any document that we file at the SEC's public reference room at 100 F Street, NE, Washington, D.C. 20549. You may request copies of these documents by writing to the SEC and paying a fee for the copying cost. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for more information about the operation of the public reference room. Our SEC filings are also available to the public at the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. In addition, you may read and copy our SEC filings at the office of the New York Stock Exchange at 20 Broad Street, New York, New York 10005. We also make available free of charge through our website our Annual Reports on Form 10-K, Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, Current Reports on Form 8-K and amendments to those reports filed or furnished pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Exchange Act as well as the definitive proxy statement and Section 16 reports on Forms 3, 4 and 5. Our website address is www.educationrealty.com. However, the information located on, or accessible from, our website is not, and shall not be deemed to be, except as described below, a part of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus or incorporated into any other filings that we make with the SEC.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN INFORMATION BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference the information that we file with it, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is an important part of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, and information that we file later with the SEC will automatically update and supersede this information.

We previously filed the following documents with the SEC and such filings are incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement:

Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2010 (including portions of our definitive Proxy Statement for the 2011 Annual Meeting of Stockholders incorporated therein by reference);

Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the quarters ended March 31, 2011 and June 30, 2011;

Current Report on Form 8-K filed on January 3, 2011;

Current Report on Form 8-K filed on January 7, 2011 (excluding the information furnished under Item 7.01 and Exhibit 99.1);

Current Report on Form 8-K filed on January 25, 2011;

Current Report on Form 8-K filed on May 6, 2011;

Current Report on Form 8-K filed on September 2, 2011;

Current Report on Form 8-K filed on September 20, 2011; and

The description of our common stock contained in our Registration Statement on Form 8-A filed on January 25, 2005.

All documents that we file pursuant to Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act after the date of this prospectus supplement and before all of the securities offered by this prospectus supplement are sold are incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement from the date of the filing of such documents, except for information furnished under Item 2.02 or Item 7.01 of Form 8-K or other information furnished to the SEC which is not deemed filed and not incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. Information that we subsequently file with the SEC as aforesaid will automatically update and may supersede information in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and information previously filed with the SEC.

You may request a copy of these filings (other than exhibits, unless the exhibits are specifically incorporated by reference into these documents) at no cost by writing or calling Investor Relations at the following address and telephone number:

Education Realty Trust, Inc.
530 Oak Court Drive, Suite 300
Memphis, Tennessee 38117
(901) 259-2500

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROSPECTUS

\$250,000,000

**Common Stock
Preferred Stock
Debt Securities
Depositary Shares
Subscription Rights**

We may offer, from time to time, one or more series or classes of common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, depositary shares and subscription rights. We refer to our common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, depositary shares and subscription rights collectively as the securities.

We may offer these securities with an aggregate initial public offering price of up to \$250,000,000, or its equivalent in a foreign currency based on the exchange rate at the time of sale, in amounts, at initial prices and on terms determined at the time of the offering. We may offer the securities separately or together, in separate series or classes and in amounts, at prices and on terms described in one or more supplements to this prospectus.

We will deliver this prospectus together with an accompanying prospectus supplement setting forth the specific terms of the securities we are offering. The accompanying prospectus supplement also will contain information, where applicable, about U.S. federal income tax considerations relating to, and any listing on a securities exchange of, the securities covered by the prospectus supplement. In addition, the specific terms may include limitations on direct or beneficial ownership and restrictions on transfer of the securities offered by this prospectus, in each case as may be appropriate to preserve our status as a real estate investment trust for federal income tax purposes.

We may offer and sell these securities to or through one or more underwriters, dealers and agents, or directly to purchasers, on a continuous or delayed basis. If any underwriters, dealers or agents are involved in the sale of any of the securities, their names, and any applicable purchase price, fee, commission or discount arrangement with, between or among them, will be set forth, or will be calculable from the information set forth, in an accompanying prospectus supplement. For more detailed information, see Plan of Distribution beginning on page 37 of this prospectus. No securities may be sold without delivery of an accompanying prospectus supplement describing the method and terms of the offering of those securities.

Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol EDR.

Investing in our securities involves substantial risks. See Risk Factors on page 3 of this prospectus, as well as the Risk Factors incorporated by reference herein from our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q and other reports and information that we file with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is September 10, 2009.

TABLE OF CONTENTS**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	Page
<u>About This Prospectus.</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Forward-Looking Statements</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>The Company</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Risk Factors</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Consolidated Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Description of Capital Stock</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Description of Debt Securities</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Description of Depositary Shares</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>Subscription Rights</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>Book Entry Procedures and Settlement</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>Federal Income Tax Consequences of Our Status as a REIT</u>	<u>22</u>
<u>Plan of Distribution</u>	<u>37</u>
<u>Legal Matters</u>	<u>38</u>
<u>Experts</u>	<u>38</u>
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>Incorporation of Certain Documents by Reference</u>	<u>39</u>

No dealer, salesperson or other person is authorized to give any information or to represent anything not contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus, any accompanying prospectus supplement or any free writing prospectus we may provide you in connection with an offering of securities. You must not rely on any unauthorized information or representations not contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus, any accompanying prospectus supplement or any free writing prospectus. This prospectus, any accompanying prospectus supplement or any free writing prospectus does not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy any securities other than the registered securities to which they relate, nor does this prospectus, any accompanying supplement to this prospectus or any free writing prospectus constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy securities in any jurisdiction to any person to whom it is unlawful to make such offer or solicitation in such jurisdiction. The information contained in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement to this prospectus, any free writing prospectus or the documents incorporated by reference herein or therein are accurate only as of the date of such document. Our business, financial condition, liquidity, results of operations, funds from operations and prospects may have changed since those dates.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement on Form S-3 that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or SEC, using a shelf registration process for the delayed offering and sale of securities pursuant to Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or the Securities Act. Under the shelf registration process, we may, over time, sell any combination of the securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities that we may offer. As allowed by SEC rules, this prospectus does not contain all the information you can find in the registration statement or the exhibits to the registration statement. We will not use this prospectus to offer and sell securities unless it is accompanied by a prospectus supplement that more fully describes the securities being offered and the terms of the offering. Any accompanying prospectus supplement or free writing prospectus may also add to, update or supersede other information contained in this prospectus. Before purchasing any securities, you should carefully read this prospectus, any prospectus supplement and any free writing prospectus together with the information incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference herein as described under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information** beginning on page 39 this prospectus. All references to we, our, us, EDR and the Company in this prospectus mean Education Realty Trust and its consolidated subsidiaries, except where it is made clear that the term means only Education Realty Trust, Inc.

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement, including the documents incorporated by reference into this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement, contain forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or the Exchange Act. Forward-looking statements provide our current expectations or forecasts of future events and are not statements of historical fact. These forward-looking statements include information about possible or assumed future events, including, among other things, discussion and analysis of our future financial condition, results of operations and funds from operations, our strategic plans and objectives, cost management, occupancy and leasing rates and trends, liquidity and ability to refinance our indebtedness as it matures, anticipated capital expenditures (and access to capital) required to complete projects, amounts of anticipated cash distributions to our stockholders in the future and other matters. Words such as anticipates, expects, intends, plans, believes, seeks, estimates and of these words and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. These statements are not guarantees of future performance and are subject to risks, uncertainties and other factors, some of which are beyond our control, are difficult to predict and/or could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or forecasted in the forward-looking statements.

Forward-looking statements involve inherent uncertainty and may ultimately prove to be incorrect or false. You are cautioned to not place undue reliance on forward-looking statements. Except as otherwise may be required by law, we undertake no obligation to update or revise forward-looking statements to reflect changed assumptions, the occurrence of unanticipated events or actual operating results. Our actual results could differ materially from those anticipated in these forward-looking statements as a result of various factors, including, but not limited to:

risks and uncertainties related to the current recession, the national and local economies, and the real estate industry in general and in our specific markets (including university enrollment conditions and admission policies and our relationship with these universities);

volatility in the capital markets;
rising interest and insurance rates;

competition from university-owned or other private student housing and our inability to obtain new tenants on favorable terms, or at all, upon the expiration of existing leases;
availability and terms of capital and financing, both to fund our operations and to refinance our indebtedness as it matures;

1

TABLE OF CONTENTS

legislative or regulatory changes, including changes to laws governing student housing, construction and real estate investment trusts;

our possible failure to qualify as a REIT and the risk of changes in laws affecting REITs;

our dependence upon key personnel whose continued service is not guaranteed;

our ability to identify, hire and retain highly-qualified executives in the future;

availability of appropriate acquisition and development targets;

failure to integrate acquisitions successfully;

the financial condition and liquidity of, or disputes with, our joint venture and development partners;

impact of ad valorem, property and income taxes;

changes in generally accepted accounting principles;

construction delays, increasing construction costs or construction costs that exceed estimates;

potential liability for uninsured losses and environmental liabilities;

lease-up risks; and

the potential need to fund improvements or other capital expenditures out of operating cash flow.

This list of risks and uncertainties, however, is only a summary of some of the most important factors and is not intended to be exhaustive. You should carefully review the risks and information contained, or incorporated by reference, in this prospectus or in any accompanying prospectus supplement, including, without limitation, the Risk Factors incorporated by reference herein from our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q and other reports and information that we file with the SEC. New factors may also emerge from time to time that could materially and adversely affect us.

THE COMPANY

We are a self-managed and self-advised real estate investment trust, or REIT, organized in July 2004 to develop, acquire, own and manage high quality student housing communities located near university campuses. We were formed to continue and expand upon the student housing business of Allen & O Hara, Inc., a company with over 40 years of experience as an owner, manager and developer of student housing. We own and operate student housing communities, provide third-party management services for student housing communities, selectively develop student housing communities for our own account and provide third-party development consulting services on student housing development projects for universities and other third parties.

Our primary business objectives are to maximize cash flow available for distribution to our stockholders and to achieve sustainable long-term growth in cash flow per share in order to maximize long-term stockholder value. We intend to achieve these objectives by (i) acquiring student housing communities nationwide that meet our focused investment criteria, (ii) maximizing net operating income from the operation of our owned properties through proactive and goal-oriented property management strategies, (iii) building our third-party business of management services and development consulting services and (iv) selectively developing properties for our own account.

All of our assets are held by, and we have conducted substantially all of our activities through, Education Realty Operating Partnership, LP, or the Operating Partnership, and its wholly owned subsidiaries. We are the sole general partner of our Operating Partnership, and, as a result, our board of directors effectively directs all of the Operating Partnership's affairs. As of June 30, 2009, we owned 96.0% of the outstanding partnership units of the Operating Partnership. In addition, University Towers Operating Partnership, LP, or the University Towers Partnership, which is our affiliate, owns and operates our University Towers property located in Raleigh, North Carolina. As of June 30, 2009, we owned 72.7% of the units in the University Towers Partnership.

Edgar Filing: Education Realty Trust, Inc. - Form 424B5

Our executive offices are located at 530 Oak Court Drive, Suite 300, Memphis, Tennessee 38117, and our telephone number is (901) 259-2500. Our website address is www.educationrealty.com. However, the

2

TABLE OF CONTENTS

information located on, or accessible from, our website is not, and shall not be deemed to be, a part of this prospectus, any accompanying prospectus supplement or any free writing prospectus or incorporated into any other filings that we make with the SEC.

RISK FACTORS

Investment in any securities offered pursuant to this prospectus involves substantial risks. You should carefully consider the risk factors incorporated by reference to our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K, our subsequent Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q and the other information contained in this prospectus, as updated by our subsequent filings under the Exchange Act, and the risk factors and other information contained in any accompanying prospectus supplement before acquiring any of such securities. The occurrence of any of these risks might cause you to lose all or part of your investment in the offered securities. Please also refer to the section entitled Forward-Looking Statements beginning on page 1 of this prospectus.

CONSOLIDATED RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES

Our consolidated ratios of earnings to fixed charges for the six months ended June 30, 2009 and the years ended December 31, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008 are set forth below. Information presented for periods prior to January 31, 2005, the date of our initial public offering, relate to Allen & O Hara, Inc., our predecessor. For purposes of calculating the ratio of earnings to fixed charges, earnings consist of income before taxes, noncontrolling interest and equity in earnings of equity investees, plus fixed charges less capitalized interest. Fixed charges include interest expense, capitalized interest, amortization of premiums, discounts, and deferred financing costs related to debt and an estimate of the interest component of rent expense.

	Year Ended December 31,					Six Months
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Ended June 30, 2009
Ratio of earnings to fixed charges	1.11	*	*	*	*	1.09

* For the years ended December 31, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008, fixed charges exceeded earnings by \$16,492, \$12,780, \$6,936 and \$6,801, respectively (dollar amounts in thousands).

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless we specify otherwise in an accompanying prospectus supplement, we intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of securities by us to provide additional funds for general corporate purposes. Any specific allocation of the net proceeds of an offering of securities to a specific purpose will be determined at the time of such offering and will be described in the accompanying supplement to this prospectus.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

General

We were formed under the laws of the State of Maryland. Rights of our stockholders are governed by the Maryland General Corporation Law, or MGCL, our charter and our bylaws. The following is a summary of the material provisions of our capital stock.

Authorized Stock

Our charter provides that we may issue up to 200,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$0.01 per share, and 50,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value \$0.01 per share. In addition, our charter provides that our board of directors, without any action by our stockholders, may amend our charter from time to time to increase or decrease the aggregate number of shares of stock or the number of shares of stock of any class that we have authority to issue. As of August 1, 2009, there were 56,697,966 shares of common stock issued and outstanding and no shares of preferred stock issued and outstanding.

Common Stock

Subject to the preferential rights of any other class or series of stock and to the provisions of the charter regarding the restrictions on transfer of stock, holders of shares of our common stock are entitled to receive distributions on such stock when, as and if authorized by our board of directors out of funds legally available therefor and declared by us and to share ratably in the assets of our company legally available for distribution to our stockholders in the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding up after payment of or adequate provision for all known debts and liabilities of our company, including the preferential rights on dissolution of any class or classes of preferred stock.

Subject to the provisions of our charter regarding the restrictions on transfer of stock and except as may otherwise be specified in the terms of any class or series of common stock, each outstanding share of our common stock entitles the holder to one vote on all matters submitted to a vote of stockholders, including the election of directors and, except as provided with respect to any other class or series of stock, the holders of such shares will possess the exclusive voting power. There is no cumulative voting in the election of our board of directors, which means that the holders of a majority of the outstanding shares of our common stock can elect all of the directors then standing for election and the holders of the remaining shares will not be able to elect any directors.

Holders of shares of our common stock have no preference, conversion, exchange, sinking fund or redemption rights, have no preemptive rights to subscribe for any securities of our company and generally have no appraisal rights unless our board of directors determines that appraisal rights apply, with respect to all or any classes or series of stock, to one or more transactions occurring after the date of such determination in connection with which holders would otherwise be entitled to exercise appraisal rights. Subject to the provisions of the charter regarding the restrictions on transfer of stock, shares of our common stock will have equal distribution, liquidation and other rights.

