

CALYX

PLEASANT RIDGE
WALDORF SCHOOL

Waldorf Education since 1980

Volume 47, Issue 3
Fall 2026



COMING EVENTS

OCTOBER

- 2 Kindergarten in-service, no school KG
- 16 Grandparents & Special Friends Day
- 16 Assembly, 8:15 a.m.
- 28 Faculty in-service, no school
- 29-30 Parent-teacher conferences, no school

NOVEMBER

- 7 All-school workday
- 11 Fall Concert
- 13 Martinmas Lantern Walk in evening
- 20 Assembly, 8:15 a.m.
- 25-27 Thanksgiving break, no school

DECEMBER

- 4-5 Holiday Faire
- 7-8 Advent Spiral
- 11 Santa Lucia procession
- 18 Kindergarten early dismissal, 10:30 a.m.
- 18 Festival of Light, 10:45 a.m.
- 18 Grades early dismissal, 12 p.m.
- 21-31 Holiday break, no school

JANUARY

- 1 Holiday break, no school
- 18 MLK Jr. Assembly, 2 p.m.



Save the Date!

Grandparents and Special Friends Day

October 16, 8 a.m.–12 p.m.

Please contact Katy Kurandt with questions.
608-637-8504 | marketing@pleasantridgewaldorf.org

Observation Mornings

November 13 & January 22, 8:30am.

Observation Mornings offer a window into the classrooms and the magic of Waldorf education. Parents, grandparents, friends and neighbors (adults only please) are warmly invited to attend. Participants will have the opportunity to observe a portion of the morning's main lesson in both lower and upper grades.

Please contact Hannah Hastings for more information or to sign up. Space is limited and RSVPs are required. We hope to see you there!
608-638-0802 | hannah.hastings@pleasantridgewaldorf.org

SCHOOL NEWS

El Espectáculo de Español

For three years now, PRWS students have ended their year of Spanish study by taking part in “El Espectáculo de Español.” The idea was born during my first year as the early grades Spanish teacher, after attending our school’s annual Spring Concert. That special concert is held off campus in a space designed for performance, and the children shine with pride and a palpable feeling of accomplishment. Witnessing it inspired me to bring some of what we had learned in our Spanish classes throughout the year to our greater community, to demonstrate our love and respect for the language, the music, the culture, and the people of the Spanish-speaking world.

This past year was the first year that every grade brought something to share to the Espectáculo. We began with the lower grades singing a song of welcome, “Buenos Días, Querida Tierra.” The 7th grade followed with two complex dances featuring rhythms and steps from Spain, Venezuela, the Philippines, and Brazil, taught by Julee Caspers Agar. The 1st grade sang “Baile de Colores,” a song about colors accompanied by a dance with colored scarves, and “Un Amigo Me Enseñó,” a little ditty about the sounds associated with animals in some parts of el mundo hispanohablante (the Spanish-speaking world).

Students in grade 6 shared trabalenguas (tongue-twisters) that got very tricky and very, very fast! Following this display of verbal dexterity came the 2nd grade with two songs. The first, “A Mi Burro,” was about a donkey who’s feeling under the weather and is prescribed some unconventional remedies that, thankfully, work. The second was “Hola, Somos Grado Dos,” a song with original lyrics paired to a traditional fiddle tune. The 3rd grade followed with a riddle (una adivinanza) in Spanish, eliciting guesses from the crowd. After la respuesta (the answer) was revealed, the 3rd grade sang “Hola, Somos Grado Tres,” a familiar tune and premise but with different lyrics.

The 5th grade brought original poems about the natural world in traditional forms—haiku and cinquain—and recited them in pairs or, on one occasion, solo. The 4th grade students sang a slightly modified song written by Alvaro Soler called “El Mismo Sol,” a catchy pop tune packed with hope and promise. The 8th grade wrapped everything up with a very sweet recapitulation of verses, games, and memories from their eight years of Spanish study.

Following these offerings by individual grades, everyone in the gym joined in singing “La Bamba” en el estilo de (in the style of) Ritchie Valens. The day concluded with paletas de mango y fresa (mango and strawberry popsicles), made by students in the 3rd grade.

It sure feels like an annual tradition has commenced, and we look forward to sharing many more espectáculos in years to come!

