



**RSU 22 Education Foundation**

*Community Partners for Inspired Education*



# 2025–2026

ANNUAL REPORT

*Community Partners for Inspired Education*

[rsu22foundation.org](https://rsu22foundation.org)



## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

## A Year of Showing Up

This year, we showed up. I know that sounds simple. But if you have ever tried to build something meaningful - with a small team, a tight budget, and a community counting on you - you know that showing up, consistently, is the thing that changes everything.

We raised money in ways that brought people together at the same time. The Burger Challenge at Marsh Island Kitchen turned school spirit into fundraising - 397 burgers sold, three schools competing, and 15% of every sale coming back to us. Our Community Expo and Kids Carnival at Hampden Academy drew over 300 people - families, local businesses, wellness providers, and kids, all under one roof. We raised more than \$8,100 that day. And our CLYNK program keeps growing, turning everyday recycling into real classroom support. The number I keep coming back to is 300. Three hundred people who showed up because they believe in what this Foundation does.

On the classroom side, five teachers got the yes they were waiting for. We awarded \$2,194 in mini-grants across the district - funding math tools, student motivation, arts integration, and Maine cultural enrichment. The impact is real: kids who dreaded math suddenly looking forward to it, students earning rewards for good choices, classrooms coming alive in ways a tight school budget simply cannot make happen. That is why we exist.

This was also the year we lost an important part of our board. Tina Boone left the district in August 2026, and with it her time on the Foundation - and I want to make sure her work is recognized properly. Tina was the driving force behind securing

an opioid outreach grant for RSU 22, one that funds a dedicated education outreach coordinator and a mobile outreach van. Through this program, the district actively connects families impacted by opioid use with local resources, mental health supports, and essential services - meeting people where they are, not where it is convenient. The grant operates on a three-year funding structure, with a higher portion of external funding in the first year that gradually scales down over time. As that external support decreases, the Foundation intends to step in and help carry it forward. We are already thinking about what that looks like. What Tina built is too important to let go, and we have no intention of doing so.

Our board grew stronger this year. Ludi Gerring stepped up as Vice President, Matt Williams as Secretary, and Chris Linder joined us as Treasurer. We updated our bylaws and welcomed Kathy Harris-Smedberg as our new District Liaison - exactly the right person to carry that connection forward.

Everything is temporary. The hard seasons pass. The good ones do too. What we are building here - these relationships, this trust, this presence in teachers' classrooms and families' lives - that is what creates momentum that outlasts any one of us. And right now, we have a lot of it.

*With deep gratitude,*

*Angela Ellingwood*

**Angela Ellingwood, CEFL**

President, RSU 22 Education Foundation

## ABOUT THE FOUNDATION

## Who We Are &amp; Why We Exist

## Our Vision

The Foundation will encourage community-wide financial and inspirational support for our district's students and teachers, promoting excellence for the present and into the future.

## Our Mission

We are an independent, non-profit committed to fostering innovation and excellence in RSU 22 schools by funding initiatives outside the school budget, partnering with the district, and building community-wide support.

## 2025-2026 YEAR IN REVIEW

## Growth, Engagement &amp; Innovation

2025-2026 was the year we found our stride. We launched a community event that brought 300+ people together, awarded five grants that changed classrooms, and built new fundraising channels that will grow our impact for years to come.

- ✓ **Community Event Innovation:** Hosted the Community Expo and Kids Carnival on March 21st at Hampden Academy - combining local business, wellness, and family fun for all ages. Over 300 attendees and \$8,100+ raised.
- ✓ **Fundraising Growth:** Launched the Burger Challenge at Marsh Island Kitchen and grew our CLYNK bottle recycling program - multiple new ways for the community to give.
- ✓ **Board Leadership:** Updated our bylaws, elected Ludi Gerring as VP, Matt Williams as Secretary, and Chris Linder as Treasurer - and we are looking forward to working with Kathy Harris-Smedberg as our incoming District Liaison.



Foundation board members and families at the HAMA event, sharing our mission with the community

OUR NORTH STAR

# RSU 22 Strategic Plan 2022–2027



The RSU 22 Education Foundation is proud to align with the goals and objectives of the RSU 22 Strategic Plan for 2022–2027. We see our mission as directly supporting these strategic priorities - working hand in hand with the district to ensure that students, teachers, and the broader community are equipped to thrive.