Under the MGCL, a Maryland corporation generally cannot dissolve, amend its charter, merge, consolidate, transfer all or substantially all of its assets, engage in a statutory share exchange or engage in similar transactions outside the ordinary course of business unless declared advisable by the board of directors and approved by the affirmative vote of stockholders holding at least two-thirds of the shares entitled to vote on the matter unless a lesser percentage (but

not less than a majority of all of the votes entitled to be cast on the matter) is set forth in the corporation's charter. Our charter provides for a lesser percentage for these matters. Therefore, except for certain charter amendments, any such action will be effective and valid if declared advisable by our board of directors and taken or approved by the affirmative vote of stockholders entitled to cast a majority of all the votes entitled to be cast on the matter. In addition,

Maryland law permits a corporation to transfer all or substantially all of its assets without the approval of the stockholders of the corporation to one or more persons if all of the equity interests of the person or persons are owned, directly or indirectly, by the corporation. Maryland law also does not require approval of the stockholders of a parent corporation to merge or sell all or substantially all of the assets of a subsidiary entity. Because operating assets may be held by a corporation's subsidiaries, as in our situation, this may mean that a subsidiary of a corporation can transfer all of its assets without a vote of the corporation's stockholders.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Our charter authorizes our board of directors to reclassify any unissued shares of our common stock into other classes or series of classes of stock and to establish the number of shares in each class or series and to set the preferences, conversion and other rights, voting powers, restrictions, limitations as to dividends or other distributions, qualifications or terms or conditions of redemption for each such class or series.

Preferred Stock

Our charter authorizes our board of directors to classify any unissued shares of preferred stock and to reclassify any unissued shares of common stock and any previously classified but unissued shares of preferred stock of any series. Prior to issuance of shares of each series, our board of directors is required by the MGCL and our charter to set the terms, preferences, conversion or other rights, voting powers, restrictions, limitations as to dividends or other distributions, qualifications and terms or conditions of redemption for each such series. Thus, our board of directors could authorize the issuance of shares of common or preferred stock with terms and conditions which could have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a transaction or a change of control in EDR that might involve a premium price for holders of our common stock or otherwise be in their best interest. If we offer shares of preferred stock, the accompanying prospectus supplement will describe each of the following terms that may be applicable in respect of any preferred stock offered and issued pursuant to this prospectus:

the specific designation, number of shares, seniority and purchase price;
any liquidation preference per share;
any maturity date;

any mandatory or optional redemption or repayment dates and terms or sinking fund provisions;
any dividend rate or rates and the dates on which any dividends will be payable (or the method by which such rates or dates will be determined);

any voting rights;

any rights to convert the preferred stock into other securities or rights, including a description of the securities or rights into which such preferred stock are convertible (which may include other shares of preferred stock) and the terms and conditions upon which such conversions will be effected, including, without limitation, conversion rates or formulas, conversion periods and other related provisions;

the place or places where dividends and other payments with respect to the preferred stock will be payable; and any additional voting, dividend, liquidation, redemption and other rights, preferences, privileges, limitations and restrictions, including restrictions imposed for the purpose of maintaining our qualification as a REIT under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or the Code.

Power to Increase Authorized Stock and Issue Additional Shares of Our Common Stock and Preferred Stock

We believe that the power of our board of directors, without stockholder approval, to amend our charter to increase the aggregate number of shares of stock or the number of shares of stock of any class or series that we have authority to issue, to issue additional authorized but unissued shares of our common stock or preferred stock and to classify or reclassify unissued shares of our common stock or preferred stock and thereafter to cause us to issue such classified or reclassified shares of stock will provide us with flexibility in structuring possible future financings and acquisitions and in meeting other needs which might arise. The additional classes or series, as well as the common stock, will be available for issuance without further action by our stockholders, unless stockholder consent is required by applicable law or the rules of any stock exchange or automated quotation system on which our securities may be listed or traded.

Although our board of directors does not intend to do so, it could authorize us to issue a class or series that could, depending upon the terms of the particular class or series, delay, defer or prevent a transaction or a change of control

in EDR that might involve a premium price for our stockholders or otherwise be in their best interest.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer

In order for us to qualify as a REIT under the Code, not more than 50% of the value of the outstanding shares of our capital stock may be owned, actually or constructively, by five or fewer individuals (as defined in the Code to include certain entities) during the last half of a taxable year (other than the first year for which an election to be a REIT has been made by us). In addition, if we, or one or more owners (actually or constructively) of 10% or more of us, actually or constructively owns 10% or more of a tenant of ours (or a tenant of any partnership in which we are a partner), the rent received by us (either directly or through any such partnership) from such tenant will not be qualifying income for purposes of the REIT gross income tests of the Code. Our capital stock must also be beneficially owned by 100 or more persons during at least 335 days of a taxable year of 12 months or during a proportionate part of a shorter taxable year (other than the first year for which an election to be a REIT has been made by us). For further discussion, see Federal Income Tax Consequences of our Status as a REIT beginning on page 22 of this prospectus.

Our charter contains restrictions on the ownership and transfer of our capital stock. The relevant sections of our charter provide that, subject to the exceptions described below, no person or persons acting as a group may own, or be deemed to own by virtue of the attribution provisions of the Code, more than (i) 9.8% of the most restrictive of the number, voting power, or value of shares of our outstanding capital stock or (ii) 9.8% of the most restrictive of the number, voting power or value of our outstanding common stock. We refer to this restriction as the ownership limit.

The ownership attribution rules under the Code are complex and may cause stock owned actually or constructively by a group of related individuals and/or entities to be owned constructively by one individual or entity. As a result, the acquisition of less than 9.8% of our capital stock (or the acquisition of an interest in an entity that owns, actually or constructively, our capital stock) by an individual or entity, could, nevertheless cause that individual or entity, or another individual or entity, to own constructively in excess of 9.8% of our outstanding capital stock and thereby subject that capital stock to the ownership limit.

Our board of directors may, in its sole discretion, waive (prospectively or retroactively) the ownership limit with respect to one or more stockholders who are not treated as individuals for purposes of the REIT ownership restrictions under the Code if it obtains such representations and undertakings as are reasonably necessary to ascertain that no individual's beneficial or constructive ownership of shares of our capital stock will violate the ownership limit and such stockholders do not and represent that they will not own, actually or constructively, an interest in any tenant of ours (or a tenant of any entity owned or controlled by us) that would cause us to own, actually or constructively, more than a 9.9% interest in such tenant. Such stockholders must also agree that any violation or attempted violation of these restrictions will result in the automatic transfer of the shares of capital stock causing the violation to a charitable trust.

As a condition of any grant of a waiver from the ownership limit, our board of directors may require an opinion of counsel or IRS ruling satisfactory to our board of directors and/or representations or undertakings from the applicant with respect to preserving our REIT status.

In connection with the waiver of the ownership limit or at any other time, our board of directors may decrease the ownership limit for all other persons and entities. The decreased ownership limit will not be effective for any person or entity whose percentage ownership in our capital stock is in excess of such decreased ownership limit until such time as such person or entity's percentage ownership equals or falls below the decreased ownership limit, but any further acquisition of our capital stock in excess of such percentage ownership will be in violation of the ownership limit. Additionally, the new ownership limit may not allow five or fewer individuals (as defined for purposes of the REIT ownership restrictions under the Code) to beneficially own more than 49.9% of the value of our outstanding

capital stock.

Our charter further prohibits:

any person from actually or constructively owning shares of our capital stock that would result in us being closely held under Section 856(h) of the Code or otherwise cause us to fail to qualify as a REIT; and

6

TABLE OF CONTENTS

any person from transferring shares of our capital stock if such transfer would result in shares of our capital stock being beneficially owned by fewer than 100 persons (determined without reference to any rules of attribution).

Any person who acquires or attempts or intends to acquire beneficial or constructive ownership of our capital stock that will or may violate any of the foregoing restrictions on transferability and ownership will be required to give notice immediately to us and provide us with such other information as we may request in order to determine the effect of such transfer on our status as a REIT. The foregoing provisions on transferability and ownership will not apply if our board of directors determines that it is no longer in our best interests to attempt to qualify, or to continue to qualify, as a REIT.

Pursuant to our charter, any attempted transfer of our capital stock which, if effective, would result in our stock being owned by fewer than 100 persons will be null and void. In addition, if any purported transfer of our stock or any other event would result in any person violating the ownership limit or our being closely held under Section 856(h) of the Code or otherwise failing to qualify as a REIT, then the number of shares of capital stock in excess of the ownership limit or causing the violation (rounded to the nearest whole share) will be automatically transferred to, and held by, a trust for the exclusive benefit of one or more charitable organizations selected by us. However, in the event that the transfer to the trust would not be effective for any reason to prevent the violation, then any such purported transfer will be void and of no force or effect with respect to the purported transferee or owner (collectively referred to hereinafter as the purported owner) as to the number of shares of capital stock in excess of the ownership limit or causing the violation. The trustee of the trust will be designated by us and must be unaffiliated with us and with any purported owner. The automatic transfer will be effective as of the close of business on the business day prior to the date of the violative transfer or other event that results in a transfer to the trust. The purported owner will have no rights to the shares of capital stock held by the trustee. Any dividend or other distribution paid to the purported owner, prior to our discovery that the shares of capital stock had been automatically transferred to a trust as described above, must be repaid to the trustee upon demand for distribution to the charitable beneficiary of the trust and all dividends and other distributions paid by us with respect to such excess shares prior to the sale by the trustee of such shares shall be paid to the trustee for the beneficiary.

Subject to Maryland law, effective as of the date that such excess shares of capital stock have been transferred to the trust, the trustee shall have the authority (at the trustee's sole discretion and subject to applicable law) (i) to rescind as void any vote cast by a purported owner prior to our discovery that such shares have been transferred to the trust and (ii) to recast such vote in accordance with the desires of the trustee acting for the benefit of the beneficiary of the trust, provided, however, that if we have already taken irreversible action, then the trustee shall not have the authority to rescind and recast such vote.

Shares of our capital stock transferred to the trustee are deemed offered for sale to us, or our designee, at a price per share equal to the lesser of (i) the price paid by the purported owner for such shares (or, if the event which resulted in the transfer to the trust did not involve a purchase of such shares at market price, the market price on the day of the event which resulted in the transfer of such shares to the trust) and (ii) the market price on the date we, or our designee, accepts such offer. We have the right to accept such offer until the trustee has sold the shares of our capital stock held in the trust pursuant to the clauses discussed below. Upon a sale to us, the interest of the charitable beneficiary in such shares sold terminates and the trustee must distribute the net proceeds of the sale to the purported owner and any dividends or other distributions held by the trustee with respect to such capital stock will be paid to the charitable beneficiary.

If we do not buy the shares, the trustee must, within 20 days of receiving notice from us of the transfer of shares of capital stock to the trust, sell the shares to a person or entity designated by the trustee who could own the shares without violating the ownership limits or other restrictions. After that, the trustee must distribute to the purported owner an amount equal to the lesser of (i) the net price paid by the purported owner for the shares (or, if the event

which resulted in the transfer to the trust did not involve a purchase of such shares at market price, the market price on the day of the event which resulted in the transfer of such shares of our stock to the trust) and (ii) the net sales proceeds received by the trust for the shares. Any proceeds in excess of the amount distributable to the purported owner will be distributed to the charitable beneficiary.

7

TABLE OF CONTENTS

All persons who own, directly or by virtue of the attribution provisions of the Code, 5% or more (or such other percentage as provided in the regulations promulgated under the Code) of our outstanding stock must give written notice to us within 30 days after the end of each taxable year. In addition, each stockholder will, upon demand, be required to disclose to us in writing such information with respect to the direct, indirect and constructive ownership of shares of our stock as our board of directors deems reasonably necessary to comply with the provisions of the Code applicable to a REIT, to comply with the requirements or any taxing authority or governmental agency or to determine any such compliance.

Any certificates representing shares of our capital stock shall bear a legend referring to the restrictions described above.

These ownership limits could delay, defer or prevent a transaction or a change of control in EDR that might involve a premium price over the then prevailing market price for the holders of some, or a majority, of our outstanding shares of common stock or which such holders might believe to be otherwise in their best interest.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is American Stock Transfer & Trust Company, LLC.

Material provisions of Maryland law and of our charter and bylaws

The following is a summary of certain provisions of Maryland law and of our charter and bylaws. See [Where You Can Find More Information](#) beginning on page 39 of this prospectus.

The Board of Directors. Our bylaws provide that the number of directors of our Company may be established by our board of directors but may not be fewer than the minimum number permitted under the MGCL (generally, one) nor more than 15. Any vacancy may be filled, at any regular meeting or at any special meeting called for that purpose, only by a majority of the remaining directors, even if the remaining directors do not constitute a quorum, and any director elected to fill a vacancy will serve for the remainder of the full term of the directorship in which such vacancy occurred and until a successor is elected and qualifies.

Each member of our board of directors will serve one-year terms, with each current director serving until the next annual meeting of stockholders and until their respective successors are duly elected and qualify. Our common stockholders will have no right to cumulative voting in the election of directors. Consequently, at each annual meeting of stockholders at which our board of directors is elected, the holders of a majority of the shares of our common stock will be able to elect all of the members of our board of directors. Moreover, our charter permits our stockholders to remove a director, but only for cause, upon the affirmative vote of a majority of the shares of our common stock entitled to vote generally in the election of directors.

Business Combinations. Maryland law prohibits business combinations between a corporation and an interested stockholder or an affiliate of an interested stockholder for five years after the most recent date on which the interested stockholder becomes an interested stockholder. These business combinations include a merger, consolidation, statutory share exchange, or, in circumstances specified in the statute, certain transfers of assets, certain stock issuances and transfers, liquidation plans and reclassifications involving interested stockholders and their affiliates. Maryland law defines an interested stockholder as:

any person who beneficially owns 10% or more of the voting power of our outstanding voting stock; or an affiliate or associate of the corporation who, at any time within the two-year period prior to the date in question, was the beneficial owner of 10% or more of the voting power of the then-outstanding stock of the corporation.

A person is not an interested stockholder if the board of directors approves in advance the transaction by which the person otherwise would have become an interested stockholder. However, in approving the transaction, the board of directors may provide that its approval is subject to compliance, at or after the time of approval, with any terms and conditions determined by the board of directors.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

After the five-year prohibition, any business combination between a corporation and an interested stockholder generally must be recommended by the board of directors and approved by the affirmative vote of at least:

80% of the votes entitled to be cast by holders of the then outstanding shares of voting stock; and two-thirds of the votes entitled to be cast by holders of the voting stock other than shares held by the interested stockholder with whom or with whose affiliate the business combination is to be effected or shares held by an affiliate or associate of the interested stockholder.

These super-majority vote requirements do not apply if the common stockholders receive a minimum price, as defined under Maryland law, for their shares in the form of cash or other consideration in the same form as previously paid by the interested stockholder for its shares.

The statute permits various exemptions from its provisions, including business combinations that are approved by the board of directors before the time that the interested stockholder becomes an interested stockholder.

