

# REF

## ROCKFORD EDUCATION FOUNDATION 2022 - 2023 Annual Report

Your incredible support drives change for Rockford children. Since 1991, Rockford Education Foundation (REF) has united our community to empower educators and students through our School Year Grants. Together, we've sparked imagination, nurtured confidence, and fueled transformation. With your generosity, innovative educational projects have flourished.

This year, your impact goes even further with REF's new Above & Beyond Campaign. This campaign has focused on 4 key initiatives: Literacy, Social-Emotional Wellness, Rockford Instrument Fund, and Essential Needs Fund. These initiatives ensure that Rockford children not only receive an excellent education but also thrive.

### LITERACY

Every child deserves reading excellence. With your support, we enhance literacy instruction, equipping students with tools for boundless possibilities.

### ROCKFORD INSTRUMENT FUND

Music enriches lives. Your generosity ensures that all students, regardless of their financial circumstances, have access to music programs.

### ESSENTIAL NEEDS FUND

Basic needs shape success. Your contributions offer stability—food, clothing, shelter—empowering students to thrive.

### SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

Today's challenges need comprehensive solutions. Your support cultivates tools for students to navigate life, fostering well-being and growth.

SCAN CODE TO  
DONATE TODAY!



Your dedication and generosity create opportunities for students to thrive academically, emotionally, and socially. We deeply appreciate your unwavering support that makes a lasting impact on the lives of Rockford kids. With heartfelt gratitude, we will build a brighter future together, empowering Rockford students to succeed today and become tomorrow's leaders.

# HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR SUPPORT IN ACTION



## STEAM

### NUMBER SENSE

Thanks to the Wolverine Worldwide Foundation's generous contribution, we were able to provide the Number Sense grant that furnished all 225 elementary classrooms district-wide with math manipulatives and supplies, benefiting 4,000 students in DK-5th grade and elementary Special Education classes. We are grateful for their support in making this grant a reality.



## Social Emotional Wellness

### COUNSELING DOGS

We are thrilled to continue our partnership with RPS to bring counseling dogs to the Rockford schools. Jovie became a part of the staff at Belmont Elementary in the fall, while Ruffles joined East Rockford Middle School over the winter. With their arrival, they joined Chilie, Gunner, and Hopper, who have all been instrumental in providing support for our students' mental health and well-being.



## Literacy

### LIBRARY FOR LITTLES

The RPS Literacy Department is making strides to ensure that more than 700 Rockford preschoolers have access to captivating books by creating tailored collections for local daycares and preschools. Additionally, the team provided literacy training for daycare and preschool employees. Our aim is to empower children with the tools they need to develop their literacy skills and foster their passion for reading.

## 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR STATISTICS



NEARLY  
**8,000**  
STUDENTS  
SERVED



**884**  
VOLUNTEER  
HOURS



**\$403,668**  
\$ RAISED IN  
2022-2023  
*includes interest income*



**60**  
GRANTS  
AWARDED



### College & Career Readiness

#### DIRECT TO GARMENT PRINTER

Thanks to REF's grant funding, students at Rockford High School now have access to a Direct to Garment printer in their newly established Graphic Design Production class. This powerful resource provides students with the tools they need to hone their creative skills and prepare for a bright future ahead.



### Fine Arts

#### ROCKFORD INSTRUMENT FUND

The Rockford Instrument Fund opens doors for every student interested in orchestra or band at Rockford Public Schools. Through this fund, students can apply for an instrument rental voucher, making music accessible to all. Thanks to the incredible support of our donors, 11 talented sixth graders experienced the joy of participating in orchestra and band this year, igniting their passion for music.

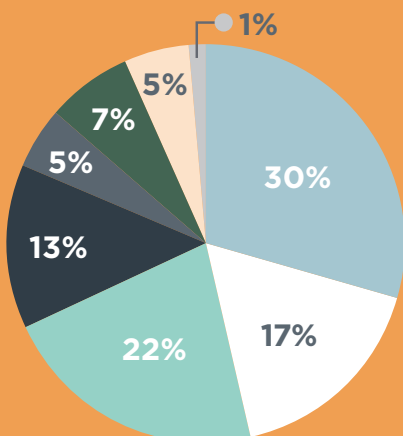


### Outdoor Education

#### ROGUEWOODS OUTDOOR LEARNING AREAS

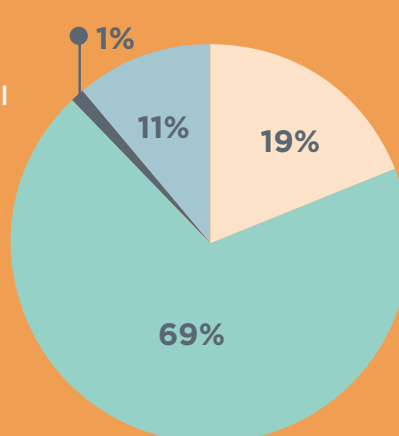
Roguewood Elementary embraced a remarkable opportunity with its 7 acres of untapped woodland potential. Through trail restoration, creation of multiple learning areas, and improved accessibility, RogueWOODS has empowered teachers and students to fully embrace the wonders of outdoor education. The result is unforgettable learning experiences that harness the true potential of their woodlands.