—Shawn Neary, Spanish teacher

Closing Day Assembly

It’s two-thirds of the way into the month of May. Viroqua is abloom with lilac and magnolia and the evening air is actually, literally, perfumed. The days are as gorgeous as they get. Up to half the grades at PRWS are wrapping up their class plays in a whirlwind of final touches while our well-used backdrops are carted from one classroom stage to the next. The children are already signed up for summer camps and pretty soon Sunday will blend into Monday into Who-Knows-What-Day-It-Is. “What’s a week ‘end’?” we are ready to say in the voice of Dame Maggie Smith.

The classrooms, carefully cared for all year by loving custodians, teachers, and students with lunchtime chores, regardless feel quite lived in. Stacks of artwork and main lesson books, ready to go home with the children, line every spare counter space. Most of the yellow painting jars are definitely tinged with green, and the classroom plants want to be on the other side of those windows, just like we do.

Amidst all of this, something else is approaching. It leaps to the front of the prioritized to-do list, bumping aside what we teachers mistakenly envisioned for those final few days of school. Perhaps there would be a productive last week of solid review, a good ol’ whole-class dusting and desk clean-out session, and maybe even a head start on end-of-year reports during our precious afternoon prep period. Ha! How wrong we were. Because look out, the Closing Assembly is coming! The 8th grade is graduating, forevermore, and in one final push grades 1 through 7 are about to give them everything we’ve got.

By the time I arrived in Viroqua in 2008, it was already a well-established tradition that each class prepares an offering to the 8th grade for the assembly on the last day of school. On that special morning, after our final main lesson of that grade, students and teachers gather in the gym, maybe dressed a little special. Kindergarten gets out early, recess ends early, and parents and grandmas and grandpas and alumni slide into the bleachers and folding chairs by 10:45 a.m. to witness another rite of passage unfold. When all of us are assembled, the 8th graders and their class teacher enter from the far door to a huge round of applause. It’s their last day of school at PRWS. A big last.

Leading up to this day, with whatever time and dregs of creativity we can muster, class teachers with their students prepare a class-specific offering to the 8th grade. It relies on the relationship that has been built between that class and that year’s 8th grade and teacher. Sometimes we find a special song that is just right as is. Perhaps it is something the 8th graders may remember from their early years. It could involve a crafted gift, like homemade cards for each 8th grader, or sweets like Ms. Beck’s class made this year. A highlight is the ever-popular surprise confetti held in sweaty palms until the fated moment at the assembly. Poof! The 8th graders are showered in hand-cut bits of colored construction paper, and we’re surprised every time. Dances, poems, audience



involvement, songs with changed lyrics: it's all fair game.

Who the 8th grade is and who the teacher is provide a big inspiration to what we get up to. This year was an extra-special one. If you were at the assembly, or at the graduation, you got a glimpse of just how beloved this teacher and class are to so many. Mr. Schirmer is a cherished colleague and friend to all of us, and has been at PRWS for a loonnnnggg time. What made it even more poignant is that he is actually taking a year away from the school next year. With the students also heading off to high school in different directions, next year simply won't be the same. The reality of something so special actually and truly coming to a close made us want to do it proper justice.

So this year there were extra shenanigans. Mr. Schirmer, part of a long-time Opening Assembly and Closing Assembly MC duo along with his tall counterpart, Mr. Schmidt, found himself mirrored in style as he walked up to do his golden gates of summer sthick. Golf caps, flat caps, and newsboy caps were on many heads. Snug-fitting vests and smart button-down shirts topped extra-super-duper-wide denim slacks. Barefoot-style ankle boots if we had 'em. There might have been a walk and gesture of his that we subtly and respectfully tried out. It took him a minute but he soon realized our dress was in honor of him. "I thought you were all looking rather dapper!" he said with his trademark charm.

What ensued was pure joy. The 1st graders sang a precious rendition of "Over in the Meadow," incorporating sign language and verses they wrote themselves for their 8th grade buddies. There was "Rockin' Ronald" (a play on "Rockin' Robin") by the 2nd grade, with multiple Ronald look-a-likes and homages to their 8th grade trip. A spontaneous and very enthusiastic quiz show by the 3rd grade with trivia from the graduating class's eight years included props, costumes, and 8th grade involvement! The 4th grade sang "It's You I Like" as tenderly as Fred Rogers, and anyone over the age of 30 was in tears. The 5th grade brought poems specially written for and about each 8th grader. The 6th grade read a poem they'd made for the 8th grade and gave chocolate cake in jars to each student. The 7th grade, some former fellow classmates from back when they were a combined class, had a dual offering. They first entered from outdoors with gifts of geometric paper lanterns while singing a Martinmas lantern song, and it was puzzlingly ultra-reverent. Then they suddenly burst into the Backstreet Boys hit from 1999, "I Want It That Way," but instead the lyrics were, "We will miss you, 8th grade!" They absolutely owned it.

