



WILLOWWIND
S C H O O L

2024-2025 Annual Report

ROOTED & GROWING



Celebrating where we've been. Nurturing where we're going.

TABLE OF CONTENTS



Deepening Our Roots -	2
Mission & Core Values -	3
Our Community -	4
Faculty, Staff & Board -	5
Year in Review -	6
Bright Blossoms -	8
Introducing STEAM -	9
Celebrations of Learning -	10
Student Performance Metrics -	11
The Willowwind Advantage -	12
Nature Playscape -	13
The Fruits of Your Generosity -	14
Donors -	15
Financial Overview -	16
Rooted in Service -	17
Future Growth -	18

FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Deepening Our Roots



Dear Willowwind School Community,

The 2024–25 academic year was extremely exciting! It was filled with growth and renewal. Our building has a fresh and vibrant look with new siding and landscaping. Our new garden is producing crops, as our students are learning about agriculture and sustainability. Our new nature playscape is taking shape and is ready for play. When children interact with nature, they foster increased sensory exploration and cognitive growth, while developing real-world skills. Maria Montessori understood the important role nature plays in child development, and outdoor education is a very important part of Willowwind's identity.

"The land is where our roots are. The children must be taught to feel and live in harmony with the earth." —Dr. Maria Montessori

Our school truly is redefining progressive education. Next year, we will see our students using their creativity on our 3D printers in the new STEAM lab. I cannot wait to see what they design and produce. Every day, our teachers develop amazing, inquiry-based, and hands-on educational experiences for our students. Each experience is designed to meet their social, emotional, and academic needs, resulting in Willowwind students being creative problem solvers and critical thinkers. Our students communicate effectively and have real agency and voice in their learning. They are able to reflect upon their individual learning and advocate for themselves and their peers. Our students are truly becoming stewards of their community.

Our pre-school through grade 6 campus is made up of a diverse community of globally-minded families and teachers focused on both holistic and student-led learning. Preparing our students for life is always our primary focus. Every student is unique, and it is our job to help them explore their passions and individual excellence. This last year, we reintroduced Spanish as a second language to our community, and the program will continue to develop in the years to come. Our inclusive culture is always focused on valuing the diversity in both Iowa City and the broader world around us. We will continue to celebrate the unique diversity of our community each and every year.

Our school will continue to grow our programs promoting health and wellness, art and performance, and science and engineering. Our students are our inspiration for growth, and their needs guide our innovation. The future looks very bright for Willowwind, and we will continue to support and challenge our students moving forward. In addition, all of our auxiliary programs will continue to provide new and exciting offerings. This will directly benefit our before-and-after school program, enrichment program, and summer camps. As always, we will continue to offer our programs and services to our families and also to the greater Iowa City community at large.

Thank you for your continued support! If you ever need anything, my door is always open.

Warm regards,
Stacy Stoyanoff
Head of School



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Willowwind School is located on the homelands of the Ojibwe/Anishinaabe (Chippewa), Báxoje (Iowa), Kikapú (Kickapoo), Omāēqnomenēwak (Menominee), Myaamiaki (Miami), Nutachi (Missouri), Umo'ho' (Omaha), Wahzhazhe (Osage), Jiwere (Otoe), Odawaa (Ottawa), Pá'ka (Ponca), Bodéwadmi/Neshnabé (Potawatomi), Meskwaki/Nemahahaki/Sakiwaki (Sac and Fox), Dakota/Lakota/Nakoda (Sioux), Sahnish/Nuxbaaga/Nuweta (Three Affiliated Tribes) and Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) Nations. The following tribal nations, Umo'ho' (Omaha Tribe of Nebraska and Iowa), Pá'ka (Ponca Tribe of Nebraska), Meskwaki (Sac and Fox of the Mississippi in Iowa), and Ho-Chunk (Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska) Nations continue to thrive in the State of Iowa and we continue to acknowledge them. Willowwind School recognizes that it is our responsibility to acknowledge the sovereignty and the traditional territories of these tribal nations, and the treaties that were used to remove these tribal nations, and the histories of dispossession that have allowed for the growth of Iowa City, Iowa State, and the United States.

(Prepared by the University of Iowa Native American Council)

MISSION & CORE VALUES

Willowwind School is a joyful learning community where children develop their unique potential through child-led inquiry.

