

We believe the best education
has creativity at its heart.



Third Grade Sustenance Program and Exhibit

© Side x Side



“Collaboration
is the heart of
what we do at
Side x Side and
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century skill
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Maine’s
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educators.”

Dear Side x Side Community Member,

Collaboration is the heart of what we do at Side x Side and it is a vital 21st-century skill that we bring to Maine’s students and educators. Our teaching artists collaborate with classroom teachers to create arts-integrated programs that connect curriculum with hands-on experiences, promoting critical thinking, innovation, and social emotional well-being in the classroom. Side x Side has had a banner year helping students and teachers grow their skills and confidence.

We are proud of the engagement and commitment from our community to maintain and grow this work to support students and educators. We are pleased to announce that we were awarded \$242,000 in Congressionally-Directed Spending from Senator Angus King’s office and the U.S. Department of Education, which fully funds a year-long professional development series in arts integration that will be **free** to educators throughout the state of Maine during the 2023-2024 school year. This broadens our reach and gives more students and teachers access to the benefits of integrating the arts into classroom curriculum. In addition, we are fostering strategic relationships and collaborations with organizations around Maine.

Together, we can help students and educators in Maine grow and thrive. Thank you for your partnership and support.

Emily Marczak
Chair, Side x Side Board of Directors

Letter from the Executive Director



“The arts have the power to shift perspective, join people together, and create meaningful change.”



Dear Friends,

In one of many Side x Side programs this past year, teens at Lincoln Middle School created a mural, taking a deep dive into the exploration of interpersonal relationships and healthy communities. Called “Finding Our Way,” the project demanded in-depth questions, reflection, and collaboration. For me, “Finding Our Way” encapsulates the essence of Side x Side: learning through art, joy, self-discovery, and deep connection. At Side x Side, every day we see how the arts can foster high quality, meaningful education and create vibrant communities.

Led by art teacher Sara Gimeno and teaching artist Molly Brown, “Finding Our Way” sprang from an interdisciplinary research and discovery unit. Students discussed what made them feel grounded and connected in school, the local landscape, and wider community.

The finished design is a contemporary composition that cleverly represents both people and landforms using geometric shape and color. Students spoke profoundly about the experience and of how they were able to illustrate the diversity around them while creating a strong sense of inclusivity within their school community.

This project lifted students’ voices and transformed the physical space. Lincoln Middle School principal Marisa Ayala reported that the hallway is now their favorite spot in the building. After seeing how this project compelled students, Principal Ayala has convened a second group of students to re-imagine the use of space.

Side x Side facilitates curiosity, reflection, and understanding through the process of art making. We believe that creative teaching methods offer the most engaging, effective, and inclusive educational experience.

The arts have the power to bring people together, shift perspective, and inspire change. Side x Side programs build dynamic individuals, thriving schools, and strong communities.

Our achievements are the result of collaborative efforts, working “side by side” with schools, artists, community members, and funders.

When we are connected and can see the humanity in one another, we are stronger, more joyful, and we thrive!

With deepest gratitude,

Beth Wilbur Van Mierlo
Side x Side Executive Director



WHAT OUR STUDENTS ARE SAYING...

“Art has so many different ways of portraying itself. Our mural represents how *everyone is together* – your ancestors, those behind you and ahead of you, will always be there for you.”



Make a difference for students in Maine by supporting our school programs.

“No matter the shade or color of our skin or our differences, we are all the same on the inside. Art connects us.”



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Research Highlights



Teachers reported significant student impacts in these areas:

- 91% increased understanding of the content
- 100% increased ability to take creative risks
- 91% improved ability to work with other students
- 91% increased willingness to participate
- 91% improved sense of classroom community

Teacher experience:

- 92% believe that arts integration contributes to social emotional learning
- 100% believe there was a clear connection between content and arts learning
- 100% believe that teaching artists have a positive impact on the classroom
- 90% believe community experts contribute to student learning

Side x Side students had the opportunity to be part of a public art exhibit and panel discussion called *Sustenance* at the Portland Public Library's Lewis Gallery where their installation was hung alongside nationally-recognized artists.

