VASHON SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

excellence + equity in education

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

Photo courtesy of the Vashon Nature Center

Photo courtesy of Vashon High School

Photo courtesy of Vashon Artists in Schools

The Vashon Schools Foundation harnesses community funding to ensure excellent, equitable public schools where all kids can thrive.

Photo courtesy of the Vashon Nature Center

Photo courtesy of Vashon High School Band Program

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VashonSchoolsFoundation.org

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EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY IN EDUCATION!

We are filled with gratitude for another year of extraordinary generosity from the Vashon community in championing excellence and equity in education. Because of you, students in Vashon Public Schools have access to essential programs and services that are not fully funded by the State of Washington. While the state is required to support "basic education," that funding does not fully cover the staff and programs that allow our schools—and our students—to truly thrive. Critical positions such as paraeducators, counselors, nurses, and reading specialists, along with enriching programs in the arts, science, and social-emotional learning, depend on local support. Without this community's commitment, many of these roles and opportunities would not exist at the level we have come to value.

That's Where You Come In!

In 2025, Vashon Schools Foundation (VSF) partnered closely with families, educators, and the Vashon Island School District to understand what students need most to succeed. Your investment made a direct and meaningful impact. During the 2024–2025 school year alone, VSF funding helped support over 1,400 students across the district by providing:

- **Essential staff** who keep students safe, supported, and ready to learn.
- **Arts and science enrichment programs** that expand creativity, critical thinking, and hands-on learning.
- **Mental health and social-emotional support** that helps students build resilience and confidence.

Although the state's overall operating budget has grown in recent years, the percentage allocated to K–12 education has dropped by 18% since 2019 and is projected to decline further.

Yet, every day, students on Vashon learn, grow, and discover their potential because this community refuses to let them fall through the cracks. Together, we are building a future where every child has the resources and opportunities they need to flourish

SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 2010, VSF HAS RAISED OVER $3.5M TO SUPPORT VASHON PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

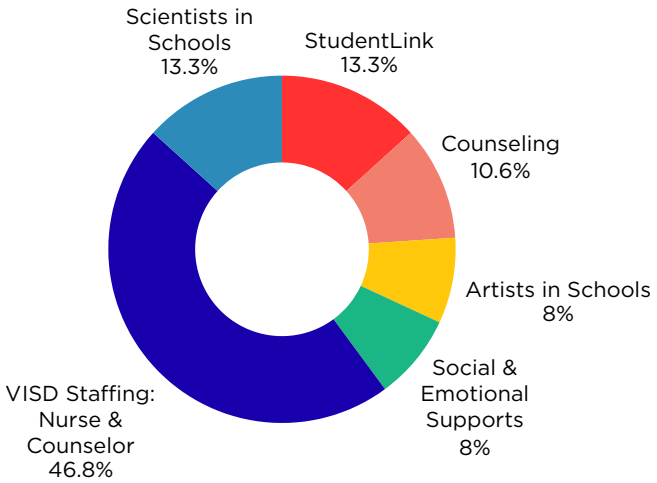
FINANCIALS

2024-2025 School Year Funding

For the 2024–2025 school year, VSF played a vital role in closing the gap between the educational experience the Vashon community values and the funding the state provides. Through VSF's annual GiveBIG campaign in May 2024, the community contributed more than $88,000 - ensuring full funding for two essential positions: a school nurse and a middle school counselor. These professionals safeguard students' physical health and social-emotional well-being, creating the stability and support students need to fully engage in learning and thrive.

VSF's contributions to our schools for the 2024-2025 school year totaled $188,000.

2024-2025 Contributions: $188,000



2025 Fundraising Highlights

Washington State is mandated to fund basic education, yet it does not fully cover essential staff and services such as paraeducators, counselors, nurses, reading interventions, substitute teachers, electives, maintenance, and athletics. Without community support, the gaps in state funding translate into real losses for our children. Every donation to VSF directly sustains the people and programs that bring learning to life for all students.