The 8th grade and their teacher, Ronald Schirmer, sang "Stand By Me" for us all before the Rainbow Bridge Ceremony, and we couldn't help but sing along. We meant it. Then, one at a time, 1st graders walked their 8th grade buddies over the bridge, the reverse of what happened on opening day back in August.



This time they understood exactly where that bridge led, and there were hugs, cards, and special handshakes, signs of a very special year of growing and friendship. The 1st grade teacher Ms. Christina Hotchkiss and Mr. Schirmer even had a snazzy handshake of their own. All of us in the audience had a chance to rise for Mr. Schirmer, cheering and whooping in the most heartfelt standing ovation. With it, we were saying, "Thank you for devoting eight years of your life to these children and their families. And congratulations—you deserve all the best there is in whatever comes next."

Outdoors, the school bell was rung by each departing 8th grader, likely the only time in their eight years they got to do that. Indoors, we listened, enchanted by something so simple and symbolic. I suppose every time a bell rings, an 8th grader gets their wings.

Finally, a cathartic round of "laughing, laughing, laughing comes the summer over the hills" led us all through those golden gates of summer.

—Carrie Treviranus, class teacher

CURRICULUM

Eurythmy Fairy Tales at PRWS

As a eurythmy teacher, I observe and wonder: What can we ask of students in the upper grades who are exploring the art of eurythmy? And how do we lead them toward true expression of this art? One tradition that has developed at PRWS as a medium for our 8th graders to explore the art of eurythmy is the 8th grade eurythmy fairy tale.

As in many Waldorf schools, our 8th graders have a 1st grade buddy. The traditional activities they share include kneading dough for dragon bread at Michaelmas, making lanterns at Martinmas, dancing the maypole together, and crossing the rainbow bridge. At least once a week they play together on the 1st grade playground during recess—tag games, swinging, digging in the sand pit, sledding, piggyback rides, and so on. The bond can grow strong between these two age groups, as one is leaving home for school and the other is soon leaving a school that was their childhood home. At some point there are even exchanges of gifts or cards, tokens of their bond.

In acknowledgment of this relationship, one of the previous eurythmy teachers at PRWS, Annette Bammer (Conlon), decided to allow the 8th graders to give their 1st grade buddies an artistic gift: the 8th grade eurythmy fairy tale. Students in 8th grade deeply resonate with the impulse to create a gift of their own work and are excited to begin our creative work in their first eurythmy lesson.

We begin deepening eurythmy by embarking on character study. Teenagers are interested in exploring different characters. In eurythmy, the character is revealed in the individual's expression of speech. The students explore the depth of the character's speech through movement. We play with a few characters to discover the zone of their movement, size of gestures, and preference for vowels or consonants. The shoemaker from "The Elves" (Class of 2026) was exact and consonantal, always gesturing straight before himself with an aim. His gestures, while not large, were precise. The angel from "The Shoes That Were Danced to Pieces" (Class of 2024) had generous vowels, depicted as high above her head, as she clearly was interacting with another world. The old woman



from "The Six Swans" (Class of 2025), who may have been a witch, had singing, swaying sounds, and so forth. Some students easily take on the sounds of a particular character, and we look to them for an example to imitate. Often students need encouragement to exaggerate and meet the character beyond their own usual comfort zone of gesturing.

Next, there is the character's stance. How do they stand? How do they hold their head and their gaze? The art of eurythmy does not use facial expressions, so the movement or position of the head expresses much about a character. The feet play a similar role in expression. The students love to see how small movements, like a slight inclination of the foot forward or backward, can express sympathy or antipathy. There are many subtleties to be learned in this realm. Then the students apply this work to the characters from our fairy tale.

Finally, we develop the movement forms. The type of forms depends on the class. Classes with an aptitude for tone eurythmy can have musical interludes between scenes, as in "The Elves." In that fairy tale, there was a multiplication of one form that started as a solo, became a duet, then a quartet, and lastly an octet. Some classes enjoy solo work, and each individual character has a form: the witch moved in a pentagram form, the princess a flowing figure eight between the witch and the king, and the huntsman a triangle. Other classes favor group forms, such as the sweeping lines of princesses that spiral down a staircase in "The Shoes That Were Danced to Pieces;" or couples rowing along the river in step, three steps forward, then one slow step back.

