Statement regarding upcoming Holi-Drag Storytime event

For immediate release: November 23, 2022

Red Oak Community School is an independent, community-focused elementary school in central Ohio. We take an approach to education that focuses on the whole child and places a high value on social-emotional learning alongside academics. We value social justice and inclusivity and believe that creating a more equitable world for all people requires us to begin this work at a young age.

We believe that learning must include not just words, but also actions. When we learned about native plants and animals this fall, we also taught those lessons by planting a native pollinator garden. When we learned about geometry in math class, we also taught those lessons by designing a city. When we learn about social justice, we also teach those lessons by being active participants in our central Ohio community. We are uninterested in performative activism.

We share these beliefs with the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Columbus, where we have our home. They are standing alongside us, buoyed by their long history of radical acceptance.

Our ROCS community hosts this drag story time event for the LGBTQ+ community in Columbus because it promotes values in young children that we hold dear to our hearts- love, kindness, inclusivity and understanding. When young children are raised with these values, it prevents bullying, hate and fear of “others” later in life. It also helps normalize and celebrate the beautiful diversity of the gender spectrum that is now and has always been, a natural part of the human experience. Additionally, and importantly, story time is fun! What child doesn’t enjoy stories, music, and glitter?

We have received an outpouring of support and love from the community here in central Ohio and that is not only healing our hearts, but also validating our work. Federal and local officials are monitoring the situation and we have a security plan in place with ample, appropriate security measures. For individuals who want to know how to contribute, we offer three ways-

1. Contribute to our ‘Feel-the-LOVE’ fundraiser that is raising money in response to hateful comments, calls, etc. 100% of proceeds will go to a local LGBTQ+ charity. [https://app.99pledges.com/fund/feelthelove](https://app.99pledges.com/fund/feelthelove)


3. If you would like to volunteer to help on the day of the event, please send an email to volunteer@redoakcommunityschool.org