IN 2025, VSF WELCOMED 100 NEW, FIRST TIME DONORS!

Amount Raised by VSF in 2025*	**$502,036**	**127% from 2024**
Amount Raised by Sustaining Monthly Donors	**$52,473**	**22% from 2024**

Monthly sustaining donations provide reliable, year-round support that schools can count on. This steady funding allows us to plan ahead and cover essential expenses. In 2025, our donors who Give Every Month (GEMs) contributed over $52,000. Thank you, GEMs!

*Funds raised in calendar year 2025 reflect our 2025 GiveBig campaign, 2025 Gala and Auction, and all 2025 donations - resources that will support the 2026-2027 school year.

FUNDING PRIORITIES

Our work directs community generosity where it matters most - supporting the programs and people that make our schools thrive. Vashon Schools Foundation funding decisions are guided by two priorities:

ENRICHMENT

Enrichment programs make our schools exceptional!

These programs go beyond the basics to inspire creativity, curiosity, connection, and bring joy in our classrooms. With the help of our community partners, VSF funds opportunities that bring learning to life, including:

- Counseling support through Vashon Youth and Family Services
- Artists in Schools through the Vashon Center for the Arts
- STEM enrichment through Scientists in Schools with the Vashon Nature Center
- Social-emotional learning through the Initiators Leadership Program with Journeymen/One Village

ESSENTIAL STAFF

Essential teacher and staff positions form the foundation of our public education!

Behind every thriving classroom is a dedicated team of educators and support staff. VSF funding helps sustain these crucial roles—like paraeducators, counselors, and nurses—who ensure every child feels safe, supported, and ready to learn.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Enhancing Education through Community Partnerships

Our schools rely on talent in the Vashon community to enhance students' educational experiences inside and outside the classroom. For the 2024-2025 school year, your dollars supported enrichment opportunities that truly distinguish a Vashon education.

Program Partner	Overview	'24 - '25 Accomplishments
Vashon Youth and Family Services	Vashon Youth and Family Services (VYFS) partners with school counselors and staff to provide students and families with behavioral health and case management support services. This includes counseling to mono-lingual and multi-lingual students as well as resource referral and navigation.	120 VISD youth received 1,918 hours of counseling, 38 families (including 73 children and 59 adults) accessed community resource navigation support, and 48 students ages 5–18 identified as "at risk" received critical services.
Vashon Artists in Schools	Vashon Center for the Arts' Artists in Schools program enhances curriculum by pairing professional regional artists with VISD classroom teachers. By bringing the arts to students in the classroom, the program helps remove barriers to arts education.	Over 950 VISD students served through 541 hours of classroom instruction, including 25 classroom residencies across CES, McM, and VHS. This work engaged 27 classroom teachers and 18 teaching artists and brought three art assemblies to students in grades 1–7.
Scientists in Schools	Vashon Nature Center's Scientists in Schools program facilitates student projects with real-life benefits and valuable teacher resources across all three schools, as well as FamilyLink and StudentLink. Scientists in Schools reaches over 40% students each school year.	Reached 46% of VISD students across CES, McM, VHS, FamilyLink & StudentLink, supported 20% of teachers with STEM-aligned units and STEM clock-hour training, and delivered more than 50 hands-on field investigations both on and off island.
Journeymen	Journeymen mentors Vashon youth by offering positive role models who facilitate weekly in-school talking circles and experiential learning. Using nature-based rights of passage, mentorship, and community engagement, they encourage compassionate, inspired, and resilient youth.	55 youth participated in the CIRCLES mentorship program which promotes emotional intelligence, mental health, and self-expression.
StudentLink	StudentLink provides an alternative learning environment for students in grades 9-12 to work independently to complete their high school course requirements.	Enhanced supports such as structured group tutoring time and access to community services.

The Power of VSF Investments

While VSF funding does not represent a large proportion of our partner programs' broader organizational or programmatic budgets, VSF's grantmaking demonstrates a tangible commitment from the district and support from the broader community. This funding allows these organizations to tap into additional public and private resources to further advance and sustain their work.