Ultimately, the question is, were the students able to bring all of this to expression in the final performance? The movement forms have generally been the easiest to ensoul. The characters' speech was also easily expressed. The head and foot positions remain the most subtle. I have found that they are easily recalled by students when placed at the end of a movement. For instance, when the six brothers spiraled into the little hut in "The Six Swans," they remembered to do the foot position for "excitement" (diagonally to the right with the toe only) at the very end of that spiral movement as they awaited their stepmother. All of these finer expressions are done more easily by students who have been exposed to a eurythmy fairy tale before.

One can look outside the art of eurythmy and find inspiration for the youth in their relationship with art. Every year I thoroughly enjoy attending the dress rehearsals and performances of the other arts available at our school: orchestral, choral, dramatic, and so on. In these moments I see the artistic potential of the students. I believe that as eurythmy becomes a familiar form of art, it will be easier for the students to explore and discover their own creativity.

—Erin Erkelens, eurythmy teacher

ALUMNI

Spotlight: Kathryn Ashley-Wright

Class of 1999

Class Teacher: Laura Negronida/Michael Wright

Kathryn and her family live on a beautiful farm east of La Farge with a large flock of sheep, a small herd of beef cattle, and one Jersey cow for milking. She and her husband Keith (also Class of 1999) have four children: Celia (7), Olan (12), Mae (15), and Stella (17). The family enjoys farming and fixing up their old farm buildings. Kathryn is the founder and owner of Ewetopia Fiber Shop on Main Street in Viroqua, and Ewetopia Fiber Mill in La Farge. She loves her work, where she gets to play with color and texture all day long!

What are your favorite memories from Pleasant Ridge?

Growing up with an education so full of art and beauty and reverence made a huge impact on me. What comes to mind is the magic of lighting candles in 1st grade. Even though we had a large, wild class, I remember the calm, quiet moments of admiring the beauty of the candle flame. I've felt that way while observing festivals as an alum, enjoying the quiet reverence as a school community.

Eurythmy also stands out to me. Even though I didn't totally understand what we were doing or why, I really loved doing it. It felt very natural. I also was an equestrian and would draw on my eurythmy practice to remember to sit up straight and let the energy emanate from within, allowing me to better control the horse. I feel the fundamentals I learned in eurythmy and gymnastics with Ms. Lerie have helped me learn to move through the world.

What do you remember about your class and subject teachers?

Laura was a good motherly presence, perfect for those early grades; and Mike was a ball of energy, perfect for matching the energy of our class, which was large (about 23 students) and rowdy. He was a musician and we formed some fabulous bands. Mike would bring instruments and we were encouraged to play whatever interested us. Even though I wasn't musically inclined, I was able to pick up an autoharp and be a part of the band. I really enjoyed the music. Those are really good memories!

Subject teachers who stand out in my memory include Lerie Alstad Van Ells, who was such a force of energy and enthusiasm. Social dance with Julee Caspers Agar, especially in upper grades, was always very exciting. Barbara Peterson was the school administrator at the time and then the librarian. I had a real soft spot for her. She was one of the most beautiful human beings I've ever known.

What do you appreciate most about PRWS?

Waldorf education's focus on the whole child is a beautiful way to support a child's development. I appreciate the integration of art into the curriculum, which can be lacking in other school systems. As someone who was really into art and color, it really inspired me. I was into handwork. I

would say my knitted squirrel in 1st grade was pretty rough-looking, but through the years, I definitely got the fundamentals down. In 8th grade, we did Shakespeare's *As You Like It* for our class play, and I really got into making costumes. I did costuming for a while for different Viroqua productions throughout high school and really loved that.

What have you been up to since PRWS?

I studied at UW–Richland and then UW–Madison. I really wasn't sure what I was doing but was going through the motions. I tried different majors and did not like them. I regularly came back to Viroqua to join the Saturday knitting group at Kindred Threads (in the building that now houses WDRT). I loved the community aspect of it.

In college, I went to Germany to visit Keith, who was working on a biodynamic farm. I went into a yarn store and picked up some yarn and needles and started knitting again. My muscle memory kicked in from PRWS handwork class. It became a great hobby for college, knitting in class or in my free time. I decided to pull out an old spinning wheel, and I learned how to hand spin. One thing led to another, and I bought sheep, which lived on my mom's farm. They had lambs and more lambs. Then I had all this wool and had to do something with it. While I was studying in Madison, there was a yarn shop in Viroqua closing. I had always seen myself coming back to Viroqua, so I purchased the inventory from the shop and started Ewetopia with the dedicated help of my mother, Lisa Ashley.