Self-direction:

We each develop our own unique potential by applying curiosity, goal-setting, and persistence to learning.

Community:

Understanding that we are stronger together, we foster healthy connections among members of the Willowwind community as well as between Willowwind and the broader community.

Flexibility:

We respond with creativity to the needs of our people and educational programs and to opportunities that arise.

Inclusiveness:

We welcome all with kindness and with appreciation for diverse perspectives, circumstances, experiences, abilities, and potential.

Stewardship:

We practice and promote responsible planning and care for the resources of our community and for the natural world around us.

Service:

We respond with caring and kindness to help individuals within our local and global communities.



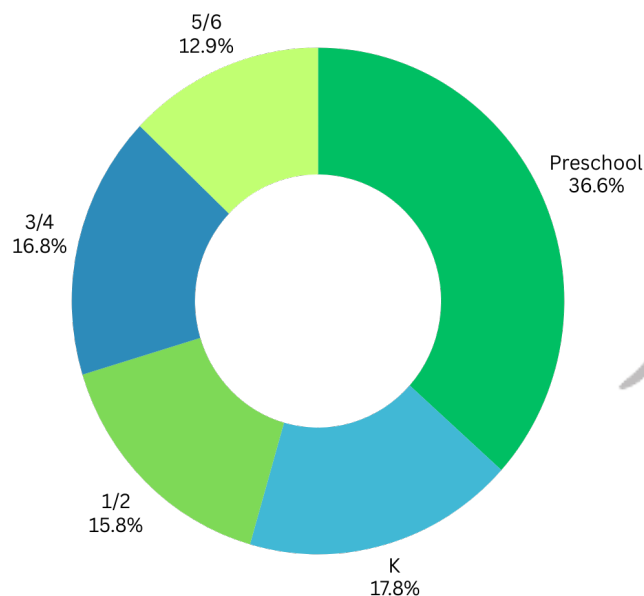
A DIVERSE AND GROWING COMMUNITY

Families from a variety of backgrounds regionally, nationally, and internationally join the Willowwind community each year representing diverse economic and ethnic backgrounds. Every family has a “Why Willowwind” story. Some choose Willowwind because of the Montessori philosophy in preschool or the progressive, project-based learning in our K-6 program. Many are drawn to Willowwind’s creative and inspiring learning environment. No matter the reason, Willowwind families come together each year to support the growth of their children both as individuals and as members of Willowwind’s incredible learning community.

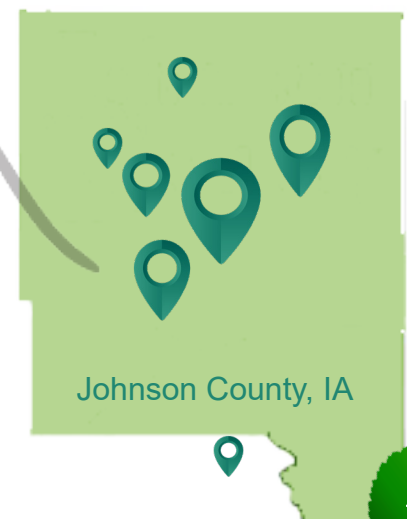
Languages Spoken at Home:

urdu turkish
english nepali
arabic
burmese
korean
mandarin
spanish

Enrollment by Grade:



Geographic Reach:



FACULTY & STAFF

Preschool Lead Teachers

Kaye Lindsley

Veronica Armstrong



Preschool Assistant Teachers

Aneesa Housel

Paige Gerjets

Hwida Awadalla



Kindergarten

Madelyn Cunningham

Jordan Babcock (Assistant)