Students at Talbot Community School participated in a Side x Side program that was facilitated by teaching artist Pamela Moulton and third grade teacher Jes Ellis. Students explored the concept of **sustenance** during a science and social studies unit on food systems, river ecology, and migratory salmon, and then worked with Moulton to create mixed media salmon sculptures and a river installation using recycled denim. This program was part of a larger art exhibit, community conversation, and performance called *Sustenance* that took place at the Portland Public Library's Lewis Gallery May–July, 2023.

During the program, students engaged in conversations about Maine's waterways, salmon migration, land access, and how food systems are closely linked to community health and well-being. They also discussed how the food we eat not only provides nutrition, but can also bring joy, community, and a deeper connection to our cultures.

During Portland's First Friday festivities on June 2nd, some of the third graders participated in a short performance with their salmon sculptures and joined a panel discussion at the library moderated by Professor Myron M. Beasley and including Beth Wilbur Van Mierlo and several of the artists represented in the exhibit. The discussion was centered around how food, art, and storytelling work together in the panelists' various art and life practices. They then addressed a variety of social topics, such as community, identity, land, and food access, providing a foundation to think critically and conceptually about the broader ideas of art and sustenance.

The *Sustenance* exhibit was reviewed in the [Portland Press Herald](#) by arts writer Jorge S. Arango who wrote,

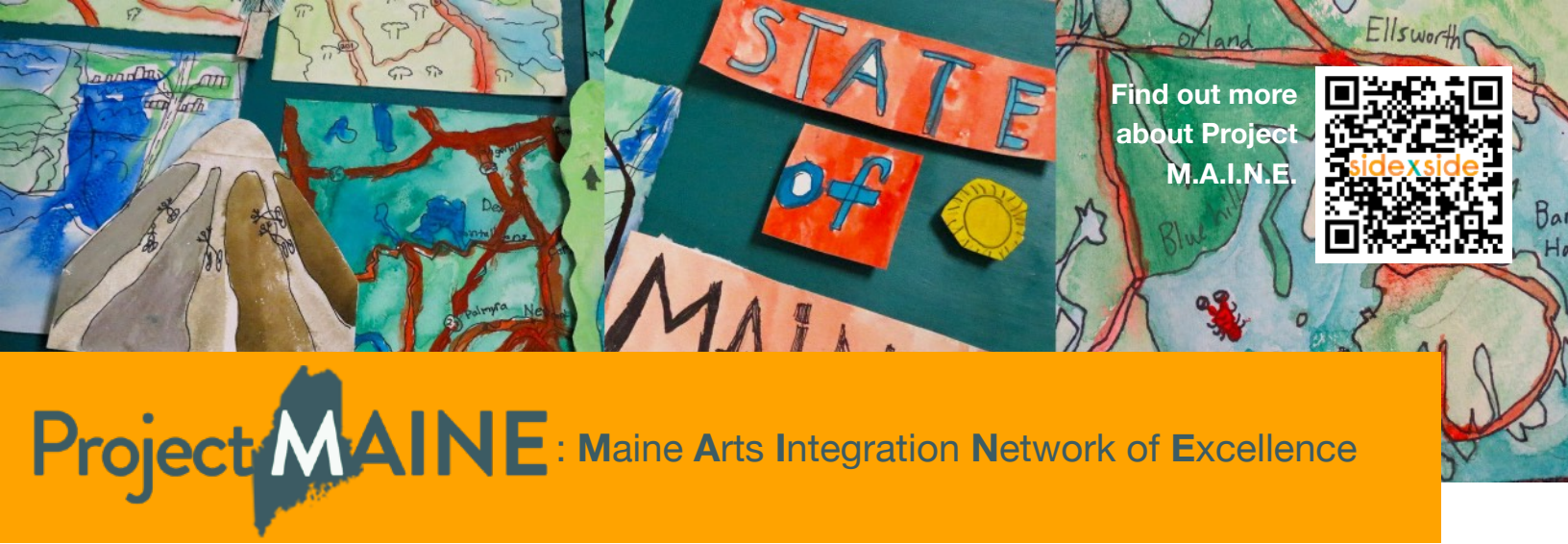
"Side x Side, an arts-integrated program in which a teaching artist collaborates with third-graders on art that responds to education about race, income, food insecurity and opportunity inequality, is one of my favorites."



