

# WALNUT FARM MONTESSORI SCHOOL

STATE OF THE SCHOOL

March 12, 2026

# OVERVIEW

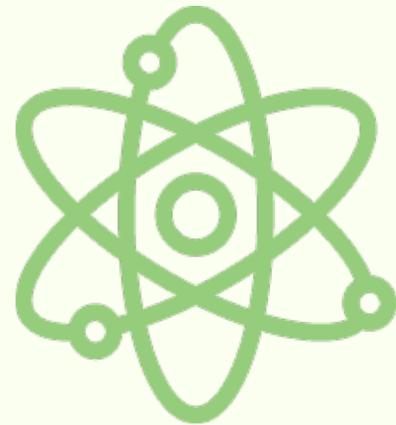
# MISSION

The nationally accredited Walnut Farm Montessori School offers children a Montessori education honoring individuality, authenticity and the natural world. We promote peace and equity, empowering and inspiring all for life-long learning.

# PROFILE

**Founded** 1991  
**Founder** Maren Schmidt  
**Campus** Six acres

**Students** 158  
**Ages** 18 months to 12 years  
**Families** 127



## **Nurtures Learning**

Peaceful, nurturing, and academically inspiring learning environments



## **Outdoor Experiences**

Outdoor environment with dedicated faculty featuring various gardens, woodworking, and science exploration.



## **Nationally Accredited**

Nationally accredited curriculum utilizing a fully-implemented Montessori methodology and philosophy.



## **Supportive**

Supportive, involved, and welcoming parent community.



# ACCREDITATION & MEMBERSHIPS



# GOVERNANCE

Walnut Farm Montessori School is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation.

WFMS is governed by a Board of Trustees.

The Board's responsibilities

- Fiduciary and legal responsibility
- Set vision and strategic goals
- Financial stability
- Hire and evaluate the Head of School

The Head of School is the sole employee of the board. The Head oversees all day-to-day operations of school including personnel, finances, policies, and procedures.

# BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board is comprised of eleven trustees

Four trustees serve as officers: President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary

