



ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

2024-2025



CHARTING THE COURSE...TOGETHER!

Navigation while driving isn't my strong suit. I use the GPS on my phone to get everywhere! Even some neighborhoods in Bennington turn me all around. I think back to the days before technology when my parents would plan a trip and unfold a large paper map and highlight the roads we were planning to travel and it seems archaic to even think about!

We've all been there, when our GPS turns us all around or we think "Why did it take us this way?" We tend to feel a sense of helplessness in the moment, especially when we are in a hurry to be somewhere on time.

This year the BPS Foundation has embraced the theme of "navigation," and it resonated with me in regards to these feelings we often get when driving and trying to get to our next destination. As we navigate the future of the BPS Foundation – from office space, to staff, to programming and beyond – it can at times feel like being turned around while driving. It can be unsettling, confusing, and even frustrating at times. But just like a compass recalculates and guides us forward, those moments of uncertainty often lead us to new paths, clearer direction, and better outcomes than we initially imagined.

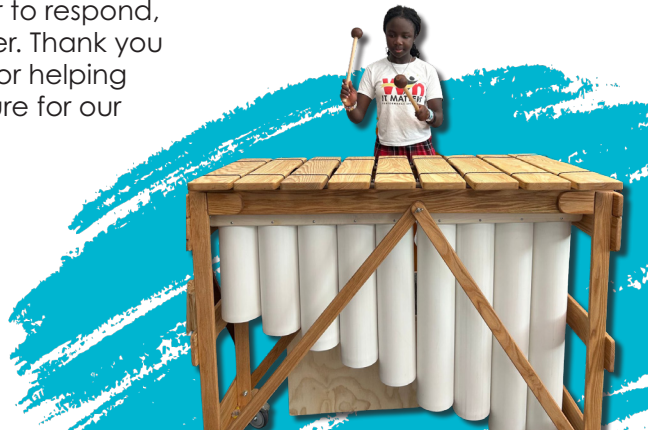
Over the past year, the BPS Foundation has experienced moments of recalibration centered around the evolving needs of our schools and community. While the route isn't always straightforward, each turn helps us better understand where we are going and why our work matters. With every adjustment, we grow to be more intentional, more focused, and more aligned with our mission to support Bennington Public Schools.

What makes this journey possible is the trust and partnership of our community. Our donors, volunteers, educators, and supporters are the steady landmarks along the way—reminding us that we are not navigating alone. Your belief in our work provides both direction and motivation, even when the road ahead feels unfamiliar.

As we look forward, we do so with confidence and optimism. The BPS Foundation is charting a course that is grounded in purpose and guided by experience. We may still encounter a few unexpected turns, but we are better equipped than ever to respond, adapt, and move forward together. Thank you for being part of this journey and for helping us navigate toward a stronger future for our students and schools.

Here's to exploring new journeys together!

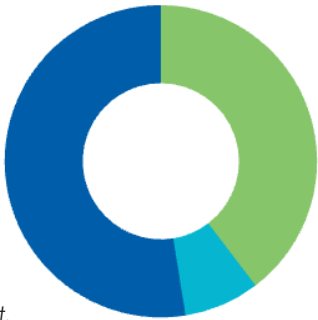
– **Blake Thompson** –
Executive Director



2024/25 FINANCIALS

FUNDS RAISED

EVENTS	\$58,639
GENERAL DONATIONS	\$11,608
PASS THROUGH	\$77,709
TOTAL	\$147,956



Note: Funds raised go to direct programming impact. Revenue from our All Star Kids Before & After School Program covers operating expenses and the remainder of our programming dollars.

3 KEY AREAS OF IMPACT



STUDENT SUCCESS	\$88,610
STAFF SUCCESS	\$81,368
FUTURE SUCCESS	\$264,555
TOTAL	\$434,533



Meeting students' basic needs while creating opportunities for them to thrive: Student Needs Fund, Lunch Balance Payoff, Classroom Grants, TeamMates Mentoring, Study Centers and more.



Investing in our educators and staff in turn impacts our students: Teacher Tuition Reimbursement, Staff Professional Development Grants, Staff Appreciation and Recognition.



Supporting student success beyond graduation: Scholarships, College Readiness Support, and Alumni Network.

24/25 SCHOOL YEAR IMPACT SNAPSHOT



48 Teachers Tuition Reimbursed



24 Classroom Grants Awarded



20 Students Basic Needs Met to Help Them Succeed



8 One-Time Projects Funded: Author Visit, Field Trips, Robotics Club Expansion & More



\$154,000 in Scholarships Awarded to 154 Seniors



LUNCH DEBT PAID IN FULL

Thanks to 62 generous donors who contributed \$8,920, and support from the **Student Needs Fund**, 298 student's lunch accounts were paid off for the 2024–25 school year—erasing \$13,273.84 in debt. Through the power of community, all students started the new school year with zero lunch debt.

