



# PARTNERING TO ELEVATE THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE



**Ravenswood  
Classroom Partners**

2023  
PROGRESS  
REPORT

.....  
15 YEARS  
OF COMMUNITY  
PARTNERSHIP

# EVERY CHILD DESERVES AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN

*Dear Friends,*

“Say”, “sound”, “read”... these are the prompts that our dedicated volunteer tutors are using when they lead small groups of students to sound out letters in unison. Jayden, a 4th grader who is part of this group, now loves reading. “It’s super-duper fun”, he says. Every day Jayden and his classmates learn new words, practice letter sounds and work their way through simple books. This active group is one of several that Ravenswood Classroom Partners (RCP) is leading this year as we align with the district’s new approach on how to teach the youngest learners to read using the “science of reading”. The evidence-based approach helps students decode words by breaking them down in parts and understand the sounds that letters make.

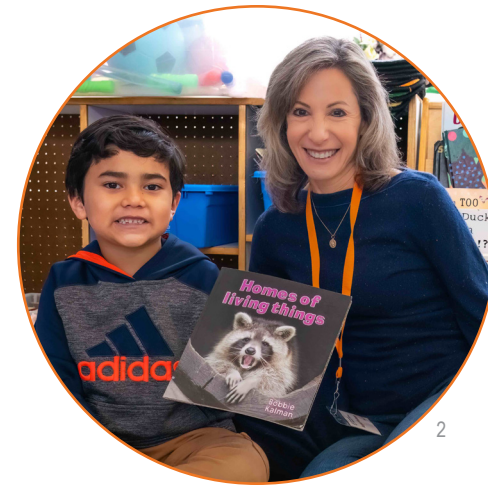
For 15 years, Ravenswood Classroom Partners has stood alongside the teachers and students of Ravenswood, helping to close the academic achievement gap by mobilizing volunteers to engage in one-on-one tutoring and mentorship support. Thanks to the generosity of supporters and partners, we have a lot of progress to celebrate. This past school year, RCP provided over 8,000 one-on-one tutoring sessions and meaningful connections to over 450 students. We continue to tailor our approach to adapt to the changing needs of the students and community. These efforts reflect the commitment RCP makes to Ravenswood students and teachers to close the opportunity gap for those who need us most. Your support is vital to making all of this happen.

We are on a long journey with the work that we do but I am certain that all of us—our team members, volunteers and supporters—are on the right path. We believe all youth should have access to the opportunities and experiences they need to succeed no matter who they are, where they live or what circumstances surround them. I would like to thank every single person who brings so much energy, enthusiasm and generosity to our work with the Ravenswood students. With your help, I know they are on the road to a brighter future.

With heartfelt gratitude,

*Angie Holman*

Angie Holman  
*Executive Director*



# THE COMMUNITY WE SERVE



*Ravenswood Classroom Partners was founded in 2008 to provide an opportunity for trained community members to volunteer in classrooms in East Palo Alto and eastern Menlo Park where students and teachers were eager to improve student learning outcomes and support students facing greater challenges. Since then, RCP has grown from serving students in one classroom to engaging hundreds of students each week.*

*As community members, Ravenswood students deserve equal, excellent educational opportunities.*

## BY THE NUMBERS

**12%**

of Ravenswood students read at or above grade level

**Our primary focus is on building the literacy and comprehension skills of students.**

**6%**

of Ravenswood students perform at or above grade level in math

**Our volunteer tutors also offer tutoring in math to build foundational math skills.**

**78%**

of Ravenswood students are low-income

**Tutoring can help close the achievement gap between low-income students and their more affluent peers.**

**40%**

of Ravenswood students have unstable housing

**450**

**Ravenswood students receive tutoring and mentoring from RCP volunteers**

With few counselors on campus, our tutors are trained to boost the self-confidence and social-emotional skills of Ravenswood students.