Trustee contributions

- expertise
- financial gifts
- ambassadorship
- committee participation

Committees of the Board

- Executive
- Finance
- Development
- Governance

# RE-ACCREDITATION CYCLE

AMS Pathway

Accredited School

Year 1

Year 2

Year 3

Year 4

Year 5

Year 6

Year 7

School Updates

Data Collection

Self Study

Team Visit



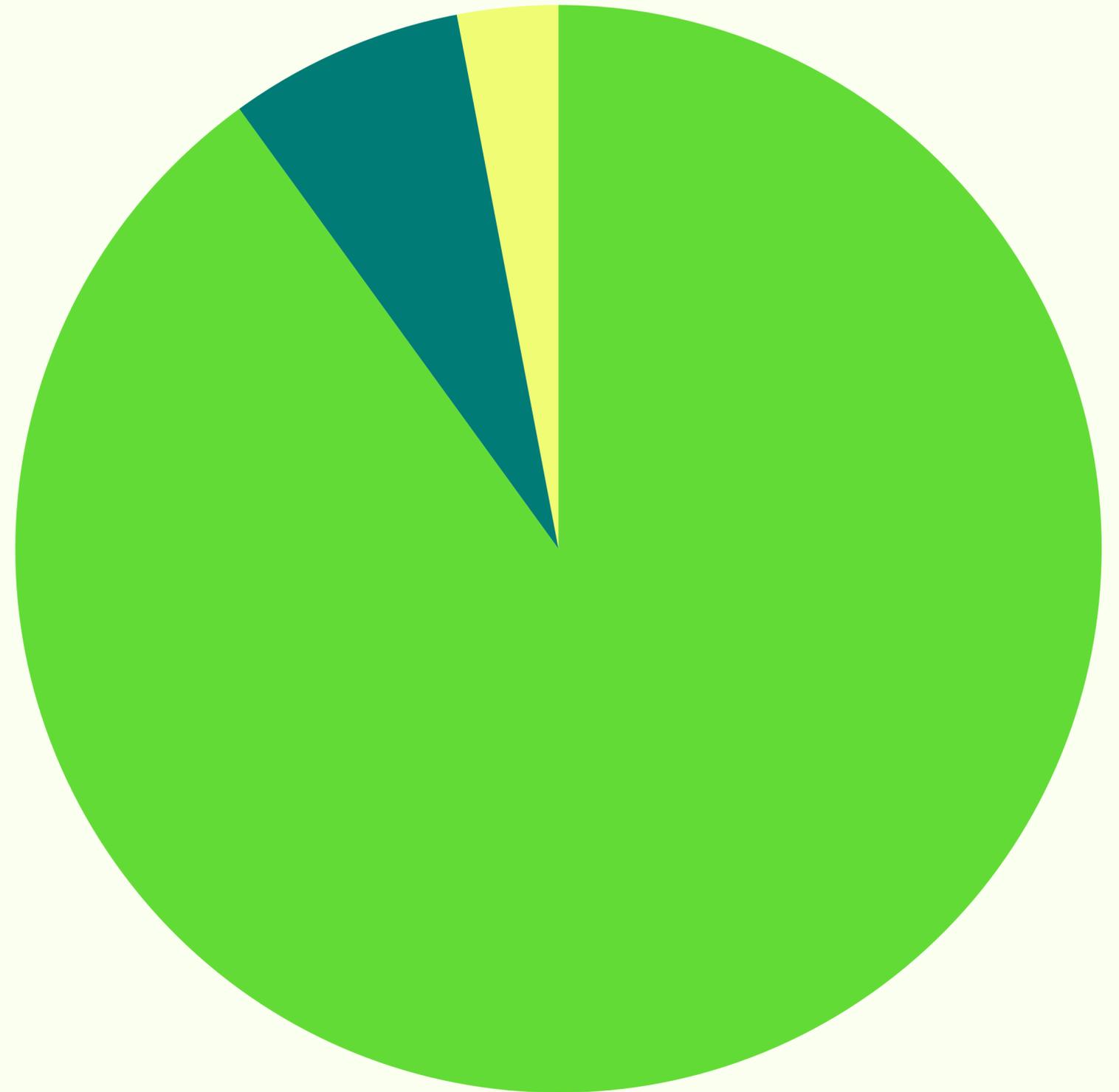
# FINANCIAL REPORT

# ENROLLMENT

Total enrollment grew from 140 in 2023-24 to 156 in 2024-25.

