



Annual Report
2022-2023



Walnut Farm
Montessori School

MISSION STATEMENT

The nationally accredited Walnut Farm Montessori School provides a Montessori education honoring community and individuality by promoting peace, and empowering children for life-long learning.



2022–2023 FACULTY AND STAFF

Lynette Goss, *Head of School*
Leslie Johnson, *Financial Administrator*
Azusa Crawford, *Education Administrator*
Misty King, *Admissions Administrator*
Amanda Phillips, *Director of Development*
Whitney Kimbro, *Toddler Guide, Juniper*
Sara Lopez, *Toddler Assistant, Juniper*
Kendyll Murray, *Toddler Guide, Cedar*
Virginia Force, *Toddler Assistant, Cedar*
Dale Keppler, *Primary Guide, Redbud*
Brandy Wilson, *Primary Assistant, Redbud*
Stephanie Throop, *Primary Guide, Dogwood*
Jennifer Crosby, *Primary Guide, Dogwood*
Christy Hrycun, *Primary Assistant, Dogwood*
Jamie Van Horn, *Primary Guide, Magnolia*
Kristal Price, *Primary Guide, Magnolia*
Sally Davis, *Elementary Guide, Sycamore*
Briana Cooper, *Elementary Assistant, Sycamore/Music Specialist*

Jill Bauer, *Elementary Guide, Oak*
Nikole Townsend, *Elementary Assistant, Oak/Technology Specialist*
Joe Love, *Outdoor Classroom Specialist, Aftercare Lead*
Tim Bare, *Outdoor Classroom Specialist*
Autumn Wisniewski, *Outdoor Classroom Specialist/Aftercare*
Kerrey Klatt, *Art Specialist/Aftercare*
Ava Mcgee, *Aftercare Assistant*
Hannah Crawford, *Aftercare Assistant*
Yesenia Villaron, *Spanish Specialist*



PUBLICATION CONTRIBUTORS

Lynette Goss, *Head of School*
Amanda Phillips, *Editor, Director of Development*
Heather Shakespeare, *Financial Administrator*
Nancy Lynn Goldberg, *Graphic Design*
Amanda Phillips, *Photography*
Starr W. Snead, *Consultant*

2022–2023 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Smita (Vadlamani) Sarma, *President*
Runa Howard, *Vice President*
Lina Scroggins, *Secretary*
Sean D'Hoostelaere, *Treasurer*
Emma Pengelly
Chi Ibekwe
Amanda Marsee
Jannae White
Peyton Sterns

YEAR IN REVIEW

Dear WFMS Families and Friends,

The 2022-2023 academic year saw many of our dreams and wishes begin to come to fruition. From adding an elementary classroom to finalizing plans for a construction project, it was indeed an exciting and productive year!

2022-2023 was also a time to reconnect with our community and our values after weathering the storms of COVID. We were able to move back into a more regular schedule and not only revive past specials for students, but add more! We saw our elementary program grow from one to two classrooms and hired Jill Bauer, a first-through-sixth-grade trained Montessori teacher to lead the second classroom. We were able to add outdoor classroom experiences for our toddler community making outdoor classroom an option for the entire student body. In addition, we were able to offer Spanish and music experiences for all of our students. Kerrey Klatt joined our staff to reintroduce an art curriculum to our older primary and elementary students, and we continued to offer PE to these students as well.

The Family Association worked hard to provide a fun and eventful Fall Festival with bounce houses, petting zoo, and pony rides. Other community events included our Peace Day celebration, Montessori Silent Journey (where parents were able to experience the classroom similar to their children), Winter Solstice celebration, and Discovery Nights (where students showed their families around their classroom and shared their favorite lessons).

With Lynette's support, the Board of Trustees focused on assessing current funds and the school's physical growth needs. Through careful consideration and deliberation, the board voted to move forward with an addition to the Primary building. We were thrilled to take this next step as we also began the application for our AMS reaccreditation process for re-approval in 2026. None of this would be possible without our amazing community who volunteer their time and generously donate to our Annual Fund. We are humbled by this amazing support!