**130**

**RCP volunteers tutor Ravenswood students each week**

The school district relies on our volunteers as integrated partners for delivering structured support within their tiered system to address student academic needs.

# A STRONG COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

## *For 15 Years, Ravenswood Classroom Partners*

has been tutoring and mentoring students in Ravenswood schools in East Palo Alto and eastern Menlo Park. Our volunteer tutors are passionate about student learning and meet a critical need for additional student support in the Ravenswood community. Each day our dedicated volunteers form relationships, achieve results and help hundreds of students recover from the pandemic's many educational setbacks. RCP's programs have been requested by all the schools we support and are available at no charge to the Ravenswood City School District.

*Our core values are long standing, deeply held and inform all that we do.*



### **Educational Equity**

We believe that every child is a valued member of the community who deserves an opportunity to learn and succeed, including high quality support for academic and social growth.

### **Whole Child Support**

We believe that supporting students with their academics and self-confidence enables them to develop their unique potential.

### **Working in Partnership**

We believe in aligning with district priorities, programs and curriculum while building connections with community organizations in support of students as part of the district's One Ravenswood initiative.

### **Meet Students' Unique Needs**

We believe students are at the center of their learning journey and we adapt our tutoring to meet students where they are in their unique learning and development trajectory.

### **Volunteer Support**

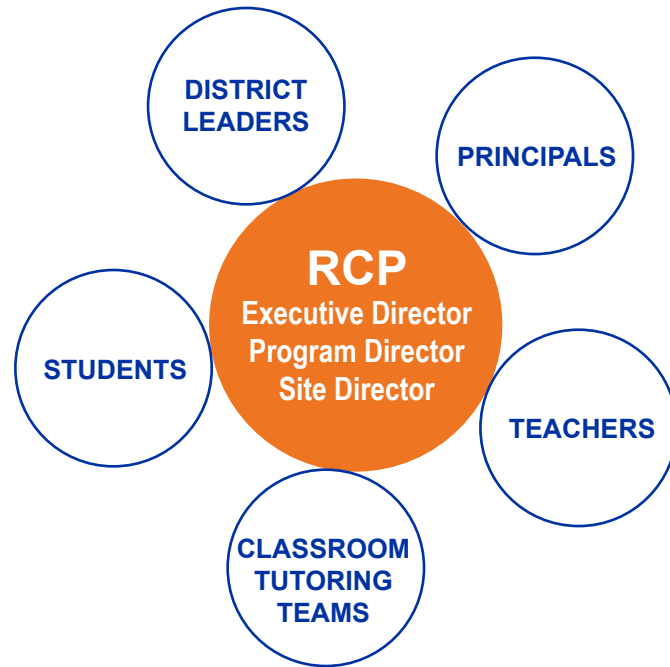
We provide rewarding hands-on experiences in which volunteers build relationships with each other, with the students and teachers they support, and the Ravenswood community.

# 15 YEARS PARTNERING IN RAVENSWOOD SCHOOLS

*We have one of the longest and strongest partnerships within the Ravenswood City School District.*

We just celebrated 15 years of working in tandem to support teachers and students. We align with the district's priorities and curriculum to provide seamless support in the classroom.

The value of our long-standing partnership across all levels of the school district and our ability to adapt and work with school leaders to meet the changing needs of students are more critical than ever due to lasting impacts on student learning from the challenges of the pandemic.



## SITE DIRECTORS

*Our School Site Directors play a unique role in building partnerships on each campus.*

**Belle Haven School Site Director Kathy Kau** embodies this partnership ethic. She has built a trusted relationship with the principal, teachers and tutors on campus. Whether it's matching tutors with teachers, advising on best practices, adapting tutoring approaches based on real-time needs, or organizing volunteers for special school events and projects, her role is essential in ensuring RCP delivers high quality programs.



