

## 2021–2022 GRATITUDE REPORT



## ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY SEPTEMBER 1, 2021–AUGUST 31, 2022

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION. SUPPORTING STUDENTS.

## Thank you.

You made this happen— the generosity of this community continues to propel innovation, equity, and leadership for over 18,000 students, and 1,000 educators in Bellevue.

In the first full year since our community confronted the pandemic, school resumed as an in-person experience, yet felt anything but normal. While on the outside it was school as usual, inside kids were still struggling with learning loss, pandemic stress, and many forms of readjustment academically, socially, and emotionally. With your continued support, the Bellevue Schools Foundation was able to fund critical programming, reaching kids where they were, with the tools needed to excel as students and citizens. As a community and foundation, we have been able to fund innovative programming, additional curriculum components, and resources otherwise unavailable through local, state, and federal money. Most significantly, in our opinion, our collective investment in comprehensive, on-site mental health support for our students helped create a safer learning environment, and allowed for the education of our students to continue more mindfully and more effectively.

We are thrilled to share with you some of the highlights that you, in partnership with the Bellevue Schools Foundation, made possible for our students in the 2021-2022 school year in this report.

Thank you for your continued support of each and every student here in the Bellevue School District. We look forward to your partnership so together we can continue to invest in our students, the future leaders of tomorrow.



Ulm Z

Allison Frey Bellevue Schools Foundation Board of Trustees President: 2021–2022 School Year



Juliet Buder Bellevue Schools Foundation Executive Director

## Mission & Beliefs

The Bellevue Schools Foundation promotes and funds the best possible learning opportunities for ALL students in Bellevue's public schools.

## We Believe ...

- ... that education is a foundation for opportunity, growth and success in life.
- ... that every child in our community has a right to the best education available anywhere.
- ... that structural and systemic inequities perpetuating discrimination must be dismantled.
- ... that strong, healthy schools contribute to a strong, healthy community.
- ... that continuously pursuing best practices and piloting innovative educational ideas are essential for Bellevue's public schools to be leading providers of world-class education.
- ... that private support for our public schools makes the difference in our schools ability to provide the high quality education all children in our community deserve.
- ... that the Foundation is uniquely positioned to be a catalytic agent of positive change and advancement in Bellevue's public schools.





The impact of the Bellevue Schools Foundation over forty years is found in the countless stories of students and families where Foundation funding has made the difference. Students inspired by a book purchased for a classroom library, college graduates whose positive college experience was due to the support of the Naviance platform, students who received counseling intervention and support following a mental health assessment screening, students who find a passion for technology in coding lessons, and the list goes on, all connected to the Bellevue Schools Foundation.

## John Harrison

Executive Director for District and Community Affairs Bellevue School District

## Thank you for helping students



**6,688** students received mental health screenings.

**135** students worked with counselors to develop safety plans.

**372** students received therapy with a counselor.

**93%** of students reported increased coping skills.



**20** schools received grants for teachers and students; Chinese arts, glass fusing, toymaking, music coaches, special education teacher kits, foreign language books, and more.



**27** part-day preschoolers received financial support to attend full or extended work day slots.

**90%** of families reported that access to affordable early learning improved their family self-sufficiency.



**14,247** books were provided to 150 elementary classrooms.

New electronic and audio books were made available to **18,079** students, including those with special needs.



**3,859** PreK-8 students studied computer science at 19 elementary and 6 middle schools.

**91%** of 4th grade girls and **92%** of boys reported that they can create things with computer science, coding, or technology.



## through a dynamic year!



**26** teachers earned a new or renewed National Board Certification.

4 districts in the country have over **40%** of teachers with a National Board Certification, and Bellevue is one of them.



**167** 7th–12th grade students connected, were inspired, found support, and were taught by men and women who identify like them racially, culturally, and socially.



**\$11,000** for the cost of training district and Odle staff after the tragic death of a student by suicide. In spring 2022, after only two months of implementation, 53% of Odle students reported using one of the emotional problem-solving skills they had learned through the program with the previous two weeks.



**\$40,000** supported new and developing programs in phonetic awareness, artists in residence, robotics, and violins and violas for 5th graders.





## IN HER OWN WORDS: Rosie's Story

Hello my name is Roselina Aguilar, but I go by Rosie. I wanted to share my story and why I believe the Mental Health Assistance Team should stay in the Bellevue School District. I am from Mexico and I have been in this country for only one year. During the pandemic, I wasn't well mentally. One of my best friends took his life and I fell into a deep depression. The pandemic did not help and I was isolated. There was a point where I also tried to take my life. Thanks to my brother who found me, I failed. My mom told me it was better for me to be here with her, so I came to Washington.