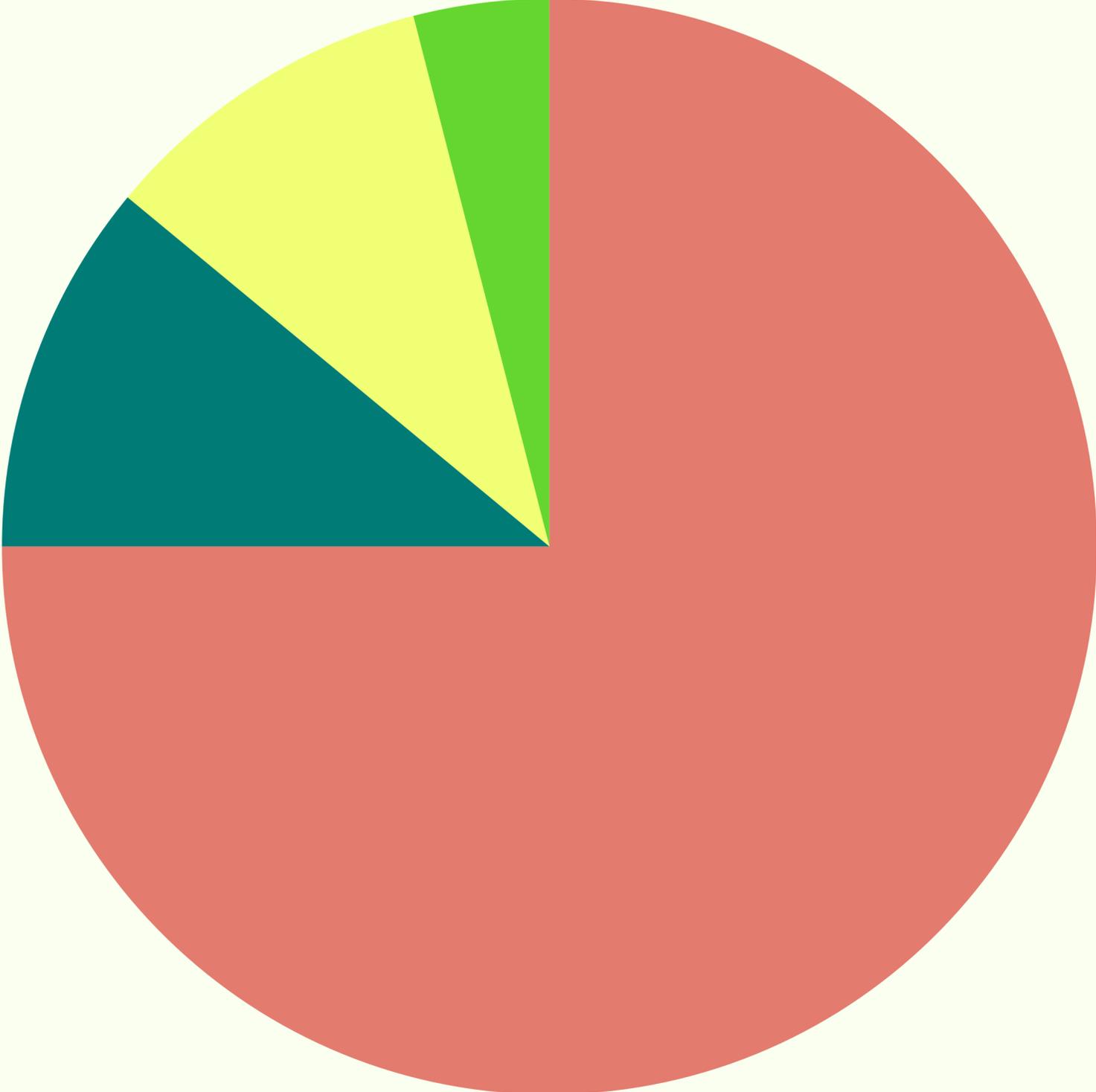
# INCOME

	Tuition & Fees	90%
	Fundraising Net	7%
	Interest & Other Operating	3%



# EXPENSES

● Salaries & Benefits	75%
● General Administration	11%
● Facilities & Campus	10%
● All Other Operating	4%



# FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025

## ACTIVITY

### INCOME

Tuition & Fees	\$	1,683,966
Fundraising Net	\$	135,443
All Other Operating	\$	58,263
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1,877,672</b>

### EXPENSES

Salaries & Benefits	\$	1,363,784
Other Program Expenses	\$	78,670
Facilities & Campus	\$	180,534
General Administration	\$	292,962
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1,915,950</b>

## FINANCIAL POSITION

### ASSETS

Cash & Investments	\$	1,347,044
Receivables	\$	918,631
Prepaid Expenses & Deposits	\$	54,582
Fixed Assets	\$	2,462,829
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>4,783,086</b>

### LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	\$	18,149
Accrued Salaries & Benefits	\$	32,756
Deferred Income	\$	1,638,259
Other Accrued Expenses	\$	57,371
Notes Payable	\$	770,000
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>2,516,535</b>

Net Assets - Unrestricted	\$	2,184,043
Net Assets - Restricted	\$	120,786
Net Revenue	\$	(38,278)
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>4,783,086</b>

# FINANCIAL AUDIT AND REVIEW

The school's prior-year finances are reviewed annually each fall by Pierce Firm, PLLC. A full financial audit is completed every three years.



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030

# STRATEGIC PLAN TIMELINE

The data collection for the 2026-2030 Strategic Plan began in 2024

2024 Fall	Parent surveys Staff survey Board survey
2024 Winter	First draft of plan
2025 Fall	Parent input sessions (four) in October and November Staff input session in November Board input session
2025 Winter	Updated draft of plan
2026 Spring	Published 2026-2030 Strategic Plan

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030

## Staying the Same

1. Commitment to Montessori Pedagogy
2. Dedication to help children prepare themselves for lifelong learning
3. Support for faculty and staff in their delivery of the school's mission
4. Connecting as a community of engaged parents and caregivers.
5. Building partnerships to support families in NWA

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030

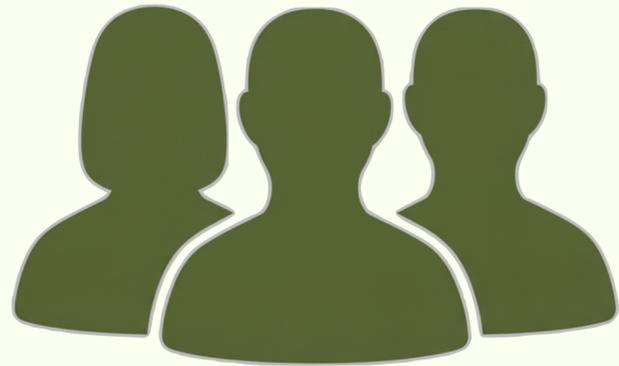
## Areas

1. Student Experience and Programs
2. Faculty and Staff
3. Campus and Operations
4. Advancement and Communications
5. Governance and Finances

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030 : AREAS



Student  
Experience  
and  
Programs



Faculty and  
Staff



Campus and  
Operations



Advancement  
and  
Communications



Governance  
and Finances

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030

## PRIORITIES & INITIATIVES

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030

## Priorities

### Student Experience & Authentic Montessori Programs

The student experience is the heart of Walnut Farm Montessori School. This priority focuses on delivering fully-implemented Montessori programs throughout the school that honor curiosity, independence, and deep learning. By focusing on learning outcomes, expanding experiential and project-based learning, maintaining a low-tech, human-centered environment, and fostering belonging, we ensure every child's journey is purposeful, engaging, and developmentally aligned.



