

# Annual Report

2020-2021



French Immersion  
School of Washington





## Annual Giving 2020-2021

Each contribution to our 2020-2021 Annual Giving campaign was crucial in helping us bridge the gap between tuition and the actual cost of an FISW education. As part of the annual budget, Annual Giving directly supports our students, teachers, and program and promotes a diverse community by funding financial aid. In short, annual gifts directly benefit every child and promote learning beyond borders.

In 2020-2021, as we continued to navigate the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic together, annual gifts were vital to support the unique budgetary needs of our Health and Safety Plan. This included hiring new teachers to physically distance our students and form

pods to minimize exposure, investing in infrastructure and materials including adapted spaces, technology, air purifiers, and personal protective equipment, and increasing our financial aid budget to support FISW families in need.

Thank you to Annual Giving Co-Chairs Nicole François and Mary Pantelopoulou for re-imagining creative ways to bring the community together for our Annual Giving campaign during an unusual year.

Thank you to all of our 2020-2021 Annual Giving donors. We truly appreciate your support.



# 2020-2021 Donors



## EXPANDERS (\$2,001 to \$9,999)

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## SUPPORTERS (Up to \$1,999)

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Maëva & Jean-Baptiste Evain  
Rosa Gabriele & Francesco Faggioli  
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# 2020-2021 Donors

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Sabet & Dan Vallejo  
Nathalie Vezina & Dan Kyes  
Axelle & Quentin Vincent  
Julia Walker  
Fiona & Court Watson  
Erin Brust & Matthew Weger  
Amy & Thomas Wolf



## Matching Gifts

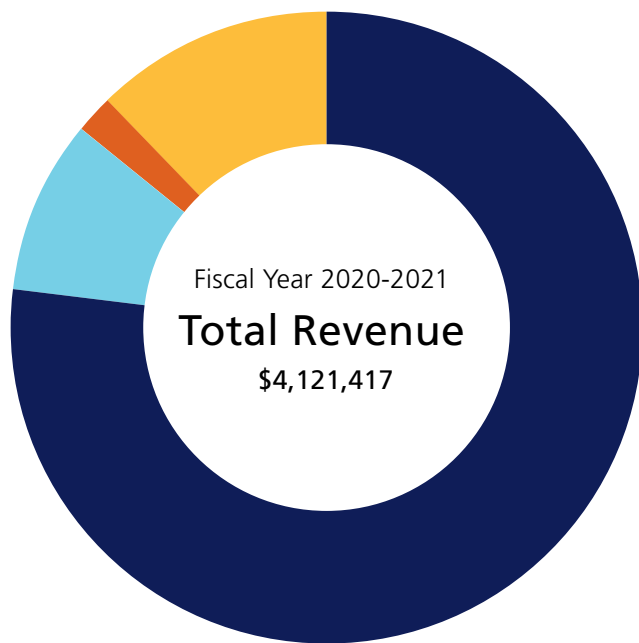
Many generous companies in our area match an employee's philanthropic donations or provide a monetary match for volunteer hours. Thank you to the following companies for their support of our school in the 2020-21 school year through matching gifts.

Adobe Systems  
Amazon  
Apple  
Costco Corporate Matching  
DocuSign  
GE Corporate Matching  
Google Inc.  
Hulu  
Jacobs  
Microsoft Matching Gift Program  
Nintendo  
Nordstrom  
The Walt Disney Company

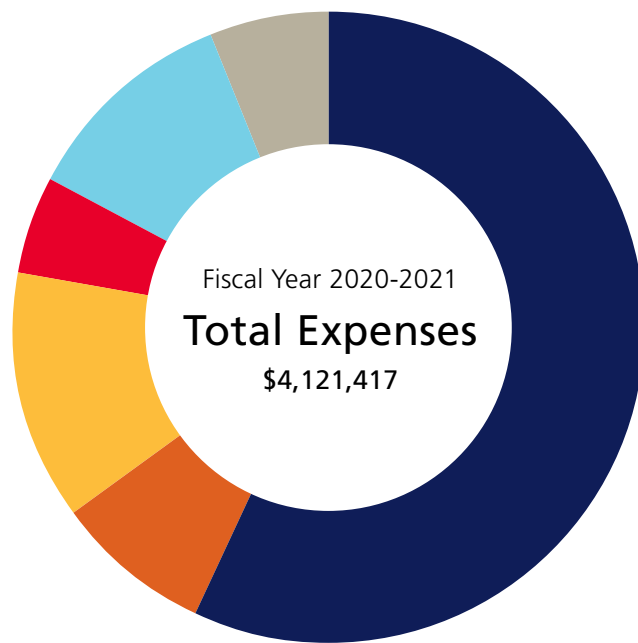




## Financial Information



- Tuition: \$3,187,089 – 77%
- Fundraising & Public Support: \$358,400 – 9%
- Supplemental Programs: \$71,944 – 2%
- Other Income: \$503,984 – 12%



