



# HEAD OF SCHOOL ENTRY REPORT

CARROLL SCHOOL  
*by Dr. Renée Greenfield*



# A NOTE FROM RENÉE



When I began my role as Head of School in July 2021, I knew this first year would be essential for me to listen to and learn about the Carroll School community. While I was a Carroll teacher in the early 2000s, my return marked an opportunity to get to know Carroll again, including new practices, traditions, and opportunities for growth.

Over the last year, my “Listening and Learning Tour” included meeting with over 375 members of the Carroll community, including Carroll employees, current and past families, alumni, trustees, donors, and current students. In addition, about 500 individuals participated in a survey. Gathering these data as well as countless interactions on our three campuses since July 2021 helped me gain multiple perspectives about Carroll’s strengths and opportunities for growth.

I appreciate the support of the Carroll community who shared their perspectives and advice with me. I am especially grateful for the partnership of Steve Wilkins whose consistent leadership over his 16 years as Head established a strong foundation for my transition and onboarding.

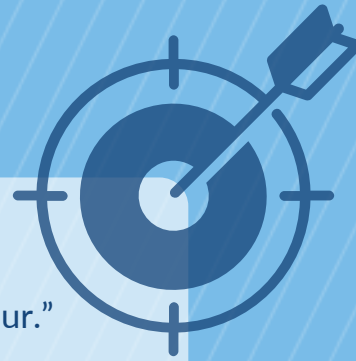
There is so much to celebrate at Carroll. Students at Carroll are cared for and supported by an unbelievable team of school leaders, educators, staff, and their families. It is through these collective efforts that our students thrive.

In partnership,

*Renée Greenfield*



# GOAL OF REPORT



The goal of this Entry Report is to organize and share perspectives gathered on my “Listening and Learning Tour.” Transition of a new Head of School provides a unique opportunity to ask key questions and listen to responses and perspectives in order to support the Carroll community in identifying our strengths and opportunities for growth.

**This report is centered around two guiding questions - asked to all stakeholders:**

**1** What does Carroll School do well?

**2** What does Carroll School most need to work on?

By understanding the community’s response to these key questions as well as their perspectives, we are able to clearly identify our strong foundation and the challenges we face. Once we do so, we are able to chart our future course together, including a collaborative, thoughtful strategic plan.





# MISSION

Carroll School's three campuses in Waltham, Lincoln and Wayland create incredible teaching and learning environments that educate 442 students from 89 different communities. Across all three campuses, there are 200 employees who deliver and support our mission. This mission remains central to our collective work:

Carroll School empowers children with language-based learning differences, such as dyslexia, to become academically skilled students who are strong self-advocates and confident lifelong learners. Carroll is an inclusive community committed to embracing diverse strengths, identities, and lived experiences in order to give each child what they most need to thrive.



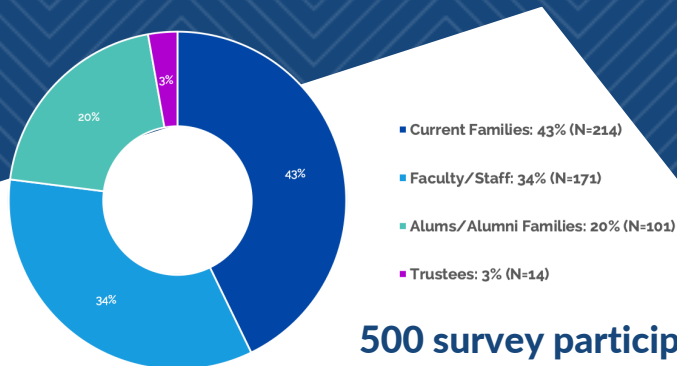


# PROCESS

## My process included a multi-phase approach:

In all, 375 members of the Carroll School community took time to share their perspectives in Phase I and II. At the end of Phase II, I analyzed the qualitative data gathered through Phases I and II and identified themes. These themes were central to the survey sent out to over 1800 community members in Phase III. Of the 1800 surveyed, 500 (25%) individuals responded to the survey. The quantitative data from the survey, in combination with the qualitative data gathered through meetings, are the basis of this Entry Report.