Opening the Doors of Opportunity

Since 1998, the Doors of Opportunity award honors a VISD educator who exemplifies a true spirit and grit that goes beyond their job description, opening doors and maximizing students' potential.

Created and generously endowed by Benita and Charlie Staadecker—longtime supporters of VISD with Charlie having served many years on the School Board—the award honors outstanding educators with $1,000 for personal use and $1,000 to support their classroom or department, giving them the autonomy to continue their extraordinary work.

Doors of Opportunity recipient Nidia Sahagun (right), with Interim Superintendent Dr. Jo Moccia (center) and VSF Secretary, India Alarcon (left). Photo courtesy of Vashon Island School District.

Recipients are nominated by their peers, and the award winner is determined by input from district staff, school families, and the community. The 2025 Doors of Opportunity award went to Nidia Sahagun, Vashon Island School District's Family Engagement Coordinator.

Nidia is someone who has turned barriers into bridges, lifting up students and families and uniting our community in powerful ways. She is the heart of family engagement at VISD, supporting culturally, racially, and linguistically diverse students and families across the district. Nidia works tirelessly to build and strengthen trust to ensure every family feels seen and supported.

Previous award winners include: Roxanne Thayer, Mike Kirk, Doug Kloke, Renae Taylor, Jim Dorsey, Martha Woodard, Cornelius Lopez, Cherry Champagne, Shirley Ferris, Mike Scott, Julie Jaffe, Gail Labinski, Harris Levinson, Lance Morgan, Mary Heath, Geri Wilson, Char Phillips, Larry Dubois, Esther Morrison, Yvette Butler, Dr. Stephen Floyd, Jenny Granum, Lisa Cyra, Sarah Day, Lisa Miller, Nan Van Putten, and Margie Butcher.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

2025 VSF Gala "Under the Stars"

What a night to remember! We dined, we dashed, we danced, we dared to set our goal high — and Vashon, you delivered beyond our wildest dreams. Thanks to the generosity of this incredible community, we raised $335,000 in support of the programs and people who help every Vashon student thrive. This gala was more than an event — it was a reflection of the incredible village that surrounds our kids. We are deeply grateful.

While this report highlights the impact on the 2024-2025 school year, we couldn't wait to share some exciting news about what's already underway for 2025-2026! Because of the momentum from our community and the success of the Gala, VSF is expanding its impact in meaningful ways this school year. We are funding a second Family Engagement Coordinator, Richard Rivas-Gutierrez, who was hired in September and is working in the district's new Family Engagement Center, to offer comprehensive support to all families in our district who need it. In addition, for the first time VSF is funding direct academic support for students. This school year, that includes:

- **Paraeducator** support in math at McMurray Middle School
- **Two dedicated homerooms** at Vashon High School to help more students meet grade-level standards
- **Paraeducator** reading support at Chautauqua Elementary School

Experience the impact these amazing staff members are having on our students - watch the video here. This new academic initiative builds on our longstanding commitment to ensuring every family can engage in their child's education. We'll have more to share on the accomplishments of the 2025-2026 school year when we issue our 2026 annual report. Stay tuned for more details on our 2026 Gala, coming this November - and don't forget to check out the magic from 2025.

Photo Gallery from talented local photographer, Yui Holbrook

Prom Photobooth Gallery

Beachcomber Article

Thank you for showing up — it truly makes all the difference!

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Vashon Schools Foundation

excellence + equity in education

DID YOU KNOW?

Behind every successful school district is a thriving schools foundation! At Vashon Schools Foundation, we help ensure every child has access to high-quality education by bridging gaps in public school funding and expanding the resources and opportunities available to students. Together with families, educators, school and district leadership, and generous supporters, we are building a thriving educational community—one that offers rich, equitable learning experiences, supports student well-being, and inspires every student to reach their full potential.

THANK YOU 2025 DONORS!

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