Our board of directors has by resolution exempted any business combination between the corporation and our officers and directors from these provisions of the MGCL and, consequently, the five-year prohibition and the super-majority vote requirements will not apply to business combinations between us and any of our officers and directors unless our board later resolves otherwise. We believe that our ownership restrictions will substantially reduce the risk that a stockholder would become an interested stockholder within the meaning of the Maryland business combination statute.

Control Share Acquisitions. The MGCL provides that control shares of a Maryland corporation acquired in a control share acquisition have no voting rights except to the extent approved at a special meeting by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the votes entitled to be cast on the matter, excluding shares of stock in a corporation in respect of which any of the following persons is entitled to exercise or direct the exercise of the voting power of shares of stock of the corporation in the election of directors: (i) a person who makes or proposes to make a control share acquisition, (ii) an officer of the corporation or (iii) an employee of the corporation who is also a director of the corporation. Control shares are voting shares of stock which, if aggregated with all other such shares of stock previously acquired by the acquiror or in respect of which the acquiror is able to exercise or direct the exercise of voting power (except solely by virtue of a revocable proxy), would entitle the acquiror to exercise voting power in electing directors within one of the following ranges of voting power: (i) one-tenth or more but less than one-third, (ii) one-third or more but less than a majority, or (iii) a majority or more of all voting power. Control shares do not include shares that the acquiring person is then entitled to vote as a result of having previously obtained stockholder approval. A control share acquisition means the acquisition of control shares, subject to certain exceptions.

A person who has made or proposes to make a control share acquisition, upon satisfaction of certain conditions (including an undertaking to pay expenses), may compel our board of directors to call a special meeting of stockholders to be held within 50 days of demand to consider the voting rights of the shares. If no request for a meeting is made, the corporation may itself present the question at any stockholders meeting.

If voting rights are not approved at the meeting or if the acquiring person does not deliver an acquiring person statement as required by the statute, then, subject to certain conditions and limitations, the corporation may redeem any or all of the control shares (except those for which voting rights have previously been approved) for fair value determined, without regard to the absence of voting rights for the control shares, as of the date of the last control share acquisition by the acquiror or of any meeting of stockholders at which the voting rights of such shares are considered and not approved. If voting rights for control shares are approved at a stockholders meeting and the acquiror becomes entitled to vote a majority of the shares entitled to vote, all other stockholders may exercise appraisal rights. The fair value of the shares as determined for purposes of such appraisal rights may not be less than the highest price per share

paid by the acquiror in the control share acquisition.

9

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The control share acquisition statute does not apply (a) to shares acquired in a merger, consolidation or share exchange if the corporation is a party to the transaction or (b) to acquisitions approved or exempted by the charter or bylaws of the corporation.

Our bylaws contain a provision exempting from the control share acquisition statute any and all acquisitions by any person of our stock and, consequently, the applicability of the control share acquisitions unless we later amend our bylaws to modify or eliminate this provision.

Subtitle 8. Subtitle 8 of Title 3 of the MGCL permits a Maryland corporation with a class of equity securities registered under the Exchange Act and at least three independent directors to elect to be subject, by provision in its charter or bylaws or a resolution of its board of directors and notwithstanding any contrary provision in the charter or bylaws, to any or all of five provisions:

a classified board;

a two-thirds vote requirement for removing a director;

a requirement that the number of directors be fixed only by vote of the directors;

a requirement that a vacancy on the board be filled only by the remaining directors and for the remainder of the full term of the class of directors in which the vacancy occurred; and

a majority requirement for the calling by stockholders of a special meeting of stockholders.

Through provisions in our charter and bylaws unrelated to Subtitle 8, we already (a) vest in the board the exclusive power to fix the number of directorships and (b) require, unless called by our chairman of the board of directors, our president, our chief executive officer or the board of directors, the request of holders of a majority of outstanding shares entitled to vote to call a special meeting. We have elected to be subject to the provisions of Subtitle 8 relating to the filling of vacancies on the board.

Amendment to our charter. Our charter may be amended only if declared advisable by the board of directors and approved by the affirmative vote of the holders of at least a majority of all of the votes entitled to be cast on the matter, other than amendments to provisions relating to the removal of directors, which must be declared advisable by our board of directors and approved by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of all the votes entitled to be cast on the matter.

Dissolution of our Company. The dissolution of our Company must be declared advisable by a majority of the entire board of directors and approved by the affirmative vote of the holders of not less than a majority of all of the votes entitled to be cast on the matter.

Advance notice of director nominations and new business. Our bylaws provide that, with respect to an annual meeting of stockholders, nominations of individuals for election to our board of directors and the proposal of business to be considered by stockholders may be made only:

pursuant to our notice of the meeting;

by, or at the direction of, our board of directors; or

by a stockholder who is a stockholder of record both at the time of giving of notice and at the time of the annual meeting, who is entitled to vote at the meeting and who has complied with the advance notice procedures set forth in our bylaws.

With respect to special meetings of stockholders, only the business specified in our Company's notice of meeting may be brought before the meeting of stockholders, unless otherwise provided by law.

Nominations of individuals for election to our board of directors at any special meeting of stockholders may be made only:

by, or at the direction of, our board of directors; or

10

TABLE OF CONTENTS

provided that our board of directors has determined that directors shall be elected at such special meeting, by any stockholder who is a stockholder of record both at the time of giving of notice and at the time of the special meeting, who is entitled to vote at the meeting and who has complied with the advance notice procedures set forth in our bylaws.

Anti-takeover effect of certain provisions of Maryland law and of our charter and bylaws. The business combination provisions of the MGCL, the provisions of our charter regarding the restrictions on ownership and transfer of our stock and the advance notice provisions of our bylaws could delay, defer or prevent a transaction or a change of control in EDR that might involve a premium price for holders of our common stock or otherwise be in their best interest. Likewise, if our board of directors resolves to avail the corporation of any of the provisions of Subtitle 8 of Title 3 of the MGCL not currently applicable to us or if the provision in the bylaws opting out of the control share acquisition provisions of the MGCL were rescinded, these provisions of the MGCL could have similar anti-takeover effects.

Indemnification and limitation of directors and officers liability. Maryland law permits us to include in our charter a provision limiting the liability of our directors and officers to us and our stockholders for money damages, except for liability resulting from (i) actual receipt of an improper benefit or profit in money, property or services or (ii) active and deliberate dishonesty established by a final judgment and material to the cause of action. Our charter contains a provision that eliminates directors and officers liability to the maximum extent permitted by Maryland law.

The MGCL requires a corporation unless its charter provides otherwise, which our charter does not, to indemnify a director or officer who has been successful, on the merits or otherwise, in the defense of any proceeding to which he or she is made, or threatened to be made, a party by reason of his or her service in that capacity. The MGCL permits a corporation to indemnify its present and former directors and officers, among others, against judgments, penalties, fines, settlements and reasonable expenses actually incurred by them in connection with any proceeding to which they may be made or threatened to be made a party by reason of their service in those or other capacities unless it is established that:

an act or omission of the director or officer was material to the matter giving rise to the proceeding and:
was committed in bad faith; or
was the result of active and deliberate dishonesty;

the director or officer actually received an improper personal benefit in money, property or services; or in the case of any criminal proceeding, the director or officer had reasonable cause to believe that the act or omission was unlawful.

However, under the MGCL, a Maryland corporation may not, and our Company will not, indemnify for an adverse judgment in a suit by or in the right of the corporation or for a judgment of liability on the basis that personal benefit was improperly received, unless in either case a court orders indemnification and then only for expenses. In addition, the MGCL permits a corporation to, and our Company will, advance reasonable expenses to a director or officer upon the corporation's receipt of:

a written affirmation by the director or officer of his or her good faith belief that he or she has met the standard of conduct necessary for indemnification by the corporation; and
a written undertaking by the director or officer or on the director's or officer's behalf to repay the amount paid or reimbursed by the corporation if it is ultimately determined that the director or officer did not meet the standard of conduct.

Our charter authorizes us to obligate our Company and our bylaws obligate us, to the fullest extent permitted by Maryland law, to indemnify and, without requiring a preliminary determination of the ultimate entitlement to indemnification, pay or reimburse reasonable expenses in advance of final disposition of a proceeding to:

TABLE OF CONTENTS

any present or former director or officer who is made, or threatened to be made, a party to the proceeding by reason of his or her service in that capacity; or

any individual who, while a director or officer of our Company and at our request, serves or has served another corporation, real estate investment trust, partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan or any other enterprise as a director, officer, partner or trustee and who is made, or threatened to be made, a party to the proceeding by reason of his or her service in that capacity.

Our bylaws also authorize us, subject to approval from our board of directors or a committee thereof, to indemnify and advance expenses to any person who served a predecessor of ours in any of the capacities described above and to any employee or agent of our Company or a predecessor of our Company.

The partnership agreements of our Operating Partnership and University Towers Partnership provide that we, as general partner of our Operating Partnership and University Towers Partnership, and our officers and directors are indemnified to the fullest extent permitted by law.

We have entered into indemnification agreements with each of our executive officers and directors.

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

We may issue debt securities under one or more trust indentures to be executed by us and a specified trustee. The terms of the debt securities will include those stated in the indenture and those made a part of the indenture by reference to the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, or the Trust Indenture Act. The indentures will be qualified under the Trust Indenture Act.

The following description sets forth certain anticipated general terms and provisions of the debt securities to which an accompanying prospectus supplement may relate. The particular terms of the debt securities offered by an accompanying prospectus supplement (which terms may be different than those stated below) and the extent, if any, to which such general provisions may apply to the debt securities so offered will be described in the prospectus supplement relating to such debt securities. Accordingly, for a description of the terms of a particular issue of debt securities, investors should review both the accompanying prospectus supplement relating thereto and the following description. A form of the indenture (as discussed herein) has been filed as an exhibit to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part.

The debt securities will be our direct obligations and may be either senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities. The indebtedness represented by subordinated securities will be subordinated in right of payment to the prior payment in full of our senior debt (as defined in the applicable indenture).

Except as set forth in the applicable indenture and described in an accompanying prospectus supplement relating thereto, the debt securities may be issued without limit as to aggregate principal amount, in one or more series, secured or unsecured, in each case as established from time to time in or pursuant to authority granted by a resolution of the board of directors or as established in the applicable indenture. All debt securities of one series need not be issued at the same time and, unless otherwise provided, a series may be reopened, without the consent of the holders of the debt securities of such series, for issuance of additional debt securities of such series.

The accompanying prospectus supplement relating to any series of debt securities being offered will contain their specific terms, including, without limitation:

their title and whether they are senior securities or subordinated securities;

their initial aggregate principal amount and any limit on their aggregate principal amount;
the percentage of the principal amount at which they will be issued and, if other than 100% of the principal amount,
the portion of the principal amount payable upon declaration of acceleration of their maturity;
the terms, if any, upon which they may be convertible into shares of our common stock or preferred stock and the
terms and conditions upon which a conversion will be effected, including the initial conversion price or rate and the
conversion period;

12

TABLE OF CONTENTS

if convertible, the portion of the principal amount that is convertible into common stock or preferred stock, or the method by which any portion will be determined;

if convertible, any applicable limitations on the ownership or transferability of the common stock or preferred stock into which they are convertible;

the date or dates, or the method for determining the date or dates, on which the principal will be payable;

the rate or rates (which may be fixed or variable), or the method for determining the rate or rates, at which they will bear interest, if any;

the date or dates, or the method for determining the date or dates, from which any interest will accrue, the interest payment dates on which any interest will be payable, the regular record dates for the interest payment dates, or the method by which the date will be determined, the person to whom the interest will be payable, and the basis upon which interest will be calculated if other than that of a 360-day year of twelve 30-day months;

the place or places where the principal (and premium, if any) and interest, if any, will be payable, where they may be surrendered for conversion or registration of transfer or exchange and where notices or demands to or upon us may be served;

the period or periods within which, the price or prices at which and the terms and conditions upon which they may be redeemed, as a whole or in part, at our option, if we are to have the option;

our obligation, if any, to redeem, repay or purchase them pursuant to any sinking fund or analogous provision or at the option of a holder, and the period or periods within which, the price or prices at which and the terms and conditions upon which they will be redeemed, repaid or purchased, as a whole or in part, pursuant to this obligation;

if other than U.S. dollars, the currency or currencies in which they are denominated and payable, which may be a foreign currency or units of two or more foreign currencies or a composite currency or currencies, and the related terms and conditions;

whether the payments of principal (and premium, if any) or interest, if any, may be determined with reference to an index, formula or other method (which index, formula or method may, but need not be, based on a currency, currencies, currency unit or units or composite currencies) and the manner in which the amounts will be determined;

any additions to, modifications of or deletions from their terms with respect to the events of default or covenants set forth in the indenture;

any provisions for collateral security for their repayment;

whether they will be issued in certificated or book-entry form;

whether they will be in registered or bearer form and, if in registered form, the denominations if other than \$1,000 and any integral multiple thereof and, if in bearer form, the denominations and related terms and conditions;

the applicability, if any, of defeasance and covenant defeasance provisions of the applicable indenture;

whether and under what circumstances we will pay additional amounts as contemplated in the applicable indenture in respect of any tax, assessment or governmental charge and, if so, whether we will have the option to redeem them in lieu of making the payment; and

any other terms and any deletions from or modifications or additions to the applicable indenture.

The debt securities may provide for less than the entire principal amount thereof to be payable upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity thereof. Special federal income tax, accounting and other considerations applicable to debt securities will be described in the accompanying prospectus supplement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The applicable indenture may contain provisions that would limit our ability to incur indebtedness or that would afford holders of debt securities protection in the event of a highly leveraged or similar transaction involving us or in the event of a change of control.

Restrictions on ownership and transfer of our common stock and preferred stock are designed to preserve our status as a REIT and, therefore, may act to prevent or hinder a change of control. See Description Of Capital Stock Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer beginning on page 6 of this prospectus. Investors should review the accompanying prospectus supplement for information with respect to any deletions from, modifications of or additions to the events of default or covenants that are described below, including any addition of a covenant or other provision providing event risk or similar protection.

Merger, Consolidation or Sale

The applicable indenture will provide that we may consolidate with, or sell, lease or convey all or substantially all of our assets to, or merge with or into, any other corporation, provided that:

we are the continuing corporation, or the successor corporation (if other than EDR) formed by or resulting from any consolidation or merger or which has received the transfer of our assets will be organized and existing under U.S. or state law and expressly assumes payment of the principal of (and premium, if any), and interest on, all of the applicable debt securities and the due and punctual performance and observance of all of the covenants and conditions contained in the applicable indenture;

immediately after giving effect to the transaction and treating any indebtedness which becomes our obligation or the obligation of any subsidiary as a result thereof as having been incurred by us or such subsidiary at the time of the transaction, no event of default under the applicable indenture, and no event which, after notice or the lapse of time, or both, would become an event of default, will have occurred and be continuing; and

an officer's certificate and legal opinion covering these conditions will be delivered to the trustee.

Covenants

The applicable indenture will contain covenants requiring us to take certain actions and prohibiting us from taking certain actions. The covenants with respect to any series of debt securities will be described in the accompanying prospectus supplement.

