

RUTH WASHBURN COOPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL



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• COOPERATIVE •
NURSERY SCHOOL**

Ruth Washburn Cooperative Nursery School (RWCNS) is a nonprofit preschool dedicated to educating and nurturing children in an enriching play-based environment and engaging families in a supportive community.

2014-2015 ANNUAL REPORT



**RUTH WASHBURN
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2014-2015 Board of Governors

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LETTER FROM THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The 2014-2015 year at Ruth Washburn Cooperative Nursery School (RWCNS) was one of stability, clarity and joy. The Board and school continue to hone the organizational processes that help support the work of the teachers. The highly experienced staff led in both the community and the classroom. And of course the children created, explored, got messy and were encouraged to find joy in being children! We welcomed former Assistant Director, Jen Filonowich into the role of Executive Director, and she exceeded all expectations in her first year with her competent leadership, organizational skills and ability to connect with families and children.

The Board of Governors is proud to have accomplished the following this year:

- Hosted our first ever “Legacy Event” where Alumni, from founding families to current parents, came together to celebrate and support the school
- Created an Endowment Investment Account
- After a study to determine the most valuable compensation, we increased teacher and staff pay for the 2015-16 budget year
- Approved funding for a new play structure in the backyard

We again ended our year with a fiscal surplus, proving that our trend towards a more stable financial future continues. This surplus will be used to maintain and improve our facilities, invest in quality materials and reduce debt. We are also proud to offer scholarships to make the RWCNS experience affordable for a wide variety of families, which is why we are committed to continuing to set aside 10% of our annual budget to do so.

Each child, family, staff member, volunteer and alumnus plays a vital role in sustaining and growing our beloved little school. Thank you! May you always have a little RWCNS glitter lingering in your heart (if not in your car!)

Alison Christofferson

RWCNS Board President 2014-15

RWCNS CORE VALUES

at Ruth Washburn we believe...



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- That by calling ourselves a “nursery” school we strive to honor the child at the developmental stage where he or she is now, which is the best possible preparation for future schooling.
- Deeply in the value of play and the learning attained when children are invited to explore with a variety of materials including music, art, movement, and dramatic play.
- In providing an atmosphere focused on the “whole child;” where a child’s emotional, physical, social and cognitive needs are carefully nurtured.
- In helping children develop and sustain a positive self-image by learning to engage in caring interactions with others.
- In class sizes that are small and where teachers guide and facilitate activities, allowing children to make their own choices and direct their own work.
- In the blending of school and family life to create a cooperative community which provides the richest, most caring environment possible for children.

2014-2015 Staff

Jen Filonowich, Director

Stacy Holmes, Education Director

Lois Arndt

Karen Brown

Mary Jean Coyne

Lisa Cumby

Winona Entwisle

Lori Goodwin

Sukie Jackson

Karen Jones

Leighann Klein

Cecilia Lingle

Kristi Maida

Lori Mandino

Eva Manz-Jackson

Chris Rosas

Kristin Schooveld

Linette Sheridan

Brenda Holmes-Stanciu

Erin Sullivan

Tessa Sutherland

Jordan Womochil



ROLE OF ALUMNI



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You're a Ruth Washburn Alumni Parent!

Now What?

As you leave behind your time as a parent at RWCNS, despite your excitement for not having to mop the classroom floors (again), or come up with another appealing vegetarian, gluten-free, dairy-free, sugar-free snack (again), there is often a real sense of sadness for no longer being a part of such a treasured community. One Alumni parent offered the following wisdom to make your future journey in education as meaningful as the first chapter:

STAY involved! Although you will likely not be **REQUIRED** to be engaged to the same extent at your future school, they need you! Rates of parent participation in schools are greatly diminished as children grow older, but there is such value in knowing your student's friends and being a regular presence in the classroom.

Create community! The first day of elementary school can feel a little overwhelming for **PARENTS** too, "I don't know anyone here!" "Do they have the same parenting values as me?" You and your children will have a better experience in school when you feel connected with other families. So, go ahead...make new friends!

Stay connected! Some of my most dear friends today I met ten years ago when we had our first children at Ruth Washburn. There is a deep and lasting connection with the people that you've been through the muck of parenting young children with. Stay in touch! Attend the Fork and Bottle every year. It is always an event where I look forward to reconnecting with those from my past.

Remember where it all started! The current Ruth Washburn community benefits from the hard work and dedication of 50+ years of cooperative parents that came before us. As the climate of early childhood education changes, Ruth Washburn will need the support of the **ENTIRE** Ruth Washburn community to sustain the legacy and continue to provide an exceptional early childhood environment for families of young children. Make sure you remember Ruth Washburn in your yearly giving as an honor to the community that nurtured your children and to help those who come after you.

Above all, remember that once you are a part of the Ruth Washburn family, you are **ALWAYS** part of this community. Treasure the memories you and your children made here and know you have given them the best start to the rest of their lives.