First & Second Grade

Madison Kaiz

Third & Fourth Grade

Christine Sobocinski

Fifth & Sixth Grade

Ann Creasey

Teaching Artist/Integrated Arts Coordinator

Megan Bishop



Music & Physical Education

Alec Cassatt

Head of School

Stacy Stoyanoff

Assistant Head of School

Lisa Kavanaugh

Director of Admissions and Campus Operations

Rachel Butler

Director of Finance and Business Operations

Anne Ehlinger

Director of Marketing and Community Engagement

Byanca Pruitt

Director of Extracurricular Activities

Laura Townsend

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

President

Dawn Lyons

Secretary

Leah DeGrazia

Treasurer

Steve Morenz

Vice-President

Erin Lane

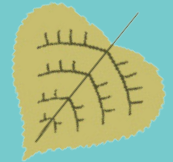
Members at Large

Kammie Galyean Erin Garity

Leslie Nolte Shannon Perteit

Vance Van Daele

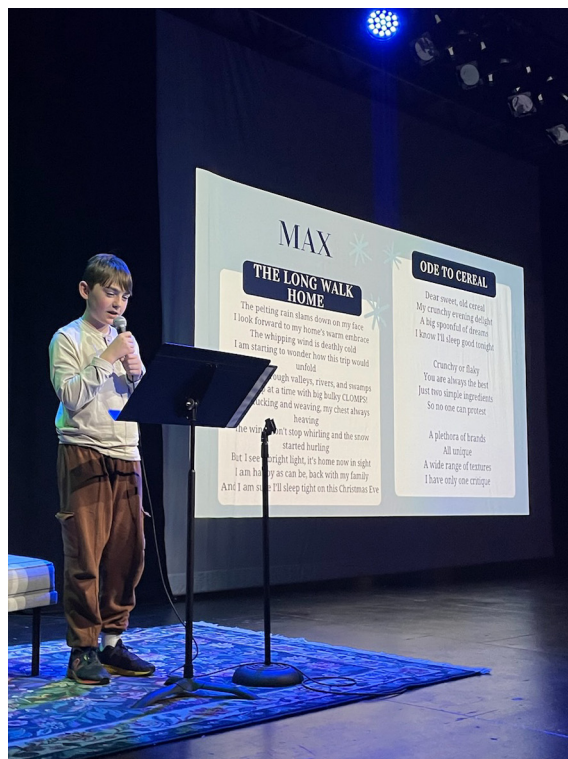
YEAR IN REVIEW



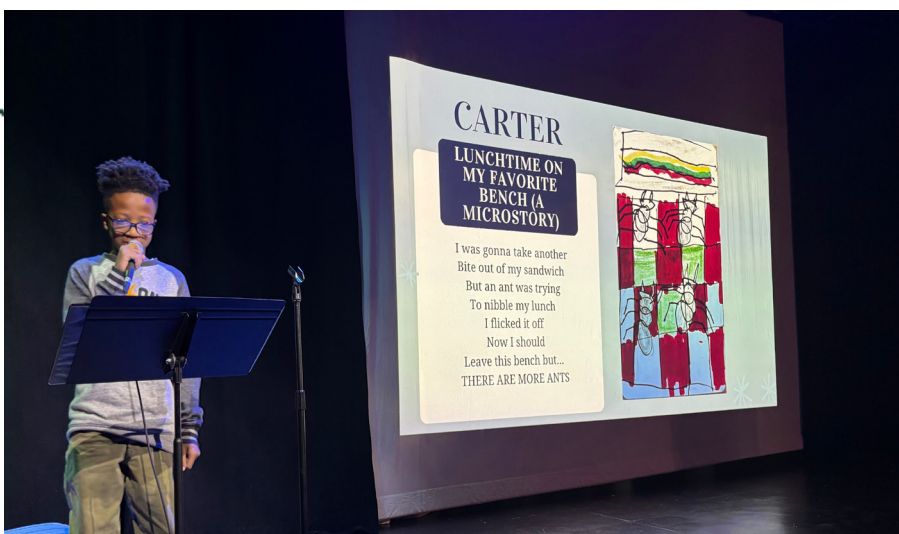
2024–25 was a year full of curiosity, creativity, and community at Willowwind. Our students welcomed a variety of guest visitors who introduced them to exciting new fields—from astronomy and optometry to artistic exploration and STEAM. We opened our brand new STEAM room, and our 3rd–6th grade students brought imagination to life by designing and building their own nature playscape. Throughout the year, beloved traditions like the Thanksgiving Feast, Author’s Cocoa, Harvest Fest, and our spring showcases offered opportunities for families to celebrate student learning and growth. Our 5th and 6th graders proudly ran their student-led Prairie Café and capped the year with a joyful adventure at Camp Edwards. Special events like ASP Pie Day and the glow party added extra fun and magic to the calendar.



