



**learning
together**

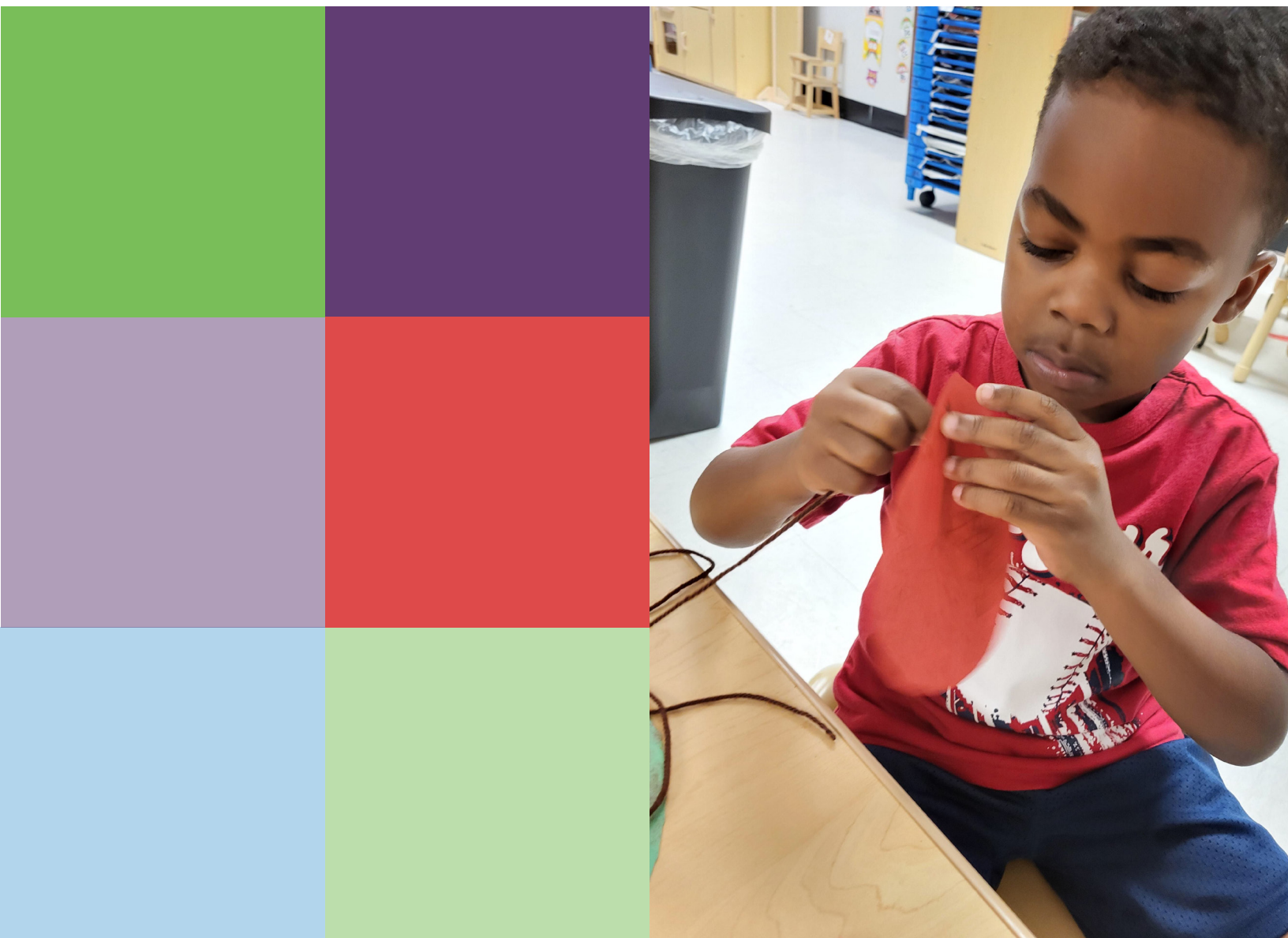
2023-2024

IMPACT REPORT

CHAMPIONS FOR EQUITY IN EDUCATION

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VISION

We envision an education system that is equitable, inclusive, and accessible for all children.