ENDOWMENT EXPLAINED

In 2014-15 the RWCNS Board of Governors made the exciting decision to create an Endowment for RWCNS. But what exactly does that mean? In the most basic terms this means that we have created an investment and have placed \$25,000 in it. Please read on to learn more:

Where did the money come from?

In 2013-14 the school received an anonymous donation of \$25,000. Initially, the Board approved using some of these funds for needed updates at the school; however, these expenses were absorbed into the school's annual budget and the \$25,000 gift remained intact.

Why not use the \$25,000 on something else?

While the Board dreams of a day when we can lower tuition and substantially increase teacher pay, the reality is the amount would only allow us to do these things for a few years. The Board felt it was wiser to look long term. It is our hope that the Endowment can eventually become a revenue source to support the operating budget.

What are the benefits to having an Endowment?

There are a number of benefits to an Endowment. Having this type of account will allow us to become a more professional fundraising organization. A donor now has the option of transferring investments to the RWCNS account instead of giving a cash gift.

Is this the school's entire savings?

No. RWCNS maintains separate emergency savings. However in the event of a catastrophic event, the money in the endowment fund can be accessed within a matter of days.

This is an exciting time for the future of our school. By building a financial legacy we can ensure stability in our organization for another 50 years and more!

Ruth Washburn by the Numbers

92 students from **88 families** in **9 classes**

1:5
**teacher/
student
ratio**

111 students attending
SUMMER CAMPS

1:3
**adult/
student
ratio with
parent
helpers**

21 staff including...

9 lead teachers with

4 Master's degrees

4 Bachelor's degrees

1 Associate's degrees

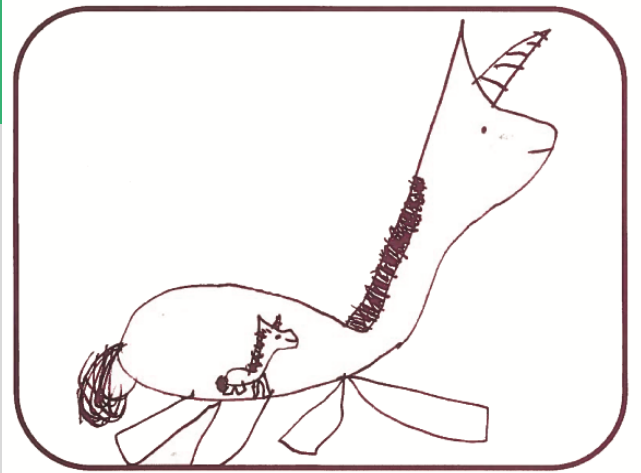
25 FAMILIES AWARDED FINANCIAL AID

533 **FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS:**
follow us at facebook.com/rwcns

OUTCOMES

Parent Outcome

Alumni parent and former Board President, Deb Walker was named Executive Director of Citizen's Project in May. While a parent at Ruth Washburn, Deb finished her Master's Degree in Non-Profit Management. She completed her Master's project emphasizing Ruth Washburn.



Pregnant Unicorn
by Johnny Mojica, Age 5 2015

Child Outcome

5 year old Johnny Mojica is collaborating on an art installation for the front window displays of Enso Prenatal Yoga. He will be using two large 5x6 pieces of canvas. He's going to add images of pregnant animals (unicorns, dinosaurs, etc.) and mama animals with newly born babies. Additionally, he will have cards of his artwork for sale through Etsy and Enso. Johnny shared his favorite thing about his time at RW. "I liked to play outside. The swings were my favorite. I like it when they go so high. When we were swinging, Sukie would run in front of us and say "waaah!" It made me laugh."

Staff Outcomes

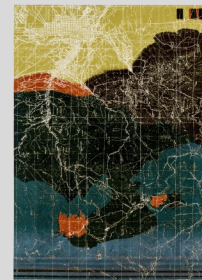
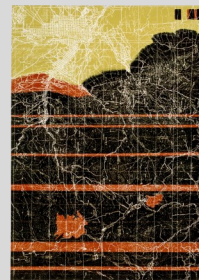
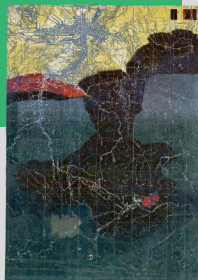
Stacy Holmes, longtime Ruth Washburn teacher and first year Education Director, completed the Leadership Pikes Peak Early Care and Education Cohort. This program brought together 23 Early Childhood Professionals from the Pikes Peak Region for 9 months of leadership, advocacy and education. Stacy's small group was instrumental in making meaningful changes at the El Paso County Early Childhood Council. She now serves on one of the county's committees.

Sukie Jackson (O4 teacher), Karen Brown (M3 assistant), Lois Arndt (Y4 teacher) and Chris Rosas (M4 teacher) all presented at the fall Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children (CAEYC) conference in Denver. Additionally, Chris Rosas became a certified trainer in January.

