

EPOCH DREAM CENTER

2023

ANNUAL REPORT



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Thank you, Epoch Community!



# Words from our Executive Director

To our Epoch Community Supporters,

In 2023 the Epoch Dream Center has seen an incredible amount of change. Early in the Spring of 2022, the Epoch Dream Center was informed that in 2023, our previous location at the Nelson Church in Hebron, Maryland could no longer accommodate our students.

This news may have tested our resilience but with our programming at risk we understood that this was no time to show fear. Losing our first home in Hebron was a bittersweet goodbye. Our students, staff, and volunteers had become comfortable within the walls of Nelson Church. Finding a new location was going to be a challenge...

Luckily, challenges are one thing we know how to handle at Epoch!

We teach our students to dream beyond their current circumstances and that is exactly how the Epoch Team approached our search for a new home. Relocating meant re-strategizing for long term success leading to a new strategic plan for 2024 - 2026!

While our students and volunteers grew accustomed to our site at the Cross Pointe Church on Nanticoke road, the board and staff worked behind the scenes to develop plans for a building to call our own!

Yes! The Epoch Dream Center is gearing up to expand our program and build a facility of our own. In 2023 we soft-launched a capital campaign, petitioning individuals, corporations, charitable foundations and local governments to support our effort to create lasting change in the lives of our students.

In the upcoming year, we will have so many opportunities to share our dream for the future, but now it's time to celebrate our students and the awesome achievements from 2023!

Thank you all for believing in our students as much as we do. Your support does not go unnoticed or under-appreciated.

Sincerely,

JoAnn Blackmon

Executive Director, Epoch Dream Center



# Mission & Vision



For a Nonprofit, their Mission and Vision act as the organization's North Star. Adapting our Mission and Vision was a decision that paid homage to the success we've seen in the past 10 years while daring to dream even bigger than before.

## Our Mission:

To create nurturing relationships that empower, mentor, and encourage students in the areas of academics, character development, and social-emotional wellness.

## Our Vision:

Epoch envisions a community in which all students have the support, resources, and opportunities to reach their greatest potential as thriving, compassionate individuals.

# Core Values



**Integrity Inclusivity Compassion Respect Responsibility**

The Epoch Center has always held its values in high regard. They were created by our Board and Staff, known by our students, modeled by teachers, mentors and volunteers. The 2024-2026 Strategic Plan has simplified the way we communicate the values that sit at the heart of our organization.

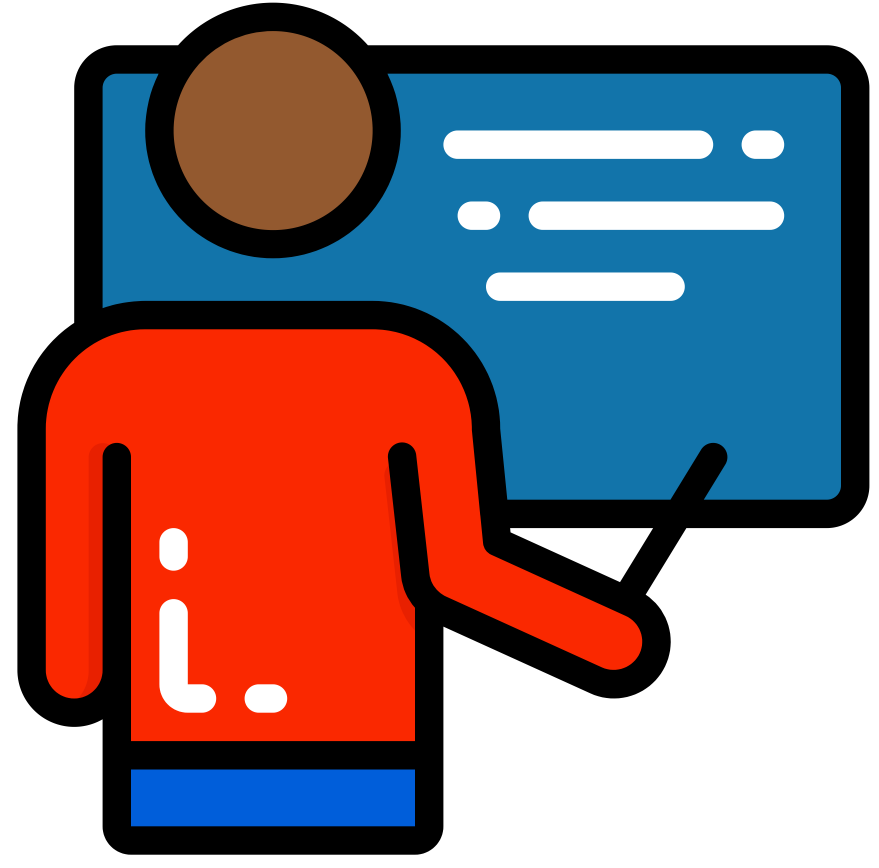
THANK YOU TO  
OUR  
VOLUNTEERS,  
TEACHERS AND  
MENTORS ...