MISSION

Our certified developmental day center and community of resources empower children with and without developmental delays and their families with the tools and skills essential for a life of learning and success.

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on this transformative year, I am both inspired and emboldened by the progress we've made at Learning Together. Our vision is clear and unwavering: we are more than just a school; we are a catalyst for systemic change in early childhood education. Our mission is nothing short of revolutionary—championing an inclusive, anti-racist approach to education that will redefine what is possible for children and families across North Carolina.

Our impact is a testament to our bold vision. Our classrooms are not just spaces for learning; they are incubators of equity, where children of all abilities, races, and socio-economic backgrounds come together to build a future grounded in diversity, accessibility, and inclusion. Our “Classrooms of the Future” initiative is setting a new standard in early education—creating environments that not only foster independence and creativity but also dismantle the barriers that have long held our most vulnerable children back.

But our work extends far beyond the classroom. We are steadfast in our commitment to advocacy, driving systemic change that will reverberate throughout the entire education landscape. Our Family Advocacy program has expanded its reach, empowering families with the tools and resources they need to navigate and overcome the challenges they face. By prioritizing the lived experiences of our families, we are elevating voices that have too often been marginalized, and in doing so, we are reshaping the very foundations of early childhood education.

Looking ahead, our vision is bold. We aim to be the leading force in North Carolina's early childhood education system, setting the standard for what inclusive, equitable, and anti-racist education should be. We are investing in our teachers—our most valuable resource—ensuring they have the support and training needed to be true innovators in the field. We are expanding our programs and deepening our community partnerships, all with the goal of transforming the trajectory of children's lives through high-quality early education.

Your support is not just appreciated—it is essential. Together, we are not only changing the lives of the children and families we serve today, but we are also paving the way for generations to come. We are creating a brighter, more inclusive future, and I am honored to have you by our side on this journey.

With unwavering commitment,



Kyle Reese

Executive Director
Learning Together



OUR PROVEN STRATEGY

We are setting the standard for equity and inclusion.

Since 1969, we have been helping children thrive in an educational system that is systemically biased against disability, race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. We continue to champion super-inclusive education as the model for ensuring every student has an equitable future.



OUR THREE PILLARS

We champion equity through education so that diversity, accessibility, and inclusion become cornerstones of our collective future.

Super-Inclusive Education



Students with disabilities learn alongside their peers from diverse ethnic, racial, and socio-economic backgrounds.

Classroom of the Future



We provide families with high-quality adaptive learning environments and evidence-based curricula that promote lifelong success.

Systems Change & Advocacy



We advocate for fair compensation for our teachers and staff and partner with organizations that empower families with the skills and resources to advocate for their children, themselves and our community.

2023-2024 ENROLLMENT AND FAMILY STATISTICS

Student Enrollment and Demographics

51%

children
of color

49%

white

7%

Hispanic

36%

of children aged 3 or older had identified developmental delays and IEPs, receiving over 2,000 hours of on-site therapy at no cost to parents

Family Demographics

38%

of families
have an annual
income under
\$50,000

35%

of families are
supported by a
single parent

64%

families receive
some form
of tuition
assistance

THE PROBLEM

ACCESS

There is an urgent need for equitable access to early childhood education!

1,778

Childcare centers in NC set to close in the next 3-5 years.

155,539

Children in NC are expected to lose childcare due to legislative changes.

\$17,400

Average annual pre-K costs are higher than almost all of NC in-state college tuition.

For the first time since the pandemic, North Carolina has a waiting list for Child Care Subsidy vouchers, leaving families experiencing poverty unable to access the support they need to afford childcare. This lack of access directly affects their ability to work and support their households, creating yet another barrier for low-income families striving for financial stability and reliable employment.

OUR RESPONSE

55,000 hot, nutritious meals served each year at no additional cost to parents, saving them up to \$7,000 a year.

