

2021-2022 Annual Report



Collective Enrichment and Continual Evolution



The 2021-22 school year intentionally cultivated a more typical holistic learning environment for our community. While pandemic considerations remained integral for strategic decisions, we reintegrated our community in ways that equally centered relationships and healing. Our theme for the year, Collective Enrichment and Continual Evolution, highlighted our potential through unified learning, growth, and spiritual connection.

Over the school year, a profound evolution took place. Previously, these moments may have been perceived as routine, but the pandemic gifted us the experience of finding the extraordinary in the ordinary. We felt this when parents and caregivers regained access to the classrooms and campus. We witnessed this in the joyful unmasking of a friend's smile for the first time. We heard this in the harmonies of song circle and Marimba band. We healed and hoped together, building a school year filled with milestones.

Beginning with our littlest learners, we adapted the preschool program to support a range of school readiness, accommodating children seeking a three-year preschool experience. Additionally, the redesigned spaces for loose parts encouraged imaginative play and exploration. In the primary years program, the new Foundations curriculum integrated further enrichment of research-based language learning practices. All grades incorporated a new progress report at the opening of the year, surfacing benchmark data to help guide the learning journey for each child. Our year culminated with the return of many sacred rituals including May Day, End of Year Trips, Field Day, Imagine, and of course, Graduation.

Vincent Van Gogh is quoted as saying, "Great things are done by a series of small things brought together." This year honored that sentiment as our teachers, staff, families, and students all contributed to our collective enrichment and evolution. It is with great pride that we share this year's Annual Report acknowledging and celebrating everyone who contributed to our thriving.

Yours In Service,

Susie Fahrer

Susie Fahrer
Executive Director

Mission, Vision, and Holistic Journey



We develop accomplished, confident, and creative learners who are prepared to be compassionate leaders in building a socially just, spiritually connected, and environmentally sustainable world.

Our Method

We provide an engaging, nurturing learning environment to educate the whole child using the seven domains.

We inspire academic excellence with a program in harmony with the stages of child development.

We model within our community the kind of world in which we aspire to live.

The 7 Domains of the Whole Child



The Heart of Rainbow



Seven Domains



“Rainbow is a gift to our children. The level of learning they are doing in all of the domains helps them thrive as humans in an ever-evolving culture and world.”

- Anonymous Parent Survey 21-22

Mental Domain



The heart of our programming fosters academic rigor through student-centered, developmentally appropriate pedagogy that encourages thinking dispositions for twenty-first century learning. The holistic lens on learning ensures students develop the confidence and self-reflection necessary to engage scholarship that extends beyond a single textbook, content area, or skill set.

Teacher Quality
98%
Parent Satisfaction

On a scale of Very Good to Very Poor, parents who responded to our End-of-Year Survey ranked teacher quality and our philosophy and approach to education as Very Good or Good.

Philosophy and Approach to Education
98%
Parent Satisfaction

Standardized Test Scores

96%

An Average of RCS/OMS students in grades 4-8 that scored at or above national norms for all tested academic areas as reported by their Comprehensive Testing Program Scores

Teacher Education
200+
Professional Development Hours

Teachers participated in over 200 hours of professional development focusing on themes of differentiation, holistic education and research-based literacy instruction, and racial equity.





Omega Middle School Student Receives Award in Thomas Wolfe Memorial Student Writing Competition!

In keeping with the celebration of Thomas Wolfe’s birthday month of October, the Thomas Wolfe Memorial has announced the winners of the 2021 “Telling Our Tales” Student Writing Competition. Thomas Wolfe, while best known for his novels, also wrote many short stories. In this competition, students submitted their own work of fiction inspired by Thomas Wolfe’s story “One of the Girls in Our Party.” The story was published in Scribner’s magazine in January of 1935. In the story Wolfe writes about a tour group consisting of thirty women, all of them teachers from the public schools of the American mid-west traveling through Europe.

Congratulations to Amelia Lopez de la Cruz, who placed third in the Grades 6-8 competition!

Alumni Awards and Recognition



The Superintendent’s Award: Savannah Hagen-Ohbi

Asheville High School’s and SILSA’s highest award honors the senior who is the most excellent in each and every of the following areas: academics, arts, athletics, community service, character, and leadership.

Savannah attended RCS from preschool through eighth grade.