In gratitude and excitement for what's to come,

Smita (Vadlamani) Sarma, Board President 2020-2022
and *Lynette Goss*, Head of School



Smita (Vadlamani) Sarma
Board President 2020-2022



Lynette Goss
Head of School



REPORT OF GIVING

Annual Fund Leadership Team 2022–2023

Amanda Phillips, *Director of Development*
 Lynette Goss, *Head of School*
 Leslie Johnson, *Finance Administrator*
 Smita (Vadlamani) Sarma, *President, Board of Trustees*
 Peyton Sterns, *Development Liaison, Board of Trustees*
 Russell and Katie Bloodworth, *Walnut Farm Annual Fund Chairs*
 Jason and Heather Foitek, *Walnut Farm Annual Fund Alumni Chairs*

Annual Fund Classroom Captains

Jannae White, <i>Juniper</i>	Lauren Magnusson, <i>Magnolia</i>
Sheila Eddy, <i>Cedar</i>	Tabitha Tichenor-Turner, <i>Magnolia</i>
Miles VanVeckhoven, <i>Redbud</i>	Jennifer Tichenor-Turner, <i>Magnolia</i>
Rachel Hatch, <i>Redbud</i>	Lindsey Robers, <i>Sycamore</i>
Callie Wohletz, <i>Dogwood</i>	Danielle Lyman, <i>Oak</i>

Generosity Abounds

Walnut Farm's Annual Fund raised more than \$72,000 during our 2022-2023 *Just Imagine!* campaign. An anonymous donor matched these gifts 2:1 enabling us to use these additional monies to help fund our Primary Addition. With increased funding, we were able to provide additional professional development for our teachers and staff, technology updates, increases in tuition assistance for our community, and environment enhancements.

THANK YOU!

We extend our sincerest gratitude to all those who contributed to Walnut Farm Montessori School with an Annual Fund gift, an in-kind gift, or a gift of service with your invaluable time or talent. For those who donated, your generosity ensures that we continue our mission to provide an exceptional education experience that prepares students to enter the world as independent, self-directed, and civically engaged individuals. We are grateful for the support everyone in our community has shown Walnut Farm Montessori School this year.

Disclaimer We have made every effort to include all those who supported the Walnut Farm Annual Fund — and Walnut Farm Annual Giving as a whole — along with other special projects. We sincerely apologize for any errors or omissions. Should you find an error, please reach out to Amanda Phillips at amanda@walnutfarm.org.

Walnut Farm Montessori School (WFMS) Annual Fund Giving Levels

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

Impactor \$5,000 and above
 Inspirer \$2,500 to \$4,999
 Creator \$1,500 to \$2,499
 Innovator \$1,000 to \$1,499

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

Connector \$500 to \$999
 Inquirer \$250 to \$499
 Explorer \$125 to \$249
 Collaborator to \$124

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

Impactors

Gifts of \$5,000 and above

Frank Barbieri and
 Tricia Iboshi
 James Howard Jr.
 Sophia Scott '11
 Amelia Scott '19
 Anonymous (1)

Prajesh Joshi and
 Nitu Gongal
 Nate and Danielle Lyman
 Steve and Lina Scroggins
 Smita (Vadlamani) Sarma
 Venkatesh Vadlamani
 Kyle and Jannae White
 Anonymous (1)

Inspirers

Gifts of \$2,500 to \$4,999

Abhishek Agarwal and
 Jinali Desai
 Charles and Leslie Fletcher
 David and Danielle Guggina
 Amanda Sparks Marsee
 Tim and Ashley Robinson