- Salaries & Benefits: \$2,365,548 – 57%
- Financial Aid: \$307,808 – 8%
- Facilities: \$527,819 – 13%
- Program Expenses: \$189,774 – 5%
- Operational Expenses: \$470,231 – 11%
- Reserve Allocation: \$260,237 – 6%

# Fund-A-Need 2021

## Optimal Spaces for Learning: Playground Redesign



One of the many things this past year has taught us is the importance of outdoor space. Our previous playground offered plenty of space to be active in a natural setting. However, it was created more than 20 years ago and was ready for a major re-design. Thanks to the generosity of our 2021 Fund-A-Need donors, we were able to completely renovate our front recess area.

Play is essential to our students and is an important component of an FISW education. Our students work very hard all day long, and they need time to reset and decompress. According to our teachers, students work much better after recess.

At FISW, outdoor play impacts how our students learn.

Students discover and engage with their world, use their imagination, test boundaries, and interact with their peers. They develop new competencies that lead to enhanced confidence and resilience.

Based on ideas from students and teachers, we created a new playground with:

- Age-appropriate climbing structures where they can climb bounce and slide, where they can take small risks, and therefore develop their confidence, be energetic, and develop a sense of adventure.
- A raised organic flower and vegetable garden in our amphitheater to help students connect with nature and care for living plants, augmenting what they learn in science class.
- Musical instruments, little houses, and swings that inspire our students to be imaginative and creative by offering them multiple options for free and self-directed play so that they can role-play, pretend, and participate in dramatic play.
- Games and quiet spaces that offer opportunities for students to engage with each other, to solve problems, and to develop friendships.
- A well thought out design that give our students opportunities to make choices and build their independence.

Thank you to all of our generous Fund-A-Need donors for making this beautiful new recess area a reality for our students. It has positive impact on the educational experience, growth, and development of all of our students.



# Fund-A-Need Donors

Kristen & James Amspacher  
 Jennifer Brewington &  
 Lee Andrews  
 Elena Vukosavljev &  
 Vincent Arribe  
 Rebecca Gordon & Diego Arrioja  
 Andrea & Philip Assouad  
 Sara & Eric Bader  
 Corinne & Brian Ball\*  
 Gillian Allen & Nick Barratt\*  
 Catherine Bassova  
 Rohila Sabkat &  
 Matthew Behrens  
 My-Liên Dao Bellec &  
 Gwenaël Bellec  
 Delphine & Jérôme Bernière  
 Rachele & Blaise Bouchand\*  
 Jennefer & Jason Boyer  
 Isabelle Plouffe &  
 Mike Broadhurst  
 Christine Chauvet-Pizzute &  
 Cédric Chauvet  
 Natalie Nguyen & Sean Chong\*  
 Donna & David Clawson  
 Amber Tribble & Michael Cobb  
 Jill & Tom Curtin  
 Sarah Delandre  
 Patricia Dirk  
 Gwyneth & John Drake\*  
 Emilie & Mark Drechsler  
 Samuelle Eeckhoutte  
 Elizabeth Sholander &  
 Fabián Esparza-Villalba\*  
 Joy & Ernest Falcon  
 Erin Fernandez-Mommer &  
 Jesús Fernandez  
 Frédéric Funfschilling  
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 Daisy Pigeon & Ryan Harvison  
 Shelly & Paul Irvine  
 Tanya & Vinit Jain  
 Richelle & Mpitulo  
 Kala-Lufulwabo\*  
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 Jennifer Martin & Jeff Kraeger