Events of Default, Notice and Waiver

Each indenture will describe specific events of default with respect to a series of debt securities issued under the indenture. These events of default are likely to include (with grace and cure periods):

our failure to pay any installment of interest;

our failure to pay their principal (or premium, if any) at their maturity;

our failure to make any required sinking fund payment;

our breach of any other covenant or warranty contained in the applicable indenture (other than a covenant added to the indenture solely for the benefit of a different series of debt securities); and

certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization, or court appointment of a receiver, liquidator or trustee of us or any substantial part of our property.

If an event of default under any indenture with respect to debt securities of any series at the time outstanding occurs and is continuing, then the applicable trustee or the holders of not less than 25% of the principal amount of the

outstanding debt securities of that series may declare the principal amount (or, if the debt securities of that series are original issue discount securities or indexed securities, such portion of the principal amount as may be specified in the terms thereof) of all the debt securities of that series to be due and payable immediately by written notice thereof to us (and to the applicable trustee if given by the holders). However, at any time after such a declaration of acceleration with respect to debt securities of such series (or of all debt securities then outstanding under any indenture, as the case may be) has been made, but before a

TABLE OF CONTENTS

judgment or decree for payment of the money due has been obtained by the applicable trustee, the holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of outstanding debt securities of such series (or of all debt securities then outstanding under the applicable indenture, as the case may be) may rescind and annul such declaration and its consequences if:

we shall have deposited with the applicable trustee all required payments of the principal of (and premium, if any) and interest on the debt securities of such series (or of all debt securities then outstanding under the applicable indenture, as the case may be), plus certain fees, expenses, disbursements and advances of the applicable trustee; and all events of default, other than the non-payment of accelerated principal (or specified portion thereof), with respect to debt securities of such series (or of all debt securities then outstanding under the applicable indenture, as the case may be) have been cured or waived as provided in such indenture.

Each indenture also will provide that the holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series (or of all debt securities then outstanding under the applicable indenture, as the case may be) may waive any past default with respect to the series and its consequences, except a:

payment default; or

covenant default that cannot be modified or amended without the consent of the holder of each outstanding debt security affected thereby.

Each trustee will be required to give notice to the holders of debt securities within a certain number of days of a default under the applicable indenture unless the default has been cured or waived; provided, however, that the trustee may withhold notice to the holders of any series of debt securities of any default with respect to the series (except a default in the payment of the principal of (or premium, if any) or interest on any debt security of the series or in the payment of any sinking fund installment in respect of any debt security of the series) if specified responsible officers of the trustee consider withholding the notice to be in the interest of the holders.

Each indenture will prohibit the holders of debt securities of any series from instituting any proceedings, judicial or otherwise, with respect to the indenture or for any remedy thereunder, except in the case of failure of the applicable trustee, for a certain period of time after the trustee has received a written request to institute proceedings in respect of an event of default from the holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of such series, as well as the furnishing of indemnity reasonably satisfactory to it. This provision will not prevent any holder of debt securities from instituting a suit to enforce the payment of the principal of (and premium, if any) and interest on the debt securities at the respective due dates thereof.

Subject to the indenture, no trustee will be under any obligation to exercise any of its rights or powers under an indenture at the request or direction of any holders of any series of debt securities then outstanding, unless the holders furnish the trustee thereunder reasonable security or indemnity. The holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series (or of all debt securities then outstanding under an indenture, as the case may be) will have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the applicable trustee, or of exercising any trust or power conferred upon the trustee. However, a trustee may refuse to follow any direction which is in conflict with any law or the applicable indenture, which may involve the trustee in personal liability or which may be unduly prejudicial to the holders of debt securities of such series not joining therein.

Within a certain period of time of the close of each fiscal year, we will be required to deliver to each trustee, a certificate, signed by one of several specified officers, stating whether or not the officer has knowledge of any default under the applicable indenture and, if so, specifying each default and the nature and status thereof.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Modification of the Indenture

The indenture will likely be modified or amended, with the consent of the holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of each series of the outstanding debt securities issued under the indenture affected by the modification or amendment, provided that no modification or amendment may, without the consent of each affected holder of the debt securities:

change the stated maturity date of the principal of (or premium, if any) or any installment of interest, if any, on the debt securities;

reduce the principal amount of (or premium, if any) or the interest, if any, on the debt securities or the principal amount due upon acceleration of an original issue discount security;

change the place or currency of payment of principal of (or premium, if any) or interest, if any, on the debt securities;

impair the right to institute suit for the enforcement of any payment on or with respect to the debt securities;

reduce the above-stated percentage of holders of the debt securities necessary to modify or amend the indenture; or

modify the foregoing requirements or reduce the percentage of the outstanding debt securities necessary to waive compliance with certain provisions of the indenture or for waiver of certain defaults.

A record date may be set for any act of the holders with respect to consenting to any amendment.

The holders of not less than a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of each series affected thereby will have the right to waive our compliance with certain covenants in the indenture. Each indenture will contain provisions for convening meetings of the holders of debt securities of a series to take permitted action. Under certain circumstances, we and the trustee may make modifications and amendments to an indenture without the consent of any holders of outstanding debt securities.

Redemption of Debt securities

The debt securities may be redeemed at any time at our option, in whole or in part, to protect our status as a REIT. The debt securities will also be subject to optional or mandatory redemption on terms and conditions described in the accompanying prospectus supplement.

Conversion of Debt securities

The terms and conditions, if any, upon which any debt securities are convertible into shares of our common stock or preferred stock will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement relating thereto. The terms will include:

whether the debt securities are convertible into shares of our common stock or preferred stock;

the conversion price (or the manner of calculating the price);

the conversion period;

the events requiring an adjustment to the conversion price and provisions affecting conversion if the debt securities are redeemed; and

any restrictions on conversion.

Subordination

Upon any distribution to our creditors in a liquidation, dissolution or reorganization, the payment of the principal of and interest on any subordinated securities will be subordinated to the extent provided in the applicable indenture to the prior payment in full of all senior securities. No payment of principal or interest will be permitted to be made on

subordinated securities at any time if any payment default or any other default which permits accelerations exists.
After all senior securities are paid in full and until the subordinated

TABLE OF CONTENTS

securities are paid in full, holders of subordinated securities will be subrogated to the right of holders of senior securities to the extent that distributions otherwise payable to holders of subordinated securities have been applied to the payment of senior securities. By reason of any subordination, in the event of a distribution of assets upon our insolvency, some of our general creditors may recover more, ratably, than holders of subordinated securities. The accompanying prospectus supplement or the information incorporated herein by reference will contain the approximate amount of senior securities outstanding as of the end of our most recent fiscal quarter.

Global Debt Securities

The debt securities of a series may be issued in whole or in part in global form. The global securities will be deposited with a depository, or with a nominee for a depository, identified in the accompanying prospectus supplement. In this case, one or more global securities will be issued in a denomination or aggregate denominations equal to the portion of the aggregate principal amount of outstanding debt securities of the series to be represented by the global security or securities. Unless and until it is exchanged in whole or in part for debt securities in definitive form, a global security may not be transferred except as a whole by the depository for the global security to a nominee of the depository or by a nominee of the depository to the depository or another nominee of the depository or by the depository or any nominee to a successor of the depository or a nominee of the successor.

The specific material terms of the depository arrangement with respect to any portion of a series of debt securities to be represented by a global security will be described in the accompanying prospectus supplement. We anticipate that the following provisions will apply to all depository arrangements.

Upon the issuance of a global security, the depository for the global security will credit, on its book-entry registration and transfer system, the respective principal amounts of the debt securities represented by the global security to the accounts of persons, or participants, that have accounts with the depository. The accounts to be credited will be designated by any underwriters or agents participating in the distribution of the debt securities. Ownership of beneficial interests in a global security will be limited to participants or persons that may hold interests through participants. Ownership of beneficial interests in the global security will be shown on, and the transfer of that ownership will be effected only through, records maintained by the depository for the global security, with respect to interests of participants, or by participants or persons that hold through participants, with respect to interests of persons other than participants. So long as the depository for a global security, or its nominee, is the registered owner of the global security, the depository or the nominee, as the case may be, will be considered the sole owner or holder of the debt securities represented by the global security for all purposes under the indenture; provided, however, that for purposes of obtaining any consents or directions required to be given by the holders of the debt securities, we, the trustee and our agents will treat a person as the holder of the principal amount of debt securities as specified in a written statement of the depository. Except as set forth herein or otherwise provided in the accompanying prospectus supplement, owners of beneficial interests in a global security will not be entitled to have the debt securities represented by the global security registered in their names, will not receive physical delivery of the debt securities in definitive form and will not be considered the owners or holders thereof under the indenture.

Principal, premium, if any, and interest payments on debt securities represented by a global security registered in the name of a depository or its nominee will be made to the depository or its nominee, as the case may be, as the registered owner of the global security. Neither we, the trustee nor any paying agent for the debt securities will have any responsibility or liability for any aspect of the records relating to or payments made on account of beneficial ownership interests in the global security or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any records relating to the beneficial ownership interests.

We expect that the depository for any debt securities represented by a global security, upon receipt of any payment of principal, premium, if any, or interest will immediately credit participants' accounts with payments in amounts proportionate to their respective beneficial interests in the principal amount of the global security as shown on the records of the depository. We also expect that payments by participants will be governed by standing instructions and customary practices, as is now the case with the securities held for the accounts of customers registered in street names and will be the responsibility of the participants.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

If the depository for any debt securities represented by a global security is at any time unwilling or unable to continue as depository and a successor depository is not appointed by us within the period of time set forth in the indenture, we will issue the debt securities in definitive form in exchange for the global security. In addition, we may at any time, and in our sole discretion, determine not to have any of the debt securities of a series represented by one or more global securities and, in that event, will issue debt securities of the series in definitive form in exchange for all of the global security or securities representing the debt securities.

The laws of some states require that certain purchasers of securities take physical delivery of the securities in definitive form. These laws may impair the ability to transfer beneficial interests in debt securities represented by global securities.

Governing Law

The indenture and the debt securities will be governed by and construed in accordance with the internal laws of the State of New York.

DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES

General

We may issue depositary shares, each of which will represent a fractional interest of a share of a particular class or series of our preferred stock, as specified in the accompanying prospectus supplement which will more fully describe the terms of those depositary shares. Shares of a class or series of preferred stock represented by depositary shares will be deposited under a separate deposit agreement among us, the depository named therein and the holders from time to time of the depositary receipts issued by the preferred stock depository which will evidence the depositary shares. Subject to the terms of the deposit agreement, each owner of a depositary receipt will be entitled, in proportion to the fractional interest of a share of a particular class or series of preferred stock represented by the depositary shares evidenced by that depositary receipt, to all the rights and preferences of the class or series of preferred stock represented by those depositary shares (including dividend, voting, conversion, redemption and liquidation rights).

The depositary shares to be issued will be evidenced by depositary receipts issued pursuant to the applicable deposit agreement. Immediately following the issuance and delivery of a class or series of preferred stock by us to the preferred stock depository, we will cause the preferred stock depository to issue, on our behalf, the depositary receipts. The following description of the depositary shares, and any description of the depositary shares in an accompanying prospectus supplement, may not be complete and is subject to, and qualified in its entirety by reference to, the underlying deposit agreement and the depositary receipt, which we will file with the SEC at or prior to the time of the sale of the depositary shares. You should refer to, and read this summary together with, the deposit agreement and related depositary receipt. You can obtain copies of any form of deposit agreement or other agreement pursuant to which the depositary shares are issued by following the directions described under the caption **Where You Can Find More Information** in the accompanying prospectus.

Dividends And Other Distributions

The depository will distribute all cash dividends or other cash distributions received in respect of our preferred stock to the record holders of depositary shares relating to such preferred stock in proportion to the number of such

depository shares owned by such holders. The depository shall distribute only such amount, however, as can be distributed without attributing to any holder of depository shares a fraction of one cent, and the balance not so distributed shall be added to and treated as part of the next sum received by the depository for distribution to record holders of depository shares.

In the event of a distribution other than in cash, the depository will distribute property received by it to the record holders of depository shares entitled thereto, unless the depository determines that it is not feasible to make such distribution, in which case the depository may, with our approval, sell such property and distribute the net proceeds from such sale to such holders.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The deposit agreement will also contain provisions relating to the manner in which any subscription or similar rights offered by us to holders of our preferred stock shall be made available to the holders of depositary shares.

Redemption Of Depositary Shares

If a series of preferred stock represented by depositary shares is subject to redemption, the depositary shares will be redeemed from the proceeds received by the depositary resulting from the redemption, in whole or in part, of such series of preferred stock held by the depositary. The redemption price per depositary share will be equal to the applicable fraction of the redemption price per share payable with respect to such series of preferred stock. Whenever we redeem shares of preferred stock held by the depositary, the depositary will redeem as of the same redemption date the number of depositary shares representing the shares of preferred stock so redeemed. If fewer than all the depositary shares are to be redeemed, the depositary shares to be redeemed will be selected by lot or pro rata as may be determined by the depositary.

After the date fixed for redemption, the depositary shares so called for redemption will no longer be outstanding and all rights of the holders of the depositary shares will cease, except the right to receive the money, securities or other property payable upon such redemption and any money, securities or other property to which the holders of such depositary shares were entitled upon such redemption upon surrender to the depositary of the depositary receipts evidencing such depositary shares.

Voting Our Preferred Stock

Upon receipt of notice of any meeting at which the holders of preferred stock are entitled to vote, the depositary will mail the information contained in such notice of meeting to the record holders of the depositary shares relating to such preferred stock. Each record holder of such depositary shares on the record date (which will be the same date as the record date for our preferred stock) will be entitled to instruct the depositary as to the exercise of the voting rights pertaining to the amount of preferred stock represented by such holder's depositary shares. The depositary will endeavor, insofar as practicable, to vote the amount of preferred stock represented by such depositary shares in accordance with such instructions, and we will agree to take all action which may be deemed necessary by the depositary in order to enable the depositary to do so. The depositary may abstain from voting shares of preferred stock to the extent it does not receive specific instructions from the holders of depositary shares representing such preferred stock.

Amendment And Termination Of The Depositary Agreement

The form of depositary receipt evidencing the depositary shares and any provision of the deposit agreement may at any time be amended by agreement between the depositary and us. However, any amendment that materially and adversely alters the rights of the holders of depositary shares will not be effective unless such amendment has been approved by the holders of at least a majority of the depositary shares then outstanding. The deposit agreement may be terminated by us or the depositary only if (i) all outstanding depositary shares have been redeemed or (ii) there has been a final distribution in respect of our preferred stock in connection with any liquidation, dissolution or winding up of the Company and such distribution has been distributed to the holders of depositary receipts.

Charges Of Depositary

We will pay all transfer and other taxes and governmental charges arising solely from the existence of the depositary arrangements. We will pay charges of the depositary in connection with the initial deposit of our preferred stock and any redemption of our preferred stock. Holders of depositary receipts will pay other transfer and other taxes and governmental charges and such other charges, including a fee for the withdrawal of shares of preferred stock upon surrender of depositary receipts, as are expressly provided in the deposit agreement to be for their accounts.