AUTHORS' COCOA



Author's Cocoa is one of Willowwind's most cherished traditions, a celebration of student voice, creativity, and courage. Each winter, Kindergarten through 6th grade students take to the stage to share original poetry with an audience of family and friends. This year, we were thrilled to host the event at Riverside Theatre in downtown Iowa City, where our young authors presented their writing. From heartfelt verses to bold, imaginative lines, every student brought their unique voice to life, and we couldn't be prouder of their bravery and expression.



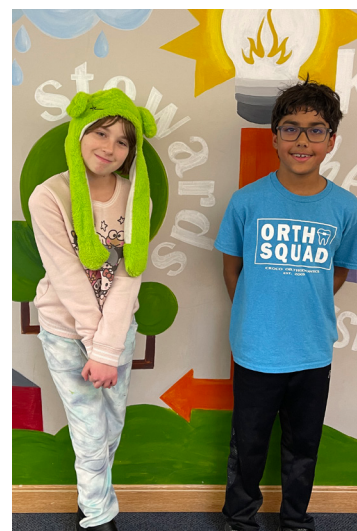


STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS



Two Willowwind students were recognized as winners in the **University of Iowa's annual Hawkeye Haiku Contest!** Their poems stood out among 399 submissions from alumni and friends across 33 states and countries including India, Poland, Sri Lanka, and the United Kingdom. This year's theme centered on "family," with each haiku crafted in the traditional 5-7-5 syllable structure.

Congratulations to Maeve and Jasper, who won for their respective grade levels! In addition, Dasha, Gabby, and Eli received honorable mentions for their thoughtful and expressive work. We're incredibly proud of all our student poets!



Willowwind students shone once again at the **One Book Two Book Children's Literature Festival!** We're proud to announce that Vera (1st grade) and Vance (4th grade) won in their respective grade groups. Vera was recognized in the From the Heart category, judged on creativity, passion, and expressiveness. Vance, earning this honor for the third time, was awarded in The Write Stuff category, which celebrates clarity, structure, and emotional impact.

We also extend heartfelt congratulations to our honorable mentions: Gabby (6th), Amelia (2nd), Rayaana (1st), Sage (1st), Dasha (3rd), Ainsley (3rd), and Rowan (6th). All students were celebrated at the February festival for their exceptional writing and storytelling. We are so proud of their voices and talent!



Willowwind artists were proudly featured in the annual **MidWestOne Art Show** this spring! A total of 19 students from across grade levels selected artwork for display, showcasing the creativity and imagination nurtured in our classrooms. Among them, **Phoenix and Sophia from the 1st/2nd grade class were honored as featured artists** at a public reception hosted by MidWestOne Bank in downtown Iowa City. The event, held in April, brought together families, friends, and community members for an evening of art, celebration, and connection. Congratulations to all of our student artists for sharing their incredible work with the wider world!

INTRODUCING THE STEAM ROOM



This year, Willowwind proudly unveiled a brand new STEAM Room: a creative, hands-on space designed to fuel imagination, innovation, and project-based learning. What was once a storage closet and former art room has been completely transformed by the vision and hard work of Ms. Ann and Ms. Lisa, who thoughtfully curated the space to support student projects and exploration for years to come. The new room features 3D printers, a LEGO wall, every kind of craft supply imaginable, and a custom mural created by Willowwind faculty alumnus and artist Ryan Bentzinger. In the upcoming years, students will be able to dive into this vibrant space to build, experiment, and bring their ideas to life.



The Spring Learning Showcase brought our community together to celebrate the creativity, curiosity, and hard work of Willowwind students. Families and friends joined us on a Thursday evening to explore a wide array of student-led projects developed throughout the semester. Highlights included student-made inventions, human body research, solar system models, community design proposals, and science fair exhibits, each one reflecting deep engagement and inquiry. We are incredibly proud of our students for their efforts and grateful to the teachers and guest judges who helped make this inspiring event possible.



SPRING LEARNING SHOWCASE INTEGRATED ARTS SHOWCASE



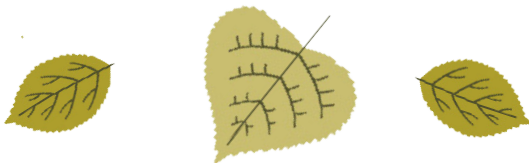
At this year's Integrated Arts Showcase students shared their creativity, collaboration, and learning through the arts. The event featured joyful Preschool Song Performances, imaginative Kindergarten Music and Nature projects, the beautifully crafted Racrunner Collaborative Book Project, and the much-anticipated unveiling of the Owl and Fox Nature Playscape. A wonderful reflection of how integrated arts experiences enrich and connect our school community!