I moved to a new neighborhood and a new school with new people. I still didn't feel well. I was still depressed, and I just wanted to die. I fought with my mom every day, and she also got frustrated because she didn't know what to do or how to help me. I didn't want to live anymore and had no hope of getting better.

It was in October 2021 that I met Ruth. We met because it was the day the counselors gave a lesson in my chemistry class on how to recognize signs of suicide. I immediately felt provoked by the topic. I thought about my friend. I thought about myself. I left the class because I could not sustain all the excitement. A counselor tried to speak to me, but I didn't speak English. So, they called for Ruth. She brought me to her office, helped me calm down, and told me she was here to help. The fact that she spoke Spanish made me feel comfortable right away and I could trust her.

She told me that at school I could get counseling to help relieve my depression and anxiety, using a therapy called cognitive behavior therapy. At first, I didn't know if I wanted to do this. But I also didn't want to suffer anymore, so I gave it a chance. She explained to me that cognitive behavioral therapy is all about thoughts, emotions, and behavior, and taught me to be flexible with my thoughts so I don't feel so bad. It also taught me that to help us feel better we have to do active things, and for me that was always sports. Ruth connected me with the sports coordinator and I signed

I feel like if I hadn't had access to counseling at school, I don't know if I would have someone who could help me. up for the wrestling team. Being part of this team gave me the motivation to keep trying to improve. At first, I was very anxious about being new to a team and not being able to speak English. We used the little triangle to see the way I was thinking and I learned that if I had more useful realistic thoughts, I wouldn't feel so bad about trying new things. This really helped me feel better about speaking English, but it also helped me improve my performance on the team, and more importantly, with depression.

Other things I learned that helped me a lot were deep breathing and how to calm my mind and body in stressful times. We talk a lot about how to take care of our body and how to show compassion when I have a bad day. At the moment I know how to combat negative thoughts and unpleasant feelings in a way I didn't know before. I've learned that my depression is something I'll probably always live with, but it shouldn't stop me from setting goals for my life or doing things that make me happy. Everything is not perfect, but it is much better than where I started with Ruth.

I feel like if I hadn't had access to counseling at school, I don't know if I would have someone who could help me. It was also very helpful to have someone who spoke Spanish and knew my culture as a counselor. It felt natural to talk to Ruth and I am so grateful for all the things she has taught me. She showed me that I am strong and resilient when I didn't believe it. And I don't want to die. Now I see a future for myself, maybe in a psychology career where I can also help people like me. I know she's helping other students too, and I think having access to counseling at school is reaching a lot of students who otherwise wouldn't have asked for help.



Thank you,

## Rosie

10th grade student at Interlake High School

# MENTAL HEALTH NATERS

## Computer Science





Computer Science has never been more important for our students than it is right now. As we look toward the future, we know that the skills that students learn in their CS program will serve them throughout their schooling and into a wide range of careers. We also know that we live in a community where

some students have vast access to CS learning outside of school, while many of our students are not afforded the same opportunities.

This is why our program has the lofty goal of reaching **all** students. Computer Science gives creative voice to students in a new way. It helps students understand the technology-rich world around them. It opens doors and levels playing fields. It builds a skill set that student need as they set out to Investigate the World, Recognize Perspectives, Communicate, and Take Action as globally competent change-makers.

We commit to continue to expand and improve our program to increase access to Computer Science by providing opportunities to authentically engage in Computer Science with a focus on computational thinking and global competency, in order to provide a meaningful and equitable opportunity for all of our students to be creators of their future world.

## Yusra Obaid Middle School STEM/Science Developer

Dani Ward K-5 Computer Science/Science Developer







## **Inclusive Libraries**

The Inclusive Libraries grant has provided classroom library books to almost 400 K-5 classrooms, each receiving over 100 books and the building of a digital library all K-12 students can access. In response to receiving the inclusive libraries, a K-5 educator shared in response, **"Not only do these books enrich, inform, and entertain our students, they serve as mirrors and windows to the world! Thank you for seeing the value and necessity of culturally responsive texts! SO appreciated!"** Another educator shared, **"Thank you so much for these amazing books. I'm incredibly thankful that my classroom library now has so many more culturally responsive books that my kids can see themselves in and learn from different perspectives and experiences. The books are beautiful and will be well loved by students for years to come! They will also spark many great lessons and discussions in my classroom."** The Inclusive Libraries are a source of rich literature, as we collaborate on our district's Strategic Plan to cultivate culturally competent and globally aware students through an education that supports each and every student.