Miscellaneous

The depositary will forward to holders of depositary receipts all reports and communications from EDR that are delivered to the depositary and that we are required to furnish to holders of preferred stock.

Neither the depositary nor EDR will be liable if it is prevented or delayed by law or any circumstance beyond its control in performing its obligations under the deposit agreement. The obligations of the depositary

TABLE OF CONTENTS

and EDR under the deposit agreement will be limited to performance in good faith of their duties thereunder and they will not be obligated to prosecute or defend any legal proceeding in respect of any depositary shares or preferred stock unless satisfactory indemnity is furnished. They may rely upon written advice of counsel or accountants, or upon information provided by persons presenting preferred stock for deposit, holders of depositary receipts or other persons believed to be competent and on documents believed to be genuine.

Resignation And Removal Of The Depositary

The depositary may resign at any time by delivering to us notice of its election to do so, and we may at any time remove the depositary, any such resignation or removal to take effect upon the appointment of a successor depositary and its acceptance of such appointment. Such successor depositary must be appointed within 60 days after delivery of the notice of resignation or removal.

Restrictions On Ownership

The deposit agreement will contain provisions restricting the ownership and transfer of depositary shares. Such restrictions will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement and will be referenced on the applicable depositary receipts.

DESCRIPTION OF SUBSCRIPTION RIGHTS

We may issue subscription rights to purchase one or more series or classes of common stock, preferred stock, debt securities and depositary shares. We may issue subscription rights independently or together with any other offered security, which may or may not be transferable by the stockholder. In connection with any offering of subscription rights, we may enter into a standby arrangement with one or more underwriters or other purchasers pursuant to which the underwriters or other purchasers may be required to purchase any securities remaining unsubscribed for after such offering.

The accompanying prospectus supplement relating to any subscription rights we may offer will contain the specific terms of the subscription rights. These terms may include the following:

- the price, if any, for the subscription rights;
- the exercise price payable for common stock, preferred stock, debt securities or depositary shares upon the exercise of the subscription rights;
- the number of subscription rights issued to each security holder;
- the number and terms of the common stock, preferred stock, debt securities or depositary shares which may be purchased per each subscription right;
- the extent to which the subscription rights are transferable;
- any provisions for adjustment of the number or amount of securities receivable upon exercise of the subscription rights or the exercise price of the subscription rights;
- any other terms of the subscription rights, including the terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the subscription rights;
- the date on which the right to exercise the subscription rights shall commence, and the date on which the subscription rights shall expire;
- the extent to which the subscription rights may include an over-subscription privilege with respect to unsubscribed securities; and

if applicable, the material terms of any standby underwriting or purchase arrangement entered into by us in connection with the offering of subscription rights.

The description in the accompanying prospectus supplement of any subscription rights we offer will not necessarily be complete and will be qualified in its entirety by reference to the applicable subscription rights certificate or subscription rights agreement, which will be filed with the SEC if we offer subscription rights. For more information on how you can obtain copies of any subscription rights certificate or subscription rights agreement if we offer subscription rights, see [Where You Can Find More Information](#) beginning on [page 39](#)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

of this prospectus. We urge you to read the applicable subscription rights certificate, the applicable subscription rights agreement and any applicable prospectus supplement in their entirety.

BOOK ENTRY PROCEDURES AND SETTLEMENT

We may issue the securities offered pursuant to this prospectus in certificated or book-entry form or in the form of one or more global securities. The accompanying prospectus supplement will describe the manner in which the securities offered thereby will be issued.

21

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES OF OUR STATUS AS A REIT

This section summarizes the current material federal income tax consequences generally resulting from our election to be taxed as a REIT. A prospectus supplement will contain information about the material federal income tax considerations relating to the ownership and disposition of our securities. As used in this section, the terms we and our refer solely to Education Realty Trust, Inc. and not to our subsidiaries and affiliates which have not elected to be taxed as REITs under the Internal Revenue Code. This discussion is not exhaustive of all possible tax considerations and does not provide a detailed discussion of any state, local or foreign tax considerations.

The statements in this section and the opinion of Bass, Berry & Sims PLC, described below, are based on the current federal income tax laws governing qualification as a REIT. We cannot assure you that new laws, interpretations of law or court decisions, any of which may take effect retroactively, will not cause any statement in this section to be inaccurate.

We urge you to consult your own tax advisor regarding the specific tax consequences to you of ownership of our securities and of our election to be taxed as a REIT. Specifically, you should consult your own tax advisor regarding the federal, state, local, foreign, and other tax consequences of such ownership and election, and regarding potential changes in applicable tax laws.

Taxation of Our Company

We elected to be taxed as a REIT under the federal income tax laws beginning with our short taxable year ended December 31, 2005. We believe that, beginning with such short taxable year, we have been organized and have operated in such a manner as to qualify for taxation as a REIT under the Internal Revenue Code and intend to continue to operate in such a manner. However, no assurances can be given that our beliefs or expectations will be fulfilled, since qualification as a REIT depends on our continuing to satisfy numerous asset, income, stock ownership and distribution tests described below, the satisfaction of which depends, in part, on our operating results.

The sections of the Internal Revenue Code relating to qualification and operation as a REIT, and the federal income taxation of a REIT, are highly technical and complex. The following discussion sets forth only the material aspects of those sections. This summary is qualified in its entirety by the applicable Internal Revenue Code provisions and the related rules and regulations.

In the opinion of Bass, Berry & Sims PLC, we qualified to be taxed as a REIT for our taxable years ended December 31, 2005 through December 31, 2008 and our organization and current and proposed method of operation will enable us to continue to qualify as a REIT for our taxable year ending December 31, 2009 and in the future. Investors should be aware that Bass, Berry & Sims PLC's opinion is based upon customary assumptions, is conditioned upon certain representations made by us as to factual matters, including representations regarding the nature of our properties and the future conduct of our business, and is not binding upon the IRS or any court and speaks as of the date issued. In addition, Bass, Berry & Sims PLC's opinion is based on existing federal income tax law governing qualification as a REIT, which is subject to change, possibly on a retroactive basis. Moreover, our continued qualification and taxation as a REIT depend upon our ability to meet on a continuing basis, through actual results, certain qualification tests set forth in the federal income tax laws. Those qualification tests involve the percentage of income that we earn from specified sources, the percentage of our assets that falls within specified categories, the diversity of our share ownership, and the percentage of our earnings that we distribute. While Bass, Berry & Sims PLC has reviewed those

matters in connection with the foregoing opinion, Bass, Berry & Sims PLC will not review our compliance with those tests on a continuing basis. Accordingly, no assurance can be given that the actual results of our operations for any particular taxable year will satisfy such requirements. For a discussion of the tax consequences of our failure to qualify as a REIT, see Requirements for Qualification Failure to Qualify below.

Pursuant to our charter, our board of directors has the authority to make any tax elections on our behalf that, in its sole judgment, are in our best interest. This authority includes the ability to revoke or otherwise terminate our status as a REIT. Our board of directors has the authority under our charter to make these elections without the necessity of obtaining the approval of our stockholders. In addition, our board of

TABLE OF CONTENTS

directors has the authority to waive any restrictions and limitations contained in our charter that are intended to preserve our status as a REIT during any period in which our board of directors has determined not to pursue or preserve our status as a REIT.

If we qualify as a REIT, we generally will not be subject to federal income tax on the taxable income that we distribute to our stockholders. The benefit of that tax treatment is that it avoids the double taxation, or taxation at both the corporate and stockholder levels, that generally results from owning shares in a corporation. However, we will be subject to federal tax in the following circumstances:

We are subject to the corporate federal income tax on any taxable income, including net capital gain that we do not distribute to stockholders during, or within a specified time period after, the calendar year in which the income is earned.

We may be subject to the corporate alternative minimum tax on any items of tax preference, including any deductions of net operating losses.

We are subject to tax, at the highest corporate rate, on:

net income from the sale or other disposition of property acquired through foreclosure (foreclosure property) that we hold primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business, and other non-qualifying income from foreclosure property.

We are subject to a 100% tax on net income from sales or other dispositions of property, other than foreclosure property, that we hold primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business.

If we fail to satisfy one or both of the 75% gross income test or the 95% gross income test, as described below under Requirements for Qualification Gross Income Tests, but nonetheless continue to qualify as a REIT because we meet other requirements, we will be subject to a 100% tax on:

the greater of (1) the amount by which we fail the 75% gross income test, or (2) the amount by which 95% of our gross income exceeds the amount of our income qualifying under the 95% gross income test, multiplied, in either case, by

a fraction intended to reflect our profitability.

If we fail to distribute during a calendar year at least the sum of: (1) 85% of our REIT ordinary income for the year, (2) 95% of our REIT capital gain net income for the year, and (3) any undistributed taxable income required to be distributed from earlier periods, then we will be subject to a 4% nondeductible excise tax on the excess of the required distribution over the amount we actually distributed.

If we fail any of the asset tests (other than a de minimis failure of the 5% asset test or the 10% vote or value test), as described below under Requirements for Qualification Asset Tests, as long as (1) the failure was due to reasonable cause and not to willful neglect, (2) we file a description of each asset that caused such failure with the IRS, and (3) we dispose of the assets or otherwise comply with the asset tests within six months after the last day of the quarter in which we identify such failure, we will pay a tax equal to the greater of \$50,000 or 35% of the net income from the nonqualifying assets during the period in which we failed to satisfy the asset tests.

If we fail to satisfy one or more requirements for REIT qualification, other than the gross income tests and the asset tests, and such failure is due to reasonable cause and not to willful neglect, we will be required to pay a penalty of \$50,000 for each such failure.

We may elect to retain and pay income tax on our net long-term capital gain.

We will be subject to a 100% excise tax on transactions with a taxable REIT subsidiary that are not conducted on an arm's-length basis.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

If we acquire any asset from a C corporation, or a corporation that generally is subject to full corporate-level tax, in a merger or other transaction in which we acquire a basis in the asset that is determined by reference either to the C corporation's basis in the asset or to another asset, we will pay tax at the highest regular corporate rate applicable if we recognize gain on the sale or disposition of the asset during the 10-year period after we acquire the asset. The amount of gain on which we will pay tax generally is the lesser of:

the amount of gain that we recognize at the time of the sale or disposition, and

the amount of gain that we would have recognized if we had sold the asset at the time we acquired it.

We may be required to pay monetary penalties to the IRS in certain circumstances, including if we fail to meet record-keeping requirements intended to monitor our compliance with rules relating to the composition of a REIT's stockholders, as described below in Requirements for Qualification Recordkeeping Requirements.

The earnings of our lower-tier entities that are subchapter C corporations, including taxable REIT subsidiaries, are subject to federal corporate income tax.

In addition, we may be subject to a variety of taxes, including payroll taxes and state, local and foreign income, property and other taxes on our assets and operations. We could also be subject to tax in situations and on transactions not presently contemplated.

Requirements for Qualification

To qualify as a REIT, we must elect to be treated as a REIT, and we must meet various (a) organizational requirements, (b) gross income tests, (c) asset tests, and (d) annual distribution requirements.

Organizational Requirements. A REIT is a corporation, trust or association that meets each of the following requirements:

- (1) It is managed by one or more trustees or directors;
- (2) Its beneficial ownership is evidenced by transferable shares, or by transferable certificates of beneficial interest;
- (3) It would be taxable as a domestic corporation, but for Sections 856 through 860 of the Internal Revenue Code;
- (4) It is neither a financial institution nor an insurance company subject to special provisions of the federal income tax laws;
- (5) At least 100 persons are beneficial owners of its shares or ownership certificates (determined without reference to any rules of attribution);
- (6) Not more than 50% in value of its outstanding shares or ownership certificates is owned, directly or indirectly, by five or fewer individuals, which the federal income tax laws define to include certain entities, during the last half of any taxable year;
- (7) It elects to be a REIT, or has made such election for a previous taxable year, and satisfies all relevant filing and other administrative requirements established by the IRS that must be met to elect and maintain REIT status;
- (8) It uses a calendar year for federal income tax purposes and complies with the recordkeeping requirements of the federal income tax laws; and

- (9) It meets certain other qualifications, tests described below, regarding the nature of its income and assets and the distribution of its income.

We must meet requirements 1 through 4, 8 and 9 during our entire taxable year and must meet requirement 5 during at least 335 days of a taxable year of 12 months, or during a proportionate part of a taxable year of less than 12 months.

If we comply with all the requirements for ascertaining information

TABLE OF CONTENTS

concerning the ownership of our outstanding shares in a taxable year and have no reason to know that we violated requirement 6, we will be deemed to have satisfied requirement 6 for that taxable year. Our charter provides for restrictions regarding the ownership and transfer of shares of our capital stock so that we should continue to satisfy these requirements. The provisions of the charter restricting the ownership and transfer of shares of our capital stock are described in Description of Capital Stock Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer.

For purposes of determining share ownership under requirement 6, an individual generally includes a supplemental unemployment compensation benefits plan, a private foundation, or a portion of a trust permanently set aside or used exclusively for charitable purposes. An individual, however, generally does not include a trust that is a qualified employee pension or profit sharing trust under the federal income tax laws, and beneficiaries of such a trust will be treated as holding our shares in proportion to their actuarial interests in the trust for purposes of requirement 6. We believe we have issued sufficient shares of capital stock with enough diversity of ownership to satisfy requirements 5 and 6 set forth above.

A corporation that is a qualified REIT subsidiary is not treated as a corporation separate from its parent REIT. A qualified REIT subsidiary is a corporation, all of the capital stock of which is owned by the REIT and that has not elected to be a taxable REIT subsidiary. All assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit of a qualified REIT subsidiary are treated as assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit of the REIT. Thus, in applying the requirements described herein, any qualified REIT subsidiary that we own will be ignored, and all assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit of such subsidiary will be treated as our assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit.

An unincorporated domestic entity, such as a partnership or limited liability company that has a single owner, generally is not treated as an entity separate from its parent for federal income tax purposes. An unincorporated domestic entity with two or more owners is generally treated as a partnership for federal income tax purposes. In the case of a REIT that is a partner in a partnership, the REIT is treated as owning its proportionate share of the assets of the partnership and as earning its allocable share of the gross income of the partnership for purposes of the applicable REIT qualification tests. Thus, our proportionate share of the assets, liabilities and items of income of our operating partnership and any other partnership, joint venture, or limited liability company that is treated as a partnership for federal income tax purposes in which we acquire an interest, directly or indirectly, is treated as our assets and gross income for purposes of applying the various REIT qualification requirements. For purposes of the 10% value test (described in Requirements for Qualification Asset Tests), our proportionate share is based on our proportionate interest in the equity interests and certain debt securities issued by a partnership. For all of the other asset and income tests, our proportionate share is based on our proportionate interest in the capital of the partnership.

