



The Grove Program: An Afternoon Bridge for Our Suns

Richmond Waldorf School's *Grove* program offers our kindergarten students—our Suns—an intentional and nurturing afternoon experience designed to balance the busy morning program while lengthening the school day in preparation for First Grade.

Rooted in the principles of Waldorf early childhood education, the Grove extends the familiar warmth and rhythm of the morning into the afternoon. Each afternoon follows a consistent rhythm of rest, activity, and play.

The program goals are for the children to strengthen five learning skills in co-regulation, ability to follow routines and adapt to a longer and more varied day, to sustain attention, gain greater communication skills, and foster positive social interactions:

- **1 – 1:30 pm:** Children return to the classroom and settle in with rest and quiet, listening to a chapter book read aloud by the Grove Lead Teacher.
- **1:30 – 2:15 pm:** A period of indoor activity that may include drawing, handcrafts, or a formed activity that nurtures fine motor skills, imagination, and focus.
- **2:15 – 2:45 pm:** Outdoor play invites joy and collaboration, inviting movement, imagination, and cooperation on the Early Childhood Playground.
- **2:45 – 3 pm:** The day concludes with children gathering belongings and saying goodbye on the EC patio.

The Grove is more than just an afternoon program—it's a mindful way of bridging between the world of Early Childhood and the journey ahead in the Grades. With its gentle rhythm and purposeful activities, it honors the Waldorf understanding of childhood while fostering readiness, confidence, and social connection.

The Grove Faculty



The Grove program will be led by our very own, **Zaira Pulido**, who served as an Aftercare Assistant this year at RWS and has many years of experience working with young children in movement arts, where she created and implemented an age-appropriate curriculum in the arts and dance. We are excited to have her oversee this new program for our kindergarten students!

Zaira was born in Bogotá, Colombia, South America, and moved to the U.S. in 2022. She is a Somatic Movement Educator, a professional dancer with a master's degree in dance research, a corporate lawyer, and a Mindfulness practitioner and facilitator certified by Rainbow Kids Yoga in Yoga for Kids, Mindful Schools, and "Respira en Colombia" in mindfulness in education. She has worked with children, youth, and under-served communities for more than 20 years, designing and executing projects based on movement and dance to create teaching-learning processes and experiences.



Deborah Ross will serve in the role of Grove Assistant. Deborah brings four years of experience as a homeschool teacher and tutor where she created and implemented educational curriculum. She has assisted in varied school administrative duties over her career, and as a mother of three RWS students and one 2025 alumna, has essential experience working with young children. Deborah is excited to join our team and deepen her understanding of working with the young child.