HELPING STUDENTS FOCUS WITH CALM STRIPS

A **Classroom Grant** to 4th-grade teacher Marshall Keough at Pine Creek Elementary provided Calm Strips—low-distraction, tactile tools that help nearly 100 students manage energy and improve focus.

This simple innovation helps meet diverse social-emotional and behavioral needs so all students can succeed.

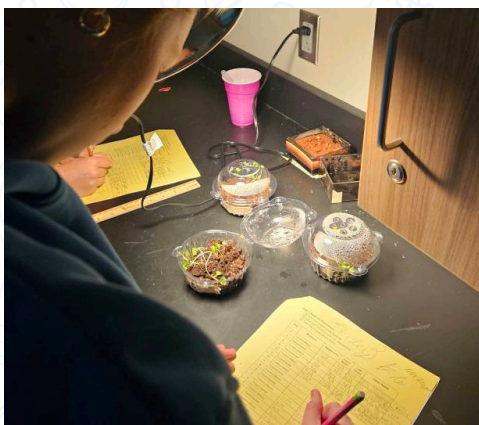


INVESTING IN COLLEGE READINESS

Through our **AP Test Reimbursement** initiative, Bennington High School students took 244 AP exams in 2024–25. Each year, the Foundation covers half the cost—about \$11,000—while the High School covers the other half, so students face no financial barrier. Support for dual-certified teachers and AP courses like this gives students like 2025 BHS graduate Baylor Detjens a head start, allowing him to enter Syracuse University as a sophomore.

7TH GRADERS EXPLORE SCIENCE THROUGH MARS AND EARTH

At Bennington Middle School, 7th graders brought real-world science to life with Martian soil kits funded by a **Classroom Grant**. Led by teacher Lindsey Wilson, students designed experiments testing sunlight, water, and soil variables, connecting Earth's ecosystems to Mars while developing critical thinking, collaboration, and scientific inquiry skills.



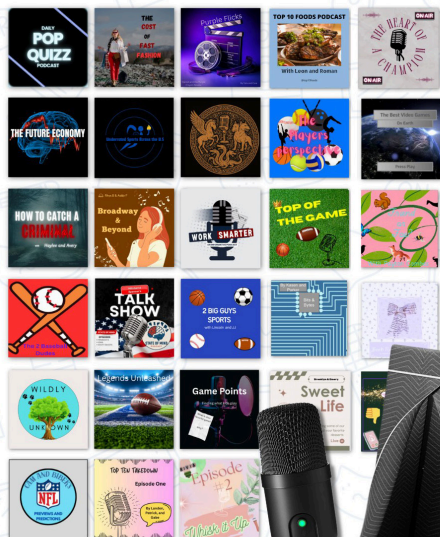
CONNECTING COMMUNITY SUPPORT TO STUDENT CREATIVITY

Bennington High School English teacher Ben Tompkins had an idea for a short story contest, and community member Connie Wickham generously offered to fund the prizes. The Foundation connected them, launching the Inkwell Short Story Contest, celebrating student writing and imagination, and inspiring a new student writing club—showing how community support brings teacher-led ideas to life.

HAL STUDENTS HARNESS THE POWER OF PODCASTING

At Bennington Middle School and Bennington South Middle School, HAL students are exploring creativity and technology through podcasting.

With portable recording cubes and microphones funded by a **Classroom Grant**, students wrote, recorded, and produced 28 shows, developing collaboration, communication, and 21st-century skills while sharing their work with a real audience.



View more
impact stories:



MIDDLE SCHOOL SCOREBOARD

With **Project Funding** and alumni donations, Bennington South Middle School installed a permanent scoreboard, replacing the outdated portable one. The upgrade benefits student athletes at both middle schools, enhancing games, practices, and school spirit for years to come.

EVENTS

Events are an important part of our work. Events bring in revenue as well as raise awareness about the Foundation and the work we do for the district.

ALUMNI HOMECOMING TAILGATE

The 2nd annual all-alumni Homecoming Tailgate, welcomed 102 alumni of all ages back to their alma mater. Attendees enjoyed free game admission, a meal voucher from the Athletic Booster Club, a chance to win free apparel, and time to reconnect with fellow alumni.

Alumni are encouraged to create a free profile at BenningtonAlumni.NationBuilder.com to stay updated on events, access the online directory, plan reunions, and shop for alumni merchandise.

Join us for our first ever All Class Alumni Reunion Sept 27, 2026!



TRIFECTA GAME NIGHT RAISED \$4,142

In its second year, Trifecta Game Night brought laughter and friendly competition while raising \$4,142 for Foundation programs. Teams raced through puzzles, pizza, and challenges on the 'Wheel of Chaos.'

Join us for next year's event Jan 16 & 17, 2026!