YOUR SUPPORT  
MAKES US SMILE

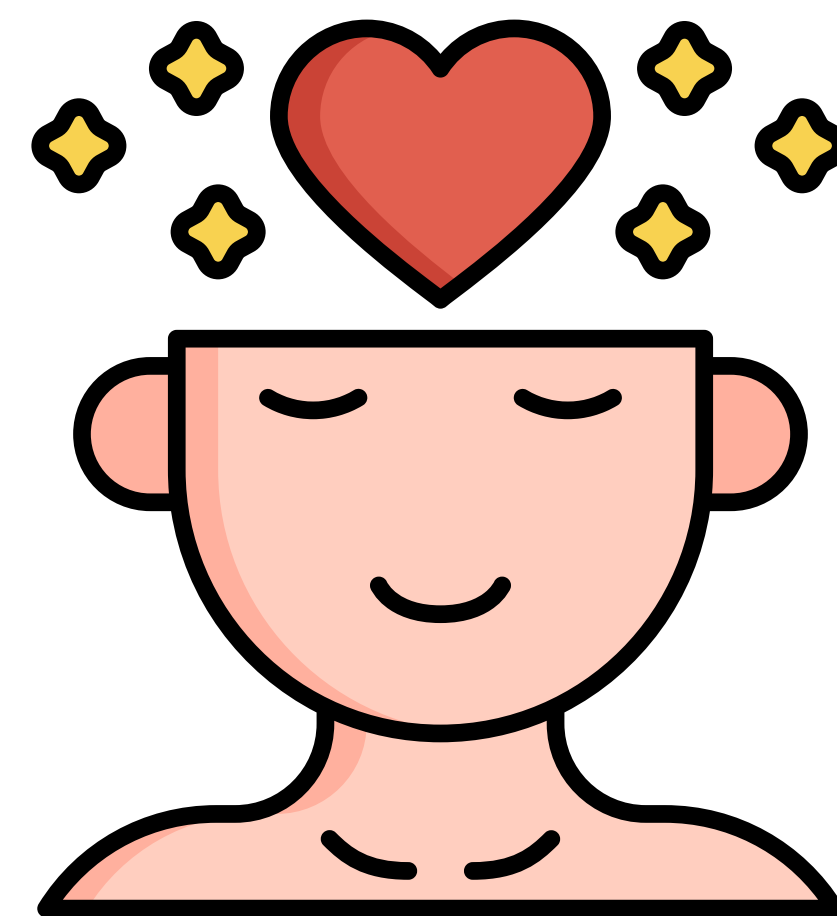


# A YEAR IN REVIEW

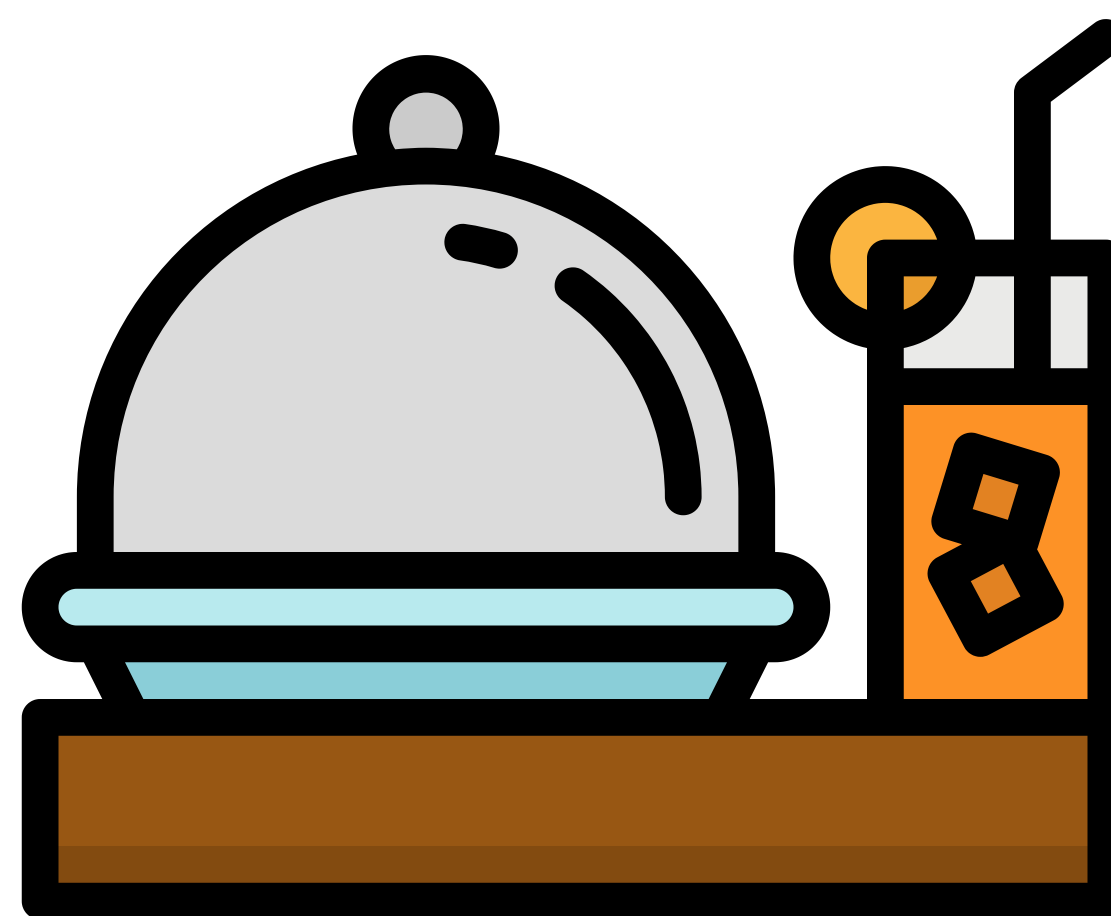


Epoch student learning was supported by ...  