RSU 22 Education Foundation at the Community Expo & Kids Carnival, Hampden Academy

### Four Building Blocks

| Student Success                                                                                | Professional Excellence                                               | Community Partnerships                                                                                                         | Operational Excellence                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Academic Excellence & Achievement<br>Foundational Skills<br>Instructional Models<br>Engagement | Recruitment & Retention<br>Professional Development<br>Best Practices | Family & Community Engagement<br><b>RSU 22 Educational Foundation</b><br>Communication & Transparency<br>Campus Based Services | Budget Development<br>Fiscal & Facilities Management<br>Comprehensive Planning |

WHERE WE MAKE OUR MARK

### Student Success

Mini-grants fund classroom projects, hands-on tools, and learning experiences that go beyond what the school budget can provide.

### Community Partnerships

The RSU 22 Educational Foundation is named in the plan itself, directly bridging community resources with the district's vision for students.

### Operational Excellence

Fundraising, board governance, and financial transparency support the district's goal of sustainable, well-managed operations.



## MINI-GRANTS PROGRAM

# Empowering Our Teachers

Our mini-grant program remains the heartbeat of the Foundation, turning teacher ideas into student realities.

**5**  
GRANTS AWARDED

**\$2,194**  
TOTAL AWARDED

This year, the RSU 22 Education Foundation awarded five mini-grants to teachers across the district - supporting hands-on math learning, student motivation, arts integration, and Maine cultural enrichment. Every dollar goes directly to the classroom, where it matters most.

**Betsy Murphy** · Measurement tools for fifth graders at Wagner Middle School

**Erin Adams** · Math manipulatives at Weatherbee that turned "I have no idea" into "I can't believe how fun this is"

**Tom Leonard** · Wagner Growth Dollars school store rewarding students for positive choices

*Plus two additional grants supporting arts integration and Maine cultural enrichment across the district.*



Mini-grant math manipulatives in a hands-on scavenger hunt

## MAINE DAY - CULTURAL ENRICHMENT



Steel-drum music and a marine touch tank brought Maine's heritage to life for students

*"Your donations helped provide tools for hands-on learning – without your support, these innovative projects might have remained just ideas."*

## A MINI-GRANT IN ACTION

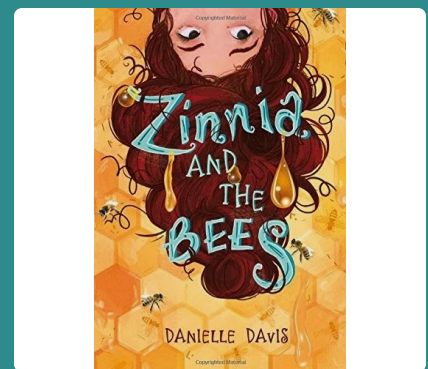
# Yarn Bombing: Where Literature Meets Art

It started with a book. RSU 22 sixth graders read Danielle Davis's novel *Zinnia and the Bees* - the story of Zinnia, an avid knitter who lands in detention for yarn-bombing, just as a colony of bees mistakes her hair for a hive. Told from both Zinnia's and the bees' perspectives, the book explores self-discovery, family, and friendship while highlighting the vital role bees play in our world.

Inspired by what they read, **Reeds Brook sixth graders** picked up looms for the second year in a row, crafting knitted squares that they wrapped around a tree outside the school. Yarn bombing - or knit graffiti - is a playful form of street art that decorates public spaces with colorful knitted and crocheted yarn, adding vibrancy and personality wherever it appears.

Reeds Brook's sixth-grade staff and students thank the RSU 22 Education Foundation for its generous initial gift, which helped purchase the equipment students needed to create their yarn squares.

## THE INSPIRATION



## *Zinnia and the Bees*

by Danielle Davis



The finished yarn-bombed tree outside Reeds Brook



Sixth graders at work on their looms, weaving the squares

## WHY IT MATTERS

Designed by Reeds Brook's sixth-grade teachers and supported by the Foundation, this experience encourages unique, hands-on interactions with texts. Research shows that creative, life-oriented activities increase engagement and motivation while enhancing creativity and imagination - nurturing meaningful connections between literature and life.