STUDENT PERFORMANCE METRICS (GRADES 3-6)

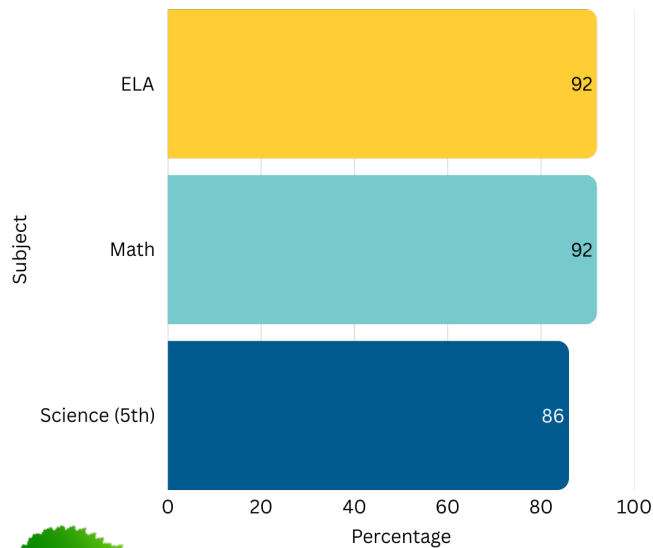
At Willowwind, we are committed to understanding and supporting each student’s academic growth. Our 3rd–6th grade students participate annually in two key assessments: the **Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP)** and the **ERB Milestones Testing Program**. These tools help us evaluate achievement, guide instruction, and benchmark progress against local and national standards.

ISASP RESULTS

As a state-accredited nonpublic school, Willowwind participates in ISASP testing, which is aligned to the Iowa Core Standards and administered statewide. It measures student achievement and growth in core subjects including reading, language, writing, mathematics, and science (5th grade). These results reflect how our students compare with peers in the Iowa City Community School District and across the state, demonstrating Willowwind’s academic strength.



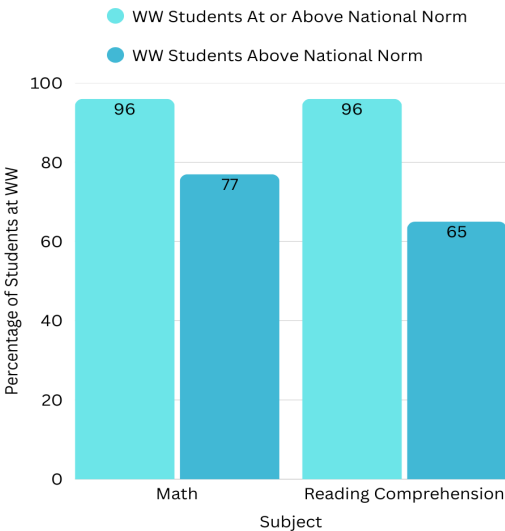
ISASP: Percentage of Willowwind Students Proficient or Advanced



ERB MILESTONES RESULTS

ERB is an independent educational advisory. The ERB assessments are nationally normed interim evaluations used to monitor progress throughout the year in reading comprehension and mathematics. These results highlight the effectiveness of our curriculum and the dedication of our students and teachers.

ERB: Willowwind Student National Norm Comparison



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Professional Learning in Action
This fall, our Assistant Head of School, 3rd/4th grade teacher, and 5th/6th grade teacher attended the PEN (Progressive Education Network) Conference at Wickliffe Progressive Elementary. Through engaging workshops and collaboration with fellow educators, they explored innovative practices in progressive education. Their experience brings fresh inspiration and valuable insights back to our classrooms—further strengthening our commitment to creativity, connection, and student-centered learning.