**8,550 hours** of after-school instruction

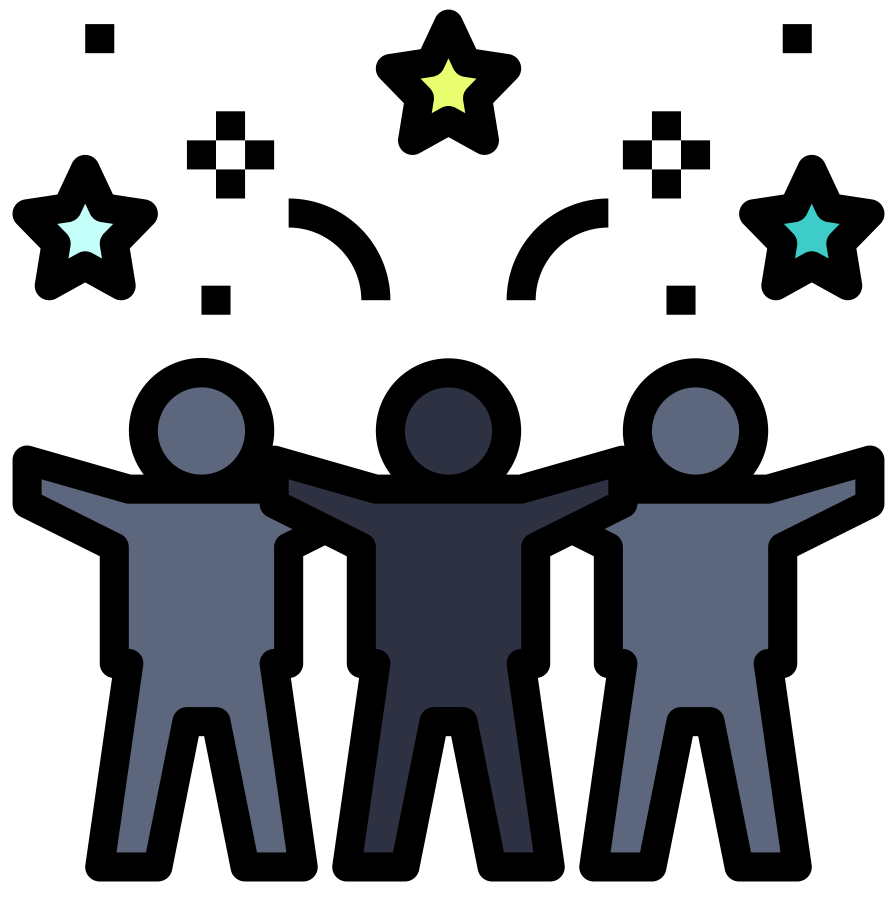
**168 individual** counselling sessions  
**70** social-emotional learning groups