64% of families receive some type of **needs-based financial assistance**.

2,000 hours of onsite therapy services that saves families **\$30,000 in medical expenses**.

THE PROBLEM

ADVOCACY

There is an urgent need to advocate for affordable early childhood education!

27%

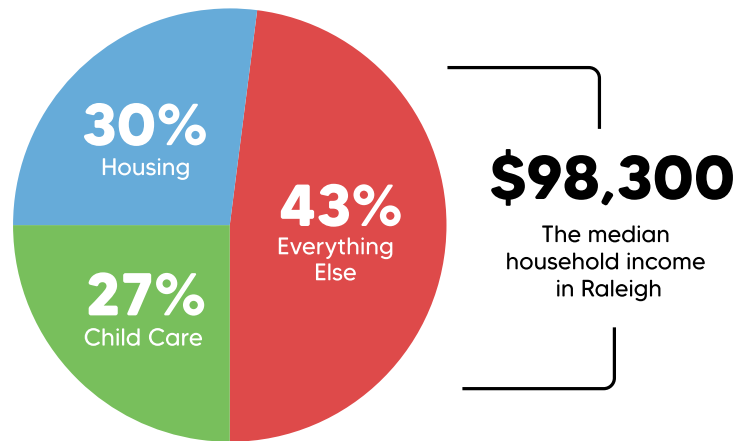
of family income is allocated to childcare, which is forecasted to exceed housing cost in the next 2-4 years.

**\$122
BILLION**

is the nationwide cost of childcare for infants and toddlers, which has more than doubled since 2018, rising from \$57 billion to \$122 billion annually.

**\$416
BILLION**

are lost by parents in North Carolina, in earnings annually because they are forced to cut work hours or leave the workforce.



OUR RESPONSE

In 2023-2024 we amplified our advocacy work focusing on parent empowerment, improving community resource engagement, and working with policymakers to ensure sustainable funding for early childhood education across NC.

Key Advocacy Highlights:

- ✓ Collaborated with NC ADD and Senator Michael Lee to secure a **40% increase in funding**, the first in over 20 years, for children served through the Wake County Public School System.
- ✓ Created a **Director of Family Advocacy role** to enhance support for families, focused on family empowerment and expanding our community of resources.
- ✓ Attended the **Hunt Institute Legislative Retreat**, where we participated in systems change and sustainability funding panels with state legislators.

THE PROBLEM

TEACHER COMPENSATION

There is an urgent need to pay teachers a living wage!

North Carolina

is 2nd lowest in the nation for teacher pay.

\$10-12/hour

is the average earnings for ECE educators in Raleigh, far below the living **wage of \$18.95**/hour in Wake County, leading to teacher shortages and program closures.

Medical, dental and vision benefits are not typically covered by early childhood education providers.



OUR RESPONSE

38% the increase in teacher compensation over the past three years.

100% Employee-only medical, dental, and vision benefits covered by Learning Together.

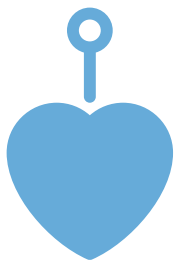
Changes to school calendar to allow for more **professional development** and time off.

Our work helps children achieve kindergarten readiness, which reduces the likelihood of poverty, increases employment opportunities, and contributes to a stronger community.

WHAT IF WE DO NOTHING?

If children don't have access to high-quality preschool education, there could be generational consequences:

**Program changes help beat the odds...
system changes change the odds.**



Social Impacts

- Increased juvenile delinquency
- Limited employment options
- Increased criminal activity



Economic Impacts

- Increased likelihood of poverty
- Reduced long term income
- Higher healthcare costs



FAMILY STORIES



Nola has completely blossomed this past school year. I deeply wanted for her to attend Learning Together and was thrilled when she began. Nola was born four weeks premature. Although she has met all her cognitive and physical milestones, she still needed some extra help with her speech and controlling her big emotions. Mr. Todd, Ms. Tanisha, Amy, and Gabby, along with other staff members, have been so supportive of Nola and allowed her to navigate and grow. She has gone from having speech therapy twice a week to once a week. She has also become more confident and learned techniques to help her when she's overstimulated. I am so appreciative to the teachers and staff for how they have helped Nola to thrive.

