

A LETTER FROM THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Fall is such a wonderful time to be part of Ruth Washburn Cooperative Nursery School: Classrooms bustling with the sounds of children playing, walls filling with art, and the newly revamped garden ready and waiting for spring. This year, the sledding hill got a serious workout in October—an unusual but welcome event for our little snowwomen and men!

As you'll see in these pages, our financial position is strong and steady, enrollment is high, and we've welcomed some fabulous new staff members this year, including two Ruth Washburn alumni! We've made incredible progress on our five-year Strategic Plan (2018-2023)—so much, in fact, that we are forming a Strategic Planning Committee in January 2020 to start work on the next five-year plan.

I want to thank you all for the hard work, time, and dedication you share with the school. The cooperative model offers a unique opportunity for community, connection, and camaraderie. Some Ruth Washburn friendships truly last lifetimes. At the same time, we recognize that the co-op requires *a lot* of work! We see and appreciate the many, many ways you contribute. The quest for healthy snacks. The parent helping days (and the childcare often required for siblings on those days!). The time off work. The maintenance hours. The sweeping of mind-bogglingly uncooperative piles of glitter (oh, the glitter!).

We appreciate you, our Ruth Washburn families, and we know these are taxing years parenting young children. We hope that Ruth Washburn offers meaningful supports for your family. As we continually strive to improve and expand those supports, we welcome your thoughts and feedback. Please reach out to a Board member, join us at a Board meeting (the third Tuesday of each month), or consider running for a spot on the Board—we would love to have you!

We're so glad you've chosen Ruth Washburn as your nursery school community. Our families and staff make Ruth Washburn the magic place that it is. We are grateful for all you do, and we will continue to work to make this school the kind of place your children will want to come back to year after year, send their children to, and maybe even to join the staff themselves one day!

With heartfelt gratitude,



Suzanne Dillon
Board President 2019-2020

2019 - 2020 Board of Governors

Suzanne Dillon, President
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Judy Van Valin





113 students in 10 classes

50 families served by
Wee and Not-So-Wee explorers

19 Staff Members who
completed 480+ hours of
professional development

\$45,000 Value of parent
maintenance work

\$39,000 in financial aid
awarded to 27% of our
families!



RWCNS CORE VALUES

At Ruth Washburn we believe . . .



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.

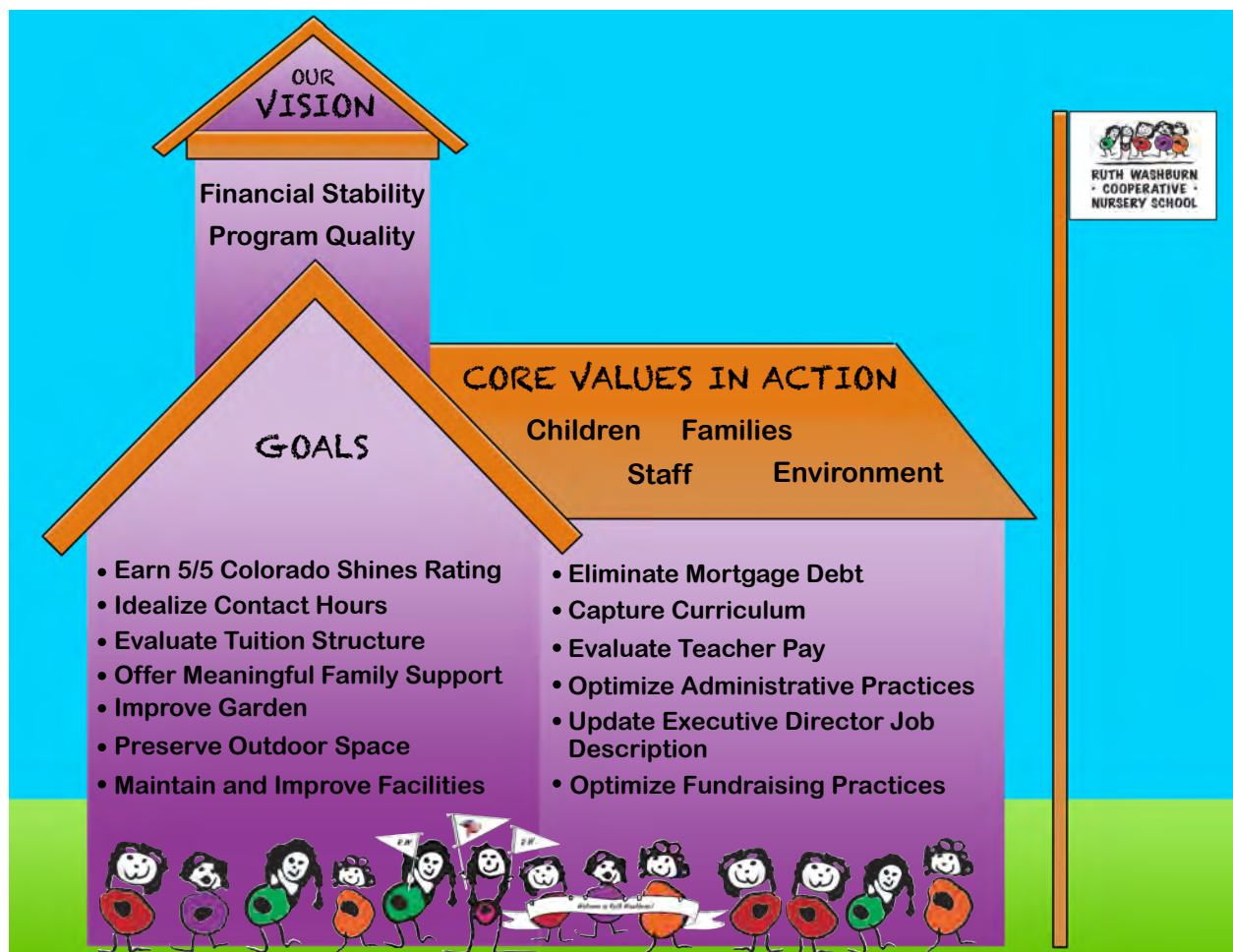
Deeply in the value of play and the learning attained when children are invited to explore with a variety of materials including music, art, movement, and dramatic play.