**Small
Class
Sizes**

**Integrated
Arts
Curriculum**

**Project
Based
Learning**

**Community
Focused**

**Social
Emotional
Growth**

**Outdoor
Education**

THE
ADVANTAGE
WIND



PROJECT HIGHLIGHT: NATURE PLAYSCAPE



During the 2024-25 school year, Willowwind's 3rd-6th-graders brought their vision to life by designing and building a nature playscape on the southeast corner of campus for student use. The playscape includes a tube swing, stage, hammocks, willow huts, an obstacle course, student artwork, and musical elements. The project began in the fall with research trips to local playscapes and online exploration, followed by digital design work with Fred Meyer from Backyard Abundance. In the spring, students worked together to construct the play elements and bring their ideas to reality.

Guided by the dedication of Ms. Ann, Ms. Christine, and Ms. Laura, this student-led project transformed an empty corner of campus into a vibrant space for play, creativity, and connection. The Nature Playscape now stands as a lasting testament to our students' hard work and vision, and will be enjoyed by the Willowwind community for years to come.



THE FRUITS OF YOUR GENEROSITY

TOTAL
DONATIONS
IN 2024-2025:
\$55, 918

3% OF
WILLOWWIND'S
OPERATING
INCOME

This year, donations played a vital role in strengthening the Willowwind community. Your generosity fueled meaningful campus improvements and supported projects like our new nature playscape, creating vibrant spaces for active learning and exploration. Contributions also provided essential scholarship funding, ensuring that Willowwind students in need could continue to learn, grow, and thrive. We are deeply grateful for your generosity and the role you play in our community.



49% OF
WILLOWWIND
FAMILIES
BENEFIT FROM
OUR SLIDING
SCALE TUITION

16% OF
WILLOWWIND
STUDENTS
RECEIVE
FINANCIAL AID



THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR DONORS!

We are deeply grateful for the generous support of our Willowwind donors this year. Your contributions strengthened our programs, expanded opportunities for students, and allowed us to invest in the tools and spaces that make learning come alive. With your help, we enhanced technology, improved facilities, and provided teachers with the resources they need to offer extraordinary learning experiences.

Your generosity also ensured that families facing financial challenges received essential support, and it strengthened our partnerships with community organizations that promote student health, wellness, and joyful learning.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to Willowwind's mission. Your belief in our school has a lasting impact on our students—empowering them, inspiring them, and shaping their futures. We are honored to have you as part of the Willowwind community.

BLAZE \$2,500+

Kay & William Creasey
Alan Driggs & Catherina Pinnaro
Greenstate Credit Union
Robin & Jonathan Russell
Jonathan Sallade & Demaris Mills

FLAME \$1,000-2,499

Sarah Brown
Hills Bank
Sally Holland
Fatima Toor & Umar Farooq

FLICKER \$500-999

Emily Brown
Marianne Brown
Miriam Gilbert
Jennifer Horn-Frasier
Maen Aboul Hosn, Maya Abou Hamra
Jean Lloyd-Jones
Timothy & Dawn Lyons
Amir Shaban & Chenchen Liu
Ian Shapiro & Evelyn Ross-Shapiro
Vance & Douglas Van Daele

SPARK \$250-499

Neto Abath & Osorio Lopes
BlackStone
Anne & Michelle Ehlinger
Marta Elliot
Ann Ernst
Michael & Barb Kaldenberg
Joun Lee & Syed Mubeen
George Mutter
Mandy Southard

EMBER \$1-249

James Wetzel & Shelly Hsiao
Michael Zielstorf & Andrea Cramer

Christopher Sales & Larisa Bowman
Dee Salisbury
Rachael Schmerbach
David Shannon
Jacob & Katherine Simmering
Abdullah Sohail & Zunaira Mahmood
Jill & Todd Tomkins
Carol Watson
Michael Watson & Erin Lane

Jenny Gordy & Joe Gillespie
Jenna & Kelly Hangauer
Anne & Matthew Harding
Jane & Bob Harding
Adam & Andrea Havlin
Riaz & Hillary Jahangir
Lisa & Keegan Kavanaugh
Peter Nessa & Anne Barber
Anna Stanhewicz & Scott Rager

Robert & Rose Amundson
Ahmad & Tahreem Mir Arham
Kelly Ledbetter & Brad Brewer
Rachel Butler & Jim Mills
Ethon Burns & Sarah Harkness
Juan & Lastascia Coleman
Ann Creasey & Ryan Bentzinger
Stacy & Corey Crouse
Michal & Riley Eynon-Lynch