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 Nicole François &  
 Laurent Lanoiselet  
 Angelica & Erick Lerma  
 Anastasiia Rusina &  
 Bogdan Lytvynovskyi  
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 Mirena Zannou & Argyris Meletis  
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 Vera Choi & Shehzad Mevawalla  
 Vincent Joris & Marco Micalizzi  
 Ophélie & Bryan Minnigerode  
 Emily & Keir Moreano  
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 Milka Pantelic & Peter Muller\*  
 Eva Samora & David Ndinya  
 Alexandra Dorca & Richard Pavy  
 Nicolas Payette  
 Raina Tammets & Pravin Pillai  
 Haley & Nathan Plesnicher  
 Jennifer & Philippe Poutonnet  
 Siska Presiskawaty &  
 Tarik Soulami  
 Hallie & Zach Pritchett  
 Angelina Rael  
 Marialuisa Richeri &  
 Edouard Robine  
 Maribel Carrillo &  
 Raúl Herrera Rodriguez  
 Kristen & Loïc Roger  
 Shauna Forster & Andrew Royes  
 Kimberly & Jed Santiago  
 Annie Genevieve Teletchea &  
 Jyun Shimizu  
 George Spix\*  
 Amy Chuang & Pierre Storme  
 Yuko Takahama  
 Maria Pantelopoulou &  
 Christos Teriakidis  
 Heather & Nicolas Trescases  
 Sabet & Dan Vallejo  
 Melissa Davis &  
 Christopher Varas\*  
 Erin Brust & Matthew Weger  
 Amy & Thomas Wolf  
 Jennifer O'Meara &  
 Jonathan Wolff

*\*Denotes our major donors*

## A Note of Deep Appreciation to Founders George Spix and Brian Ball

We would like to express our deep appreciation to Founders George Spix and Brian Ball for their generous ongoing support of our school. Their incredible \$50,000 challenge gift inspired our community and prompted others to generously contribute at our Virtual Gala to our 2021 Fund-A-Need playground redesign project. Thanks to the leadership of George Spix and Brian Ball, and the challenge they set forth at our Virtual Gala, the FISW community achieved our 2021 Fund-A-Need goal and complete an amazing renovation of our front recess area to welcome students back to school in September 2021. Merci du fond du coeur.





# A word from our students: What do you love about the new recess area?

We visited students at recess to ask them what they loved about their new playground. Here's what they said...



"To be honest, we like the little monkey bars, because we like to sit on them."

Lilyana and Ingrid, Fifth Grade



"Monkey bars.  
Monkey bars!"

Isabella and Zoë, First Grade

"I like the little house and the climbing chair. I think my mom probably likes it too, because she likes things kids can climb."

Gabrielle, Second Grade



"My favorite thing is the clock!  
And the slide!"

Teddy, Moyens





# Virtual Gala

Thank you to our amazing team of volunteers and to the entire FISW community for embarking on this new endeavor with us and for making it such an incredible success! A special thank you to Gala Co-Chairs Andrea Assouad and Gwyneth Drake, Procurement Chair Shelly Irvine, and MC Extraordinaire Philippe Poutonnet. This event was a true example of the adaptability, creativity, and vision of our FISW Community. **Thank you all for your support.**





Carrie Fox Photography, 2018.

## Portrait of an FISW Volunteer Jennefer Boyer

### Why did you decide to get involved as an FISW volunteer?

I had my first opportunity to join the PTA when my oldest daughter was in the Petits class. Being new to the school it was a great way to get to know the community, including the teachers and staff. I was actually asked to step in “temporarily” as PTA Secretary while someone was on bed rest. Little did I know that “a couple of months” as secretary would turn into 8 years as a PTA Officer! But the truth is, I loved being involved and feeling like I was helping to make my children’s school a better place. I truly believe it is important for our kids to see us volunteering in the community. By volunteering at the school, I was also showing that I value their education and think that what they are doing in school is worth my time. On the other hand, I did have to correct my daughter when she told me one day, “I hope you’ll be PTA President forever so you can make lots and lots of money!” :)



**You were actively involved in many roles including PTA Co-President. What is a favorite memory from your time volunteering at FISW?**

My favorite memories all stem from the lifelong friendships that my family and I built while volunteering. My children bonded more with other kids as I was active in all of the school events with them and often stayed from set-up to take-down, which they helped with. My kids loved that I was so involved in their school (which is great to catch while they are young and actually want you to be involved.) My memories of the school involve things like: laughing with friends while we prepared meals for the teachers, going through the pain of latching in 5 car seats, but then hearing the joy of the kids excited about their unique field trip, squeezing all of the talented PTA Officers around my dining room table for Thai food, observing rows of pumpkins and giddy children with their sharp carving tools, and seeing paddles raise at a gala that we put hours of work into, knowing we were making a difference together. The friendships our family made will continue long after our kids have grown. Our family recently returned from a trip to the East Coast visiting one of the PTA Officers that I worked with. We hired another PTA Officer where I work because I knew what a responsible employee she would be and I couldn't be happier to still be able to work with her on things like galas in another setting. FISW can be so much more than a school if you invest a little extra time into it.