61 Volunteers joined Epoch, committing a total...  
**2,526 service hours in fy23!**

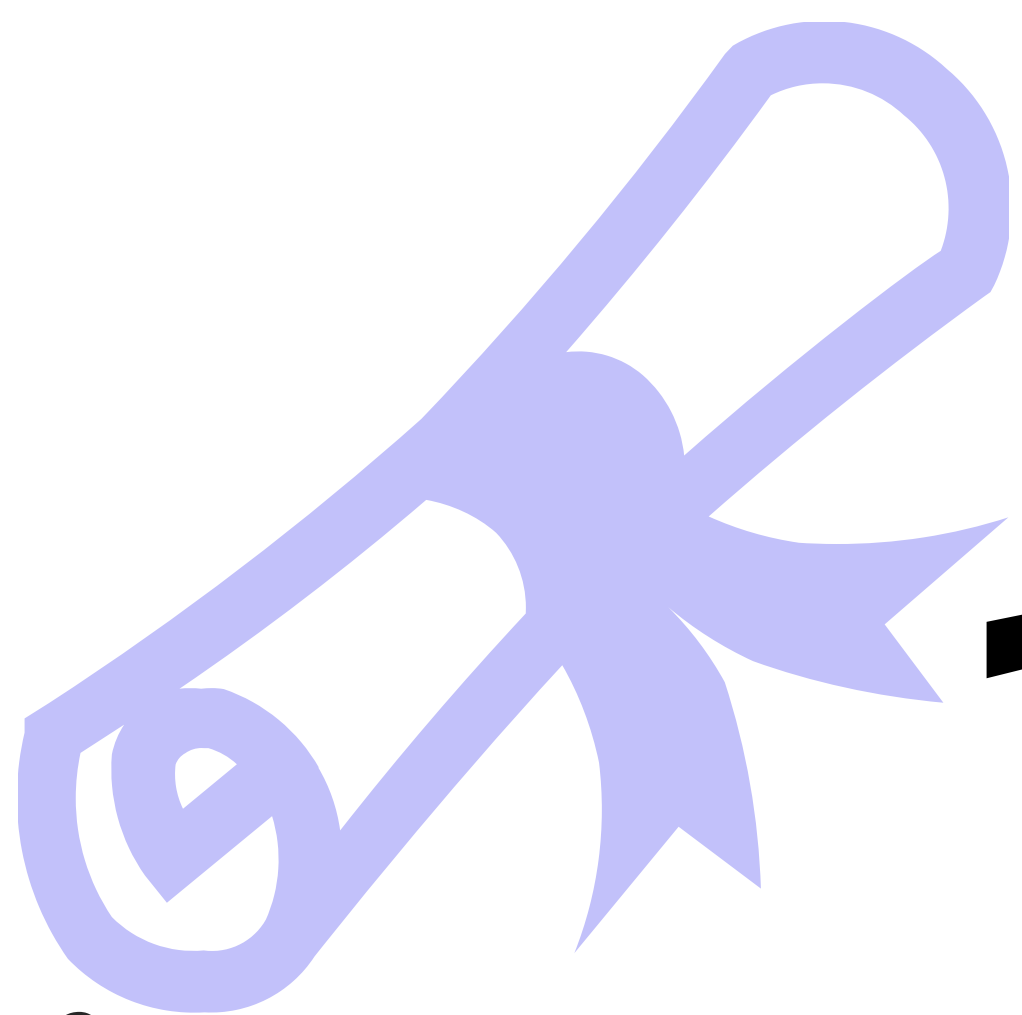


Epoch Family Dinners succeed in serving...  
**14,346 meals in 2023**



**EPOCH  
WELCOMED  
65 STUDENTS  
IN 2023**

# 2023 Learning Outcomes

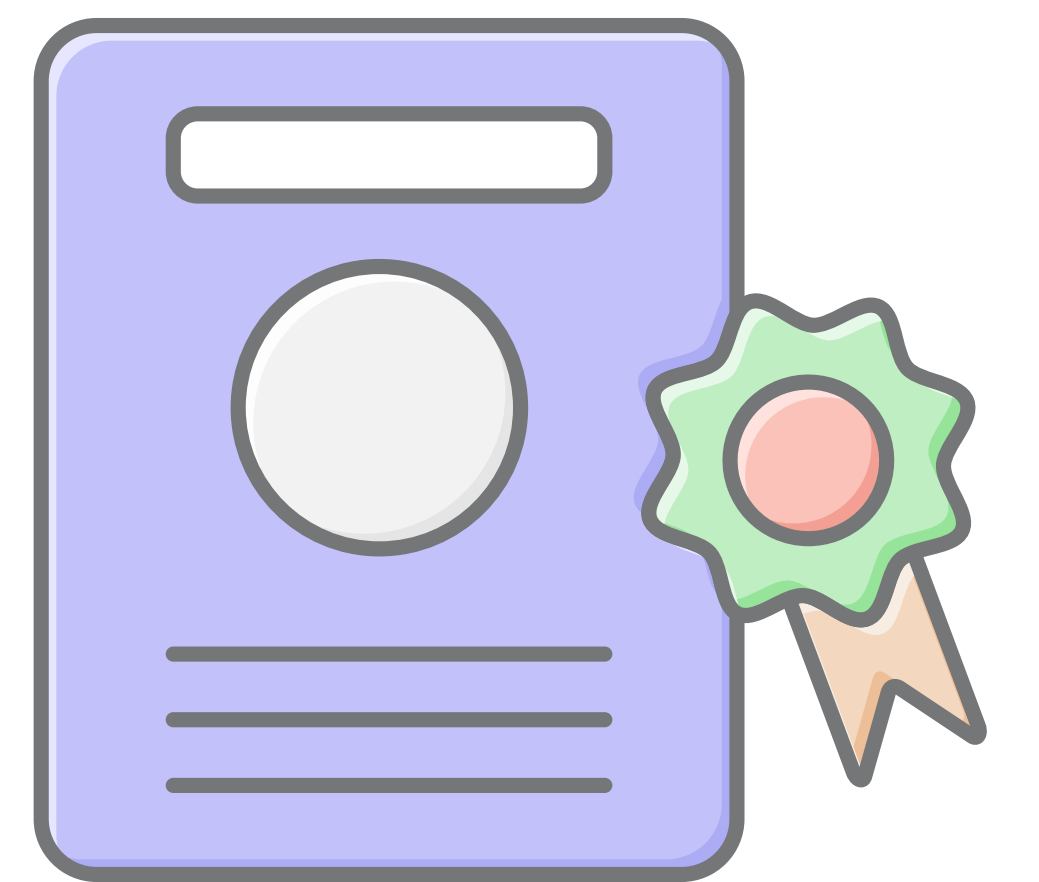


**100%**

of 2023 Epoch seniors received their high school diploma!

**↑ 74%** 

of students maintained or improved reading scores



**75%**

of 9-12 graders ended the year with better GPA

**↑ 78%** 

of students maintained or improved math scores



**97% of Epoch students**

Improved their social-emotional literacy through counseling and group lessons



# MENTORING MATTERS

As I sit to reflect on our last year of Mentor Epoch, I feel satisfied and encouraged. When I was named Mentor Coordinator in the 2022-2023, I was excited about the possibilities but felt weighed by challenge ahead. At the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year, only 4 mentors would return to their students.