“The arts are a catalyst for conversation and help students voice complex concepts.”

- Beth Wilbur Van Mierlo

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Project MAINE: Maine Arts Integration Network of Excellence

Side x Side is thrilled to announce that we are a recipient of Congressionally-Directed Spending through the office of Senator Angus King and the U.S. Department of Education for \$242,000 to fully fund Project M.A.I.N.E. for the 2023–2024 school year. This professional development series will incorporate community collaborations with organizations across the state. Participants will be provided with an arts integration framework that includes community connections, teaching tools, classroom resources, and arts-based assessment strategies that support teachers to experiment with this work in their own classrooms.

Interactive virtual sessions will be held monthly September–May. In summer 2024, **in-person visual and performing arts integration workshops** will be offered at locations around the state.

VIRTUAL SESSIONS: 7–8pm

SEPTEMBER 6	Who is Side x Side and What is Arts Integration?
OCTOBER 4	The Impact of Arts Integration in Schools
NOVEMBER 8	Beyond Content: Arts Integration Strategies for Inclusivity and Health and Wellness
DECEMBER 6	Multiliteracies in the Classroom
JANUARY 3	Maine Museums and Their Resources
FEBRUARY 7	Community Partners: The Importance of Collaboration
MARCH 6	Single Sheet Books and Literacy
APRIL 3	Moving Outside: Project Journals as a Tool for the Arts
MAY 1	Nuts and Bolts of Side x Side’s Arts Integration Model

in partnership with



PORTLAND • GORHAM • LEWISTON • ONLINE



During the 2022-2023 school year, **side**x**side** provided arts integration experiences to...

1,786

PRE-K-8TH GRADE STUDENTS



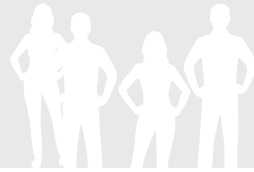
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TEACHERS, SPECIALISTS, SPECIAL ED AND ELL INSTRUCTORS



12

UNIVERSITY INTERNS / PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS



11

SCHOOLS (ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE)



Use the QR Code to check out photos from our in-school programs.

2022-2023 Donors

7/1/22–6/30/23



THANK YOU

Your generous support makes our in-school programs possible. We couldn't do it without you!



INDIVIDUALS

Anonymous
Amy Amoroso
David and Isobel Anable
Tessa Anable
Carol Walker Aten
Eliza Barnes
Kristen Bird
Catherine Bloom
Victoria Bonebakker
Toria Brett
Jane Briggs
Trish Brigham
Janet Burson
Sarah Campbell
Marie-Gaelle Casset-Ford
Chick Lee
Sheila Cook
David E. Currier
Lorie Dana
Heather Davis
Indriani Demers
Tyna Donelson
Tom Driscoll
Kerem Durdag
Zoe Eiber
John Elliott
Catherine Fisher
Jeanne Handy
Amy Hawkes
Ellen Hirschberg
Daniel Hrenko
Kelly Hrenko
Jennifer Hutchins
Masey Kaplan
Will Kilbreth and Leah Whalen
Catherine King
Elias Kuh
Celine Kuhn
Lilly Kuhn
June Lacombe
Ariel M. Linet
Sarah Linet
Lin Lisberger
Marjie Longshore
Emily Marczak
Caitlin Marshall
Dan Marston
Christopher Scott Marx
Alice McNulty
Bevin McNulty
Emily Molchan
Josephine Moody
Irene Moon
Ted Oldham
Lisa Page
Betsy Peters
Hilary Pidden
Jed Porta
John Rex-Waller
Antonio Rocha
Julie Rosenthal
Rene Roy
Paul Jarvis
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John Scribner
Lois Seewald
Angel Simoneau
Susan Spagnola
Ed Suslovic
Beth Anne Swan
Erica Swan
Laura Toran Graff
Ann Toran
Cathy Toran
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Emily Vitale
Sarah H. Waite
Judy Watson
Annetta Weatherhead
Mary Wellehan
Charity West
Emma Wilson
David Wright

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this report. Email info@sidexsideme.com with any omissions or corrections, and please accept our sincere apologies.