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030

## Initiatives

### Student Experience & Authentic Montessori Programs

Student outcomes and support  
Curricular and co-curricular programs  
Elementary and outdoor program  
Belonging & inclusion



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030

## Priorities

### Thriving Professional Faculty & Staff

Our children thrive when our educators and staff thrive. We are committed to supporting faculty and staff through competitive compensation, strong benefits, professional growth opportunities, and a healthy, respectful work environment. This priority ensures Walnut Farm attracts, develops, and retains skilled Montessori professionals who feel valued, supported, and able to bring their best selves to their work with children.



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030

## Initiatives

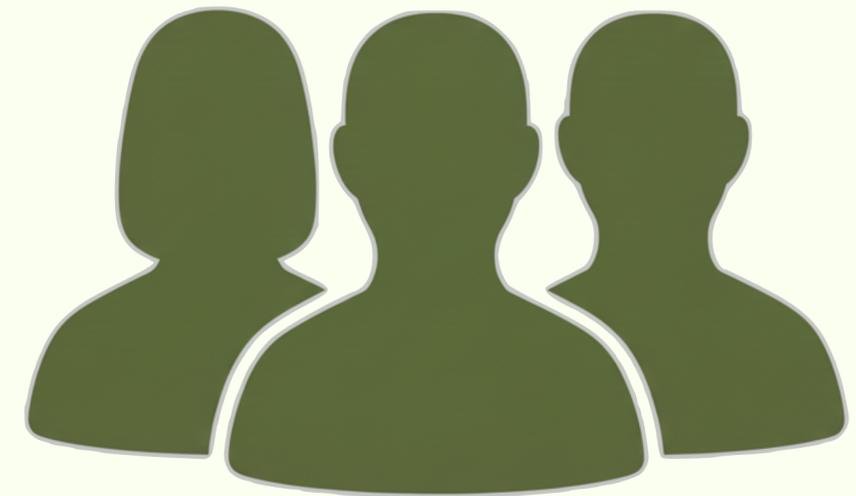
### Thriving Professional Faculty & Staff

Compensation and benefits

Professional growth and wellbeing

Recruiting and retention

Work environment



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030

## Priorities

### Campus Life & Operational Excellence

Our campus and operations should reflect the quality and care of our educational mission. This priority emphasizes thoughtful stewardship of our land, facilities, and systems – including outdoor learning environments, accessibility, safety, and long-range campus planning. By aligning operational practices with educational goals, we create a campus that is welcoming, sustainable, and ready to support future generations of learners.



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030

## Initiatives

### Campus Life & Operational Excellence

- Outdoor learning infrastructure
- Accessibility and compliance
- Campus growth planning
- Operational efficiency



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030

## Priorities

### Growth Through Advancement and Communication

We strengthen our school by deepening relationships and telling our story with clarity and authenticity. This priority focuses on aligning admissions, communications, and fundraising to build enrollment sustainability, broaden community engagement, and secure resources that support our mission. By communicating the value of Montessori education and inviting meaningful participation, we cultivate a connected, invested, and growing community.



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030

## Initiatives

Growth Through Advancement and Communication

WFMS Value Proposition

Storytelling and brand identity

Fundraising and diversification

Enrollment sustainability



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030

## Priorities

### Purpose-Driven Governance and Financial Planning

We commit to strong, mission-centered governance that provides clarity, stability, and long-term vision for the school. Through intentional board leadership, strategic planning, and sound financial stewardship, we ensure Walnut Farm Montessori School remains resilient, values-driven, and well-positioned for the future. This priority centers on governance practices that support leadership continuity, fiscal responsibility, and thoughtful decision-making in the service of children and families.



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030

## Initiatives

### Purpose-Driven Governance and Financial Planning

Strategic planning and leadership

Long-term financial sustainability

Leadership continuity

Outreach, connections, and partnerships



# UPCOMING

An Enchanted Forest Evening  
Saturday, April 11

GrandFriends Day is  
Friday, April 17  
(+ Earth Day Celebration)



**SPIRIT NIGHT**

Wed. April 29, 3:00 - 8:00 p.m.

15% of sales benefit WFMS

THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF THE  
WALNUT FARM MONTESSORI SCHOOL  
COMMUNITY!