**Your volunteer experience spans many years, roles, and grade levels. What is one positive way you've seen the school evolve during your time at FISW? What is one thing you hope will never change?**

FISW has always been a special place for our family. We have seen many dedicated teachers come and go, and they will always be remembered, no matter how far away. My kids loved their time with Véronique and they loved their time with Barbara. The school has evolved and become more modern over time, with technology integrated into the classrooms. It has also opened its doors for instructing kids beyond 5th grade. But in all of

our 10 years at the school, having had the opportunity to work closely with both Heads of School, I observed that recognizing what is best for the kids has always been the foundation for every decision, and that is something that I hope will never change.

**How do you plan to stay connected to FISW? What opportunities do you hope to see for alumni families?**

The most difficult thing about FISW is that the day will eventually come when children grow up and move on to middle school. Luckily, coming from FISW, they bring with them a foundation of values, independence, an acceptance of other cultures and ways of thinking, a second (or third or fourth...) language, and so much more. FISW is like a first home full of good memories that we look forward to returning to whenever we have the opportunity. I hope my four kids are invited back to alumni events so they can keep that strong bond and have opportunities to serve younger kids. We would also love to still attend the gala to pay it forward so other children can benefit as our children have.



# Inside the FISW Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee was formed in order to create a plan focusing directly on the values of DEI as FISW defines them: Diversity is the variety of characteristics in our school community that includes a variety of identities, languages, cultures, nationalities, races, ethnicities, beliefs, religions, sexual orientations, genders, personalities, physical abilities, learning styles, and socioeconomic status; Equity is providing different levels of resources according to need in order to reach and attain equality; and Inclusion is providing each member of our school community with a sense of belonging and purpose.

During the 2020-2021 school year, the DEI Committee continued its work with school leadership to develop and progress FISW's Diversity Plan including updating the diversity statement to its current form and setting DEI goals, success metrics, and progress evaluation based on recommendations from the Northwest Association of Independent Schools (NWAIS) and the needs of the school community.

The DEI Committee also continued defining existing strengths, opportunities, and challenges to enhance the principles of DEI at FISW. This work began with an intensive self-assessment of multiple areas including the FISW vision, leadership & messaging, school climate, and program & teaching. After assessment, the DEI Committee focused the year on development of strategies, timelines, and benchmarks for success to address the DEI needs of the school related to three major areas: Program & Curriculum, Admissions & Student/Family Retention, and Hiring, Training & Retention.

The 2020-2021 DEI Committee has turned this strategy and success benchmarks over to the 2021-2022 Committee for initial implementation of the FISW DEI Vision.



## FISW Diversity Statement:

We empower our students, faculty, staff, and community to understand, value, and embrace differences. Our community celebrates diversity in all its forms. This includes race, ethnicity, culture, language, religion, belief, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, ability, and learning style. We are committed to learning together as we continue to grow our understanding of diversity and to create a space of belonging. We are educating and guiding the inclusive adults of tomorrow to become the global citizens who will shape the future.



## DEI in the Classroom: Culture Day

At FISW, celebrating diversity is an important part of our community and our students' educational experience at every grade level. On March 18, 2021, FISW held a Culture Day, a virtual showcase of student work.

This initiative came from the staff, and the event ties into the ongoing work of the FISW Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee on the school's Diversity Plan.

FISW compiled all the class projects into a padlet and shared with the school community. This format was a wonderful opportunity to explore in the virtual environment the DEI work happening in the classroom.

You can visit the [Culture Day padlet](#) to see, listen to, and read the work of each class.

Students explore DEI concepts using a wide array of modes of expression. From portraiture to recipes, quilt-work to oral and written storytelling, the work was truly impressive! We hope you enjoy [exploring the projects here](#).

Thank you to all the FISW teachers for the dedication and care they put into these projects that were made in the spirit of celebrating each other, our differences, and our connections.





## Congratulations, Fifth Grade Graduates!

Congratulations to our Fifth Grade Graduates! We were so impressed by your adaptability and perseverance as you navigated an unusual fifth grade year together. Family, teachers, and staff were so happy to mark this special occasion with an outdoor diploma ceremony and car parade. We were also very pleased to continue a new FISW tradition of welcoming extended family and friends near and far to a virtual graduation ceremony, where we enjoyed the fifth grader's eloquent bilingual speeches and touching video messages from the class's teachers over the years. We are so proud of your accomplishments and wish you the best on your next chapter. Next stop Middle School! Please keep in touch as FISW Alumni!