Innovators

Gifts of \$1,000 to \$1,499

Liz Alsina
 Sean and Kylie D'Hoostelaere
 Matt and Alexandra Hesse
 Jyh-I and Carrie Lu
 Jake and Jennifer Newell
 Eric and Molly Plummer
 Starr W. Snead
 Miles VanVeckhoven
 Dani VanVeckhoven

Creators

Gifts of \$1,500 to \$2,499

Jordan and Sheila Eddy
 Jason and Heather Foitek



CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

Connectors

Gifts of \$500 to \$999

Russell and Katie Bloodworth
Shaun and Rachel Hatch
Runa Howard
Scott and Svetlana Jackson
Mark and Trish Love
Richard Mahan
Spencer and Emily McNelly
Andrew and Kerrey Ann Moll
Bryan and Amanda Phillips
Seidle Family Foundation
Stefan and Peyton Sterns
Gustavo Torres and
Emma Ruane

Inquirers

Gifts of \$250 to \$499

Ernesto and Cristina Batres
David Blancho and
Lindsey Robers
David and Jemma Coleman
Walter and Joy Cooper
Allyson Esposito
Jason and Lynette Goss
Teresa Malies
James Mathis and
Eileen Van Wonerghem
Jeffrey Rieske
Tabitha and
Jennifer Tichenor-Turner
Chidozie Ugwumba and
Chuanbi Xu
Javier and Meagan Zavala

Explorers

Gifts of \$125 to \$249

Rob Baker
Blake and
Alexandra Bornkessel
Azusa Crawford
Marc and Jennifer Crosby
Wei Du and Kat Ran
Alvin and Tricia Hicks
Haoyu Huo and Xiaochan Wu
Leslie Johnson
Harsh Kalsi and
Zuzana Koharyova
Kolby and Paige Kemp



Misty King
Ryan and Diana Martin
Justin and Susan Miller

Collaborators

Gifts to \$124

Tyler and Katelyn Allen
Andre and Amanda Arceneaux
Judy Blahut
Reed and Briana Cooper
Julie and Aaron Fidler
Virginia Force
Dan and Alyssa Gomez
Christy Hrycun
Chi Ibekwe
Whitney Kimbro
Vitaliy Krapivin and
Nataliya Chapovska
Joe Love
Bjarni and Lauren Magnusson
Amy Mills
Kendyll Murray
Sean and Joseph Pao-Wu
Daryk and Emma Pengelly
Irene and Bob Phillips
Kristal Price
Leila Runyan
Kyle and Emma Slone
David and Ashley Spencer
Michael and Jessica Stratford
Jared and Suzanna Styles
Rita Stutzman
Jamie Van Horn
Brandy Wilson
Anonymous (2)



Leadership Donors' Brunch

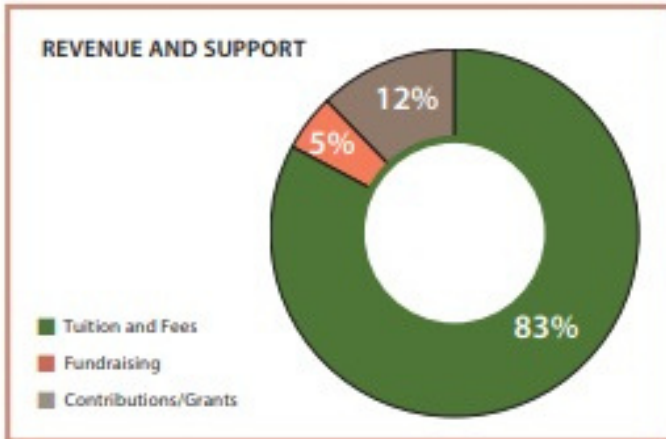
On Friday, September 29, 2023, we honored our Leadership Circle Donors with a brunch at Compton Gardens and Arboretum. At this inaugural Leadership Donors' Brunch, Walnut Farm Montessori School Administrators and Trustees expressed their appreciation for our leadership donors' support of WFMS. These donors contributed over \$50,000 to Walnut Farm Annual Fund in 2022–2023 which was 69% of our 2022–2023 Walnut Farm Annual Fund campaign. Our brunch ended with the unveiling of our 2023–2024 campaign theme — *Build. Grow. Inspire.* — and an inspirational speech by our 2023–2024 Walnut Farm Annual Fund Chairs, Tabitha and Jennifer Tichenor-Turner.