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 care 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.





Family Support Workshops

Our mission at Ruth Washburn is twofold: to **educate children** in a play-based environment and to **engage families** in a supportive community. Our amazing, dedicated teachers work daily to create environments where children develop and thrive. At the same time, as a co-op model nursery school, we recognize that quality early childhood education involves **WHOLE family**.

We know when families are involved in children's education, everyone benefits. We also know that parenting young children is **HARD work**. That's why for the second year in a row, based on research and feedback from co-op members, we have expanded workshops and resources to support our families.

This year Ruth Washburn hosted monthly family support events. These consist of a series of kindergarten readiness workshops, including sessions on how parents can support children in the transition to kindergarten; how to choose a kindergarten that best meets the needs of your child and your family; information sessions to help families navigate the school choice system in Colorado Springs; and workshops on supporting nutrition and establishing routines with young children.

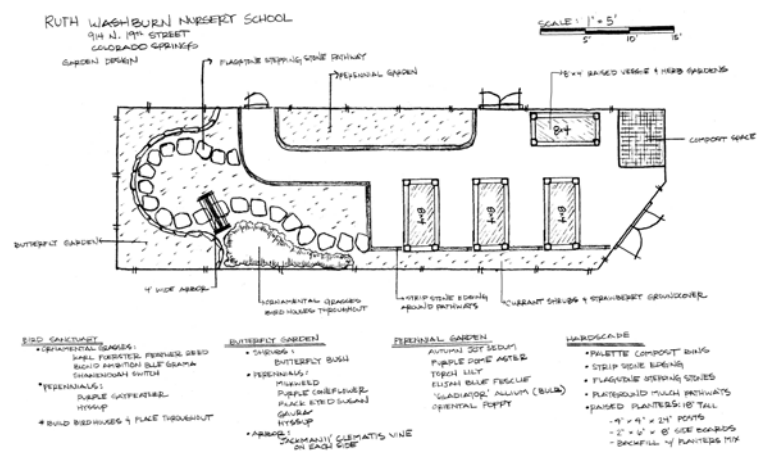
We also continue to offer a parenting workshop - Positive Solutions for Families – that supports parents in implementing the same positive language and strategies practiced by our teachers. The workshop is a series of sessions designed to help parents support their child's social and emotional development and to better understand and effectively address children's challenging behaviors.

Additionally, we continue to host "Sunday Fundays." One Sunday per month we invite all co-op families to come and enjoy our expansive outdoor space, and to play and connect with other families.

We hope all of these workshops offer important resources for our families and provide opportunities for families to make lifelong friendships and connections.

Check out our family support offerings on rwcns.org!

We are proud to have completed our garden project this year with a space that is beautiful, creative, and accessible to the entire community. The gardens attract insects and wildlife for the children to view and learn about during school. There are flowers and herbs and vegetables growing. Classes incorporate the gardens into lessons, exposing our children to various aspects of plant care and harvest. A great part about our garden is that it is accessible for the entire community. Please stop by and enjoy our new space!





PATHS Overview

Ruth Washburn teachers support children's social and emotional development in many ways. One of the primary ways is through implementing PATHS curriculum in the classroom.

