

Friends of the Waltham Family School, Inc.

ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021



DEDICATION



The Friends of the Waltham Family School dedicates this FY2020-2021 Annual Report to Britta McNemar, the Founder of the Waltham Family School who worked tirelessly over the past 18 years to empower English Learner families. Her dedication to WFS families proved that "Together We Succeed." May her work and success be carried forward in this unique program to provide education for future generations.

Happy retirement, Britta!

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Together we
succeed!
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FWFS PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2020 – 2021

As we all navigated the challenges and changing needs in 2020-21 due to implications from Covid-19, the Friends of the Waltham Family School, Inc. (FWFS) reflect on a busier year than ever. This was a year of many "firsts" for both the program and the Friends.

In the uncertainties of the summer of 2020, the Waltham Family School experienced the first year with two "schools." During the summer, several WFS staff and WFS alumni volunteered on the Waltham Public Schools' Reopening Advisory Council along with the WPS physician and nursing team, 83 WPS administrators, teachers, parents, community members and more. WFS reopening plans were based on the Council's guidelines. As a result, the WFS consisted of two groups: 7 families learning in person and 15 families working with tutors one-on-one online.

For the Friends, the year brought several new challenges and opportunities, such as the Chromebook project and virtual events. I encourage you to check out the highlights page to learn more about the successes from the year.

The second half of 2021 brought a very different kind of "first". After founding the Waltham Family School in 2003, Britta McNemar announced that she would be retiring from her position as WFS Program Coordinator in June of 2021. All recognized that it would be no easy feat to find a great successor to Britta! The Friends established a Transition Committee to support Britta in the process and to enable the next leader to successfully assume their new responsibilities.

The Friends Board wanted to honor Britta's 18 years of work at the Waltham Family School and felt that the best way to do so would be to continue to support WFS alumni. The WFS Scholarship Fund was created this year to support Waltham High School graduates who started their educational journey at the

WFS. The scholarship will also support WFS parents who are continuing to educate themselves in a variety of ways. We plan to award the first scholarship in 2022.

The Friends partnered with the Superintendent of the Waltham Public Schools to aid the transition and the hiring of the next Program Coordinator. The Transition Committee participated in candidate interviews and developed a transition plan in concert with the school system and the WFS to successfully and quickly welcome the incoming Program Coordinator into the new role.

The Friends were overjoyed when Jackie Herrera was hired in July this year as the WFS Program Coordinator! As a first generation college graduate in her family, Jackie is both well qualified and well positioned to lead the Waltham Family School. If you missed the 2021 FWFS Annual Meeting, I encourage you to watch the recording on the FWFS YouTube Channel, and hear Jackie's powerful vision for the WFS. You can also learn more about Jackie and her background later in this report.

As a final "first", the Friends are also making transitions. Tracy McMahon will assume the role of President of the Board, after I have been at the helm since the Friends' establishment in 2014. Tracy brings new ideas, passion and a great vision to the Board. I will stay on the Board for the next 12 months to assist. It has been an honor to serve on the Friends' Board, and I am thankful for the many great friendships I have made through my time here.

Thank you!



FWFS President, 2014-2021

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS YEAR

TRANSITION 2021



Britta McNemar & Jackie Herrera

A focus of the Board this year was preparing for and celebrating Britta McNemar's retirement and onboarding a new WFS Program Coordinator.

To this end, the FWFS established a Transition Committee including WFS staff, Board members and Advisory Council members - thank you to Kaytie Dowcett and John Frassica for participating!

As part of the transition process, the committee participated in candidate interviews and developed a transition plan in concert with the school system and the WFS.

The board is overjoyed to have Jackie Herrera take the WFS Program Coordinator role and continue to work with her to support a smooth transition.

VIRTUAL EVENTS

Like the rest of the world the FWFS had to pivot to virtual events. FWFS learned a lot planning a virtual Fiesta, WFS graduation, and Coffee & Conversation.

The Friends are amazed at how well received these virtual events have been - reaching guests and supporters across the country from New England to California. This year's virtual Fiesta! was the largest one-day annual fundraiser and raised nearly \$35,000!



Save the date:
Fiesta with us on April 7, 2022

CHROMEBOOK PROJECT

The FWFS established a Chromebook Task Force in the Fall of 2020 to work on securing Chromebooks and wifi hotspots and to consider how to safely deploy the Chromebooks to the WFS parents. Thanks to the Task Force's hard work and dedication, FWFS purchased 30 Chromebooks and agreed to a subscription for 22 hotspots with T-Mobile.