\$10,542  
TOTAL REVENUE

+\$6,254  
NET GROWTH

67  
BUSINESSES & ORGS  
PARTICIPATED

\$12,604  
YEAR-END BALANCE

SOURCES OF FUNDS



**Community Expo & Kids Carnival** \$8,139  
77.2%  
\$4,420 sponsors ·  
\$1,740 vendors ·  
\$951 games · \$594  
food · \$315 CPR ·  
\$118 raffle

**Burger Challenge Fundraiser** \$1,900  
18%  
Feb 2026 at Marsh  
Island Kitchen -  
15% of sales back to  
the Foundation

**Sponsorships, Gifts & Interest** \$503  
4.8%  
Katahdin Trust, Home  
Depot match,  
individual donors,  
MAHA raffle

USES OF FUNDS



**Event Production & Promotion** \$1,897  
44.2%  
Printing, supplies,  
Facebook Boosts,  
concessions, card  
processing

**Insurance & Compliance** \$1,446  
33.7%  
Liability coverage,  
State of Maine filing,  
annual licensing

**Admin & Operations** \$470  
11%  
PO Box, banking &  
card terminal fees,  
professional services

**Marketing & Technology** \$296  
6.9%  
GoDaddy website,  
Market Maine  
advertising

**Mini-Grants to Educators** \$180  
4.2%  
Direct classroom  
grants - educator  
innovation fund

\$8,108 FOUNDATION'S OWN  
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

\$6,241 EXPO NET  
PROCEEDS

\$2,194  
TOTAL EDUCATOR  
MINI-GRANTS AWARDED  
ALL GRANTS THROUGH 2025, INCL. 2024-25 SCHOOL  
YEAR

**Note on Year-End Balance:** The total year-end balance of \$12,604 includes \$4,530 held on behalf of participating student clubs and organizations. The Foundation's own unrestricted funds stand at **\$8,108** - an increase of more than \$5,000 from the prior year. The \$2,194 in educator mini-grants reflects all grants awarded through 2025. This includes the Maine Day grant (March 2025), which was made during the 2024-25 school year. Because the Foundation ran annual reports on a January-December calendar at that time, this grant was not captured in the previous annual report. Mini-grant award to Tamara Cardello (\$460) pending disbursement and not reflected in the 2025-26 Uses chart above.

2025-2026 COMMUNITY IMPACT

# By the Numbers

Numbers tell part of the story. The rest is the Pickle Power Burger selling 397 times, a classroom where every kid suddenly loves math, and a room of 300 people who showed up because they believe in what public education can do.

300+  
PEOPLE

## Came Together at the Community Expo & Kids Carnival

Families, businesses, and community members filled Hampden Academy on March 21st - proving that when you build something for everyone, everyone shows up.

67

BUSINESSES, ORGANIZATIONS  
& CLUBS WHO PARTICIPATED

5

TEACHERS FUNDED  
WITH MINI-GRANTS

3

ACTIVE FUNDRAISING  
STREAMS THIS YEAR

100%

OF UNRESTRICTED  
FUNDS GO DIRECTLY  
TO RSU 22 SCHOOLS

Every unrestricted dollar we raise goes directly back to RSU 22 students and teachers. No administrative bloat. No hidden fees. Just real support for the people doing the real work in classrooms across the district. That is the promise we made, and it is the one we keep.



## 2026-2027 PRIORITIES

# Inspiring the Future

Building on our strongest year yet, we have real plans to grow our community impact and deepen our roots in RSU 22.



## Community Expo & Kids Carnival

The board is evaluating whether to hold the Expo annually or every other year - and already planning earlier sponsor outreach to make the next one even bigger.



## Opioid Outreach Partnership

Exploring how the Foundation can help sustain the RSU 22 opioid outreach program - a van that reaches students at home to keep them connected to learning.



## Growing Our Donor Base

Earlier sponsor outreach, stronger community ties, and a track record of real impact - building the case for long-term investment in RSU 22 students.