PATHS stands for **Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies** and was adopted by a teacher-led committee after our school recognized the need for a foundational curriculum to support the teaching of social/emotional skills. Units include Fostering Positive Classroom Climates, Basic and Advanced Feelings, Self-Control, Sharing, Caring and Friendship and Basic Problem Solving.

Why we love PATHS

PATHS provides teachers specific tools to support students' social and emotional development. At the same time, it leaves lots of room for teachers to add their own "spin" to the curriculum and to flexibly apply social/emotional learning opportunities to their own lesson plans and the current interests of students.

Kids love the PATHS lessons too, as teaching can be done through fun, scripted puppet shows. Children quickly become familiar with the puppet characters of PATHS, like Twiggie, Duke, Daphne and other animals. One of the key lessons offered through PATHS and taught by teachers across our classes is a short puppet show called "Twiggie Makes Friends". In this story, Twiggie the turtle puppet introduces "the turtle" model for calming down (see the "How to do Turtle" example below). Preschool children have fun with the puppets and get to practice important social/emotional skills at the same time.

We want our families to be aware of the language and strategies PATHS offers. We encourage you to ask your teachers about how they are using PATHS in the classroom! And of course, ask your children about Twiggie and his friends!



RECOGNIZING STAFF



New Staff Highlight

Christina Mandico remembers stepping into her Young 5s classroom with a sense of wonder and excitement. She recalls her teacher, Brenda Holmes-Stanciu, and how special she felt when Brenda came to her home for a visit before the start of school. Christina reminisces about the feeling of contentment she had while playing in the various cabins on the playground. She has memories of making a homemade unicorn costume with her mom and wearing it to school on Halloween.



For Christina, life has come full circle since her days in the Young 5s class. She is back at Ruth Washburn, this time as a teacher for the very class she once attended, now called the Owls class. This experience has also been a trip down memory lane for her mother, Ann, as she came to visit the Owls at the start of the school year to make an apple cake with the class, an event reminiscent of her parent helping days so long ago.

Christina graduated from UCCS with a bachelor's degree in inclusive early childhood education, which included special and regular education. She completed her student teaching and received her teacher's license. It was then that Christina saw a job opening with Ruth Washburn, a place she views as the ideal in early childhood learning.



When not at school, Christina enjoys walking and hiking when the sun is shining, skiing our beautiful Colorado mountains, singing and playing music with her family (including her two older sisters who are also RW grads), and riding horses. She is currently working towards her yoga teacher certification. Christina is the second former student to come back to the school as an adult to teach. Ruth Washburn is so lucky to have Christina teaching the Owls class and assisting the Hummingbirds class this year!

RECOGNIZING STAFF



Staff Highlights . . .

Thank you for 20+ years of service:

Mary Jean Coyne (20)

Stacy Holmes (20)

Cecelia Lingle (21)



Congratulations to Sukie Jackson on her retirement!

This year we were sad to say goodbye to Sukie Jackson, who retired after 17 years of service! Sukie is a beloved member of the Ruth Washburn community, and we will miss seeing her joyful smile each day.

Sukie attended Stanford University, where she studied English literature, which included classes in children's literature, education, and a practicum where she taught reading at a local elementary school. She taught elementary school for several years before she and her husband, Bob Tanabe, had their own three children, Kenji, Mari, and Kimi.

Throughout the years she raised her children, Sukie wrote stories, poems, and parenting articles published primarily in Ladybug Magazine. As a parent of three Ruth Washburn graduates, Sukie treasured the school's philosophy, history, the cooperative model, and the many talented, wonderful people she met.

During her time at the school, Sukie taught a variety of classes over the years and served as Executive Director for three years. Most recently, she pioneered the creation of the Outdoor Class.

In true Ruth Washburn fashion, Sukie can occasionally be found in the halls of the school, volunteering in the library.

Enjoy your retirement, Sukie!





Fundraising Update

As members of the Ruth Washburn Cooperative Nursery School community, we all recognize the importance of sustaining the school through fundraising. As a non-profit, Ruth Washburn relies upon the generosity of our community to continue supporting our children, staff, and the fabulous learning environment. There are very well-known areas of annual fundraising—giving through King Soopers and other larger events like Boots and Brews, our annual silent auction.

One lesser known and easy way to give is through **ColoradoGives.org**. ColoradoGives.org is a year-round, online giving website for more than 2,500 Colorado nonprofits, one of which is Ruth Washburn. The website is also the platform for Colorado Gives Day, which you may already be familiar with. Colorado Gives Day occurs annually in December and is a statewide push to make donations to our favorite charitable organizations.