The use of Chromebooks in the classroom was very successful. The WFS parents incorporated Chromebooks into every aspect of their learning. Volunteers from Bentley University were instrumental in teaching via Zoom workshops and remote 1:1 tutoring. Parents learned to send emails, share photos with family members in other countries, search for information, use Google documents, complete online forms, and participate in Zoom meetings and in Google Meets with their child's teacher.

The FWFS is thankful for the supporters who believe in the importance of alleviating technology inequities. A special thank you also goes out to Mike Chen and Alan Sieving for sharing their ideas and knowledge on the Task Force.



Special thank you to the funders who believe in tech equity in education:

- Foundation for MetroWest & Oechsle Family Foundation
- Anonymous Donor
- Linda Y. King Fund
- Rockland Trust Charitable Foundation

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Statement of Financial Position

FY2020 - 2021

ASSETS

Unreserved Bank Accounts	\$18,029
Investments	\$293,556
Cash	\$71
Reserved per Instructions	\$60,000
Reserved for LCSW	\$90,000
Reserved Technology Grant	\$3,600
Parent Technology Fund	23,660
MetroWest Emergency Relief	\$10,265
TOTAL ASSETS	\$499,181

LIABILITIES

TOTAL LIABILITIES \$0

FY20-21 NET ASSETS **\$499,181**

Statement of Activities

FY2020 - 2021

INCOME

General Donations ***	\$37,921
Major Donations - Restricted	\$20,000
Major Donations - Unrestricted	\$30,000
Readathon Donations	\$7,322
Fiesta Income	\$42,861
Grants *	\$33,960
Interest & Dividends	\$2,021
Scholarship Fund Donations	\$13,654
FY20-21 INCOME **	\$187,740

EXPENSES

Development Expenses	\$55,539
Event Expenses	\$7,769
Administrative & General Expenses	\$6,707
Educational Programs	\$1,902
Waltham Public Schools Supplement	6,260.00
Parent Technology Fund	\$14,735
FY20-21 EXPENSES **	\$92,911

NET INCREASE IN ASSETS **\$94,829**

* Grants Received 2020-2021:

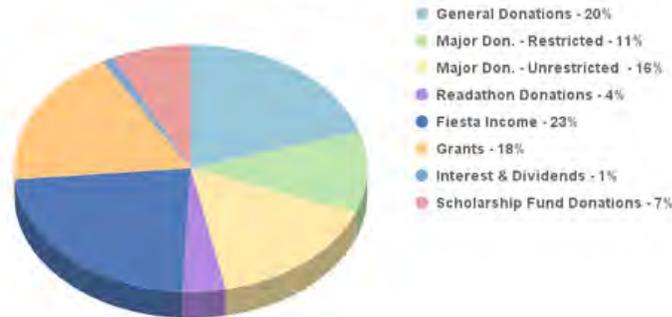
City of Waltham Community Development Block Grant
 Foundation For MetroWest & Oechsle Family Foundation
 Linda Y. King Fund
 Rockland Trust Charitable Foundation

** Unaudited FY20-21 Financial Statement

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

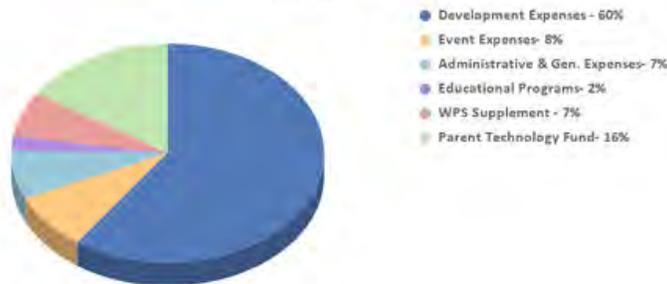
FWFS Income FY20-21

\$187,740



FWFS Expenses FY20-21

\$92,911



Income

Through increased donor outreach and a very successful virtual fundraiser in 2021, revenues grew over the previous year.

Contributing to the growth were grants and donations specifically to purchase Chromebooks for WFS parents, and new technology investment to address inequities in education faced by WFS parents. Additionally, donations were made in honor of Britta McNemar's retirement to the WFS Scholarship Fund.

The FWFS increased revenues by 28% over FY19-20, returning to pre-pandemic levels.

Expenses

Expenses fell this year as staffing was reduced. During the school year of 2020-2021, with a small group of parents in person and limited preschool space, the WFS went from a staff of 12 part-time employees to 5 part-time employees, with the Program Coordinator as the only full-time employee.

Asset Increase

The resulting increase in assets will be needed for this coming year, as WFS staffing is returning to pre-pandemic levels.

WFS BY THE NUMBERS

400+

families have attended the WFS over the past 18 years!



45

high school graduates began their educational journey in the WFS. They began graduating in 2016.