It is important to note that these data are all rooted in lived experiences and perceptions. Therefore, some of the data are based on current experiences, while others are based on past experiences (up to five years ago). These perspectives and the acknowledgment that the last three school years have been influenced by the ongoing pandemic provide the context of gathering this information.



500 survey participants

## Phase 1: July - August 2021

- Meetings with Senior Leadership Team
- Visiting Summer@Carroll
- Meetings with school leaders, departments & trustees
- Review of all key school documents

## Phase 2: September 2021 - March 2022

- Weekly division visits
- Get-to-know-you meetings with school leaders, departments & trustees
- 27 Listening/learning in-person meetings with all educators and staff
- 8 Listening/learning virtual meetings with current families, including grandparents
- 6 Listening/learning virtual meetings with alums, alum families, including grandparents
- 10 Listening/learning in-person meetings with students
- Analyses and synthesis of listening/learning tour data

## Phase 3: April - May 2022

- Weekly division visits
- Survey for current and alum families, alum, faculty, staff, and trustees
- Analyses and synthesis of listening/learning tour data
- Creation and presentation of Entry Report



# KEY FINDINGS

from Dr. Greenfield's  
Entry Report:



*I am pleased to see that Carroll's new Head of School is reaching out to the community (especially families past and present) in this way.*

**Alumni Family**

## Teaching & Learning

Teaching children with dyslexia is what Carroll does best. It is clear that our mission and directive is to continue to grow and evolve our approach to give each child what they most need.

## Exceptional Educators

Carroll educators transform the lives of the children they educate. It is essential to continue to attract, hire and support highly-skilled and mission-driven educators who are experts in teaching children with LBLDs. We will work to diversify our team of educators to meet the needs of our increasingly diverse student community.



## Partnership

Carroll provides meaningful professional development to educators at Carroll through the Garside Institute of Teacher Training (GIFTT). We need to expand this teacher training to educators outside of Carroll and enhance existing research partnerships to best support student outcomes.

## Culture

Carroll creates and reinforces a culture that breeds self-confidence for students. The deep connection our educators and staff forge with students and families is core to Carroll's success. We need to continue to support these connections and foster our school/family partnerships.

## Diversity & Access

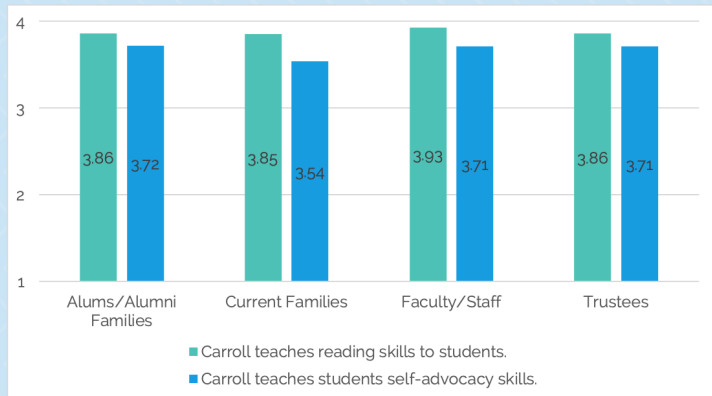
Although we are making strides to become a more fully diverse and inclusive Carroll school community, there is still more to do - in our student admissions, our hiring and training, our financial assistance, and our outreach efforts.



# FINDINGS: STRENGTHS

## 1 Teaching and Learning

- Carroll teaches students reading skills.
- Carroll teaches students self-advocacy skills.



Key: y-axis is the average based on these responses: 4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree

99% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Carroll teaches reading skills; 98% say Carroll teaches advocacy skills.