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2022-2023 Supporters

FOUNDATIONS / ORGANIZATIONS

Frances Hollis Brain Foundation Fund

The Cabin Foundation

Community Health Options

The Davis Family Foundation

Flatbread Company

Horizon Foundation

Katherine Lindsay Howell Fund

Lily Sarah Grace Fund

Maine Arts Commission

Maine Humanities Council

The Onion Foundation

Peirce Gandolf Charitable Giving

Elmina B. Sewall Foundation

Widgeon Point Charitable Foundation

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

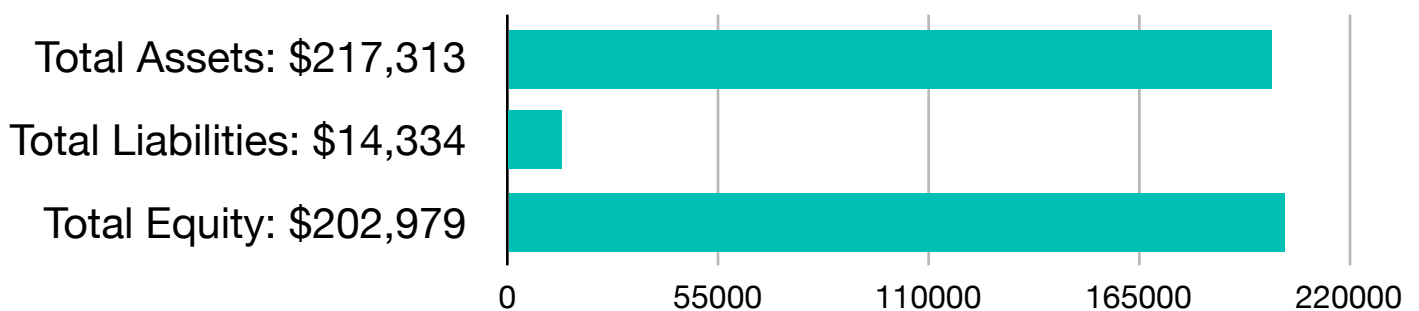
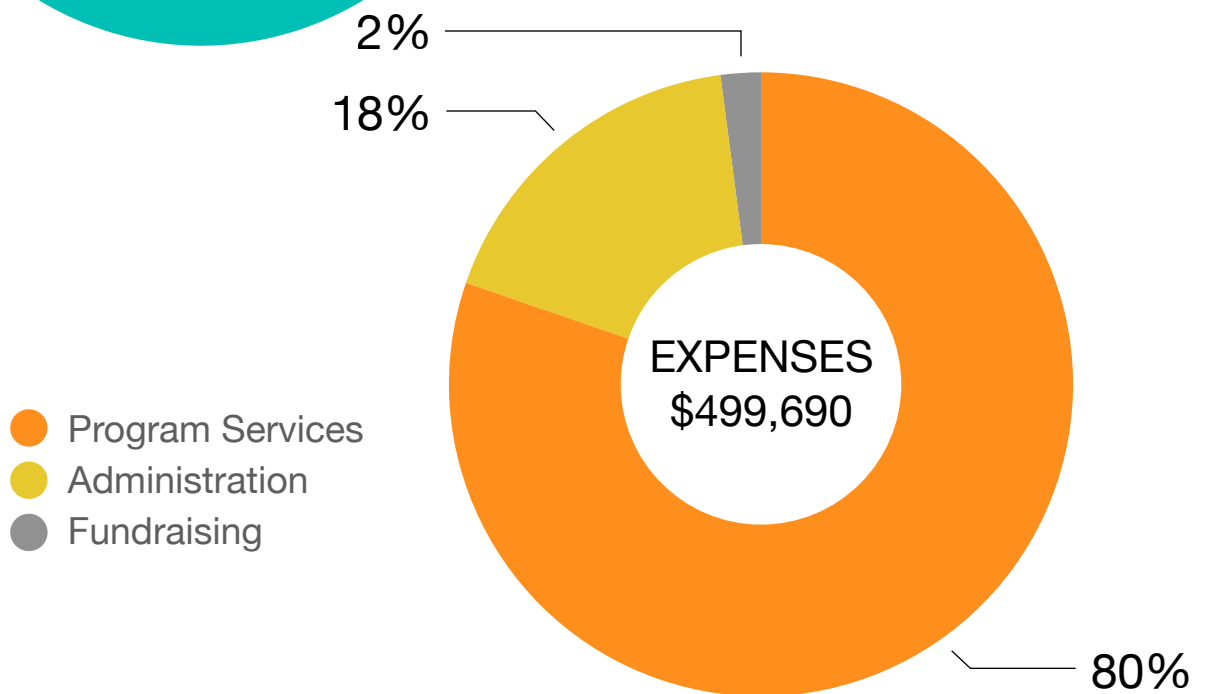
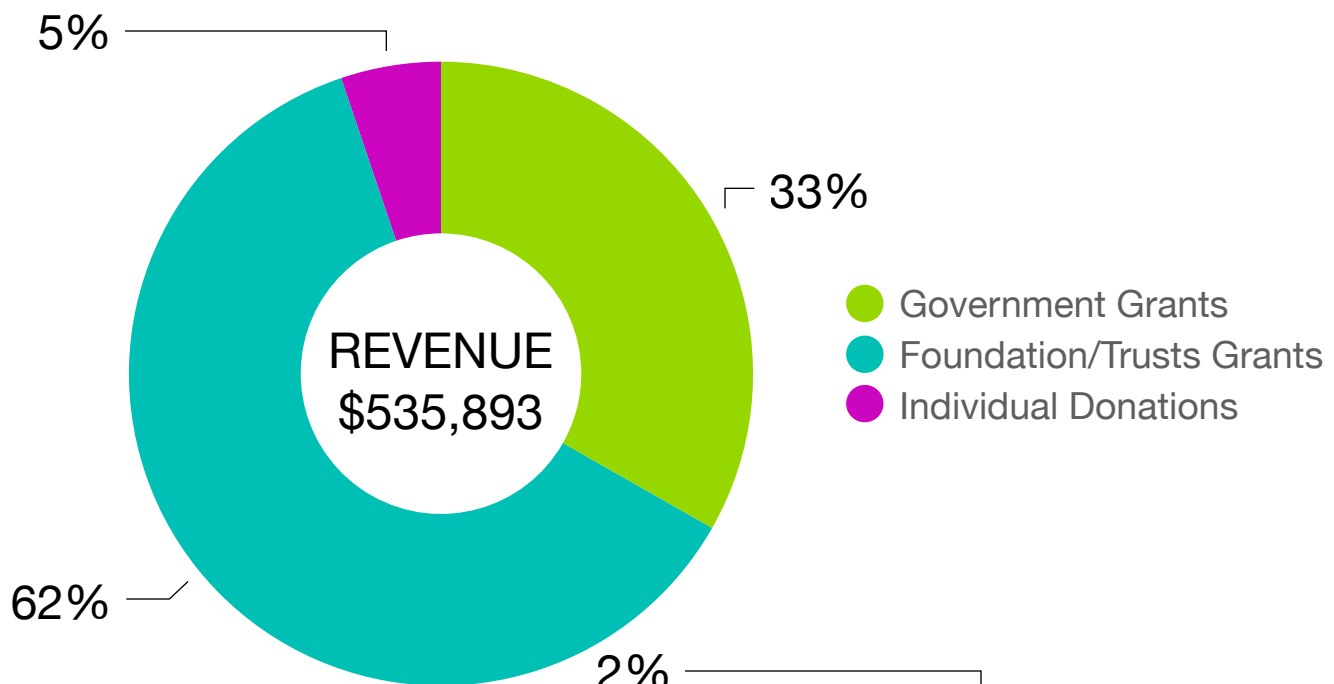
Email: info@sidexsideme.com
to inquire about fundraising
opportunities or to join our
Development Committee



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2022-2023 Financial Overview





WHAT OUR TEACHERS ARE SAYING...