### IMPACT AREAS



- STEAM
- Social & Emotional Wellness
- Literacy
- College & Career Readiness
- Fine Arts
- Outdoor Education
- Essential Needs
- Other

### TOTAL REVENUE



Business Contributions	75,673
Individual/Family Donations	279,619
Other	5,122
Interest Income	43,253
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$403,668</b>

# THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS!

Represents donations made from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023

## \$25,000+

Brian & Dana Kraus  
Wolverine Worldwide Foundation

## \$10,000 to \$24,999

William & Bobbi Jo Blanton  
Daniel & Karen DeRyke  
Ron & Nancy Hager  
Joe & Leslie Poot  
Kevin & Mary Kay Shaver  
Rob & Sarah Vella  
Jeff & Tara Wilson

## \$5,000 to \$9,999

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Scott & Lisa Chaudoir  
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## \$1,000 to \$2,499

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Adam & Melissa Burkholder  
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Korie Wilson-Crawford  
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Carl & Karen Dufendach  
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Curtis & Katie Gross  
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Heather Jensen  
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Aimee Marvel  
Rachel McCay  
Beth Meyer-Kraff & Dave Kraff  
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Caitlin Oliver  
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Kristi Pelc  
Jerry & Jan Peterson  
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Ian & Vivien Purvis  
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Josh & Renee Schueller  
Philip & Laura Schultz  
Jennifer Semeyn  
Dominic & Janelle Siciliano  
Chris & Jilaine Snoeyink  
Carl & Kristy Stites

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Mary Thompson  
Bob & Andrea Toole  
Renee Vande Wege  
Corey & Emily Weinmann  
West Michigan Whitecaps  
Thomas & Sarah Williams  
Hayes & Marci Wyngarden  
Michael & Anna Zevalkink

### Up to \$249

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Holly Anderson  
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Judy Baer  
Michael Bair  
Carole Baker  
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Richard & Sue Bakita  
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Jason Ballou  
Chris & Kelly Bantle-Miller  
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Jen Bascom  
Jeffrey & Michele Bates  
Kristen Beals  
Jeriell & Carol Beard  
Thomas & Shelley Belanger  
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Lane & Dawn Bennett  
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Brenda Bera-Alters  
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Calvin & Carolynn Cole  
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Nina Eltringham  
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Andrea Eteo  
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Kim Fink  
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Katherine Freeman  
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Michael Sweany  
Sandra Talsma  
The Toasted Pickle  
Thrivent  
Bridget Tietema  
Kipp Tremlin  
Richard & Deb Umlor  
United Health  
Stacy & Danielle Vallad  
Meghan & Jason Vandenhout  
Jason & Johanna VanderWall  
Ingemar & Mary Venckus  
Jessica Visser  
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Jaclyn Warren  
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George Wilson  
Pamela Wolven  
Mackenzie Woodward  
Jason & Jenny Wypych  
Sarah Youngberg  
Bernie & Julie Zahm  
Brian & Cindy Zimmerman  
Alex and Kaitlin Zucco

### In Kind Donations

Amore Trattoria Italiana  
Blue Water Grill  
Norman and Rosemary Byrne  
Byrne  
Cannonsburg Village  
Cedar Springs Brewing Company  
Herman's Boy  
Lamoreaux Farm Market  
Rockford Brewing Company  
The Hawk's Nest  
The Toasted Pickle  
West Michigan Whitecaps

# 2022-2023 LIST OF GRANTS

## Belmont Elementary

**Jovie the Counseling Dog**  
**Bass Xylophone Wheels**, Claire Salinas  
**Number Sense Manipulatives**, Alexandra Briggs  
**One School, One Book**, Kendra Austin  
**PBIS Books for Library**, Sarah Stevenson  
**StarLab Astronomy Assembly**, Lauren Bisher

## Cannonsburg

**Salmon In the Classroom**, Matt Zokoe

## Crestwood Elementary

**DK Dramatic Play**, Elyse Anderson  
**March Book Madness**, Caitlin Oliver  
**“Picturing” Mental Health in 4th Grade**, Lisa Schroeder