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Carroll has been a phenomenal academic experience for my child. I am SO grateful for all the work and thought teachers and tutors put into what they do in the classroom. My child is once again curious, engaged with the world, and aware that hard work leads to success.

**Current Family**



**Alumni Family**

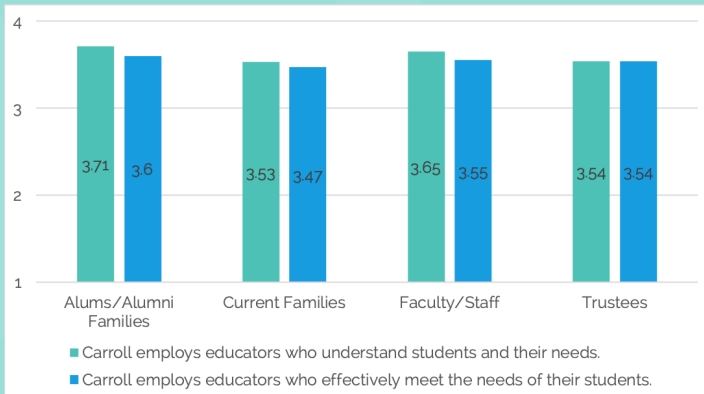
Carroll was a wonderful experience for my daughter. Most importantly, she knows how to advocate for herself. She is just completing high school where she experienced much success and has been accepted to her #1 choice for college. We are so grateful for the experience she had at Carroll which helped her to get to where she is today.



# FINDINGS: STRENGTHS

## 2 Highly Trained Educators

- Carroll educators effectively meet students' needs by using best practices for students with language-based learning differences.
- Carroll educators understand students' learning profiles and their needs.



Key: y-axis is the average based on these responses:  
4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree

**98% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Carroll employs the right educators and that they meet the needs of students consistently.**



### Current Family

*Our experience with Carroll teachers has been nothing short of spectacular. Our child has been part of this community and we have seen her thrive. We feel our child is in the best environment to achieve academic success and self-confidence.*



### Alumni Family

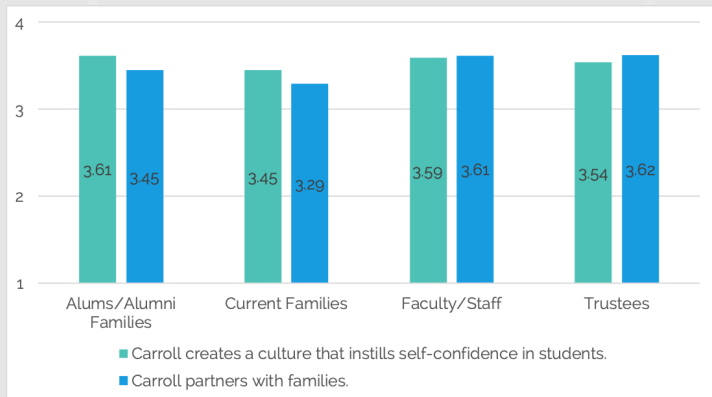
*Our child had a great experience at Carroll. His teachers were very supportive. He continues to talk about his great learning experience and how special and fantastic his teachers were while at Carroll. The teachers care about their students and are passionate about their subjects and profession.*



# FINDINGS: STRENGTHS

## 3 Carroll Culture

- Carroll creates a culture that instills confidence.
- Carroll uses a team-based, collaborative approach to educate students and partner with families.



96% of respondents agree or strongly agree that Carroll's culture instills confidence in students; 94% agree that Carroll partners with families.