I very quickly realized that to make this successful, it had to be more than just a yarn shop. It had to offer something unique. We started working with local farms and buying their wool. The dyeing operations went through many iterations, from my apartment in Madison to the shop, our garage at home, and now the mill. We grew and grew and started offering our own lines of yarn. It's nice to be able to offer regular products versus small batches for short times. The wool in our bases typically comes from local farms. Ewetopia travels to wool festivals around the US and works with designers and farmers to create unique yarns.



In 2012 the shop moved to its current location in the historic Felix's store building. The fiber mill opened in La Farge in 2017, and in the beginning of 2026 the mill moved into a larger and better suited building on the outskirts of La Farge. My mom came on as a co-owner in 2012 and now manages the retail store side of Ewetopia while I manage the mill and production side.

Lisa was truly dedicated in sending me to PRWS, through 45-minute commutes to working in the school office to supporting my tuition. I am forever grateful for this wonderful education.



Thank you, Kathryn, for sharing your story! Readers, please be sure to check out Ewetopia at 102 S. Main Street in Viroqua! In addition to beautiful yarn, Ewetopia offers other things to the community, including classes and open handwork gatherings. They also graciously house the PRWS school store. It's truly a lovely place to peruse for your own handwork needs and for gifts.

—Kelly Slentz, PRWS development director

Alumni News

Class of 2011

Justys Grenier and his fiancée Lauren Kelm are the proud parents of a son, Jory Morgen Grenier, who was born on Monday, December 22, 2025.

Cecilia (Kouba) Ludovice, husband Joe, and son Wesley welcomed a baby girl to their family on Saturday, January 3, 2026. Her name is Alma Josephine Ludovice.

Classes of 2015 and 2016

Perla Grenier (Class of 2015) and Amory Lenarz (Class of 2016) were married on Saturday, March 21, 2026. They reside in Spartanburg, South Carolina, where Perla is pursuing a doctor of chiropractic degree from Sherman

College of Chiropractic. Amory graduated from New York University in May 2024 and works at gener8tor, a start-up accelerator and venture capital firm.

Class of 2017

Ansel Brenneman graduated from Northern Michigan University in 2025 with a bachelor of science degree, majoring in environmental studies and sustainability with a minor in biology. This summer he is running a boat as part of a salmon fishing crew for his fifth season in Bristol Bay, Alaska, and will then pursue a career in natural resources.

Beirgan (Kay) Wolf works at Susitna Adventure Lodge/Squid Acres Kennel near Cantwell, Alaska, and was on the support team for musher Paige Drobny in her fourth-place finish in the 2026 Iditarod sled dog race.

Class of 2018

Sylvia Hunt graduated this spring magna cum laude with a bachelor's degree in music education from Nazareth University in Rochester, New York.

PRWS Class of 2022

We want to wish the PRWS Class of 2022 the best as they move on to new adventures post high school. We were excited to hear from some alumni and are happy to share their plans for 2026-2027.

Rowan Cain

High school attended: Youth Initiative High School
Plans: Gap year to finish pilot's license

Amelia Olson

High school attended: Viroqua High School
Plans: Study pre-veterinary medicine at University of Wisconsin–River Falls

Grace Anderson

High school attended: Youth Initiative High School
Plans: Study creative writing and Latin American studies at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota

Greta Lenarz

High school attended: Youth Initiative High School
Plans: Attend Davidson College in Davidson, North Carolina

Zephyr LeMaire

High school attended: Laurel High School
Plans: Work at Viroqua Food Co-op with hopes to WWOOF overseas

Nanuka Shirmer

High school attended: Youth Initiative High School
Plans: Attend the School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Faculty Spotlight: Geri Shonka

Upper Grades Handwork Teacher



When did you start teaching at PRWS?

I taught the full handwork program (grades 1 through 8) from 2014 to 2020 and switched to my current position, the upper grades handwork teacher, in 2021.

What drew you to become a handwork teacher?

For as long as I can remember I've wanted to be an art teacher. When I entered college, my counselor convinced me that graphic design would be a more practical and lucrative career path. As the graphic design profession moved more toward computers and away from hands-on, people-centered work, my interest began to wane. I missed the tactile quality of handcrafting. Blessed with a vast array of skills bestowed upon me by my grandmother, my BFA in college, and a few years filling in as a substitute handwork teacher, I felt ready to return to my childhood dream and share my passion for handcrafts with grade school children.