A REIT is permitted to own up to 100% of the stock of one or more taxable REIT subsidiaries. A taxable REIT subsidiary is a fully taxable corporation that may earn income that would not be qualifying income if earned directly by the parent REIT. The subsidiary and the REIT must jointly elect to treat the subsidiary as a taxable REIT subsidiary. A taxable REIT subsidiary will pay income tax at regular corporate rates on any income that it earns. In addition, the taxable REIT subsidiary rules limit the deductibility of interest paid or accrued by a taxable REIT subsidiary to its parent REIT to assure that the taxable REIT subsidiary is subject to an appropriate level of corporate taxation. Further, the rules impose a 100% excise tax on transactions between a taxable REIT subsidiary and its parent REIT or the REIT's tenants that are not conducted on an arm's-length basis. We may engage in activities indirectly through a taxable REIT subsidiary as necessary or convenient to avoid obtaining the benefit of income or services that would jeopardize our REIT status if we engaged in the activities directly. In particular, we would likely engage in activities through a taxable REIT subsidiary if we wished to provide services to unrelated parties which might produce income that does not qualify under the gross income tests described below. We might also dispose of an unwanted asset through a taxable REIT subsidiary as necessary or convenient to avoid the 100% tax on income from prohibited

Edgar Filing: Education Realty Trust, Inc. - Form 424B5
transactions. See description below under Prohibited Transactions.

We own interests in various entities described above.

25

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Gross Income Tests. We must satisfy two gross income tests annually to maintain our qualification as a REIT. First, at least 75% of our gross income for each taxable year must consist of defined types of income that we derive, directly or indirectly, from investments relating to real property or mortgages on real property or qualified temporary investment income. Qualifying income for purposes of that 75% gross income test generally includes:

rents from real property;

interest on debt secured by mortgages on real property or on interests in real property; dividends or other distributions on, and gain from the sale of, shares in other REITs (excluding dividends from our taxable REIT subsidiaries);

gain from the sale of real estate assets;

income and gain derived from foreclosure property; and

income derived from the temporary investment of new capital that is attributable to the issuance of shares of our capital stock or a public offering of our debt with a maturity date of at least five years and that we receive during the one year period beginning on the date on which we receive such new capital.

Second, in general, at least 95% of our gross income for each taxable year must consist of income that is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test, other types of interest and dividends (including dividends from our taxable REIT subsidiaries), gain from the sale or disposition of stock or securities, or any combination of these. Gross income from our sale of property that we hold primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business is excluded from both the numerator and the denominator in both income tests. In addition, any gains from hedging transactions, as defined in Hedging Transactions, that are clearly and timely identified as such will be excluded from both the numerator and the denominator for purposes of the 95% gross income test. Income and gain from hedging transactions entered into after July 30, 2008 that are clearly and timely identified as such will also be excluded from both the numerator and the denominator for purposes of the 75% gross income test; however, income and gain from hedging transactions entered into on or before July 30, 2008 will be treated as non-qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test. In addition, certain foreign currency gains recognized after July 30, 2008 will be excluded from gross income for purposes of one or both of the gross income tests. See Foreign Currency Gain. The following paragraphs discuss the specific application of the gross income tests to us.

Rents from Real Property. Rent that we receive from our real property will qualify as rents from real property, which is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% and 95% gross income tests, only if the following conditions are met:

First, the rent must not be based in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person. Participating rent, however, will qualify as rents from real property if it is based on percentages of receipts or sales and the percentages:

are fixed at the time the leases are entered into;

are not renegotiated during the term of the leases in a manner that has the effect of basing percentage rent on income or profits; and

conform with normal business practice.

More generally, the rent will not qualify as rents from real property if, considering the relevant lease and all the surrounding circumstances, the arrangement does not conform with normal business practice, but is in reality used as a means of basing the rent on income or profits. We have represented to Bass, Berry & Sims PLC that we intend to set and accept rents which are fixed dollar amounts or a fixed percentage of gross revenue, and not to any extent by reference to any person's income or profits, in compliance with the rules above.

Second, we must not own, actually or constructively, 10% or more of the stock of any corporate tenant or the assets or net profits of any tenant, referred to as a related party tenant, other than a taxable REIT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

subsidiary. The constructive ownership rules generally provide that, if 10% or more in value of our shares is owned, directly or indirectly, by or for any person, we are considered as owning the stock owned, directly or indirectly, by or for such person. We do not own any stock or any assets or net profits of any tenant directly. Additionally, we have represented to Bass, Berry & Sims PLC that we will not rent any property to a related-party tenant. However, because the constructive ownership rules are broad and it is not possible to monitor continually direct and indirect transfers of our shares, no absolute assurance can be given that such transfers or other events of which we have no knowledge will not cause us to own constructively 10% or more of a tenant (or a subtenant, in which case only rent attributable to the subtenant is disqualified) other than a taxable REIT subsidiary at some future date.

Under an exception to the related-party tenant rule described in the preceding paragraph, rent that we receive from a taxable REIT subsidiary will qualify as rents from real property as long as (1) at least 90% of the leased space in the property is leased to persons other than taxable REIT subsidiaries and related-party tenants, and (2) the amount paid by the taxable REIT subsidiary to rent space at the property is substantially comparable to rents paid by other tenants of the property for comparable space. The substantially comparable requirement must be satisfied when the lease is entered into, when it is extended, and when the lease is modified, if the modification increases the rent paid by the taxable REIT subsidiary. If the requirement that at least 90% of the leased space in the related property is rented to unrelated tenants is met when a lease is entered into, extended, or modified, such requirement will continue to be met as long as there is no increase in the space leased to any taxable REIT subsidiary or related party tenant. Any increased rent attributable to a modification of a lease with a taxable REIT subsidiary in which we own directly or indirectly more than 50% of the voting power or value of the stock (a controlled taxable REIT subsidiary) will not be treated as rents from real property.

Third, the rent attributable to the personal property leased in connection with a lease of real property must not be greater than 15% of the total rent received under the lease. The rent attributable to personal property under a lease is the amount that bears the same ratio to total rent under the lease for the taxable year as the average of the fair market values of the leased personal property at the beginning and at the end of the taxable year bears to the average of the aggregate fair market values of both the real and personal property covered by the lease at the beginning and at the end of such taxable year (the personal property ratio). With respect to each of our leases, we believe that the personal property ratio generally is less than 15%. Where that is not, or may in the future not be, the case, we believe that any income attributable to personal property will not jeopardize our ability to qualify as a REIT. There can be no assurance, however, that the IRS would not challenge our calculation of a personal property ratio, or that a court would not uphold such assertion. If such a challenge were successfully asserted, we could fail to satisfy the 75% or 95% gross income test and thus lose our REIT status.

If a portion of the rent we receive from a property does not qualify as rents from real property because the rent attributable to personal property exceeds 15% of the total rent for a taxable year, the portion of the rent attributable to personal property will not be qualifying income for purposes of either the 75% or 95% gross income test. Thus, if rent attributable to personal property, plus any other income that is nonqualifying income for purposes of the 95% gross income test, during a taxable year exceeds 5% of our gross income during the year, we would lose our REIT status, unless we qualified for certain statutory relief provisions. By contrast, in the following circumstances, none of the rent from a lease of property would qualify as rents from real property: (1) the rent is considered based on the income or profits of the tenant; (2) the lessee is a related party tenant or fails to qualify for the exception to the related-party tenant rule for qualifying taxable REIT subsidiaries; or (3) we furnish noncustomary services to the tenants of the property, or manage or operate the property, other than through a qualifying independent contractor or a taxable REIT subsidiary. In any of these circumstances, we could lose our REIT status, unless we qualified for certain statutory relief provisions, because we would be unable to satisfy either the 75% or 95% gross income test.

Fourth, we cannot furnish or render noncustomary services to the tenants of our properties, or manage or operate our properties, other than through an independent contractor who is adequately compensated and from whom we do not derive or receive any income. However, we need not provide services through an independent contractor, but instead may provide services directly to our tenants, if the services are usually or customarily rendered in connection with the rental of space for occupancy only and are not considered to

TABLE OF CONTENTS

be provided for the tenants' convenience. In addition, we may provide a minimal amount of noncustomary services to the tenants of a property, other than through an independent contractor, as long as our income from the services does not exceed 1% of our income from the related property. Finally, we may own up to 100% of the stock of one or more taxable REIT subsidiaries, which may provide noncustomary services to our tenants without tainting our rents from the related properties. We have not performed, and do not intend to perform, any services other than customary ones for our tenants, other than services provided through independent contractors or taxable REIT subsidiaries.

Tenants may be required to pay, in addition to base rent, reimbursements for certain amounts we are obligated to pay to third parties (such as a lessee's proportionate share of a property's operational or capital expenses), penalties for nonpayment or late payment of rent or additions to rent. These and other similar payments should qualify as rents from real property. To the extent they do not, they should be treated as interest that qualifies for the 95% gross income test.

Interest. The term "interest" generally does not include any amount received or accrued, directly or indirectly, if the determination of the amount depends in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person. However, an amount received or accrued generally will not be excluded from the term "interest" solely because it is based on a fixed percentage or percentages of receipts or sales. Furthermore, to the extent that interest from a loan that is based on the profit or net cash proceeds from the sale of the property securing the loan constitutes a shared appreciation provision, income attributable to such participation feature will be treated as gain from the sale of the secured property.

Prohibited Transactions. A REIT will incur a 100% tax on the net income derived from any sale or other disposition of property, other than foreclosure property, that the REIT holds primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business. We believe that none of our assets are held primarily for sale to customers and that a sale of any of our assets will not be in the ordinary course of our business. Whether a REIT holds an asset primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business depends, however, on the facts and circumstances in effect from time to time, including those related to a particular asset. A safe harbor to the characterization of the sale of property by a REIT as a prohibited transaction and the 100% prohibited transaction tax is available if the following requirements are met:

the REIT has held the property for not less than two years (or, for sales made on or before July 30, 2008, four years);
the aggregate expenditures made by the REIT, or any partner of the REIT, during the two-year period (or, for sales made on or before July 30, 2008, four-year period) preceding the date of the sale that are includable in the basis of the property do not exceed 30% of the selling price of the property;
either (1) during the year in question, the REIT did not make more than seven sales of property other than foreclosure property or sales to which Section 1033 of the Internal Revenue Code applies, (2) the aggregate adjusted bases of all such properties sold by the REIT during the year did not exceed 10% of the aggregate bases of all of the assets of the REIT at the beginning of the year or (3) for sales made after July 30, 2008, the aggregate fair market value of all such properties sold by the REIT during the year did not exceed 10% of the aggregate fair market value of all of the assets of the REIT at the beginning of the year;
in the case of property not acquired through foreclosure or lease termination, the REIT has held the property for at least two years (or, for sales made on or before July 30, 2008, four years) for the production of rental income; and
if the REIT has made more than seven sales of non-foreclosure property during the taxable year, substantially all of the marketing and development expenditures with respect to the property were made through an independent contractor from whom the REIT derives no income.

We will attempt to comply with the terms of the safe-harbor provision in the federal income tax laws prescribing when an asset sale will not be characterized as a prohibited transaction. We cannot assure you; however, that we can comply with the safe-harbor provisions or that we will avoid owning property that may

TABLE OF CONTENTS

be characterized as property held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business. We may, however, form or acquire a taxable REIT subsidiary to hold and dispose of those properties we conclude may not fall within the safe-harbor provisions.

Foreclosure Property. We will be subject to tax at the maximum corporate rate on any income from foreclosure property, which includes certain foreign currency gains and related deductions recognized subsequent to July 30, 2008, other than income that otherwise would be qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test, less expenses directly connected with the production of that income. However, gross income from foreclosure property will qualify under the 75% and 95% gross income tests. Foreclosure property is any real property, including interests in real property, and any personal property incident to such real property:

that is acquired by a REIT as the result of the REIT having bid on such property at foreclosure, or having otherwise reduced such property to ownership or possession by agreement or process of law, after there was a default or default was imminent on a lease of such property or on indebtedness that such property secured;

for which the related loan or leased property was acquired by the REIT at a time when the default was not imminent or anticipated; and

for which the REIT makes a proper election to treat the property as foreclosure property.

A REIT will not be considered to have foreclosed on a property where the REIT takes control of the property as a mortgagee-in-possession and cannot receive any profit or sustain any loss except as a creditor of the mortgagor. Property generally ceases to be foreclosure property at the end of the third taxable year following the taxable year in which the REIT acquired the property (or longer if an extension is granted by the Secretary of the Treasury). This period (as extended, if applicable) terminates, and foreclosure property ceases to be foreclosure property on the first day:

on which a lease is entered into for the property that, by its terms, will give rise to income that does not qualify for purposes of the 75% gross income test, or any amount is received or accrued, directly or indirectly, pursuant to a lease entered into on or after such day that will give rise to income that does not qualify for purposes of the 75% gross income test;

on which any construction takes place on the property, other than completion of a building or, any other improvement, where more than 10% of the construction was completed before default became imminent; or which is more than 90 days after the day on which the REIT acquired the property and the property is used in a trade or business which is conducted by the REIT, other than through an independent contractor from whom the REIT itself does not derive or receive any income.

Hedging Transactions. From time to time, we enter into hedging transactions with respect to our assets or liabilities. Our hedging activities may include entering into interest rate swaps, caps, and floors, options to purchase such items, and futures and forward contracts. For hedging transactions entered into on or before July 30, 2008, income and gain from hedging transactions will be excluded from gross income for purposes of the 95% gross income test, but not the 75% gross income test. For hedging transactions entered into after July 30, 2008, income and gain from hedging transactions will be excluded from gross income for purposes of both the 75% and 95% gross income tests. A hedging transaction means either (1) any transaction entered into in the normal course of our trade or business primarily to manage the risk of interest rate, price changes, or currency fluctuations with respect to borrowings made or to be made, or ordinary obligations incurred or to be incurred, to acquire or carry real estate assets or (2) for transactions entered into after July 30, 2008, any transaction entered into primarily to manage the risk of currency fluctuations with respect to any item of income or gain that would be qualifying income under the 75% or 95% gross income test (or any property which generates such income or gain). We will be required to clearly identify any such hedging transaction before the close of the day on which it was acquired, originated, or entered into and to satisfy other identification requirements. No assurance can be given that our hedging activities will not give rise to

TABLE OF CONTENTS

income that does not qualify for purposes of either or both of the gross income tests, and will not adversely affect our ability to satisfy the REIT qualification requirements.

Foreign Currency Gain. Certain foreign currency gains recognized after June 30, 2008 will be excluded from gross income for purposes of one or both of the gross income tests. Real estate foreign exchange gain will be excluded from gross income for purposes of the 75% gross income test. Real estate foreign exchange gain generally includes foreign currency gain attributable to any item of income or gain that is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test, foreign currency gain attributable to the acquisition or ownership of (or becoming or being the obligor under) obligations secured by mortgages on real property or on interest in real property and certain foreign currency gain attributable to certain qualified business units of a REIT. Passive foreign exchange gain will be excluded from gross income for purposes of the 95% gross income test. Passive foreign exchange gain generally includes real estate foreign exchange gain as described above, and also includes foreign currency gain attributable to any item of income or gain that is qualifying income for purposes of the 95% gross income test and foreign currency gain attributable to the acquisition or ownership of (or becoming or being the obligor under) obligations secured by mortgages on real property or on interest in real property. Because passive foreign exchange gain includes real estate foreign exchange gain, real estate foreign exchange gain is excluded from gross income for purposes of both the 75% and 95% gross income test. These exclusions for real estate foreign exchange gain and passive foreign exchange gain do not apply to any certain foreign currency gain derived from dealing, or engaging in substantial and regular trading, in securities. Such gain is treated as nonqualifying income for purposes of both the 75% and 95% gross income tests.