SILSA Valedictorian and French Department Award: Nicole Boots



Asheville High (Honors Program) Junior English Department Award: Quinn Ray

“I have learned that not only can learning be fun, but that I love to learn. I learned that the environment you are in impacts everything. [Omega Teachers] you have created the most beautiful and loving environment and community that I have ever been a part of and I thank you for that ”

- Quin Spoerer, 8th Grade Graduate 2021

Updates to the Preschool Program



Our preschool program has historically consisted of multi-age classrooms, combining children ages three to five in each class. This year our preschool classrooms have been assigned to specific age groups as a strategy for more personalized differentiation within the early childhood program. Our Blue Door Dragonfly class nurtures our youngest three- and four-year-old learners while our Green Door Turtle class sustains our older four- and five-year-old learners. These changes have increased opportunities for preschool teachers to provide students with tailored opportunities for learning across all domains.

New Foundations Phonics Program

All students in our four- to five-year-old preschool class through third grade were introduced to Foundations, a research-based phonics instruction that was implemented within the existing Language Arts curriculum. Foundations was chosen as a leading curriculum that fosters the “Science of Reading” through hands-on multisensory activities that support shared language and progress monitoring as students move through the grades. It also serves as a compliment to the Orton-Gillingham approach that is already used by our Student Support Program. Teachers and Student Support Advocates gained training through online resources, in-service training with Reading Specialist Carley Stein, and bi-monthly collaborative meetings to share successes and challenges while implementing the new program.



New Progress Reports!



Fall Progress Reports were integrated as an addition to the robust reporting and monitoring process for students in

Preschool through 8th grade. This tool served to offer initial benchmark data to families in the mental domain specifically and compliments the end-of-semester comprehensive narrative assessments.

“It’s an amazing, positive, and caring community with teachers and administrators that ‘walk the walk’ of teaching multiple intelligence.”

- Anonymous Parent Survey 21-22



Formal Assessment Protocols



K-3 Teachers and Student Support Advocates refined formal assessment protocols to create a baseline for measurable data in the mental domain this year.



Creative Domain

Engaging the arts and STEAM education empower our students to explore learning through a variety of lenses, mediums, and perspectives. The beauty and diversity fostered through the creative domain seeds our inspired school experience.

7 awards!
days to celebrate!



2nd place
MUSIC TEACHER: Laura Blackley

7 awards!
days to celebrate!



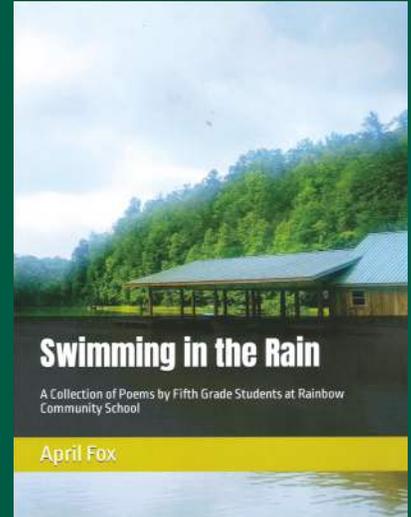
2nd place
ART EDUCATION PROGRAM!

Middle School Electives



Omega students participated in diverse creative elective coursework including Advanced Marimba Band, Rock Band, Mixed Media, Clay Class, Voice Lessons, Art History, Ukulele, Computer Programming, and Yearbook Creation.

Fifth Grade Published a Poetry Anthology



"Swimming in the Rain is the collective voice of twenty fifth-grade students who have weathered a pandemic, been isolated from their peers, and then come back together to renew and celebrate their friendships, explore and resolve their internal and external conflicts, and fully embrace their days back in the classroom as a community. It is an honor to be able to compile these voices and now to share them with you."

- April Fox, Fifth Grade Associate Teacher and Editor

IMAGINE: *Questions of the Soul*

Students and staff developed an original storyline and musical performance entitled *Questions of the Soul* that took the school community on an immersive theater quest.



"That's just it. All along, we have had what we needed to answer these questions. We are enough... every one of us."

- Closing Scene: The Circle of Reflection, *Questions of the Soul*

Ship Ahoy!



Our facilities team built a beautiful ship to enrich our preschoolers' imaginative play.



Emotional and Social Domains



The focus on emotional and social development through the ages creates a balance of self-awareness and actualization along with empathy and compassion for others.

Student Feedback

Students in fourth through eighth grade were surveyed at the end of the year to collect their feedback on our programming and their individual experience. Students reported the following as consistent areas of strength:



Reading Buddies Program Resumes



Reading Buddies supports mentorship between older and younger students across campus.

“I love you guys. This is really the best school ever in my whole life and I really like that everybody is nice to me and the teachers are really good.”