Key: y-axis is the average based on these responses: 4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree



*Carroll is excellent in teaching and supporting students with language based learning challenges. The school is a warm, thoughtful and reflective place, and the teachers are incredibly invested.*

**Alumni Family**



**Current Family**

*I can't say enough about the progress my son has made. He is not only making progress educationally but he is becoming more independent, assertive, polite and helpful towards others. He comes home happy everyday wanting to talk about what he has done in school. Thank you to the whole Carroll family!*



# FINDINGS: STRENGTHS

## 4 Unique Educator/Staff Perspectives

- Carroll teaches students math skills.
- Carroll supports the social-emotional needs of students.
- Carroll creates opportunities for students to use dyslexic strengths.
- Carroll has a clear mission that drives all work.



### Carroll Educator

*Over the years I have been so impressed by what Carroll can achieve; with its so many moving parts, and so many diverging needs. I feel the school stands as a testament to coming together to create enormous change toward a unified goal yet from many different areas of expertise. I so value being my one small part in this communal effort.*

## 5 Unique Family Perspectives

- Educators allow students to “be seen.”
- Carroll creates life-altering/transformative experiences for students and their families.



### Alumni Family

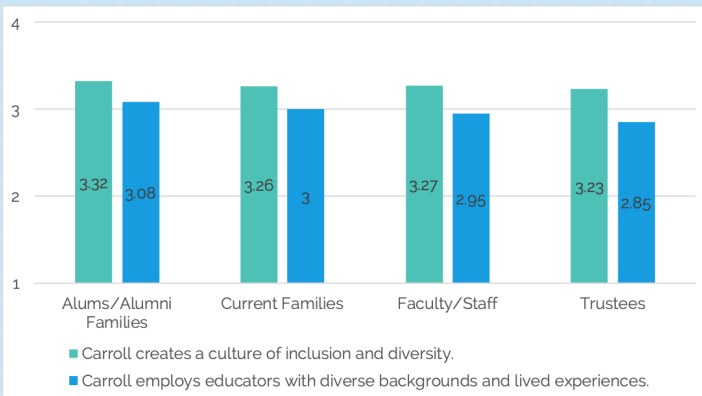
*What the survey cannot capture is how Carroll completely turned our daughter around and made it possible for her to succeed in school. It is because of the school's dedication that my daughter is now college-bound. Simply stated, we love Carroll.*



# FINDINGS: OPPORTUNITIES

## 1 Diversity

- Increase diversity in the school community, including adults and students.
- Create a stronger culture of inclusion, diversity and connection.



**83% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Carroll employs diverse educators. 17% of respondents feel Carroll could do better job employing diverse educators.**

Key: y-axis is the average based on these responses: 4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree



For creating a culture of inclusion and diversity, I believe that Carroll is working towards that goal but is not there yet. I'm not sure that the majority of our students could speak to inclusion and diversity as being a cornerstone which, for me, will be an indicator that we've reached that goal.

**Carroll Educator**



It is critically important that Carroll address the lack of racial diversity in the school community. Having no teachers of color in the Upper School and very few at the other campuses, and few students of color across campuses, supports an environment in which students of color remain emotionally isolated and at times misunderstood. Carroll has done some wonderful work toward becoming a school that demonstrates the value it places on DEI issues, and there is more to be done. We are confident that, with sincere intention, Carroll can achieve this.

**Current Family**



# FINDINGS: OPPORTUNITIES

## 2 Outreach, Access and Partnerships

- Increase professional development and training to educators outside of Carroll.
- Increase student access to Carroll (i.e. transportation, financial aid).
- Create more opportunities for Carroll to share best practices with other schools.