# OUR PROGRAMS

*Our volunteers are changing lives, one lesson at a time.*

Our programs are an integral part of the transformative change in the Ravenswood district which will provide an outstanding education for all students. Recent research has shown that tutoring provides high-quality educational opportunities and increases academic achievement, engagement and self-esteem. We focus on building literacy, new math and social-emotional skills of students from Transitional Kindergarten through Grade 5 to enable them to reach their full potential and thrive.

## LITERACY TUTORING

In our primary program, volunteers tutor and mentor students one-on-one or in small groups using a structured phonics-based curriculum to accelerate student reading and comprehension skills. Students meet with tutors multiple times per week, decoding words by breaking them down in parts and understanding the sounds that letters make. For our youngest learners in Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten, our program is more unstructured in nature and supports developmentally appropriate approaches to early literacy.



**Lalitha Kumar** has been volunteering with RCP since 2016 in our literacy programs.

She says, ***“The best part of tutoring is spending time with the students, getting to know them, and seeing their enthusiasm for reading grow.”***

She is able to easily coordinate with her fellow volunteers so students have a seamless experience moving from lesson to lesson during the week. Lalitha brings in her own creativity, finding unique ways to connect with her students such as by playing short games like tic-tac-toe at the end of a session.

***“I’m excited to see the progress students can make with regular, individualized tutoring.”***

*“Ravenswood Students thrive with the one-on-one support of their Ravenswood Classroom Partners volunteers. Volunteers work closely with students to enhance their reading and writing abilities, while also instilling confidence and promoting academic success. One-on-one attention from their tutor is truly invaluable.*

**Jennifer Gravem**  
Ravenswood City School District  
Executive Director of Educational Services

# MATH

*Volunteers help students establish a strong foundation and confidence in math through individualized tutoring.*

Tutors are able to work one-on-one with students on specific math concepts they need to learn before they move on to learn more advanced concepts. Our program allows for flexibility across all elementary ages to help students develop essential skills that have a lifelong impact.



**John Forese** was drawn to tutor students in math, a skill he sees as particularly valuable for this younger generation. And given his career in information sciences and data analytics, he's a great asset to our team.

John found that the training provided by RCP equipped him to be successful as a first time volunteer with no teaching experience.

When asked about his favorite part of working with John, a 5th grader named Daniel said, ***“Doing the math chart and playing war. It was fun.”***

“ Within a few short weeks, I developed bonds with the students and was able to help them overcome any fears they had about learning math. It’s rewarding to see the thrill a student displays when they suddenly grasp a math concept. It’s a joy to see students embrace math and feel successful and it gives me an indescribable feeling, knowing I made a difference.

**John Forese**  
Math Volunteer

# 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE BOOK CLUB

*Volunteers lead a group of students  
in a 12-week interactive program*

designed to improve both comprehension and social-emotional skills so students feel optimistic and empowered to handle life's challenges. The in-depth discussions help students build close relationships with classmates and caring adults.



“Through the book club, my students empathize with the challenges the main character faces and develop coping skills to manage similar difficulties in their own lives. They graduate from the 12-week program feeling empowered and more confident—and that is the significant difference I was hoping to make!”

**Lorna Dunne**  
Book Club Volunteer Leader

**Lorna Dunne** is a pediatric nurse who knew that connecting with children came naturally to her. Volunteering since 2017, she enjoys developing a rapport with the students, is impressed by their eagerness to learn and finds witnessing their academic growth very rewarding.

Two years ago Lorna volunteered to become one of our 5th Grade Book Club leaders. She loves sharing the book's emotional story with the students while creating a safe space for them to share and feel “seen”.