Photos by Allison Cockrum

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Statement of Activities 7/1/2022 – 6/30/2023



REVENUE AND SUPPORT	
Tuition and Fees	\$ 1,382,483
Fundraising	\$ 73,726
Contributions/Grants	\$ 202,610
Interest/Other Income	\$ 6,469
TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT	\$ 1,665,288
Less Donor Restricted Grants	\$ 98,000
EXPENSES	
Payroll/Staff Expense	\$ 1,170,783
Facility Expense (\$96,844 depreciation expense)	\$ 209,149
Program Expense	\$ 58,756
Administrative Expense	\$ 78,919
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 1,517,607
Change in Unrestricted Net Assets	\$ 49,681

Statement of Financial Position 6/30/2023

ASSETS	
Total Assets	\$ 3,678,926
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 3,678,926

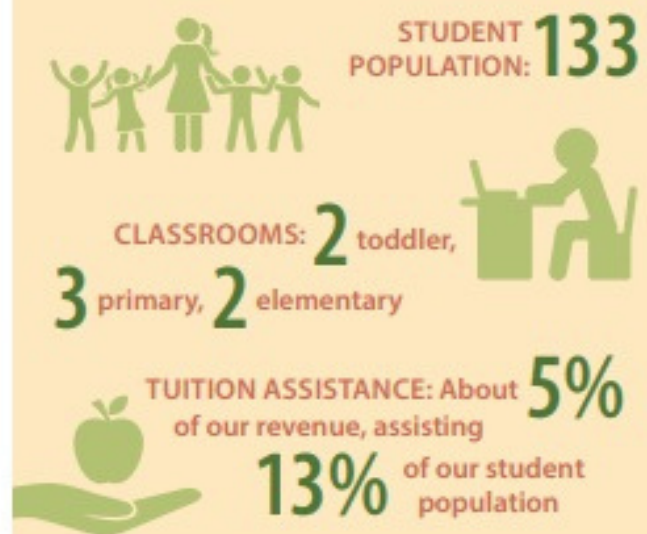
LIABILITIES	
Total Liabilities	\$ 1,558,081
NET ASSETS	
Donor Restricted Net Assets	\$ 70,360
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$ 2,050,485
Total Net Assets	\$ 2,120,845
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 3,678,926

Finance – Year in Review

In addition to creating a new Lower Elementary class, WFMS' good fortune continued by securing additional grants from DHS, Blue+You, and Crafton Tull. These grants, combined with funds from Annual Giving and our *Gather and Grow* event, made it possible to: provide new/updated technology for staff; hire additional staff for support with day-to-day operations and the growing Aftercare program; expand professional development experiences for current and new staff; implement benefit and salary increases while preserving appreciation opportunities for our exemplary staff.

In addition to continuing campus improvements, WFMS began the process for the new Primary addition; was able to grow the school's emergency reserves; and was also able to allocate funds to pay down debts — thereby significantly decreasing the repayment timeline.

NUMBERS 2022–2023





We are Growing... The Primary Building Addition

In 2022-2023, after a careful review of Walnut Farm Montessori School's current and future needs, the Board of Trustees with the support of our Head of School, Lynette Goss, finalized plans for a Primary building addition. In collaboration with architect Dave Burris of Burris Architecture, a 3,000 square-foot addition was developed for construction during the 2023-2024 school year. The Primary addition will be located on the west end of our Primary building, in what was formerly our traditional playground space. In preparation for this new space, our traditional playground was relocated behind the Primary Outdoor Classroom and Elementary backyard. The addition will provide our community with a fourth primary classroom, administration offices, a reception area, and a meeting room. The Primary addition will be paid for with funds the school has been able to set aside over the years for school growth, augmented by a generous anonymous Annual Fund match during 2022-2023, and a special low interest loan. WFMS broke ground on our addition in October 2023.