ColoradoGives.org makes charitable giving simple. The best part about ColoradoGives.org is that you don't have to wait for Colorado Gives Day to sign up for or to make donations. All you need to do is go to the "Donate" tab on the home webpage, ColoradoGives.org, click on "find a Nonprofit" and search for Ruth Washburn. There are various giving options you can choose from. You can make a one time donation anytime, you can set up a donation for a future date or for Colorado Gives Day. You could set up a recurring donation every year for Colorado Gives Day, or you can set up your own recurring donation schedule.

Coloradogives.org provides us with a very convenient and accessible way to support our school, community and children at any point in time and without waiting for our larger events. Check out Coloradogives.org!

Questions about giving to Ruth Washburn?

Contact:

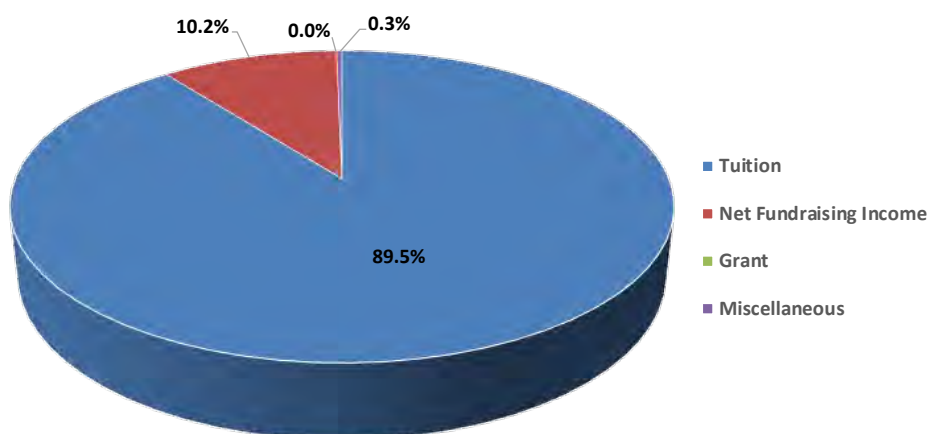
Director, Jen Filonowich, director@rwcns.org

Save the Date!
Boots and Brews
February 29, 2020



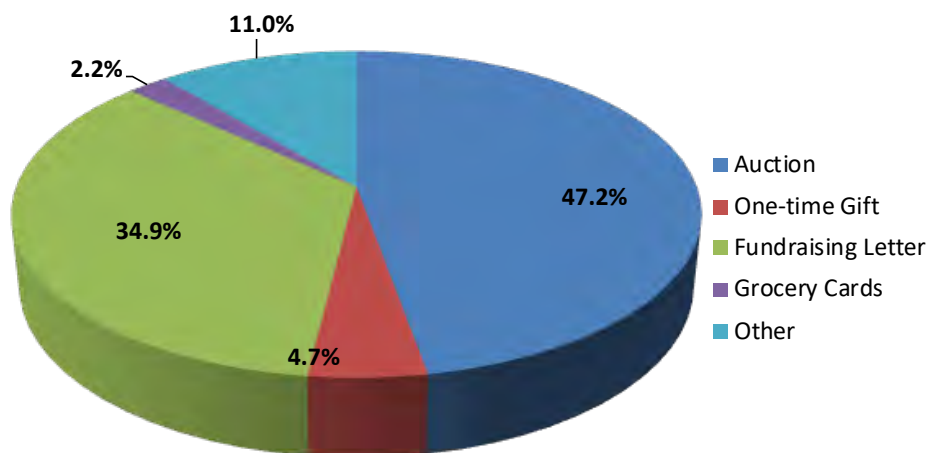
Revenue

	\$ Dollars	% to Total
Total Revenue	\$498,413	
Tuition	\$445,863	89.5%
Net Fundraising Income	\$50,968	10.2%
Grant	\$ -	0.0%
Miscellaneous	\$1,583	0.3%



Fundraising Performance Net Income

	Income	Expense	Net Income/ (Loss)	% of Total Net
Auction	\$34,456	\$10,400	\$24,057	47.2%
One-time Gift	\$2,403	\$ -	\$2,403	4.7%
Fundraising Letter	\$18,189	\$424	\$17,765	34.9%
Grocery Cards	\$1,131	\$ -	\$1,131	2.2%
Other	\$6,467	\$854	\$5,612	11.0%
Total	\$62,645	\$11,678	\$50,968	



FINANCIALS



Expenses

	\$ Dollars	% of Total
Total Expenses	\$476,899	
Payroll w/ Taxes	\$355,966	74.6%
Professional/ Bank Fees/ Consulting	\$27,947	5.9%
Maintenance/ Utilities	\$27,041	5.7%
Mortgage Interest	\$7,883	1.7%
Supplies	\$23,005	4.8%
Depreciation	\$22,809	4.8%
Miscellaneous (including Insurance)	\$12,247	2.6%