Failure to Satisfy Gross Income Tests. If we fail to satisfy one or both of the gross income tests for any taxable year, we nevertheless may qualify as a REIT for that year if we qualify for relief under certain provisions of the federal income tax laws. Those relief provisions will be available if:

our failure to meet those tests is due to reasonable cause and not to willful neglect; and following such failure for any taxable year, a schedule of the sources of our income is filed with the IRS in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury.

We cannot predict, however, whether any failure to meet these tests will qualify for the relief provisions. As discussed above in *Taxation of Our Company*, even if the relief provisions apply, we would incur a 100% tax on the gross income attributable to the greater of (1) the amount by which we fail the 75% gross income test, or (2) the excess of 95% of our gross income over the amount of gross income qualifying under the 95% gross income test, multiplied, in either case, by a fraction intended to reflect our profitability.

Asset Tests. To maintain our qualification as a REIT, we also must satisfy the following asset tests at the end of each quarter of each taxable year.

First, at least 75% of the value of our total assets must consist of:

cash or cash items, including certain receivables;

government securities;

interests in real property, including leaseholds and options to acquire real property and leaseholds;

interests in mortgages on real property;

stock in other REITs; and

investments in stock or debt instruments during the one year period following our receipt of new capital that we raise through equity offerings or public offerings of debt with at least a five year term.

Second, of our investments not included in the 75% asset class, the value of our interest in any one issuer's securities may not exceed 5% of the value of our total assets, or the 5% asset test.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Third, of our investments not included in the 75% asset class, we may not own more than 10% of the voting power or value of any one issuer's outstanding securities, or the 10% vote test and 10% value test, respectively.

Fourth, no more than 20% of the value of our total assets (or, beginning with our 2009 taxable year, 25% of the value of our total assets) may consist of the securities of one or more taxable REIT subsidiaries.

Fifth, no more than 25% of the value of our total assets may consist of the securities of taxable REIT subsidiaries and other taxable subsidiaries and other assets that are not qualifying assets for purposes of the 75% asset test.

For purposes of the 5% asset test, the 10% vote test and 10% value test, the term securities does not include stock in another REIT, equity or debt securities of a qualified REIT subsidiary or taxable REIT subsidiary, mortgage loans that constitute real estate assets, or equity interests in a partnership. The term securities, however, generally includes debt securities issued by a partnership or another REIT, except that for purposes of the 10% value test, the term securities does not include:

Straight debt securities, which is defined as a written unconditional promise to pay on demand or on a specified date a sum certain in money if (i) the debt is not convertible, directly or indirectly, into stock, and (ii) the interest rate and interest payment dates are not contingent on profits, the borrower's discretion, or similar factors. Straight debt securities do not include any securities issued by a partnership or a corporation in which we or any controlled taxable REIT subsidiary hold non-straight debt securities that have an aggregate value of more than 1% of the issuer's outstanding securities. However, straight debt securities include debt subject to the following contingencies:

a contingency relating to the time of payment of interest or principal, as long as either (i) there is no change to the effective yield of the debt obligation, other than a change to the annual yield that does not exceed the greater of 0.25% or 5% of the annual yield, or (ii) neither the aggregate issue price nor the aggregate face amount of the issuer's debt obligations held by us exceeds \$1 million and no more than 12 months of unaccrued interest on the debt obligations can be required to be prepaid; and

a contingency relating to the time or amount of payment upon a default or prepayment of a debt obligation, as long as the contingency is consistent with customary commercial practice.

Any loan to an individual or an estate.

Any section 467 rental agreement, other than an agreement with a related party tenant.

Any obligation to pay rents from real property.

Certain securities issued by governmental entities.

Any security issued by a REIT.

Any debt instrument issued by an entity treated as a partnership for federal income tax purposes in which we are a partner to the extent of our proportionate interest in the debt and equity securities of the partnership.

Any debt instrument issued by an entity treated as a partnership for federal income tax purposes not described in the preceding bullet points if at least 75% of the partnership's gross income, excluding income from prohibited transactions, is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test described above in Requirements for Qualification Gross Income Tests. For purposes of the 10% value test, our proportionate share of the assets of a partnership is our proportionate interest in any securities issued by the partnership, without regard to the securities described in the last two bullet points above.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

We will monitor the status of our assets for purposes of the various asset tests and will manage our portfolio in order to comply at all times with such tests. If we fail to satisfy the asset tests at the end of a calendar quarter, we would not lose our REIT status if:

we satisfied the asset tests at the end of the preceding calendar quarter; and the discrepancy between the value of our assets and the asset test requirements arose from changes in the market values of our assets and was not wholly or partly caused by the acquisition of one or more non-qualifying assets.

If we did not satisfy the condition described in the second item above, we still could avoid disqualification by eliminating any discrepancy within 30 days after the close of the calendar quarter in which the discrepancy arose.

In the event that, at the end of any calendar quarter, we violate the 5% asset test, the 10% vote test or the 10% value test described above, we will not lose our REIT status if (i) the failure is de minimis (up to the lesser of 1% of our assets or \$10 million) and (ii) we dispose of assets or otherwise comply with the asset tests within six months after the last day of the quarter in which we identify such failure. In the event of any other failure of the asset tests, we will not lose our REIT status if (i) the failure was due to reasonable cause and not to willful neglect, (ii) we file a description of each asset causing the failure with the IRS, (iii) we dispose of assets or otherwise comply with the asset tests within six months after the last day of the quarter in which we identify the failure, and (iv) we pay a tax equal to the greater of \$50,000 or 35% of the net income from the nonqualifying assets during the period in which we failed to satisfy the asset tests.

Annual Distribution Requirements. Each taxable year, we must distribute dividends, other than capital gain dividends and deemed distributions of retained capital gain, to our stockholders in an aggregate amount not less than:

the sum of
90% of our REIT taxable income, computed without regard to the dividends paid deduction and our net capital gain or loss, and

90% of our after-tax net income, if any, from foreclosure property, minus
the sum of certain items of non-cash income.

Generally, we must pay such distributions in the taxable year to which they relate, or in the following taxable year if either (a) we declare the distribution before we timely file our federal income tax return for the year and pay the distribution on or before the first regular dividend payment date after such declaration or (b) we declare the distribution in October, November, or December of the taxable year, payable to stockholders of record on a specified day in any such month, and we actually pay the dividend before the end of January of the following year. In both instances, these distributions relate to our prior taxable year for purposes of the 90% distribution requirement.

We will pay federal income tax on taxable income, including net capital gain that we do not distribute to stockholders. Furthermore, if we fail to distribute during a calendar year, or by the end of January of the following calendar year in the case of distributions with declaration and record dates falling in the last three months of the calendar year, at least the sum of:

85% of our REIT ordinary income for the year,
95% of our REIT capital gain income for the year, and
any undistributed taxable income from prior periods,

we will incur a 4% nondeductible excise tax on the excess of such required distribution over the amounts we actually distributed. If we so elect, we will be treated as having distributed any such retained amount for purposes of the 4% nondeductible excise tax described above.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

It is possible that, from time to time, we may experience timing differences between the actual receipt of income and actual payment of deductible expenses and the inclusion of that income and deduction of such expenses in arriving at our REIT taxable income. For example, we may not deduct recognized capital losses from our REIT taxable income.

Further, it is possible that, from time to time, we may be allocated a share of net capital gain from a partnership in which we own an interest attributable to the sale of depreciated property that exceeds our allocable share of cash attributable to that sale. Although several types of non-cash income are excluded in determining the annual distribution requirement, we will incur corporate income tax and the 4% nondeductible excise tax with respect to those non-cash income items if we do not distribute those items on a current basis. As a result of the foregoing, we may have less cash than is necessary to distribute all of our taxable income and thereby avoid corporate income tax and the 4% nondeductible excise tax imposed on certain undistributed income. In such a situation, we may need to borrow funds or issue additional common or preferred shares.

Under certain circumstances, we may be able to correct a failure to meet the distribution requirement for a year by paying deficiency dividends to our stockholders in a later year. We may include such deficiency dividends in our deduction for dividends paid for the earlier year. Although we may be able to avoid income tax on amounts distributed as deficiency dividends, we will be required to pay interest to the IRS based upon the amount of any deduction we take for deficiency dividends.

The IRS recently issued guidance that permits certain distributions made by a REIT that (i) are declared on or after January 1, 2008 with respect to a taxable year ending on or before December 31, 2009 and (ii) consist of both cash and its stock to be treated as dividend distributions for purposes of satisfying the annual distribution requirements applicable to REITs. Based on that guidance, if we satisfy certain requirements, including the requirement that at least 10% of the total value of any such distribution consists of cash, the cash and our shares that we distribute will be treated as a dividend, to the extent of our earnings and profits.

Recordkeeping Requirements. We must maintain certain records in order to qualify as a REIT. In addition, to avoid paying a penalty, we must request, on an annual basis, information from our stockholders designed to disclose the actual ownership of our outstanding capital stock.

Failure to Qualify. If we were to fail to qualify as a REIT in any taxable year and no relief provision applied, we would have the following consequences: We would be subject to federal income tax and any applicable alternative minimum tax at regular corporate rates applicable to regular C corporations on our taxable income, determined without reduction for amounts distributed to our stockholders. We would not be required to make any distributions to our stockholders. Unless we qualified for relief under specific statutory provisions, we would not be permitted to elect taxation as a REIT for the four taxable years following the year during which we ceased to qualify as a REIT.

If we fail to satisfy one or more requirements for REIT qualification, other than the gross income tests and the asset tests, we could avoid disqualification if our failure is due to reasonable cause and not to willful neglect and we pay a penalty of \$50,000 for each such failure. In addition, there are relief provisions for a failure of the gross income tests and asset tests, as described in Requirements for Qualification Gross Income Tests and Requirements for Qualification Asset Tests.

Taxable REIT Subsidiaries. As described above, we may own up to 100% of the stock of one or more taxable REIT subsidiaries. A taxable REIT subsidiary is a fully taxable corporation that is permitted to have income that would not be qualifying income if earned directly by us. A taxable REIT subsidiary may provide services to our tenants and engage in activities unrelated to our tenants, such as third-party management, development, and other independent business activities.

We and a subsidiary must elect for the subsidiary to be treated as a taxable REIT subsidiary. If a taxable REIT subsidiary directly or indirectly owns more than 35% of the value or voting power of all outstanding stock of a corporation, the corporation will automatically also be treated as a taxable REIT subsidiary.

Rent we receive from our taxable REIT subsidiaries will qualify as rents from real property as long as at least 90% of the leased space in the property is leased to persons other than taxable REIT subsidiaries and related party tenants, and the amount paid by the taxable REIT subsidiary to rent space at the property is substantially comparable to rents paid by other tenants of the property for comparable space.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The substantially comparable requirement must be satisfied when the lease is entered into, when it is extended, and when the lease is modified, if the modification increases the rent paid by the taxable REIT subsidiary. If the requirement that at least 90% of the leased space in the related property is rented to unrelated tenants is met when a lease is entered into, extended, or modified, such requirement will continue to be met as long as there is no increase in the space leased to any taxable REIT subsidiary or related party tenant. Any increased rent attributable to a modification of a lease with a controlled taxable REIT subsidiary will not be treated as rents from real property. The taxable REIT subsidiary rules limit the deductibility of interest paid or accrued by a taxable REIT subsidiary to us to assure that the taxable REIT subsidiary is subject to an appropriate level of corporate taxation. Further, the rules impose a 100% excise tax on transactions between a taxable REIT subsidiary and us or our tenants that are not conducted on an arm's-length basis.

State and Local Taxes. We may be subject to taxation by various states and localities, including those in which we transact business or own property. The state and local tax treatment in such jurisdictions may differ from the federal income tax treatment described above.

Other Tax Consequences

Tax Aspects of Our Investments in the Operating Partnership. The following discussion summarizes certain federal income tax considerations applicable to our direct or indirect investment in our operating partnership and any subsidiary partnerships or limited liability companies we form or acquire that are treated as partnerships for federal income tax purposes, each individually referred to as a Partnership and, collectively, as Partnerships. The following discussion does not address state or local tax laws or any federal tax laws other than income tax laws.

Classification as Partnerships. We are required to include in our income our distributive share of each Partnership's income and to deduct our distributive share of each Partnership's losses but only if such Partnership is classified for federal income tax purposes as a partnership (or an entity that is disregarded for federal income tax purposes if the entity has only one owner or member), rather than as a corporation or an association taxable as a corporation.

An organization with at least two owners or members will be classified as a partnership, rather than as a corporation, for federal income tax purposes if it:

is treated as a partnership under the Treasury regulations relating to entity classification (the check-the-box regulations); and

is not a publicly traded partnership.

Under the check-the-box regulations, an unincorporated entity with at least two owners or members may elect to be classified either as an association taxable as a corporation or as a partnership. If such an entity does not make an election, it generally will be treated as a partnership for federal income tax purposes. We intend that each Partnership will be classified as a partnership for federal income tax purposes (or else a disregarded entity where there are not at least two separate beneficial owners).

A publicly traded partnership is a partnership whose interests are traded on an established securities market or are readily tradable on a secondary market (or a substantial equivalent). A publicly traded partnership is generally treated as a corporation for federal income tax purposes, but will not be so treated if, for each taxable year beginning after December 31, 1987 in which it was classified as a publicly traded partnership, at least 90% of the partnership's gross income consisted of specified passive income, including real property rents (which includes rents that would be qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test, with certain modifications that make it easier for the rents to qualify for the 90% passive income exception), gains from the sale or other disposition of real property,

interest, and dividends (the 90% passive income exception).

Treasury regulations, referred to as PTP regulations, provide limited safe harbors from treatment as a publicly traded partnership. Pursuant to one of those safe harbors (the private placement exclusion), interests in a partnership will not be treated as readily tradable on a secondary market or the substantial equivalent thereof if (1) all interests in the partnership were issued in a transaction or transactions that were not required

TABLE OF CONTENTS

to be registered under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and (2) the partnership does not have more than 100 partners at any time during the partnership's taxable year. For the determination of the number of partners in a partnership, a person owning an interest in a partnership, grantor trust, or S corporation that owns an interest in the partnership is treated as a partner in the partnership only if (1) substantially all of the value of the owner's interest in the entity is attributable to the entity's direct or indirect interest in the partnership and (2) a principal purpose of the use of the entity is to permit the partnership to satisfy the 100-partner limitation. Each Partnership should qualify for the private placement exclusion.

We have not requested, and do not intend to request, a ruling from the IRS that the Partnerships will be classified as partnerships (or disregarded entities, if the entity has only one owner or member) for federal income tax purposes. If

for any reason a Partnership were taxable as a corporation, rather than as a partnership, for federal income tax purposes, we may not be able to qualify as a REIT, unless we qualify for certain relief provisions. See Requirements for Qualification Gross Income Tests and Requirements for Qualification Asset Tests. In addition, any change in a

Partnership's status for tax purposes might be treated as a taxable event, in which case we might incur tax liability without any related cash distribution. See Requirements for Qualification Annual Distribution Requirements.