## OUR COMMITMENT

*Every initiative we pursue exists to create better opportunities for RSU 22 students and to honor the trust our community places in us.*

**2027**  
VISION

## 2025-2026 FUNDRAISING

## How We Raised Funds This Year

## COMMUNITY EVENT

## Community Expo &amp; Kids Carnival

March 21, 2026

10AM – 2PM

Hampden Academy

300+ Attendees

\$8,100+ Raised



Business, wellness, and family fun - all under one roof. Hampden Fire & Safety provided free car seat safety checks. The wellness area offered CPR courses and Stop the Bleed training. Over 38 exhibitors across farm & food, health & wellness, home services, makers & crafts, nonprofits, and youth & family organizations. Full vendor list: [rsu22foundation.org/2026-expo](https://rsu22foundation.org/2026-expo)

## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

## PREMIER

Bangor Daily News

Pulse Marketing

H.O. Bouchard

Premier Sponsor

## COMMUNITY

Little Broncos Academy

Tapestry Chiropractic

Town of Hampden

## SUPPORTING

Bangor Savings Bank • Katahdin Trust • Maine Savings • Computer Doctor of Maine • @WORK Personnel

## COMMUNITY FUNDRAISER

## The Burger Challenge



February 2-7 at Marsh Island Kitchen – 15% of every burger sold came back to the Foundation. Schools competed to see whose burger would win.

**1ST** Elementary – Pickle Power Burger (397 sold)

**2ND** High School – The Stable Special

**3RD** Middle School – The Supreme Burger

## ONGOING PROGRAM

## CLYNK Initiative

Tag your CLYNK bags for RSU 22 Education Foundation and turn everyday recycling into real support for teachers and students.

Every bag counts. Drop off at any CLYNK location and select RSU 22 Education Foundation as your beneficiary. It costs you nothing extra.

# Your Involvement Changes Lives

Donate, volunteer, or partner – every action you take directly supports RSU 22 students and teachers.

[rsu22foundation.org/financial-support](https://rsu22foundation.org/financial-support)



Scan to Donate



## Donate

Support our Mini-Grant Fund directly via our website at [rsu22foundation.org](https://rsu22foundation.org)



## Volunteer

Join a committee or help at our next community event. Every hour counts.



## Partner via Clynk

Sign up for Clynk and select the RSU 22 Education Foundation as your beneficiary.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## Thank You to Our 2025–2026 Board

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President:** Angela Ellingwood

**Vice President:** Ludi Gerring

**Treasurer:** Chris Linder

**Secretary:** Matt Williams

**Member at Large:** Caitlyn Williams

**Member at Large:** Christine Boone

*And our thanks to every teacher, sponsor, and community member who donated, volunteered, or spread the word about our mission.*

### WITH HEARTFELT GRATITUDE



## Tina Boone

**A CHAMPION FOR EVERY CHILD**

Tina completed her tenure with RSU 22 in August 2026, and with it her time on the Foundation board. She was the driving force behind the district's opioid outreach grant - a program that sends support directly to students' homes, helping children stay connected to their education. The Foundation is proud to be exploring ways to carry that mission forward. Thank you, Tina.

## Peter Witt

**13+ YEARS OF LEADERSHIP**

Peter guided our mission with steady leadership for more than thirteen years, leaving a legacy that will benefit RSU 22 students for generations. Stepped down February 2025.

## Mary Anne Royal

**REBUILT & RESTRUCTURED, 2022**

Mary Anne was pivotal in rebuilding and restructuring the Foundation in 2022, laying the organizational groundwork that makes today's growth possible. Stepped down February 2025.

## Scott Cuddy

**SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVE**

Scott served as our School Board Representative, keeping the Foundation connected to district policy and ensuring we were always current with school board decisions. His bridge between the board and the Foundation made our work stronger. Completed his service in 2025.



**RSU 22 Education Foundation**  
*Community Partners for Inspired Education*

# Thank You.

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To every teacher who applied. Every sponsor who showed up. Every community member who tagged a CLYNK bag, bought a Pickle Power Burger, or walked through the doors of Hampden Academy on March 21st - this is yours.

You are the reason this Foundation exists. And the reason it keeps growing. We are deeply grateful for everything you do for RSU 22 students and teachers.

*With deep gratitude,*

**Angela Ellingwood & the RSU 22 Education Foundation Board**

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