2022-2023 Year in Review...

- Our staff participated in professional development including:
 - ★ Understanding Autism Seminar
 - ★ Signs of and Accommodating Dyslexia Seminar
 - ★ Read and participated in discussions focused on the book *Positive Discipline* (2006) by Jane Nelson Ed.D.
 - ★ Small group opportunities and webinars offered by the American Montessori Society (AMS)
- Several Lead teachers went to Boston in Spring 2023 to attend the AMS Annual Conference.
- We expanded and enhanced our outdoor classroom experiences for all environments.
- We continued to enhance our offering of Spanish and Music at all levels and additionally offered Art and PE to our third year primary students and our elementary students.
- Our Elementary program grew so large that not only did we need to divide it into two sections but it also started discussions on how we might once again have an upper elementary program at Walnut Farm.
- Jill Bauer joined the team bringing her Montessori training in first-through-sixth grades as we began to retain fourth grade students.
- Kerrey Klatt joined our staff to add an art curriculum for our older primary and elementary children.
- To help better serve our students' needs, we began working with Amy Davis, a Montessori-trained reading and dyslexia specialist. Amy began this work by assessing children's reading abilities and making recommendations to enhance the Montessori language experience for all primary and elementary students.
- Amanda Phillips took on the role of Director of Development and is working with nationally known consultant, Starr Snead, to elevate our fundraising programs in an effort to ensure financial stability for WFMS in the near and longer-term.



SCHOOL YEAR EVENTS

Fall Festival

On October 8, 2022 we welcomed our families, friends, and community to Walnut Farm Montessori School for our annual Fall Festival. Laughter and joy abounded, new friendships were made, and old friendships re-established as everyone enjoyed games, pony rides, face painting, pumpkin decorating, bounce houses, great food and baked goods, a petting zoo, and more!

The Family Association, under the leadership of Paige Kemp and Alex Hesse, with the tireless work of the Fall Festival committee, Lindsey Robers, Greta Rozensweig, and Meagan Zavala, organized and executed this event. We cannot thank our community enough for their generous donations to help support our Fall Festival. The funds raised allowed WFMS to terrace the new traditional playground steps adding safety and beautification.

Fall Festival raised **\$9,229**



Gather and Grow

Gather and Grow offered an opportunity for our community to come together to picnic, sing, and talk about how our school is growing, while continuing to forge community bonds. Our Live Art Auction featured an art piece from each classroom made by students and their guides. Our very own Jamie Van Horn auctioned off each piece with flare. Afterward, WFMS Head of School, Lynette Goss, along with members of our Board of Trustees, shared the very exciting news that we were adding an addition on to our Primary building, creating much needed administration offices, meeting space, and a fourth Primary environment. The funds from *Gather and Grow* supported teacher professional development and tuition assistance for our current families.

Gather and Grow raised **\$1,833**

Community Events

Every year WFMS invites our families to join in a mix of fundraising, community building, and educational events such as: Fall Festival, Peace Day, Montessori Journey, Discovery Nights, Winter Solstice, Earth Day, and a Spring Benefit. We are grateful to everyone who attends and supports these gatherings. We extend a special thank you to the volunteers, teachers and staff who work so hard to bring these events to life — who through these events, create the community that is Walnut Farm Montessori School.

Montessori Journey



Discovery Nights



Earth Day



Winter Solstice



Peace Day



2023–2024 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

To the Walnut Farm Community,

In June, when I began my role as president of the Board of Trustees, my family and I were on the verge of completing our sixth year in Northwest Arkansas. We moved here in the summer of 2017 when our eldest daughter was two and our middle daughter was two months. Today, all three of our daughters attend Walnut Farm. There is much to be grateful for — and much to look forward to — at our wonderful school.