## National Board Certification

Pursuing National Board Certification is a deeply impactful professional development experience that educators voluntarily choose. It continues to impact their teaching and their students long after certifying, as the skills that were learned and/or enhanced during the process only continue to strengthen with time and experience. The National Board process gives educators time to analyze and reflect on their teaching practice and the impact it has on their students' academic and social emotional learning. Every child deserves an accomplished teacher and we are grateful for the Bellevue Schools Foundation's commitment to our success. 66

I chose to pursue my National Board Certification to strengthen my understanding of student learning and enhance my teaching practice.

Laura Lavaris, NBCT, 5th Grade Teacher, Medina Elementary



I would like to express my gratitude to the Bellevue Schools Foundation for their generous support of teachers pursuing National Board Certification in the Bellevue School District. Providing a cohort, mentor, and videographer provides a tremendous help to educators who wish to demonstrate their accomplished teaching practices. Being recognized by the prestigious National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is an honorable achievement and teachers are very appreciative of the support provided by the BSF and Sherry Ladd Endowment. Thank you for helping us grow as reflective practitioners in support of students in Bellevue, Washington!

Heidi Von Tersch, 2022-2023 National Board Candidate, Second Grade Teacher, Puesta del Sol Elementary



## **BOOM Experience**

I can say that exactly one year ago, I felt lost. Every friend I had seemed to feel the same way: always stressed, burnt out from loads of homework, lack of motivation to get anything done, struggling with mental health issues which they denied, and most of all, in need of reassurance that they were



not alone. That day I was sitting in math class. Don't get me wrong. I genuinely love math class, but that day I totally wasn't feeling it. AHHHHH! When is the lunch bell going to ring? Man, when can I get out of here?! I was screaming internally, a mild case of avolition slowly eating me bit by bit. As I was contemplating what got me to this mental state, the bell rang. Finally!

The story from here is pretty simple. I found a cool-looking poster on a wall while trudging over to the lunch line and thought "Huh this is interesting." I decided to opt-in. I needed to get myself involved in new things to give purpose to my life. It was an incredibly helpful decision. BOOM, Breaking Out of the Margins, has helped me in countless ways, but I want to talk about the ones which I think define me currently.

I just got back from a three-year trip to India where I lived, studied, and experienced the other side of the world for most of my elementary and middle school years. But wherever I went, there was something that always followed. Shyness. I know! Crazy right? It stuck with me even after I was thrown into a completely new world, left to climb from the bottom of the social ladder of recognition constantly. BOOM really did help me do so, and I can officially say that a year later I am now a proud ambivert, with close to zero self-esteem problems. Considering that the pandemic just ended that year, and I knew nobody at a new school, I was super shy. I made a few friends here and there and often buried my passion for leadership roles and urges to do something different out of fear of being shunned.

From my very first experience to the very latest, BOOM has been constantly reassuring me that I was never alone. It helped me discover amazing people my age and older from across the school district and the city of Bellevue. BOOM gave me a safe and comfortable place to practice speaking about my ideas and learn to help other people feel the same. These nurtured qualities are what nudged me into breaking out of my shell of shyness. They are the sole creditors of some of my leadership roles, such as being elected for freshman student council, winning trophies in Speech and Debate Tournaments, or joining an internship with 4Tomorrow, an awesome non-profit partnered with BOOM. To anyone who is considering joining this experience, I strongly urge you to do so right now. Even if you are already great at public speaking, even if you don't think you are struggling, and even if you feel like you found purpose, BOOM is still a remarkable community to further discover yourself, others, and countless new opportunities.

Ruhi Gadde, Freshman at Bellevue High School

## BSF Supports Wellness Program for District Employees

BSF funded an **Employee Wellness Program Pilot** sponsored by Bellevue School District in the spring of 2022 facilitated by **Be Meditation**, a local woman-owned organization which supports building community, peace, equality, and global awakening through mediation. Twenty-two employees took part in the pilot. The feedback after the program concluded was overwhelmingly positive. Over eighty percent of those participated would recommend the program to colleagues.

"

I am happier teaching than I thought I was before the program. I have re-sparked my joy for teaching and truly love my job. Huge results.

## An Inspiring Author Visit

"I want to thank BSF for paying for the students to have this opportunity. I got to meet my favorite author. I am so grateful!". These words from one of our many third, fourth and fifth grade students who got to have a visit with Christine Day demonstrate the joy and gratitude our students have for these special opportunities. It's not every day our students get to meet someone who they look up to or that feels like a celebrity. Without the generosity of BSF and all their donors, these simple moments of joy that will stick with our students for years to come, would not be possible. It is our sincere hope that these special encounters spark something in our students, whether that is a love of reading, writing or interest in a specific topic. Thank you for being an integral part of sparking the joy of learning in all our students.