Meet Katelyn & Veronica: From Preschool to College Grads



22

families attended the Waltham Family School in 2020-2021. 7 families in-person and 15 remotely.



THANK YOU PARTNERS AND DONORS!

Among the many great relationships, the Friends continue to be thankful for the City of Waltham for providing the space and the Waltham School Committee for their strong support. We are humbled by the many partners and supporters who continue to show up, to step up and to make a difference in the lives of Waltham

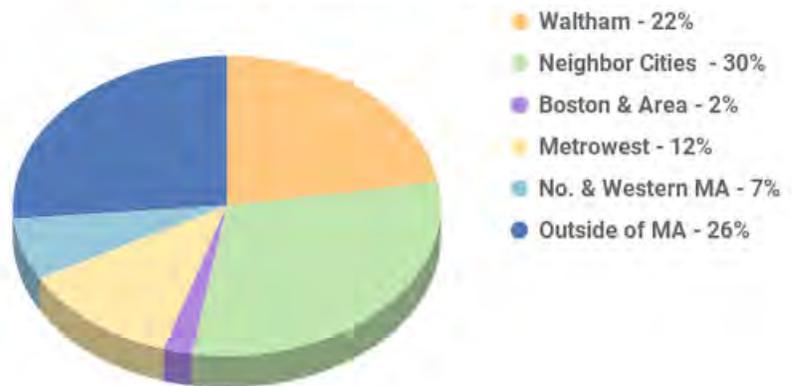
children and families. The Friends thank each and every one of the individual, corporate and foundation supporters who make Waltham Family School's work possible.

As the Waltham Family School's motto says: "Together We Succeed!"

WHERE ARE DONORS LOCATED?

The Waltham Family School may be supporting families in Waltham, but donors come from a variety of places.

Donor Locations 2019-2021



WFS ALUMNA QUOTE

I can do this and I can support my kids!
Because I felt the support in the Waltham Family school, I started to learn English.

NURIA GARZONA SANCHEZ

TOGETHER WE LEARN - GET TO KNOW US

Waltham Family School relies on many people to be successful, such as these four individuals who make a difference in WFS families' lives.

JACKIE HERRERA

WFS Program Coordinator - 2021



I was born in El Salvador.

Why did you want the WFS job? What do you bring to it?

For the past 16 years I have worked with immigrant families in Waltham and in the early childhood education field, therefore when the opportunity became available, I knew that I wanted to be a part of the WFS. In addition to my passion for this type of work, I bring my extended experience and knowledge of working with families and early childhood development.

What is your favorite moment from your introduction to WFS?

My favorite moment was registration week this September when we were able to see families and their children in person. It was really nice to see how excited every family was to start school soon.

What are your dreams for the WFS?

My dreams for WFS are to reach more immigrant families in the community and to provide more learning and leadership opportunities for parents. I would also love to see us have another preschool classroom and more learning opportunities for young children.

Fun Fact: I LOVE cake and ice cream and I love to dance.



DAVID KING

FWFS Board Treasurer 2014–Present

I am a native of Waltham, Massachusetts.

Why did you join the FWFS board?

I was the financial administrator of the original EvenStart grant, joined the original advisory board when it was formed and was a founding board member and treasurer of the Friends. I loved the program from day one.

What is your favorite part about your work on the board?

Seeing the funds spent in a way that helps educate the families.

What have you learned from your experience with FWFS?

I've learned that a small group of dedicated volunteers can do an awful lot to help families in need.

Fun Fact: I taught bucket drumming to 1st & 2nd graders at the Chesterbrook after school program.

DIANA ARGUETA



WFS Alumna and WFS Staff - 2021

I am from Guatemala. I attended WFS in 2019 with my son Carlos.

Why did you come to WFS?

I searched the community for a place where my son could develop and share with children of his age to prepare him for Kindergarten. I found this wonderful place, the Waltham Family School, where my son could have all that and I could continue learning English.

What are you doing now?

I am working for WFS as the Preschool Teacher Assistant.

What was the most important thing you learned from WFS?

That the world is full of wonderful people who teach you that the most difficult wishes can be fulfilled with effort and dedication.

What is your favorite WFS memory?

My favorite memory is Pizza and Pupusas Night, where my family and I felt like we were part of a big family called WFS.

What are your dreams for WFS?

To see the families continue their education after graduation, succeed, and follow their dreams.

Fun Fact: The name of our kitten is Tom Tomate.



MYRIAM MICHEL

FWFS Advisory Council Member

I am a first generation Haitian-American, daughter to two hard-working immigrant parents. I was born in Boston and grew up in Waltham during the 90's, moved away and settled back here with my family in 2010.

I am the Executive Director of Healthy Waltham and Founder and Owner of M&M Elite Events, an event production company.