ANNUAL GALA RAISED \$52,524

The 2025 Annual Gala "Sock Hop N Swing" – presented by Darrell & Coe Leta Logemann and Terry McGill Inc, Jason & Danielle Buchholz – raised \$52,524 for programming, with over 300 attendees!

Join us for next year's Gala on Saturday, March 14, 2026!



SENIOR ACADEMIC CEREMONY & SCHOLARSHIP BRUNCH

In partnership with BHS Administration, the Foundation helped launch a refreshed Senior Academic Ceremony recognizing all senior academic honors, awards and scholarships. New this year, a Local Scholarship Brunch brought donors and recipients together for a meaningful, personal way to connect. **Save the Date for April 26, 2026.**

TRIPLE B COMMUNITY RACE RAISED \$1,973

Led by Board Vice President Kim Rohe and presented by Thrasher Foundation Repair, the 2nd annual Triple B Relay drew 142 participants, up from 99 last year. The school-to-school race offered a 1-mile fun run plus a 5-mile relay and solo course.

Join us next year during Bennington Daze on June 6, 2026!



Forever BPS

Leave a Legacy Program for
Bennington Public Schools
through BPS Foundation.



Planned giving is a meaningful way to support Bennington Public Schools and leave your legacy—impacting students and staff for generations to come. By including the Bennington Public Schools Foundation in your estate or financial plans, you can make a lasting difference while also realizing potential tax benefits during your lifetime.

During the 2024–25 fiscal year, one of the Foundation's most transformative gifts came from **Darrell and Coe Leta Logemann**, who established a \$2 Million endowment to support both senior scholarships and staff professional development. Their generosity ensures continued investment in Bennington students and educators—an incredible example of leaving a legacy that can be seen and felt today.

Every planned gift, no matter the size, helps shape a stronger future for our schools and community. To learn more about creating your own legacy, contact Executive Director Blake Thompson at 531.329.3710 or bthompson@bennps.org.

CURRENT FOREVER BPS LEGACY GIFTS

Darrell & Coe Leta Logemann Endowed Senior Scholarships

Darrell & Coe Leta Logemann Endowed Staff Professional Development Grants

Lee & Kathy Bunz Family Endowed Senior Scholarships

Gene Baldwin Memorial Scholarships

Jeff Glover Memorial Scholarship

Dave Clark Memorial Scholarship

Larry Saunders Memorial Scholarship



Info Meeting
Coming
Spring 2026!

The BPS Foundation thanks these major supporters who make it possible to enrich teaching, inspire learning, and maximize educational opportunities for all students, staff and schools in Bennington.

See all 358 donors who gave through us during the 24/25 fiscal year and how you can join them:



Darrell & Coe Leta
Logemann

THRASHER
FOUNDATION REPAIR



Dr. Chris & Sheryl
Cornett

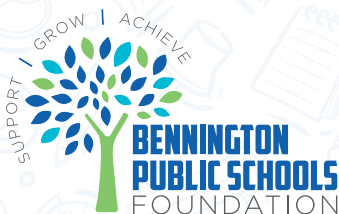


BRIDGES | TRUST



Accelerated Automotive,
Andrew & Ashley Ostendorff,
Bennington Animal Hospital,

Bennington Auto Sales, Bennington Soccer Club, Brandon McCarville & Kaylee Wallace, Chris & Melissa Reiner, Chris & Tara Gufford, DC Retirement Strategies, Dr. Aaron & Laura Plas, Dr. Terry & Theresa Haack, Jen McNally, Justin & Mindy McGrath, Lutz, Mark & Nicki Byars, Quality Dental Care, Ridgewood Senior Living, Rick & Melissa Freed, Rodgar & Dee Hoge, Steve & Melissa Koesters, Troy & Mary Beth McKinney, Union Bank & Trust.



11620 N 156th PO Box 309
Bennington, NE 68007



**SUBSCRIBE TO OUR
MONTHLY E-NEWS
FOR IMPACT +
OPPORTUNITIES
YEAR ROUND!**



CURRENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chris Reiner, President

Jason Limbach, Vice President

Michelle Miller, Treasurer

Kim Rohe, Secretary

Joe Pick, School Board Liaison

Dr. Aaron Plas, Superintendent

Tara Gufford

David Holtorf

Jason Holling Karas

Kristi Thornton

Christen Shelbourn

Connie Wickham



**SCAN TO MAKE
A DONATION**

NONPROFIT 501(C)(3)

We act as a separate entity to the District. Donor dollars are not used to cover operating expenses and go straight to program impact. Donations made through the BPS Foundation can be tax-deductible.

You can choose to give to the general programming fund or to a specific program that most aligns with your giving goals.

BenningtonSchoolsFoundation.org | 531.329.3710 |   

BPSF Non-Discrimination Policy: Shall follow all federal and state civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, marital status, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.