- Noa Hyman, RCS 2nd Grader

Sixth Grade Entrepreneurship Projects

Our sixth grade entrepreneurs created their own socially-conscious businesses. Students designed and created their own products, which were sold via an online marketplace and at the Spring Fling. Each student selected a local agency that aligned with their business model and social values to which they donated a portion of their profits.



Sixth grade students donated a total of \$487 from the sales of their products to the following organizations:



“Everyone says that middle school is among the worst years of school. I’d have to disagree. Rainbow, tiny Rainbow, with its opening circles and old oak tree in the courtyard, my locker that I love but also refuses to close, Susan making math actually fun, my friend that claims they came up to me first...they did not. It shaped me in more ways than I ever could have imagined.”

- Amelia Lopez Cruz, 2021 Graduate



Two Omega Middle School dances fostered joy and social connections.



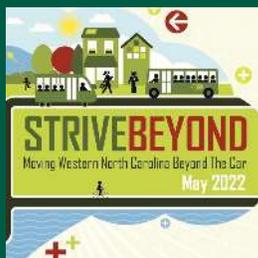
Physical Domain

Our bodies help to define the multi-sensory experience of learning. Providing intentional outlets for movement, health education, and physical exploration engages one of the most critical modalities for educational wellness.

Special Events Highlighting the Physical Domain



Students run, skip, hop, jog, dance, or walk their way through our annual **Tofurkey Trot**.



During **Strive Beyond Week** our community is encouraged to walk, bike, or skate to school.



Field Day provides a multitude of physical activities including Gaga Ball (Israeli dodgeball), team sports and games, a dance party, and water play.

Middle School Electives



Along with traditional Physical Education courses for preschool through fifth grade, new physical elective offerings for our middle schoolers in the 2021-22 school year included a Roller Skating and Biking course, Pickleball and Racket Sports, and Hockey.

Weekly Physical Activity



Students participate in a minimum of 4.5 hours of physical activity and play a week through daily recess and other scheduled activities. Many classrooms exceed this amount in support of hands-on lessons and movement integrated into learning objectives.

“When children are free to play, they play naturally at the ever-advancing edges of their mental or physical abilities.”

- Peter Gray, Ph.D



Swings that Hug



Our Facilities Team worked with the Preschoolers to replace a rotting stage with an open-ended area for swings to incorporate the enclosure schema and have a quiet alone space while outside.

Natural Domain



Commitment to nature play and environmental stewardship protects the inherent connections children have with other living beings and their surroundings. It cultivates wonder and inquiry and eventually leads to a sense of protection and personal responsibility toward human impact on the environment.

Congratulations to RCS RiverLink Art and Poetry Contest Winners!

RiverLink is a local organization that promotes the environmental and economic vitality of the French Broad River and its watershed. Every spring Riverlink hosts the Voices of the River: Art & Poetry Contest. Students are asked to use the river as a source of inspiration to showcase their creativity. RCS students participate in this contest annually. All entries are inspired by student connection to the Natural World.

Individual student awards:

- 1st Place - Poetry (3rd-5th grade): Fox Johnson
- 2nd Place - Poetry (3rd-5th grade): Sophia Clark
- 3rd Place - Poetry (3rd-5th grade): Lucie David
- 3rd Place - 2D and 3D Art (3rd-5th grade): Indigo Leitner



River
by Fox Johnson

I hear the water going down.
I see it disappear as it goes to town.
The glimmer of the water soothes me.
It just seems to move me.
I step on a sparkling rock.
The river starts to talk.
The language I can't understand.
More importantly, the river grabs my hand.
It pulls me under to the world of wonder.
I see a thing that no one, no one could understand.
I see a wonderland.



Preschool Nature Play



Preschool families came together for an Earth Day Workday to create a dry creek bed in the Loose Parts area, added more natural stumps and logs for balancing and seating areas, and remade the back of the shed into an Afterschool Clubhouse!

Honoring Retirees

A program was initiated in the spring of 2022 to honor retiring staff with a native tree planted on campus to acknowledge their legacy and contribute to the greening of our grounds. This tradition will continue into the future, populating our campus with beautiful tributes to our beloved staff members.

Spiritual Domain



The capacity to entertain meaning within and beyond the individual and collective experience is at the heart of our contemplative practices. Students learn to cultivate a sense of “center” to prime their learning, encourage humane connection with others, and consider impact beyond the immediate environment.

Daily centering practice equates to a minimum of 81 hours spent in contemplative practice annually in every classroom.