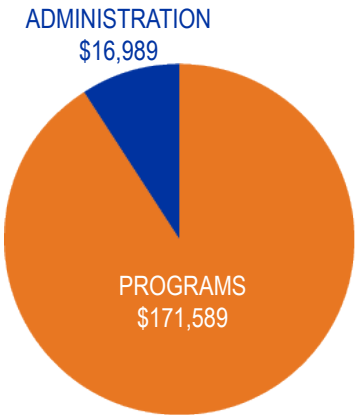
# OUR UNIQUE APPROACH

*We are a community based organization uniquely successful in integrating volunteers into Ravenswood classrooms at no charge to the district.*

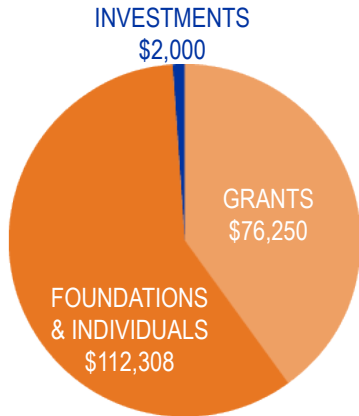
Two part-time staff design and manage our programs. We operate with a lean budget and a passionate volunteer leadership team.

Thanks to the support of generous donors who believe in our mission to close the academic achievement gap and build student self-confidence, we are able to coordinate the efforts of **130 volunteers**, **32 teachers** and reach **450 students**.

**Thank you!**



**EXPENSES**



**INCOME**

## District Curriculum Alignment

RCP's academic and social-emotional support programs are based on the same curriculum and methods the teachers and counselors utilize, resulting in seamless support.

## Classroom Teacher Guidance

Teachers select the students we tutor, give direction and guidance to our volunteers, and monitor student progress.

## Long-term Classroom Partnership

Not only has RCP supported the district for 15 years, but volunteers build expertise and close partnerships as they stay with the same teacher for an average of 3 years.

## School Day Integration

RCP volunteers are integrated into the classroom, enabling them to offer flexible support based on teacher priorities.

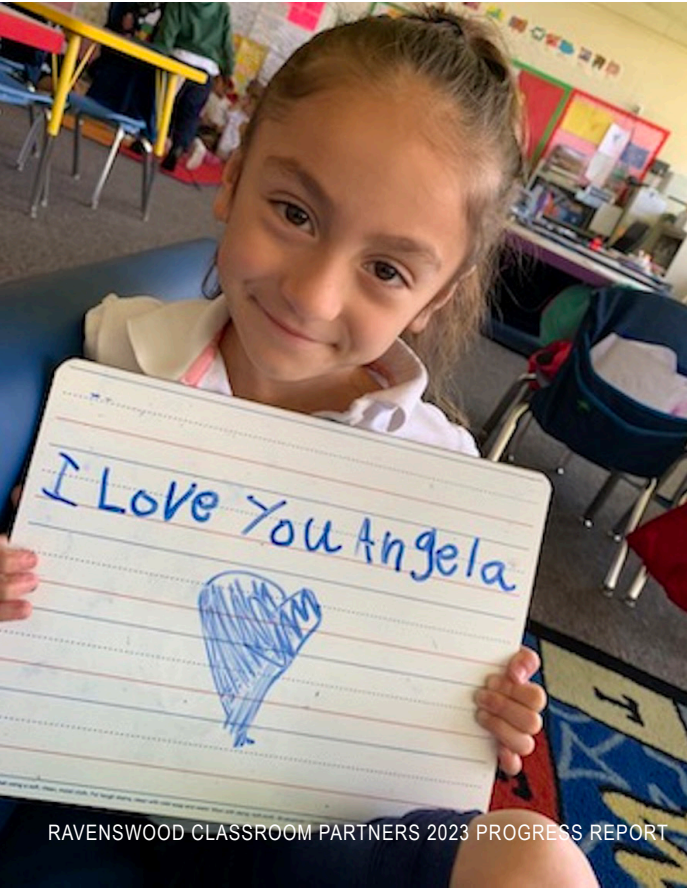
## Team Tutoring

Each teacher has the same 3 to 4 RCP volunteers in the classroom each week, enabling them to work together as a team to support the same students.

## Donor Supported

The generosity of the community keeps our tutoring programs free for all. Together we are transforming the current trajectory for hundreds of children.