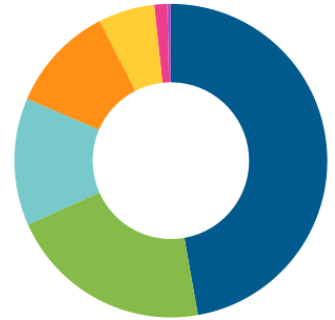
FINANCIALS



TOTAL OPERATING INCOME: \$1,824,412

K-6 Tuition	\$861,660
Preschool Tuition	\$384,700
Summer Program	\$239,315
Programs & Enrichment	\$201,680
Donations & Grants	\$105,920
Other Operating Income	\$24,350
Scholarships	\$6,787

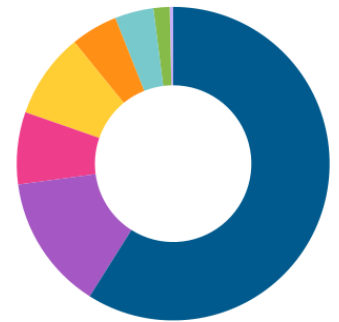
Operating Income



TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSE: \$1,893,703

Salaries, Payroll Taxes, Benefits	\$1,116,280
Long-term Debt	\$263,680
Tuition Discounts & Sliding Scale	\$141,035
Building & Utilities	\$166,680
Other Operating Expenses	\$91,781
Supplies & Technology	\$75,880
Programs & Enrichment	\$31,580
Scholarships	\$6,787

Operating Expense



WAYS TO GIVE

Your support makes a real difference in the lives of Willowwind students. There are many ways to contribute throughout the year:

Harvest Festival Auction (Fall)

Join us each autumn for our signature auction event, where your bids and donations directly support school programs and student experiences.

Iowa Independent School Tuition Organization (IISTO) (Winter)

Make a tax-advantaged gift to help provide scholarships to students in need. Winter is the perfect time to support school choice in education.

Annual Fund (Spring)

Contribute to long-term campus projects and facility improvements through our annual capital campaign. Your gifts help shape the future of Willowwind.

Classroom Cash at Hills Bank

Simple, ongoing support for teachers and classrooms—your participation turns everyday banking into a way to give back.

Give & Grow at GreenState (April)

Support Willowwind in April through GreenState Credit Union's Give & Grow program, where community members can direct funds to programs that matter most.

Every gift counts and helps our students thrive—thank you for your generosity!

Reach out to *Byanca Pruitt* (byancap@willowwind.org) to learn more about any of these opportunities.

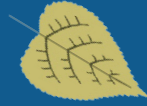
THANK YOU TO OUR WILLOWWIND FAMILY VOLUNTEERS!

Trettin
Saylor/Shen
Kim/Yoon
Rager/Stanhewicz
Burns/Harkness
Schmerbach
Driggs/Pinnaro
Brace/Block
Tomkins
Van Daele
Writer/Buchanan
Harding
Wetzel/Hsiao
Marincovich/Gumusoglu
Raymer
Lyons
Simmering
Ross/Ernst
Gurtovoy/Hample
Hemingway/Sieble
Southard
Zielstorf/Cramer
Davelaar

281
VOLUNTEER
HOURS LOGGED



FROM THE WILLOWWIND BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Dear Willowwind School Community,

Looking ahead to the coming year, the Board will be focused on strengthening our committees and setting goals that directly align with the strategic plan. Each committee will recruit new members, identify goals, and develop a plan that directly supports and impacts the strategic plan. The Board remains deeply committed to stewarding the school's resources responsibly, ensuring that our growth is both sustainable and mission-driven.

To continue to be successful in our mission the board needs your help! Your involvement plays a crucial role in Willowwind's continued success and makes a significant difference in creating engaging and memorable experiences for our students. By joining a committee you can directly impact the decisions that shape the future of the school and contribute your unique perspective and skills. Willowwind relies on its strong community and volunteers to execute projects and events throughout the year. Thank you to all of the volunteers who donated their time and talent this year! Thank you for being part of this community-whether you are a long-standing supporter or a new member of our school family. Your generosity, involvement, and belief in our mission make everything we do possible.

Sincerely,



Dawn D. Lyons
President, Willowwind Board of Trustees





950 Dover St., Iowa City, IA 52245

319-338-6061

willowwind.org