Teaching handwork has been a rewarding experience. The students' amazement when they realize what they can create with their hands, seeing their skills continue to be used into adulthood, and the many things they teach me along the way continue to enrich my life.

What are your favorite handwork projects?

My favorite projects are those that fully engage the students' head, heart, and hands—projects that meet them where they're at and provide a great sense of accomplishment upon completion. Highlights for each grade

include the knitted stripe headband, knitted gnome, crocheted stripe cap, eight-part symmetrical cross-stitch design, knitted mittens, hand-sewn dolls, parabolic string art, and machine-sewn pajama pants.

What do you love about PRWS?

The caring and supportive community, the commitment of my colleagues, lasting friendships with parents and teachers from my children's classes, and the many opportunities to get involved and meet new people.

What are your hobbies?

Knitting, weaving, wood carving, watercolor painting, sewing, traveling, and gardening.

Tell us about your children who attended PRWS.

I have three creative children that graduated from PRWS. Leo (Class of 2011), completed the Minneapolis Community College welding program and does wooden boat restoration. Ivy (Class of 2014) graduated from St. Olaf College with majors in Japanese, environmental studies, and studio art and works at a berry farm, orchard, and cidery. Sylvi (Class of 2018) graduated from St. Olaf College with a major in social work and leads kayaking trips. All three have moved back to Minneapolis where they were born!

How did your family happen to come to PRWS?

After Sylvi was born and Ivy and Leo were entering school, my husband, Drew, decided to leave his social services job to pursue Waldorf teaching. We started searching for places to live where our children could ride their bikes around town and walk to school. We narrowed it down to Sandpoint, Idaho, and Viroqua. In July of 2004 we moved from Minneapolis to Viroqua and Drew embarked on his journey with the class of 2012. I left my beloved graphic design job at Carleton College, but luckily was able to continue my freelance business while making a home with our children.



DEVELOPMENT

Development Message

Kitchen Upgrade Campaign

Goal = \$30,000, Funds at the end of campaign = \$25,995

Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who supported our campaign through donations, the purchase of baked potatoes, or positive thoughts! I want to especially thank Paige Abt for leading the very popular last-day-of-school baked potato sale and Jenny Detrick for her beautiful campaign thermometer display in our school lobby. It's so great to see us rally together to support a school need as essential as a safe and functional kitchen.

Update

PRWS is looking to the future. Having made it through COVID and its aftermath, we've come to a new stage in our life where we are more financially stable, such that we've been able to increase teacher pay significantly in recent years as well as offer a 401(k) program. At the same time, we face major investment decisions in the near future as our school buildings, dating back to 1952 and, in the case of Old Main, to 1879, continue to age. Both this financial stability and the physical state of our school drive the ability and need to plan.

The board of directors has been working toward reinvigorating our strategic planning process. We worked with a design and construction company to complete a facilities assessment in the summer of 2025 to help us understand what our capital improvement priorities should be. The company deemed it relatively urgent to update our kitchen hood and exhaust system to a type 1 grease hood, which is specifically designed to protect the indoor environment and prevent fires. With a larger capital campaign imminent, the development committee initiated the Kitchen Upgrade Campaign to address this initial portion of the priorities and warm-up" for the future, larger capital campaign.

I am happy to report some good news: we have made great progress! Between October 2025 and July 2026, we raised \$25,995 for the kitchen upgrade. This includes donations or grants from 31 households and 5 organizations, and \$700 raised via the parent-led baked potato sale.

I also have some hard news. In April, we arranged for two commercial equipment suppliers to visit our kitchen and discuss our needs. We learned that installing a new hood and exhaust fan also requires the installation of an air make-up system. This is a state requirement and installed as one system with the hood/exhaust equipment. Along with this information, we also received a much higher quote than expected: about \$50,000.

While surprised by this new number, significantly higher than our original goal, we are still optimistic and determined to raise the funds needed to make this upgrade happen in the summer of 2027. We plan to focus on applying for grants to work toward \$50,000. You may hear from us as we make a final push in the spring—and we might just have another baked potato sale then too!

—Kelly Slentz, PRWS development director



DONORS

Many thanks to all who have supported the work of our school April 16 – August 8, 2026

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In Honor of
Shihhan Chou
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Congratualtions to Ronald Schirmer and the Class of 2026!

Visit us online at
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