ALUMNI OUTCOMES

Michael Arnsteen

1992-1993 alumni Michael Arnsteen recently received his MA & MFA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is an artist and educator and will be working as a guest artist at Colorado College next academic year. When asked about his time at Ruth Washburn, Michael said, "I have a number of vivid memories. I'll never forget trying to dig to the other side of the earth in the sandbox with my friend Brendan Hannigan. We were convinced we were going to dig to China and worked diligently each day at recess, hand and shovel." Michael also vividly remembers his love of art at Ruth Washburn. "There was such an encouraging and caring atmosphere that the teachers imparted, fostering creativity and exploration. Art has been a part of my life ever since and has evolved into a career of teaching, making and learning."



Mari Tanabe

In my memory (1994-1996), the classrooms at Ruth Washburn are big and light and filled with treasures: special books in the reading area, a real boat to sit in, costumes, blocks, stamps and crazy cut scissors, a pan of paint for dipping our feet in and walking across long rolls of paper and magnifying glasses that we could take outside. I remember twirling in the tire swing, racing down big wheel hill, my teacher Karen, and always bringing mini bagels with pink cream cheese for snack. My memories are few and faded, but very joyful. Since "graduating," I'm lucky that I have been able to return to Ruth Washburn in a variety of roles. I have brought my clarinet to circle time, playing Mozart while the children danced with scarves and bringing my ukulele and singing the "Shaky Egg Song" together on stick horses. As an alumna, I'm glad to have opportunities to give back. When I come back, I'm always learning from the ways the teachers and parents interact with children. I watch them get on one knee to be eye-level with a child. They ask open-ended questions. They help solve disputes with calm language. They go all-out to support imagination. When I'm with young children, I try to copy their approach. Maybe someday, I will have young children of my own. If so, I hope to raise them with the creative, inclusive, and joyful spirit I learned at Ruth Washburn.



Attention Alumni: We encourage you to send us your story! Email us at: director@rwcns.org



School Year Highlights (as described by staff)

Administration Team

Teacher Collaboration

Early Morning Explorers

Balance of Roles

The Children!

Harvest Festival

New Play Structure

Time Honored

The Staff!

The Board of Governors

Teachers and Assistant in Each Class

Eagle Scout Projects

Modeling by Teachers

The Garden

Thoughtful/Inclusive Change

Legacy Event

Salary Increase

Assessment and Conference Forms





School Year Challenges (as described by staff)

Property Challenges

Weather Affecting the Auction Attendance

Garden Maintenance

Condition of Surrounding Properties

Rain Effects on the Property

Substitute List

Sinking Pirate Ship on the Playground

Challenge of Building Class Community



FINANCIALS

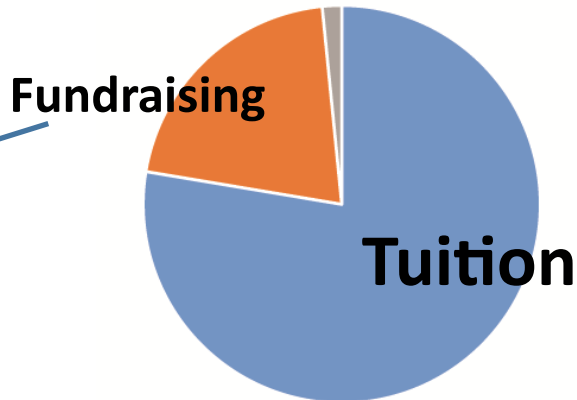
INCOME

Net Fundraising Performance

Fundraising Letter & Legacy Event	\$31,027
Auction	\$30,691
Grocery Cards	\$6,426
Other Support	\$4,613

NET FUNDRAISING \$74,295

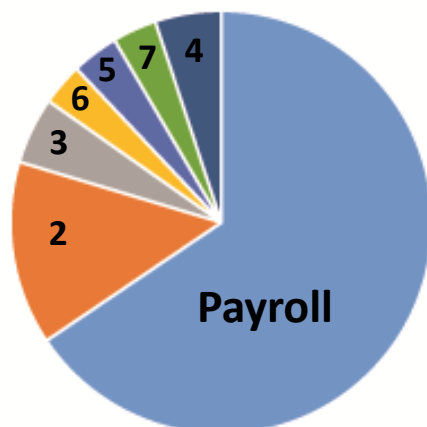
TOTAL INCOME	\$434,065
1) Tuition	77.63%
2) Fundraising	20.79%
3) Misc. Income	1.58%



TUITION ASSISTANCE = \$38,682.44

EXPENSES

TOTAL EXPENSES	\$391,138
1) Payroll	65.57%
2) Misc. Expenses	14.05%
3) Profess/Bank Fees	5.1%
4) Depreciation	5.07%
5) Mortgage Interest	3.59%
6) Supplies	3.39%
7) Maint/Utilities	3.22%





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