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*How can we expand what Carroll does with other schools that are so ill equipped? What is our obligation to the field and the community?*

**Current Family**



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**Board Member**

*Before becoming a board member, I heard from several families about how Carroll school has "saved" their children and their families. It is a testament to the great work teachers, counselors and administrators do at this great school. This is why it is even more important for the school to sustain this reputation and good work for the good of many.*

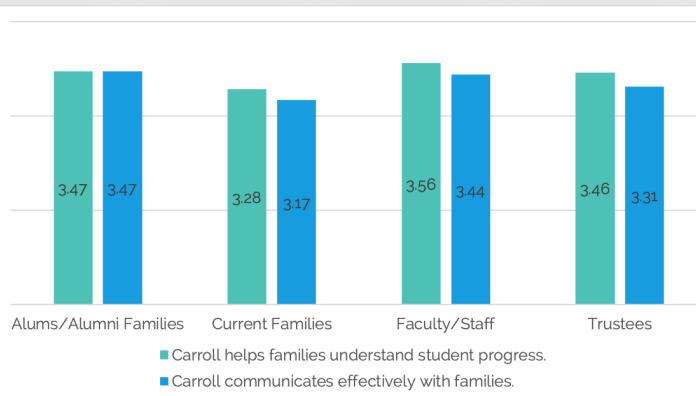




# FINDINGS: OPPORTUNITIES

## 3 School & Family Partnerships

- Create more effective communication with families (i.e., school-wide, divisions, teams, classrooms).
- Better support understanding of student progress/data (i.e., parent conferences).



Key: y-axis is the average based on these responses:  
4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree

**90% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that we are doing well communicating and partnering with families; About 10% of respondents think we can do better.**



### Current Family

*We are new to Carroll. We have had little access to experience instruction, culture, etc. first hand, except for 2 P/T conferences. Although I ask my son what he is learning about dyslexia and his learning style, I don't get answers. I see steady progress in his data which is encouraging, just wishing we could submerge in the instruction and culture through first hand experience to connect Carroll ethos with home ethos.*



### Current Family

*Carroll has been amazing at meeting the academic needs of our child, and building our child's confidence as a learner. It has been harder for our child and our family to acclimate socially - largely due to the challenges of the pandemic. We're excited for more opportunities to build relationships in the Carroll community as in person events return and, hopefully, additional in-person student opportunities return - like overnight field trips, etc.*



# FINDINGS: OPPORTUNITIES

## 4 Unique Educator/Staff Perspectives

- Build a larger sense of community across our 3 distinct campuses.
- Increase compensation for Carroll School educators.



## 5 Unique Family Perspectives

- Better balance between conferences and days without school.
- Better support students' math skills and understanding.
- Give students more opportunities for independence.
- Increase opportunities for students to use strengths - Multis, afterschool, clubs.

“

### Current Family

*My child was in the public schools where the school year was much longer and there is a requirement of 180 days. Carroll is amazing but I do wish students spent more days in school especially given their learning disabilities and need for more time/instruction in school.*

# CONCLUSIONS

## Strengths

- 1 Carroll creates effective teaching & learning experiences for students with LBLDs.
- 2 Carroll employs highly-trained, compassionate educators who deliver on our mission.
- 3 Carroll creates a culture of confidence across all three divisions that is visible when students are at Carroll and the years after they graduate.
- 4 Carroll continues to transform the lives of students with LBLDs and their families.

## Growth Opportunities

- 1 Carroll needs to continue to foster diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging in our community, particularly around creating a more racially diverse adult and student community.
- 2 Carroll needs to increase outreach efforts, including professional development and teacher training, as well as increasing access to Carroll.
- 3 Carroll needs to continue to foster our school and family partnership and engagement, with enhanced communication and supports.



# THE PATH FORWARD

One of the goals of the Listening and Learning Tour was to support a new Head's leadership transition. This Entry Report serves as one input to our short- and long-term strategies for Carroll. Other inputs will include our Campus Planning Project, our AISNE accreditation, and learning that we integrate over time.

Ultimately, we will draft a Strategic Plan to guide our path forward. It is through our collective work and learning that we will maintain Carroll's position as a leader in the field of educating students with LBLDs and a destination for families.





# MISSION ACCEPTED

*I'm honored to be a part of this incredible community and excited to move our mission forward—with the goal of truly giving every child what they most need.*

**Dr. Renée Greenfield**  
Head of Carroll School