What is your connection to WFS?

Healthy Waltham has always had a connection with the Family School. We've had nutrition education programs, cooking classes, and have participated in and facilitated an autumn harvest from Waltham Fields Community Farm.

What is your favorite memory or moment from your connection with WFS?

Right before the pandemic, we had an amazing cooking class where we brought in Cooking Matters and we made 3 recipes in 1 hour! The session focused on bringing kids into the kitchen and creating quick healthy meals as a family. Families got to go home with what they made and cookbooks and groceries.

Fun Fact: I can still do a mean one handed cartwheel! Ooh, and I love great food, libations, people, music, and dance - oh you always have to have dance!

FWFS BOARD 2020-2021

Tom Maehl, President
Tracy McMahon, Vice President
David King, Treasurer
Kate Tranquada, Clerk

Members-at-large

Mary Beth Kirsch
Kristen Lucken
Gwen Pojasek
Amy Schaffer
Elaine Wong

Dr. Brian Reagan, Waltham Public Schools *
Britta McNemar, Waltham Family School *
* Ex Officio

FWFS Contractors

Patricia Deveaux, Koundakjian & Company, P.C.
Anne Dugan, AMD EventWorks, LLC.

WFS STAFF

Britta McNemar, Program Coordinator
Susana Saldaña Sanchez, Assistant Program Coordinator
Kathleen Atwood, Interactive Literacy Teacher
Michele Houdek, ESOL Consultant
Julie Leger-Fullerton, ESOL Teacher
Mary Beth Kirsch, ESOL Consultant
Meg Maehl, WFS Preschool Lead Teacher
Eugenia Alvarado, WFS Preschool Assistant



ADVISORY COUNCIL

Liz AlJammal, School Committee
Larry Bailis, Brandeis University
Marina Paige Bartley, WPY, retired
Elizabeth Brach, Educational Consultant
Debra Brush, Family ACCESS of Newton
Gabriela Canepa, Breaking Barriers
Mike Chen, Cisco System
Ginger Conneaney, WHS, ret., WFS Volunteer
Constance Counts, Community Advocate
Katharine Cunningham, The Rivers School
Kaytie Dowcett, Waltham Partnership for Youth
Marianne Duffy, Waltham Public Schools
Rabbi David Finkelstein, Temple Beth Israel
Bill Fowler, Former City Councillor
John Frassica, School Committee
Jane Gately, School Committee
Keith Gilbert, Park Lodge Hotel Group
Dr. Liz Homan, Waltham Public Schools
Tammi Kibler, ServPro
Cynthia Lasker, Community Volunteer
Marya Levenson, Brandeis University
Kelly Linehan, Waltham Public Library
Jeannette MacInnes, Bentley University

Bob Marcou, Marcou Jewelers
Mithra Merryman, Greater Boston Legal Services
Myriam Michel, Healthy Waltham
Bonnie Newman, Consultant, retired
Alla Ovechkis, Rockland Trust
Mary Jo Rendon, Waltham High School
Molyna Richards, Waltham Chamber
Daniela Romero, Boston College Law School
Nuria Sanchez, WFS Alumna
Brian Shea, Bentley University
Delia Soza, WFS Alumna
Mary Sprogell, Waltham Public Schools
Tom Stanley, MA State Representative &
Waltham City Council
Dr. Nadene Stein, Waltham Public Schools
Rachel Theodorou, Brandeis University
Sandra Vasquez, Dual Language School
Pat Vasquezi, WPS, retired
Carlos Videal, Waltham City Council
Jonathan White, Bentley University
Mayor Jeannette McCarthy, City of Waltham*
* Ex Officio

TOGETHER WE SUCCEED

Please join the Friends of the Waltham Family School in the year ahead to prepare children for kindergarten and empower families.

Stay connected

walthamfamilyschool.org, Facebook, Twitter or YouTube

ALUMNI QUOTES

"I don't speak perfectly nor write nor understand everything, but what I learned at WFS was enough for me to understand that there are new horizons that I can have and that I can learn a lot more. I can help my children and work without shame for not speaking the language and knowing that I can learn a lot more. Thanks for everything, Waltham Family School."

Eliane, WFS Alumna



"I remember that when I first came here, I didn't even know the alphabet. Maybe I will not have accomplished as much as I would have liked this year because of the pandemic. This is not the end. I will continue achieving the goals I had when I entered this place."

Eva, WFS Alumna

"WFS changed my life since the first day when I came into this classroom. WFS makes us feel loved, protected, valued and able to reach our goals. When I arrived in the US, I didn't understand anything. Now I feel happy and proud of myself."

Glenda, WFS Alumna