Over the past three years, Walnut Farm has successfully navigated the COVID-19 pandemic while maintaining a strong financial foundation. We are now able to shift our focus to growing the school community.

In October 2023, we began to do just that when we broke ground on a construction project to expand our Primary Building. Once completed, this will allow us to welcome a new class of Primary students and provide our administrative team with much-needed office and meeting space. In partnership with the teacher, staff and family communities, the Board of Trustees also began a new strategic planning cycle to refresh Walnut Farm's six-year goals, working to renew the school's accreditation from the American Montessori Society.

It is a privilege to be able to serve Walnut Farm as we endeavor to meet the needs of our current community, while staying true to the values of our Montessori foundation. The next few years are going to be exciting, and I look forward to the partnership across the community that will make this happen.

Lina Scroggins

President, Board of Trustees, 2023-2025



Lina Scroggins
Board President, 2023-2025

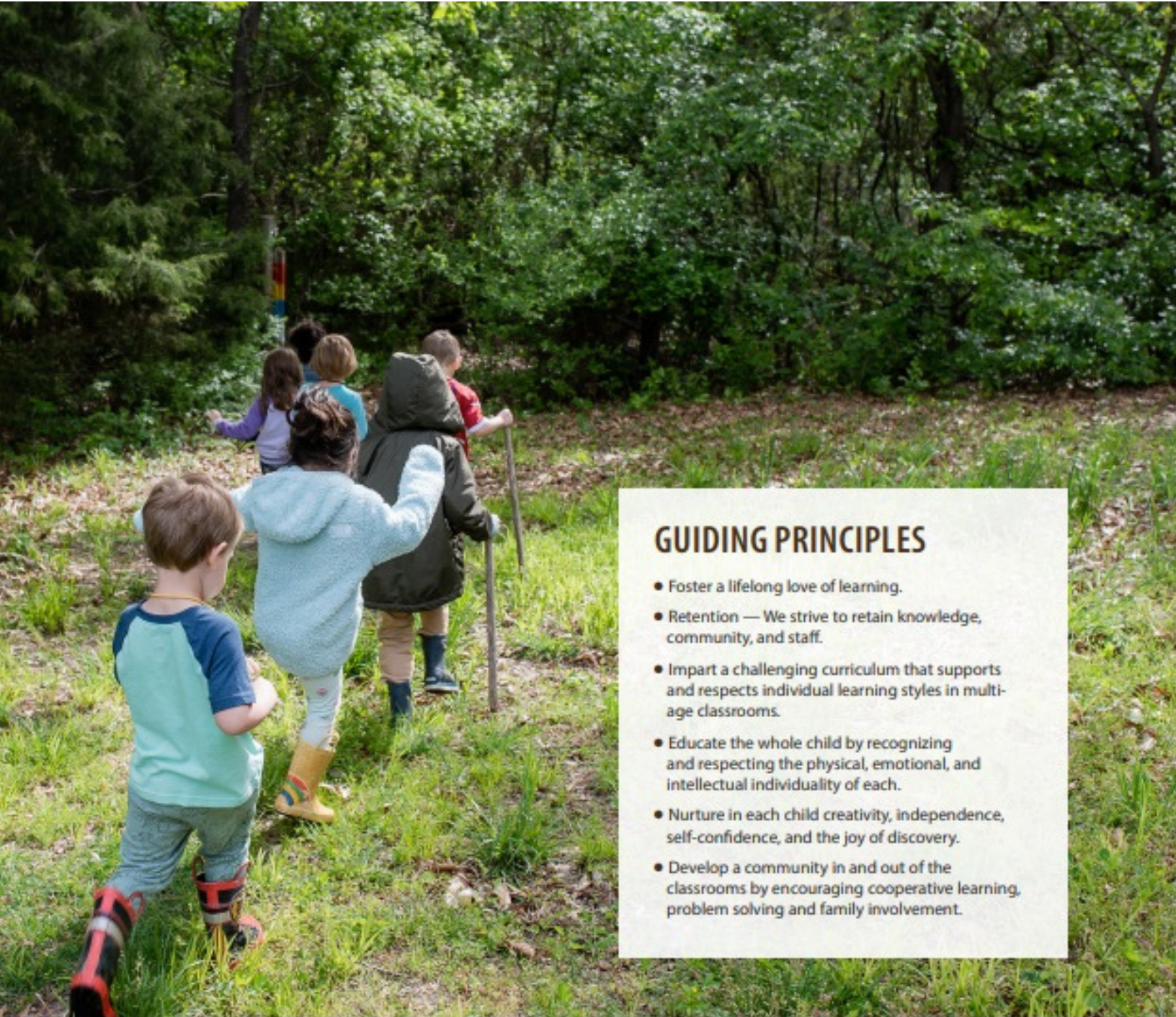
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Chi Ibekwe
Amanda Marsee
Peyton Sterns
Callie Wohletz
Tabitha Tichenor-Turner
Stephen Pauzer
Nikki Tallman