“I have worked with a Side x Side teaching artist since the beginning of this program. I have learned so much about integrating art into my classroom. I cannot even imagine teaching without it.”

“Working with Side x Side was educational to my students as well as to me as an educator. Entering the classroom to teach the arts and connect it to content standards is a wonderful way to display and assess learning.”

“I cannot wait for the next project! Side x Side makes our year!”

SIDE X SIDE

- Cultivates supportive culture, relationships, and partnerships.
- Delivers professional development and mentoring in arts integration, Social Emotional Learning (SEL), and Diversity/Equity/Inclusion/Accessibility (DEIA).
- Provides ongoing support for schools, teachers, and teaching artists.

TEACHING ARTISTS

- Collaborate to design and implement arts-integrated units.
- Cultivate supportive, inclusive classroom community.
- Integrate a variety of arts techniques to broaden student learning capacity.

STUDENTS

- Become members of a supportive, inclusive learning community that strengthens student well-being.
- Transform into engaged and capable learners in academics and arts.
- Are proud to share their work with peers, families, and community.

We are grateful
for your
continued
support.



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AWAKENING TOMORROW'S INNOVATORS

SIDEXSIDEME.COM

EST. 2011

ENHANCING EDUCATION WITH ART SINCE 2011

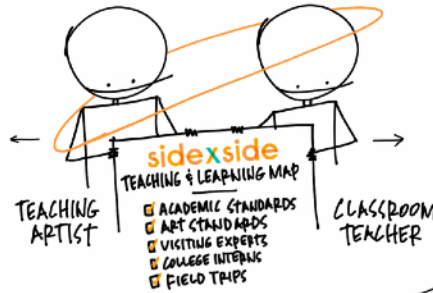
A NEW WAY TO LOOK AT STRENGTHS THAT DON'T SHOW UP ON ASSESSMENTS

TEACHERS SEE A NEW WAY TO TEACH AND SHIFT

EXPRESS LEARNING THROUGH ART

- EQUITY
- DIVERSITY
- INCLUSION
- ACCESSIBILITY
- SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL
- TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICES

ARTS INTEGRATION
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



ATTENDS SIDE x SIDE TRAINING/WORKSHOP
THEY MAKE FOR 2-3 DAYS!
SAME PROCESS AC KIDS!

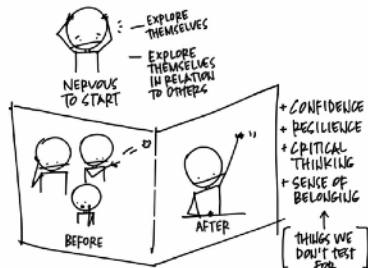
ART SUPPORTS STUDENTS

FOR SOME, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THEY'VE BEEN AS GOOD AT SOMETHING.

- ✓ TAKE RISKS
- ✓ MAKE MISTAKES
- ✓ PERSESS

ASK QUESTIONS

NOTICE



CULMINATES IN A CELEBRATION OF LEARNING EVENT
PRESENTATION SKILLS
PUBLIC SPEAKING
HOW TO SIT IN AN AUDIENCE 2 2

THEY COME ALIVE!

PLEASE SLOW DOWN

ART LEVELS THE PLAYING FIELD

GET CURIOUS!

EYES BIG HEAD UP

CURIOUS · NOTICING · EXPRESSIVE
= ENGAGED =

SEE DIFFERENTLY FEEL DIFFERENTLY ACT DIFFERENTLY

JESSIE
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Give today >

Together, we can continue to provide creative, innovative, and equity-based educational experiences for students.



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