When Epoch moved to Cross Pointe Church I could not have imagined the impact that their congregation would have on Mentor Epoch. Cross Pointe Church's mission is to "Heal the City" and from our first meeting with Pastor Larry Dunlap it was evident that he was confident that the church could help meet our mentoring needs.

Pastor Larry advocates weekly for Epoch from the pulpit and encourages his congregation to get involved with our mentoring program. Again, at the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year, we had 4 returning mentors, **at the end of FY23 we had 19** and **now, mid FY24 Epoch has 22 mentors** to stand alongside our students.

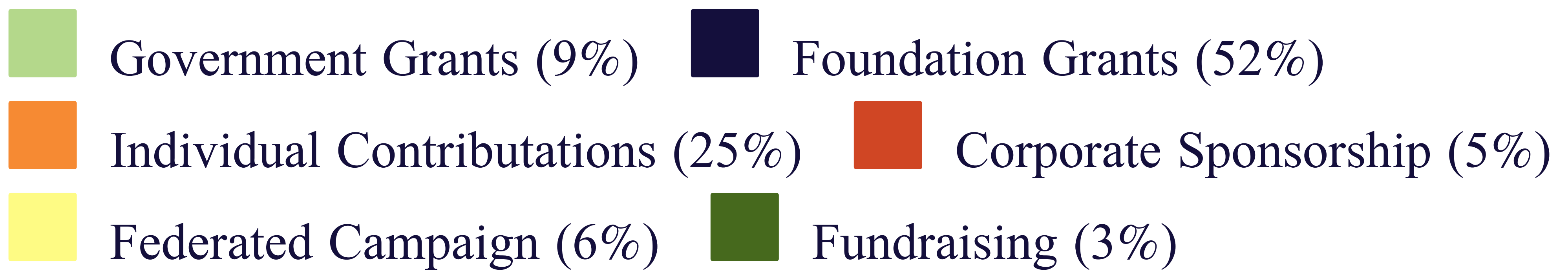
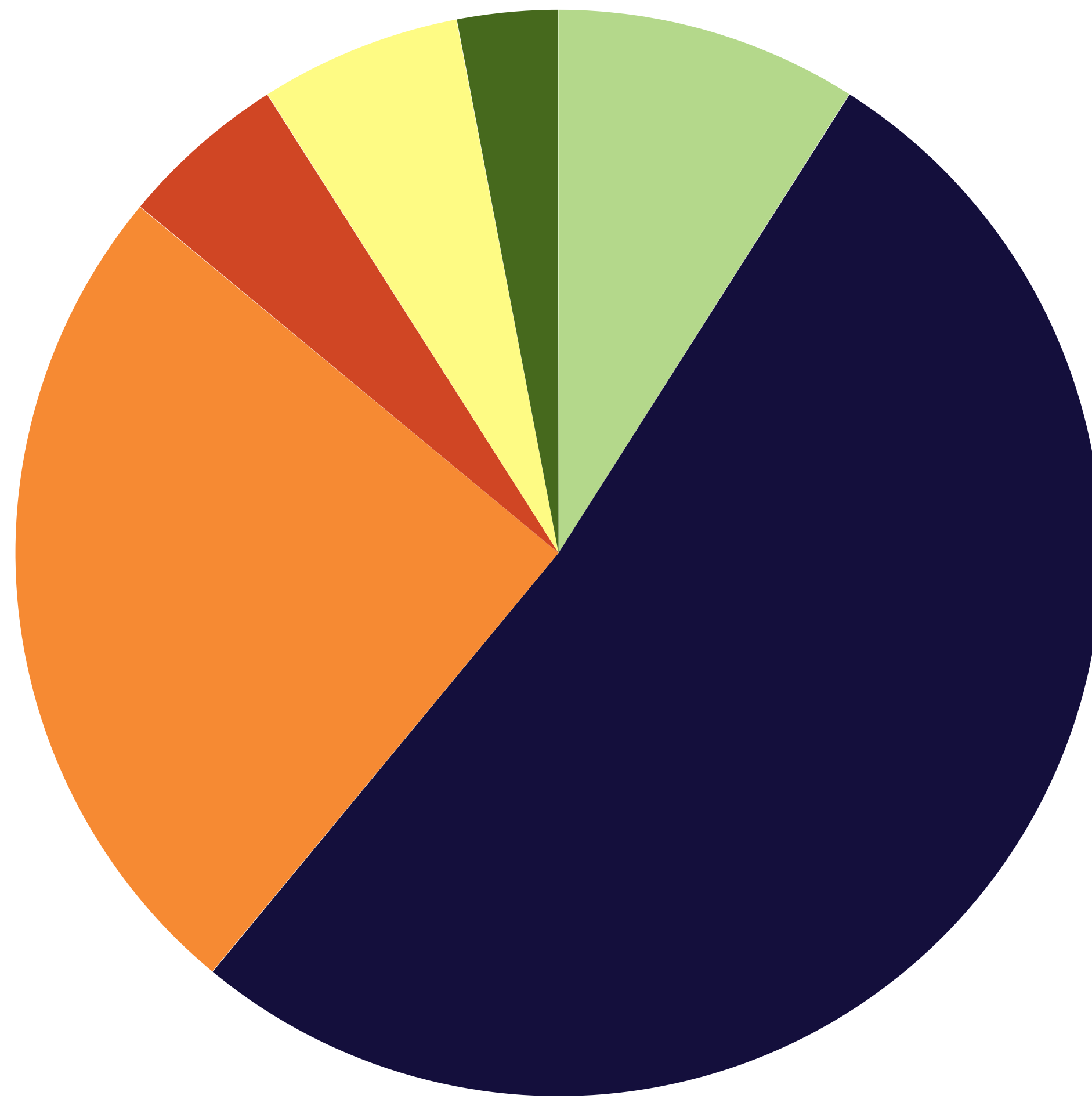
Pastor Larry was the first to step up to mentor and through his weekly encouragement 7 others from his congregation have joined Mentor Epoch. Pastor Larry has brought a much needed excitement and joy to all the students who have received a mentor. I am looking forward to continuing this momentum!