Elizabeth Roberts, Teacher-Librarian



## Responding to Urgent Needs

In November 2021, the Odle Middle School community suffered the tragic death of a student by suicide. In the aftermath of this tragedy, the school implemented a comprehensive post-vention plan that included the implementation of "DBT Skills in Schools," a universal social emotional learning (SEL) program designed for middle/high school students in educational settings. The program is based on the following principles: "Youth mental health problems are getting worse, including self-harm and suicidal behavior. Our current education and mental health system is based on a 'waiting to fail' model, meaning kids have to 'fail' or be struggling in order to receive formal support. We developed a solution to bring mental wellness strategies to schools that will educate the whole child, not just the academic child, and allow youth to obtain their education potential today and become leaders for tomorrow."

The Bellevue Schools Foundation donated \$11,000 for the cost of training district and Odle staff with University of Washington Professors, Dr. James Mazza and Dr. Elizabeth Dexter-Mazza on *DBT Skills in Schools: Skills Training for Emotional Problem Solving for Adolescents (DBT-STEPS-A).* The training for 10 Odle staff members and three District Teaching & Learning colleagues provided the foundational knowledge of DBT STEPS-A. The training included background information on how the DBT STEPS-A curriculum was developed, potential barriers and issues in implementation, solutions for student related challenges, and implementation strategies for teaching lessons. It also provided explicit instruction for teaching the four domains of the program: mindfulness, distress tolerance, emotion regulation, and interpersonal effectiveness. The program at Odle was called STEPS for SUCCESS. In spring 2022, after only two months of implementation, 53% of Odle students reported using one of the emotional problem-solving skills they had learned through the program at some time "in the last two weeks."

## Thank You INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY FOUNDATION DONORS

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> Supporting the communities in which we live and work is a top priority. Investing in our children just makes sense.

**Bill DeJarlais**, GLY Construction

## Statement of Activities & Changes in Net Assets

For the twelve months ending August 31, 2022

### **Support & Revenue Sources**

| Individuals             | \$808,683   |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Corporations            | \$212,238   |
| Grants                  | \$431,000   |
| In-kind Contributions   | \$155,509   |
| Total Support & Revenue | \$1,607,430 |
| Net Investment Loss     | -\$449,657  |
| Net Support & Revenue   | \$1,157,773 |

### Expenses

| Program Services          | \$1,067,787 |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Supporting Services       |             |
| Development & Fundraising | \$353,364   |
| General & Administrative  | \$190,870   |
| Total Expenses            | \$1,612,021 |

| Change in Net Assets           | \$4,591     |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Net Assets Beginning of Period | \$3,521,226 |
| Net Assets End of Period       | \$3,516,635 |

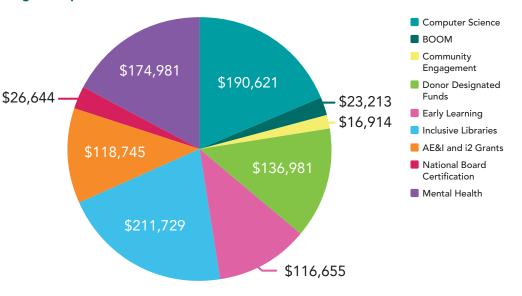
## **Statement of Financial Position**

As of August 31, 2022

| Cash & Cash Equivalents             | \$265,809   |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Pledges Receivable                  | \$12,916    |
| Operating Reserve                   | \$399,779   |
| Funding Forward Reserve             | \$821,510   |
| Endowment Investments               | \$919,678   |
| Donor Restricted Investments        | \$488,390   |
| Temporarily Restricted Scholarships | \$277,341   |
| Other                               | \$5,542     |
| Total Assets                        | \$3,190,965 |
|                                     |             |

| Total Liabilities              | \$123,987   |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Total Net Assets               | \$3,066,978 |
| Total Liabilities & Net Assets | \$3,190,965 |

## **Program Expenses**



## **Expense Ratio**

|  | Program<br>Services | Supporting<br>Services | Total       |
|--|---------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| Gross Expenses   | \$1,067,787         | \$544,234              | \$1,612,021 |
| Less:<br>In-kind expenses  | \$51,303            | \$104,206              | \$155,509   |
| Offset by certain<br>other income:<br>Sponsorships                           |                     | \$175,359              | \$175,359   |
| Net Expenses   | \$1,016,484         | \$264,669              | \$1,281,153 |
| Net Expense Ratio<br>(supporting services expenses as a % of total expenses) |                     |                        | 20.66%      |

## Total Support & Revenue: \$1,607,430



## Total Grants & Expenses: \$1,612,021



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