“I think the quiet time to be with yourself and yet still be with other people was really nice to ground yourself for the rest of the day.”

Kafira Adam, Class of 2020, Alumni Panel Event 2020-21

Space Held in Support of Staff and Community Wellness



Fire Circles are offered as safe, sacred spaces for staff, students, and community members to mark periods of transition, to sit in contemplation, to grieve, and to celebrate. We light fires with changes of the seasons and during times in which we are called upon to hold and support one another.

“My son is emotionally and spiritually safe with all staff/educators, and therefore he is free to pursue his highest education.” - RCS Parent

Engaging Summer Camps



17

summer camps



189

campers served



weeks of camp



4 OMS alumni employed



\$28,000 estimated income generated



"I usually can't get much information from [my kids], but they told me every day where they went, what they saw, and were particularly enthusiastic when animals were involved!"

- Summer Camp Parent, Summer Camp Survey



mental domain camps

American Sign Language I
American Sign Language II
Bots and Bytes
The Quill
What's Your Story?



natural domain camps

Adventures Camp
Creek Hoppers I
Creek Hoppers II
Nature Camp
Surf & Turf



creative domain camps

Creepy Crafty
Lego STEM
Theater Camp
Upcycled Fashion
Woodworking



physical domain camps

Soccer Field Fun
Soccer Skills Prep & World Cup Celebrations

Uplifting Humanity

As we exit the 21-22 year, the theme “Collective Enrichment and Continual Evolution” profoundly resonates with the equity work here at RCS. We use “equity” as an encompassing term for diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. All these things must be present or actively worked towards for a thriving collective.

Diversity is about numbers. Diversity asks, “How many people are outside the dominant culture in this setting?”

Inclusion means that people are not only seen but they are celebrated, valued, and their perspectives are actively listened to. Inclusion asks, “How can I make this person feel included and represented in this community as much as someone within the dominant culture?”

Equity means people receive what they need, which might look different than what someone else may require. Equity asks, “What does this person say they need to access this community and thrive during and after this experience?”

Belonging is about whether or not someone feels a part of the community. Belonging asks, “Does this person feel a part of this community? How much do they feel a part of this community?”

Not only do all of these terms center around community, but they center around collective enrichment. The equity work at RCS is community-based and continually evolving as we learn more and grow. For example, parents, staff, and administration attend the Equity Circle. The meeting’s purpose can range from discussing an article or podcast, helping plan an equity event, giving feedback on equity efforts, planning caregiver-led discussion groups, and more. Affinity groups for Black children, Indigenous children, or Children of Color are places for children of various grades to come together, be surrounded by other children who may reflect themselves, and enrich each other through community building. Another aspect of our collective efforts is inviting the broader community to our equity events and welcoming them into our community to share their culture and talents. This year, we hosted a couple of vendors during our Spring Fling. They were kind enough to join a discussion with the sixth graders about being business owners and entrepreneurs during the sixth grade entrepreneurial unit.

We continually evolve and enrich the collective by educating children and adults for a socially just, spiritually connected, and environmentally sustainable future. We uplift humanity by focusing on diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. Thurgood Marshall said, “In recognizing the humanity of our fellow beings, we pay ourselves the highest tribute.” This work may be difficult, but it is healing for all involved.



Bali Mitchell
Equity Director

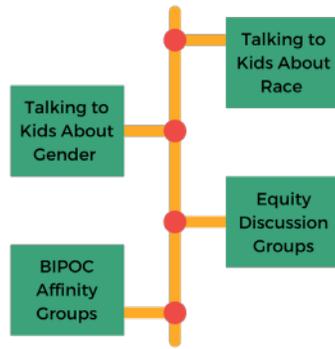
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bali Mitchell".

Bali Mitchell, Equity Director

Equity Events

“My humanity is bound up in yours, for we can only be human together.”

- Desmond Tutu

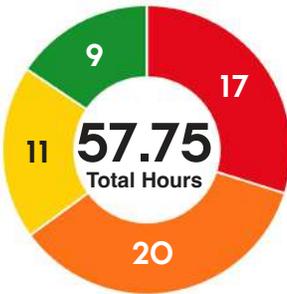


*Staff & Parent Equity Discussions

- Equity Circle
- Talking to Kids about Race
- Talking to Kids About Gender
- Staff Equity Discussions and Trainings
- Discussion Groups
- Affinity Groups



*Student Equity Discussions



- Equity Elective Q2
- Equity Elective Q4
- Middle School Gender Mysteries
- Affinity Groups

*This data does not include the Pollyanna Curriculum and other work within the classrooms or equity work completed by the Administrative Team, as these hours are difficult to measure.