*Marcy Disbennet*

Director of Mental Wellness

# 2023 Financial Report

## 2023 Income



## 2022 Expenses



# 2023 Dream Team



**JoAnn Blackmon**  
Executive Director



**Marcy Disbennett**  
Director of  
Mental Wellness &  
Mentorship



**Allison Acree**  
Community  
Liaison & Summer  
Director



**Jon Blackmon**  
Development  
Coordinator



**Emma Bush**  
School Liaison &  
3rd -5th Grade  
Leader



**Romona Harden**  
Administrative  
Assistant & Middle  
School Girls Leader



**Katie Dukes**  
Finance  
Coordinator



**Luke Gehring**  
Facilities and  
Middle School  
Boys Leader



**Laren Kellam**  
2nd Grade Leader



**Courtney Baker**  
Kindergarten & 1st  
Grade Leader



**Riley Austin**  
3rd & 4th Grade  
Leader

2023

# Board of Directors

*Thank you  
for your leadership*

## Officers:

**Chair:**

Dr. Melissa Boog

**Vice Chair:**

Dr. Josh James

**Treasurer:**

Christi Engle

**Secretary:**

Kelleigh Black

## Board Members

Dr. Jennifer Giles

Kutresa Lankford-Purnell

Aaron Brumbley

Shiela Loar

Patsy Riley

Tifanee Mckaskill

# FINANCIAL PARTNERS, THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT



Salisbury Sunrise Rotary

Food Lion Charitable  
Foundation

Johnson Lumber Company

Maryland Emergency Food  
Program

Mountaire Farms

Hebron Savings Bank

Envirotrols Group

Maryland Humanities  
SHINE Grant

The Campbell Foundation

Philip & Barbara Long  
Family Foundation

Depcom CARES

Maryland Food Bank

M&T Charitable Foundation

Dunahoo Foundation

Whitehead Real Estate  
Executives

The Restoration Project

Coastal REALTORS  
Foundation

Vernon Powell Shoes

Bank of Delmarva

Wawa

KM Foundation