Further, items of income and deduction of such Partnership would not pass through to its partners, and its partners would be treated as stockholders for tax purposes. Consequently, such Partnership would be required to pay income tax at corporate rates on its net income, and distributions to its partners would constitute dividends that would not be deductible in computing such Partnership's taxable income.

Income Taxation of the Partnerships and Their Partners

Partners, Not the Partnerships, Subject to Tax. A partnership is not a taxable entity for federal income tax purposes.

We will therefore take into account our allocable share of each Partnership's income, gains, losses, deductions, and credits for each taxable year of the Partnership ending with or within our taxable year, even if we receive no distribution from the Partnership for that year or a distribution less than our share of taxable income. Similarly, even if we receive a distribution, it may not be taxable if the distribution does not exceed our adjusted tax basis in our interest in the Partnership.

Partnership Allocations. Although a partnership agreement generally will determine the allocation of income and losses among partners, allocations will be disregarded for tax purposes if they do not comply with the provisions of the federal income tax laws governing partnership allocations. If an allocation is not recognized for federal income tax purposes, the item subject to the allocation will be reallocated in accordance with the partners' interests in the partnership, which will be determined by taking into account all of the facts and circumstances relating to the economic arrangement of the partners with respect to such item.

Tax Allocations With Respect to Contributed Properties. Income, gain, loss, and deduction attributable to (a) appreciated or depreciated property that is contributed to a partnership in exchange for an interest in the partnership or (b) property revalued on the books of a partnership must be allocated in a manner such that the contributing partner is charged with, or benefits from, respectively, the unrealized gain or unrealized loss associated with the property at the time of the contribution. The amount of such unrealized gain or unrealized loss, referred to as "built-in gain" or "built-in loss," is generally equal to the difference between the fair market value of the contributed or revalued property at the time of contribution or revaluation and the adjusted tax basis of such property at that time, referred to as a book-tax difference. Such allocations are solely for federal income tax purposes and do not affect the book capital accounts or other economic or legal arrangements among the partners. The U.S. Treasury Department has issued regulations requiring partnerships to use a reasonable method for allocating items with respect to which there is a book-tax difference and outlining several reasonable allocation methods. Unless we, as general partner, select a different

method, our operating partnership will use the traditional method for allocating items with respect to which there is a book-tax difference.

35

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Basis in Partnership Interest. Our adjusted tax basis in any partnership interest we own generally will be:

the amount of cash and the basis of any other property we contribute to the partnership;
increased by our allocable share of the partnership's income (including tax-exempt income) and our allocable share of indebtedness of the partnership; and
reduced, but not below zero, by our allocable share of the partnership's loss (excluding any non-deductible items), the amount of cash and the basis of property distributed to us, and constructive distributions resulting from a reduction in our share of indebtedness of the partnership.

Loss allocated to us in excess of our basis in a partnership interest will not be taken into account until we again have basis sufficient to absorb the loss. A reduction of our share of partnership indebtedness will be treated as a constructive cash distribution to us, and will reduce our adjusted tax basis. Distributions, including constructive distributions, in excess of the basis of our partnership interest will constitute taxable income to us. Such distributions and constructive distributions normally will be characterized as long-term capital gain.

Sale of a Partnership's Property. Generally, any gain realized by a Partnership on the sale of property held for more than one year will be long-term capital gain, except for any portion of the gain treated as depreciation or cost recovery recapture. Any gain or loss recognized by a Partnership on the disposition of contributed or revalued properties will be allocated first to the partners who contributed the properties or who were partners at the time of revaluation, to the extent of their built-in gain or loss on those properties for federal income tax purposes. The partners' built-in gain or loss on contributed or revalued properties is the difference between the partners' proportionate share of the book value of those properties and the partners' tax basis allocable to those properties at the time of the contribution or revaluation. Any remaining gain or loss recognized by the Partnership on the disposition of contributed or revalued properties, and any gain or loss recognized by the Partnership on the disposition of other properties, will be allocated among the partners in accordance with their percentage interests in the Partnership.

Our share of any Partnership gain from the sale of inventory or other property held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of the Partnership's trade or business will be treated as income from a prohibited transaction subject to a 100% tax. Income from a prohibited transaction may have an adverse effect on our ability to satisfy the gross income tests for REIT status. See Requirements for Qualification Gross Income Tests. We do not presently intend to acquire or hold, or to allow any Partnership to acquire or hold, any property that is likely to be treated as inventory or property held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of our, or the Partnership's, trade or business.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

Unless otherwise set forth in an accompanying prospectus supplement to this prospectus, we may offer and sell these securities to or through one or more underwriters, dealers and agents, or directly to purchasers, on a continuous or delayed basis. Any such underwriter, dealer or agent involved in the offer and sale of the securities will be named in the applicable prospectus supplement. If we do not name a firm in the prospectus supplement, the firm may not directly or indirectly participate in any underwriting of those securities, although it may participate in the distribution of securities under circumstances entitling it to a dealer's allowance or agent's commission. In addition, we may sell securities directly to investors on our own behalf in those jurisdictions where we are authorized to do so.

Our common stock may also be sold in one or more of the following transactions: (i) block transactions (which may involve crosses) in which a broker-dealer may sell all or a portion of such shares as agent, but may position and resell all or a portion of the block as principal to facilitate the transaction; (ii) purchases by any such broker-dealer as principal, and resale by such broker-dealer for its own account pursuant to an accompanying prospectus supplement; (iii) a special offering, an exchange distribution or a secondary distribution in accordance with applicable New York Stock Exchange or other stock exchange, quotation system or over-the-counter market rules; (iv) ordinary brokerage transactions and transactions in which any such broker-dealer solicits purchasers; (v) sales at the market to or through a market maker or into an existing trading market, on an exchange or otherwise, for such shares; and (vi) sales in other ways not involving market makers or established trading markets, including direct sales to purchasers.

For each offering of our common stock, preferred stock, debt securities, or depositary shares, the accompanying prospectus supplement or other offering materials will describe the specific plan, including (i) the terms of the offering and the specific plan of distribution; (ii) the name or names of any underwriters, dealers, agents or direct purchasers; (iii) the purchase price of the securities; (iv) any delayed delivery arrangements; (v) any commissions paid to agents and any underwriting discounts, commissions or other items constituting underwriters' compensation; (vi) any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers; and (vii) any other applicable terms of the specific offering.

Underwriters may offer and sell the securities at a fixed price or prices which may be changed, at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to such prevailing market prices or at negotiated prices. We also may, from time to time, authorize dealers or agents to offer and sell the securities upon such terms and conditions as may be set forth in the accompanying prospectus supplement. In connection with the sale of any of the securities, underwriters may receive compensation from us in the form of underwriting discounts or commissions and may also receive commissions from purchasers of the securities for whom they may act as agent. Underwriters may sell the securities to or through dealers, and such dealers may receive compensation in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions from the underwriters or commissions from the purchasers for whom they may act as agents.

Any underwriting compensation paid by us to underwriters or agents in connection with the offering of the securities, and any discounts or concessions or commissions allowed by underwriters to participating dealers, will be set forth in the accompanying prospectus supplement. Dealers and agents participating in the distribution of the securities may be deemed to be underwriters, and any discounts and commissions received by them and any profit realized by them on resale of the securities may be deemed to be underwriting discounts and commissions.

Underwriters, dealers and agents may be entitled, under agreements entered into with us, to indemnification against and contribution toward certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act. Unless otherwise set forth in an accompanying prospectus supplement, the obligations of any underwriters to purchase any of the securities will be subject to certain conditions precedent, and the underwriters will be obligated to purchase all of such

securities, if any are purchased.

Underwriters, dealers and agents may engage in transactions with, or perform services for, us and our affiliates in the ordinary course of business.

If indicated in an accompanying prospectus supplement, we may authorize underwriters or other agents to solicit offers by institutions to purchase securities from us pursuant to contracts providing for payment and

TABLE OF CONTENTS

delivery on a future date. Institutions with which we may make these delayed delivery contracts include commercial and savings banks, insurance companies, pension funds, investment companies, educational and charitable institutions and others. The contracts will be subject only to those conditions set forth in the accompanying prospectus supplement, and the prospectus supplement will set forth any commissions we pay for solicitation of these contracts. The underwriters and other agents will not have any responsibility with regard to the validity or performance of these delayed delivery contracts.

In connection with the offering of the securities hereby, certain underwriters, and selling group members and their respective affiliates may engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the market price of the applicable securities. Such transactions may include stabilization transactions effected in accordance with Rule 104 of Regulation M promulgated by the SEC pursuant to which such persons may bid for or purchase securities for the purpose of stabilizing their market price. The underwriters in an offering of securities may also create a short position for their account by selling more securities in connection with the offering than they are committed to purchase from us. In such case, the underwriters could cover all or a portion of such short position by either purchasing securities in the open market following completion of the offering of such securities or by exercising any over-allotment option granted to them by us. In addition, the managing underwriter may impose penalty bids under contractual arrangements with other underwriters, which means that they can reclaim from an underwriter (or any selling group member participating in the offering) for the account of the other underwriters, the selling concession with respect to securities that are distributed in the offering but subsequently purchased for the account of the underwriters in the open market. Any of the transactions described in this paragraph or comparable transactions that are described in any accompanying prospectus supplement may result in the maintenance of the price of the securities at a level above that which might otherwise prevail in the open market. None of such transactions described in this paragraph or in an accompanying prospectus supplement are required to be taken by any underwriters and, if they are undertaken, may be discontinued at any time.

We may sell the securities in exchange in whole or part for consideration other than cash. This consideration may consist of services or products, whether tangible or intangible, and including services or products we may use in our business; outstanding debt or equity securities of our company or one or more of its subsidiaries; debt or equity securities or assets of other companies, including in connection with investments, joint ventures or other strategic transactions, or acquisitions; release of claims or settlement of disputes; and satisfaction of obligations, including obligations to make payments to distributors or other suppliers and payment of interest on outstanding obligations. We may sell the securities as part of a transaction in which outstanding debt or equity securities of our company or one or more of our subsidiaries are surrendered, converted, exercised, canceled or transferred.

Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol EDR. Any securities that we issue, other than common stock, will be new issues of securities with no established trading market and may or may not be listed on a national securities exchange, quotation system or over-the-counter market. Any underwriters or agents to or through which securities are sold by us may make a market in such securities, but such underwriters or agents will not be obligated to do so and any of them may discontinue any market making at any time without notice. No assurance can be given as to the liquidity of or trading market for any securities sold by us.

LEGAL MATTERS

Certain matters of Maryland law, including the validity of the common stock to be offered by means of this prospectus, will be passed upon for us by Venable LLP, Baltimore, Maryland. Certain federal income tax matters will be passed upon for us by Bass, Berry & Sims PLC, Memphis, Tennessee.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements as of December 31, 2008 and 2007 and for each of the three years in the period ended December 31, 2008 incorporated in this prospectus by reference from the Education Realty Trust, Inc.'s Current Report on Form 8-K dated August 21, 2009, and the effectiveness of Education Realty Trust, Inc. and subsidiaries (the Trust) internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2008 have been audited by Deloitte & Touche LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, as

38

TABLE OF CONTENTS

stated in their report, which is incorporated herein by reference (which report (1) expresses an unqualified opinion and includes an explanatory paragraph relating to the retrospective effects of the adoption of Statement of Financial Accounting Standard No. 160, *Noncontrolling Interests in Consolidated Financial Statements-an amendment of ARB No. 51* and the retrospective presentation requirements of Statement of Financial Accounting Standard No. 144, *Accounting for the Impairment and Disposal of Long-Lived Assets* and (2) expresses an unqualified opinion on the effectiveness of the Trust's internal control over financial reporting). Such financial statements have been so incorporated in reliance upon the report of such firm given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We are a public company and file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. You may read and copy any document we file at the SEC's public reference room at 100 F Street, NE, Washington, D.C. 20549. You may request copies of these documents by writing to the SEC and paying a fee for the copying cost. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for more information about the operation of the public reference room. Our SEC filings are also available to the public at the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. In addition, you may read and copy our SEC filings at the office of the New York Stock Exchange at 20 Broad Street, New York, New York 10005. We also make available free of charge through our website our Annual Reports on Form 10-K, Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q, Current Reports on Form 8-K and amendments to those reports filed or furnished pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities and Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, as well as our definitive proxy statement and Section 16 reports on Forms 3, 4 and 5. Our website address is www.educationrealty.com. However, the information located on, or accessible from, our website is not, and shall not be deemed to be, except as described below, a part of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus or incorporated into any other filings that we make with the SEC.

This prospectus is only part of a registration statement on Form S-3 we have filed with the SEC under the Securities Act of 1933 and therefore omits some of the information contained in the registration statement. We have also filed exhibits and schedules to the registration statement which are excluded from this prospectus, and you should refer to the applicable exhibit or schedule for a complete description of any statement referring to any contract or other document. You may inspect or obtain a copy of the registration statement, including the exhibits and schedules, as described in the previous paragraph.

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference the information we file with it, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be part of this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus and the information we file subsequently with the SEC prior to the completion of this offering will automatically update and supersede this information.

We previously filed the following documents with the SEC and such filings are incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement:

Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2008 (including portions of our definitive Proxy Statement for the 2009 Annual Meeting of Stockholders incorporated therein by reference);
Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2009;

Edgar Filing: Education Realty Trust, Inc. - Form 424B5

Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2009;

Current Report on Form 8-K filed on January 5, 2009;

Current Report on Form 8-K filed on February 20, 2009;

Current Report on Form 8-K filed on July 6, 2009 (excluding the information furnished under Item 7.01 and Exhibits 99.1 and 99.2);

Current Report on Form 8-K filed on July 23, 2009 (excluding the information furnished under Item 7.01 and Exhibit 99.1);

39

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Current Report on Form 8-K filed on August 21, 2009; and

The description of our common stock contained in our Registration Statement on Form 8-A filed on January 25, 2005.

We also incorporate by reference into this prospectus additional documents that we may file with the SEC under Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act, from the date of this prospectus until all of the securities offered by this prospectus have been sold or we otherwise terminate the offering of these securities, including all filings made after the date of the initial filing of the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part and prior to the effectiveness of the registration statement; provided, however, that information furnished under Item 2.02 or Item 7.01 of Form 8-K or other information furnished to the SEC which is not deemed filed is not incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus. Information that we subsequently file with the SEC will automatically update and may supersede information in this prospectus, any accompanying prospectus and information previously filed with the SEC.

You may request a copy of these filings (other than exhibits, unless the exhibits are specifically incorporated by reference into these documents) at no cost by writing or calling Investor Relations at the following address and telephone number:

Education Realty Trust, Inc.
530 Oak Court Drive, Suite 300
Memphis, Tennessee 38117
(901) 259-2500

TABLE OF CONTENTS

\$50,000,000

Common Stock

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

KeyBanc Capital Markets

September 20, 2011