Love in Action

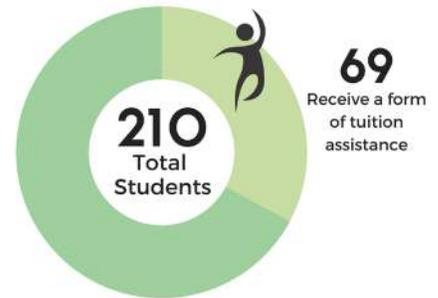
The mission of Love in Action is to strengthen our Rainbow family by providing equitable access to resources for members of our community.



LIA maintained an all-weather clothing closet so that children would remain warm and dry during outdoor instruction, provided snack stations in every classroom, and assisted families by sourcing specific needs such as car seats, bicycles, and gift cards to purchase holiday gifts.



Tuition Assistance



Sources of Tuition Assistance:

- RCS Financial Aid
- Staff Discounts
- Opportunity Scholarships
- Disabilities Grant
- Preschool Vouchers



*Opportunity Scholarships or Preschool Vouchers



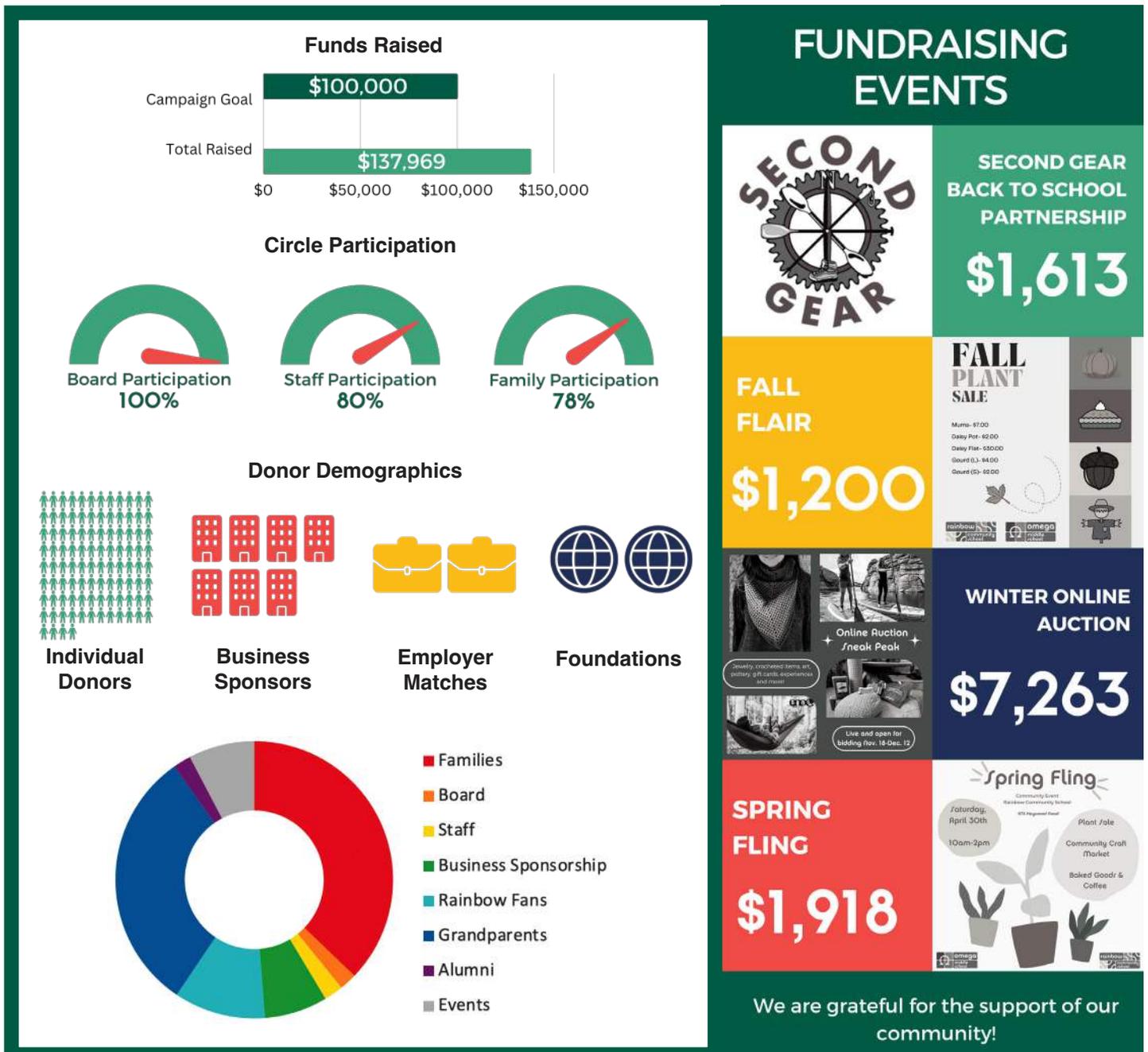
33 RCS Families
CONTRIBUTED
\$40,740 to the VET Program