# THE IMPACT WE'VE ACHIEVED TOGETHER



With support from our volunteers and donors, RCP was able to work in tandem with teachers and have a marked impact on student achievement.

**100%**

of tutored students demonstrated growth in literacy concepts

**100%**

of teachers surveyed saw improvement in students' academic performance

**100%**

of teachers surveyed saw improvement in students' self-confidence

“ I love knowing I am making a positive impact on their lives.

Volunteer Tutor

**8,000**

hours of one-on-one tutoring sessions for students who otherwise could not afford it

**2X**

the progress of non-RCP tutored students, they gained an average of 3 reading levels in a 10 week session

# JOIN OUR VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY

## *Our team of dedicated volunteers*

comes from many walks of life including at-home parents, part-time and full-time professionals, and retired community members. All share a belief in the value of an excellent education and they often tell us that tutoring is a highlight of their week.

A recent volunteer survey showed that volunteers gained a sense of satisfaction and believed that tutoring helped their students' academic performance and self-confidence.

## Training & Support

We provide it—  
no experience is necessary.

## 60 Minutes Once a Week

You volunteer based  
on your schedule.

## Positive Impact

You can directly impact a student's  
education and life trajectory.



“ I love creating a trusting relationship and being part of the students' learning journeys. They are so sweet and always so happy to see me.

**Volunteer Tutor**

# OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM



## 2023-24 STAFF

**Angie Holman**  
Executive Director

**Cristiana Freed**  
Program Director

## 2023-24 VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP

**Marsha Abbott**  
Treasurer

**Carolyn Bowsher**  
Liaison, Ravenswood Education Foundation

**Vidya Kagan**  
Development Coordinator

**Kathy Kau**  
Site Director, Belle Haven School

**Jeanette Kennedy**  
Director of Marketing

**Grayson Lane**  
Site Director, Belle Haven School

**Sidney Marks**  
Site Director, Costaño School of the Arts

**Lori McKinney**  
Site Director, Costaño School of the Arts

**Kerrin Meinhardt**  
Events Coordinator

**Emily Moberg Robinson**  
Director of Communications

**Cindy Tipton**  
Director of Data Operations & Analysis

**Jessie Wilson**  
Project Coordinator

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**Andrea Wilcox**  
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# BECOME A SUPPORTER

## Be part of the change!

Partner with us to make a difference in the lives of students in our community and create a more equitable and just society.

The Ravenswood students need the extra support provided by our individualized tutoring in order to close the academic achievement gap. Providing students academic help to succeed is more crucial than ever. Your financial support ensures that we can drive student success through improved academic performance and increased engagement.

Help us build a better future for our community and donate today at [www.ravenswoodclassroompartners.org](http://www.ravenswoodclassroompartners.org)

Or by mail at P.O. Box 384, Menlo Park, CA 94026

Ravenswood Classroom Partners is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and your donation is tax deductible.

Tax Id: 47-1582614

### Contact Us:

Angie Holman

*Executive Director*

[angie@ravenswoodclassroompartners.org](mailto:angie@ravenswoodclassroompartners.org)



“RCP is an effective, well-organized, efficient organization that serves the children of our community who need the most support.

### Carolyn Bowsher

Donor, RCP Volunteer and Board President of the Ravenswood Education Foundation



# OUR SUPPORTERS

*Thank you for your generosity!*

Anonymous  
Jane E. Aaron Fund  
Marsha Abbott  
Anel Abreau  
Aitken-Young Family  
Maria Amundson and Elliot Krane  
Sher Amos-Grosser  
Beatrice Bienaime  
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Carolyn Bowsher  
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Geoffrey Dobren  
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Jennifer Falk  
Sally and Craig Falkenhagen  
Alicia Falsetto and Doub Strauss  
Cristiana and Andrew Freed  
Christine Green  
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Vidya Kagan  
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First Congregational Church of Palo Alto  
New Community Church  
Palo Alto Community Fund  
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Rotary Club of Silicon Valley Star  
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