“Ms. Tanisha is one of Nola’s favorite people! She is the first person she looks for when I drop her off in the morning, and she always has a story most days about something “Ms. Nisha” said or did. It gives me added peace leaving her every day knowing that she is being cared for by such a caring person.”

Nola Bryant



My sweet Jason has flourished! He’s gained social skills that we all felt would take longer to develop because of his delays. His mobility, speech, and fine motor skills have progressed tremendously because of the on-site related service providers. Regardless of staffing, the team at Learning Together has worked hard daily to make sure my son is in a safe environment amongst his typically developing peers.

“Wow, there are so many to name. Jan Baker, Charles, Olivia, Jill, Tamika, Kelli, and each of his therapists listened to my concerns and pushed along with me to advocate for my son. As a first-time parent with special needs, I felt included when it came to his development.”

Jason McNeil

FY2023-24 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

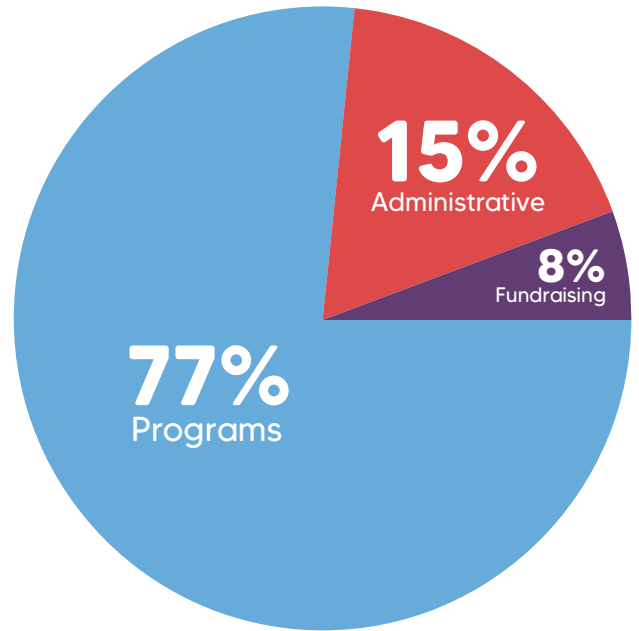
REVENUE

Contributions and Grants	\$398,526
Program Service Revenue	\$1,129,038
Other Revenue	\$318,289
Total Revenue	\$1,845,853

EXPENSES

Programs	\$1,380,139	77.28%
Administrative	\$263,311	14.74%
Fundraising	\$142,348	7.97%
Total Expenses	\$1,785,798	

*As of June 30, 2024



STAFF AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Leadership Team

Kyle Reese
Executive Director/COO

Jan Baker
Sr. Director, Education Strategy & Initiatives

Korinn Alexander
Director of School Operations

Courtney Dozier
Director of Finance

Charles Skeeter
Director of Special Education

Staff

John Baker
Feraha Beata
Felecia Dawson
Hope Gamblin
Todd Ireland
Diamond Lucas
Celeste Mardenborough
Dymone (Starr) Mickell
Jill Mitchell
Tanisha Murray
Cynthia Peterson
Jeaneria Rainey
Ashleigh Revels
Syreeta Sutton
Kiera Turner
Natasha Vega
Rosa Velez

Board of Directors

Randi Ligon
President

Joe Howison
Treasurer

Amanda Clayton
Board Member

Megan R. Bell
Board Member

Honoring Decades of Dedication Thirty Years or More

Nell Barnes
1983 - 2016

Debra Halley
1986 - 2016

Cleo Barnes
1984 - 2021

Twenty Years or More

Felecia Dawson
1998 - Present

Tanisha Murray
2002 - Present

Rosa Velez
2001 - Present

Strategic Partnerships



Champions of equity, accessibility, and inclusion in education.



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