The 2021-2022 school year marked the sixth year that Rainbow families had the option to participate in the **Voluntary Equitable Tuition (VET)** program, in which they can elect to pay more than the required tuition in order to help fund scholarships and to keep tuition moderate.

Development

Every independent school has an annual campaign that helps cover the gap between the cost of tuition and cost of operating the school. At Rainbow, 93% of Rainbow's outgoing expenses pay the salaries and benefits of its highly qualified faculty and staff. Tuition covers most of these expenses; but, as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, we also rely on tax-deductible donations, grants, and other fundraising efforts to help close the gap.

The 2021-22 school year's fundraising goal was \$100,000.



In Deep Appreciation for Our Donors

Foundations

The Fletcher Foundation
The McMichael Foundation

Employer Matching

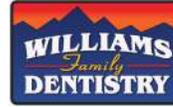
Duke Energy
Twilio

Community Members

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Amber & Daniel Baseman
Amber & Daniel Basemen
Amy & Creighton Mitchell
Andrea & Peter Rosal
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Thank you 2021-22 Business Sponsors!

Silver Level Sponsors



Bronze Level Sponsors



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Renee & Chad Conover

Continued on the next page...

Fiscal Operations

... Donor Appreciation Continued

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 Williams Family Dentistry
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Total Revenues \$2,788,868
 Total Expenditures \$2,673,069

The total value of all assets at the end of the 2021-2022 fiscal year was estimated at \$4,888,416.

We ended the year with a cash/savings reserve of \$1,410,708.



“An investment in anything Rainbow right now –the kids, the teachers, the campus, is an investment in the world!”

- RCS Parent

Additional Funding & Resources Outside of Our Annual Budget in Support of Our School Programming

- \$13,464 in Title I Funds (supports literacy/math tutoring)
- \$1,412 in Title II Funds (supports professional development)
- \$2,524 in Title IV Funds (supports well-rounded education)
- \$107,612 in Preschool Stabilization Grant Funds (supports teacher bonuses and facility upgrades.)

Community School

As a community school, we foster meaningful relationships between and beyond our campus community.

Grandfriend's Day

Our annual Grandfriend's Day welcomed 140 grandparents and special friends to our campus, fostering joyful connection between family and school and providing opportunity for intergenerational learning.



RCS/OMS Board of Directors

- Kali DeWine, Chair
- Dusty McKeelan, Vice Chair
- Nate Banchiere, Finance Officer
- Pamela Goodrum, Secretary
- Ruth Bhakta
- Tim Martin
- Stewart Stokes
- Jen Tracy



*Each member volunteering at least 10 hours monthly toward school visioning, governance, and longevity.

Community Partnerships Continue to Grow at Rainbow



Asheville Chamber of Commerce
 Asheville Racial Equity Collective
 Bounty and Soul
 Building Bridges of Asheville
 Circle Forward
 Girls Rock
 Grow Abroad
 NCDHHS
 Open Doors of Asheville
 Patchwork Farms
 Racial Equity Institute
 Riverlink



West Asheville Business Association



2021-22 Anonymous Parent Survey Feedback

“Huge thanks to all the teachers, faculty, and support staff for everything they have given to make this year a special one — and doing that whilst navigating an ever-changing, stressful, complex, and contentious COVID situation. Each of you has given so much love, presence, and care and [have] shown amazing patience, perseverance, and positivity through it all!”

“The teachers and the educational program are a model for how we need to teach in every school in America.”

“Our family has had such a wonderful experience at Rainbow and I think everyone deserves to have this type of community and education for their children.”



“I recommend RCS all the time! It has been a beautifully transformative place for both of my children. The philosophy, the staff, and the community of Rainbow is so special — we feel lucky to be a part of it.”

A strong community is our foundation. We are grateful to all our community members who have partnered with us to make 2021-22 a fantastic school year!