## East Rockford Middle Schools

**Ruffles the Counseling Dog**  
**Cricut for Libraries**, Kelly Boston\*  
**Yoga Fridays**, Student Peer Listeners  
**Rockford Instrument Fund\***

## Lakes Elementary

**Decodable Books**, Jennifer Patten

## Meadow Ridge Elementary

**Gross Motor & Sensory Items for Students with Special Needs**, Bridget Tietema  
**Hopper Sensory Books**, Kendra Weidenfellar  
**Write Reader**, Sarah Nuechterlein  
**Sensory Floor Pathways**, Laura Clark  
**Supplies for Early Childhood Special Education**, Mindy Wilcox  
**Books for Early Childhood Special Education**, Becky Totten

## North Rockford Middle

**Rotary Cutter for Art Classes**, Rachel Kibbe  
**Cricut for Libraries**, Kelly Boston\*  
**Disability Awareness Books**, Rachell Lutz  
**Baking and Cooking Tools**, Melissa Schmidt  
**Headphones for the Classroom**, Julie Gitchell  
**Muse Magazines**, Katherine Rowe  
**Rockford Instrument Fund\***

## Parkside Elementary

**Exploring the Cosmos Assembly**, Celene Watkins  
**Math Manipulatives**, Kelli Walker  
**Number Sense Math Games**, Stacey Heiss  
**Kindergarten Whiteboard Easel**, Emily Molesta  
**Manipulatives for Learning**, Jill Carnes  
**Visual Lego Creation for ASD classrooms**, Sarah Noe

## River Valley Academy

**Community Awareness Field Trips**, Katie Terry  
**3D Printer**, Jacob Grasley

## Roguewood Elementary (Traditional & Spanish Immersion)

**Educational Board Games**, Mark Schlaudt  
**First Grade Number Sense**, Megan Rewa  
**RogueWOODS Outdoor Learning Areas**, Teya Cotter

## Rockford Freshman Center & High School

**AP Psychology Library**, Christina Purvis  
**Classroom Library Building & Podcast**, Deborah Knittle  
**DTG Printer**, Melissa Burkholder  
**HS Counseling Office Refresh**, Sara Young  
**Hola, Screen Break!**, Suzy Clements  
**Improving Literacy Through Book Choice**, Tara Holwerda, Rachel Sonnenberg, Lisa Avram  
**Introduction to Memoir**, Terry Hibdon, Macey Hodge  
**Page Turners Make Lifelong Learners**, Rebecca Duran  
**Quiz Bowl Buzzer Set**, Jamie Goering  
**Rockford Aces 15th Anniversary Commission Project**, Jedd Scott

## Valley View Elementary

**First Year Teacher Book Club Books**, Emma Ritchie  
**Math Games & Whiteboard Easels**, Jen Bascom  
**Mentor Texts: Reading & Writing Curriculum**, Heather Schmidt  
**Number Sense Building**, Kristin Hubner  
**Valley View Snowshoes**, Jason Hiscock

## Rockford Community Grants

**Libraries for Littles in Rockford Preschools**, Sharon Wells, Rachel DeKuiper  
**3D Printer**, Paradise Robotics Team  
**Rockford Community Services - Speakers Series for Seniors (55+)**, Kimberly Evers

## Rockford Public Schools - District Wide

**Essential Needs Fund\***  
**Number Sense\***

*\*Grant serves multiple schools/programs*

# REF | ROCKFORD EDUCATION FOUNDATION

PO Box 777, Rockford, MI 49341

Non-Profit Org.  
US Postage  
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Grand Rapids, MI  
Permit No. 657

*Our mission is to provide funding for educational opportunities, both basic and innovative, in the Rockford community.*

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR EXCITING REF EVENTS

### GRANTS IN ACTION SHOWCASE

- **Thursday, November 9, 2023 4 pm - 5:30 pm at Boulder Creek**  
Discover the real heroes behind REF's educational grants: our teachers and REF donors! Celebrate their superpowers and the magic they bring to education.

### THE TASTE

- **Thursday, March 7, 2024 from 7 pm - 11 pm at The Gilmore**  
Calling all Auction Bidders and Food Enthusiasts! Raise your paddle and indulge in culinary delights. And don't miss out on our 4th Annual Gift Card Fundraiser: March 1 - 17, 2024

### DONOR WALL

- **2023-2024 Deadline May 15, 2024**  
Secure your place in Rockford legacy and seize your opportunity to purchase a plaque at the Creative Teaching and Learning Center at RHS.

### REF Board of Trustees

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*\*Retired Trustee as of June 30, 2023*

*\*\*New Trustee as of July 1, 2023*

### Ex-Officio Representatives

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