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

As a 501 c3 non-profit organization, Walnut Farm Montessori School is governed by a Board of Trustees. This group has a legal and fiduciary responsibility for the school as a whole, and plays a pivotal role in securing its future. The Board Members bring a diversity of talent and broad practical and professional experience to the work of assuring the school's stability and development.





GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Foster a lifelong love of learning.
- Retention — We strive to retain knowledge, community, and staff.
- Impart a challenging curriculum that supports and respects individual learning styles in multi-age classrooms.
- Educate the whole child by recognizing and respecting the physical, emotional, and intellectual individuality of each.
- Nurture in each child creativity, independence, self-confidence, and the joy of discovery.
- Develop a community in and out of the classrooms by encouraging cooperative learning, problem solving and family involvement.

STRATEGIC PILLARS

GROWTH

- Enrollment, optimal & diverse
- Facilities including classrooms and outdoor areas
- Tools and technology
- Brand in NWA
- Fundraising

PEOPLE

- Students
- Faculty and staff, including Head of School
- Parents/Guardians and families
- Alumni outreach
- Broader NWA community
- Board of Trustees

MONTESSORI

- Full Montessori curriculum
- Maintain AMS Accreditation
- Enhance outdoor Montessori learning
- Build pipeline of trained faculty



About the Annual Report

The Annual Report provides a summary of our fundraising efforts and recognizes gifts received in the fiscal year July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. For the purpose of this report, donors may be listed in more than one constituency group. We have made every effort to ensure accuracy of the information. If, however, an error or omission has been made, please accept our apologies and notify our Director of Development, Amanda Phillips at amanda@walnutfarm.org.

How To Give

Everyone can make a gift online at <https://walnutfarmmontessori.com/financial-giving/> or by cash or check received in-person or via mail. Your gift is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. In addition to making a cash donation to the Walnut Farm Annual Fund, there are other creative ways for you to give back including corporate matching gifts, planned gifts, gifts-in-kind, and gifts of your valuable time and talents. Thank you for thinking about expanding your support to help make our work possible!

WALNUT FARM MONTESSORI SCHOOL

208 E. Central Avenue | Bentonville, AR 72712
www.walnutfarmmontessori.com | (479) 271-9424

What does 2023–2024 hold for Walnut Farm Montessori School?

- Looking ahead to AMS re-accreditation
- Sending two staff members to elementary training in preparation for growing our elementary program and to enhance outdoor classroom experiences
- Having four experienced, primary-trained teachers
- Professional Development including equity training and staff choice training on Positive Discipline in the Montessori Classroom with Chip DeLorenzo
- Construction of the Primary Addition with an estimated completion date of July 2024

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