

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS QUARTERLY



COMMUNITY SCHOOL NEWS

Community Nights

Community Nights are monthly events hosted at community schools that meet all four of the pillars at once:

1. Integrative Student Supports
2. Expanded and Enriched Learning Time and Opportunity
3. Active Family and Community Engagement
4. Collaborative Leadership

All 3 community schools have been hard at work these passed few months. There have been many exciting community night events such as:

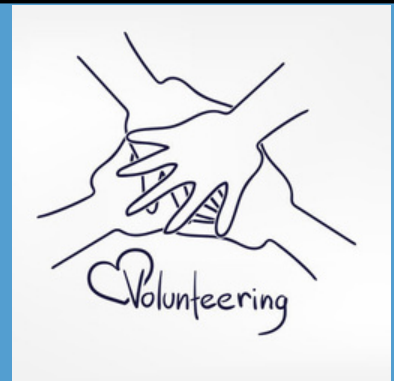
- Candy Dash
- Knight Dragon Jamboree
- Hispanic Heritage Celebrations
- Trunk R Treat
- Family Photo Day
- Community Carnival Night

Mentoring Program

There are still opportunities available for the mentoring program. Mentors volunteer their time to work 1:1 with students, whether it be to play a board game or work on school work. Contact your local community school for more information if you are interested in mentoring.

Parent Teacher Conferences

A Parent Teacher Conferences is a great opportunity to discuss your child's progress, get insight on your child's strengths and needs, work with the teacher to help your child do well in school. Conferences focus on learning, although behavior and social concerns might also be discussed at the time of the meeting. Racine Unified School District holds these meetings happen twice a year, once in the Fall then in the Spring. The meetings are brief, usually lasting 15-30 minutes.



WHY VOLUNTEER?

Volunteering allows you to connect to your community and make it a better place. Volunteers are super important because together they all support and strengthens our schools.

More benefits of volunteering:

- share your talents
- learn new skills
- create a better work-life balance
- reduction in depression
- reduction in stress
- you get a chance to give back
- improves self esteem

NOTES FROM YOUR ADMINISTRATORS



KNAPP

Knapp's Book Buddies

Older classes pair up with a younger class monthly for a Book Buddy day. During this time students' are paired up to read together and sometimes they do other activities as well. With our district-wide focus on early literacy this helps encourage reading skills and fosters a love of reading. The older students can serve as reading mentors, helping their younger buddies with pronunciation, comprehension, and fluency which can lead to improved literacy skills for both groups. These shared experiences create connections between students across grade levels which contributes to a positive school culture. Being a book buddy gives older students a chance to be responsible and a role model, while the younger students feel a sense of belonging and support. Most importantly, book buddies is FUN! Please follow us on instagram [knapp_readers](#) for pictures and reels.



JULIAN THOMAS

Our goal for 3rd quarter is to focus on setting expectations for each student to learn at a high level, offering support to each student so they can learn at a high level, and allowing each student to demonstrate high-level learning.



THE ACADEMIES OF RACINE AT MITCHELL COMMUNITY SCHOOL

We are super excited with our progress with our Math Fluency goal. We have added an incentive of taking all students who have scored 100% on their fluency and are taking them to Math Day at the Brewers on May 15th. We have done our fluency check 3 times already and we have 89 students who would qualify to go already! We have over 100 students that have scored 95-99 as well. We can't wait until April to see how many students will be able to attend.

Knapp Community School Highlights

Upcoming Events

**Black History Month
Celebration Community
Night,**
Tuesday, Feb. 13
5:30-7 p.m.

**Parent/Teacher
Conferences**
Thursday, March 7
Friday, March 8

Past Event Photos



Pickleball Paddle Donation



Community Night: Holiday
Celebration



A Family that Dances Together,
Stays Together

A message from Knapp's Community School Coordinator



Community School Coordinator of Knapp Community School

Greetings, Knapp families! I'm Zyaire Strowder. So far, my fourth year as the Community School Coordinator for Knapp has been nothing but amazing.

Knapp had a terrific first quarter and we look forward what is to come in the second quarter. We are always looking for more ways to engage our families as well as invite them into the Knapp building. If you are interested in collaborating or donating some goods, please contact me. You can find my contact info at the bottom of this page.

Hey Knapp families!
Hope you all had an awesome holiday season! As we step into this new year, we're super excited about all the amazing things that 2024 has in store for us. Starting off strong, ProLite LLC generously donated 12 paddles to Knapp's Pickleball Club. A big shoutout to ProLite for their support, which means we can now enroll even more students! We also had an absolutely fantastic December Holiday Celebration with over 600 people joining us for the evening. We had Clipper Claus, delicious pasta, hot chocolate, cookies, and so much more. It was a blast! And a special shoutout to Timber Day and RUSD for hosting our "Family that Dances Together, Stays Together" event. Mrs. McKnight and the Xtreme Hip Hop crew put on an amazing performance for our Knapp families and even taught us a new line dance. In addition to that, every Knapp Clipper got to take home a healthy snack and a bin of new books. It was such a wonderful time!

Concluding 2023 has been amazing, but there is more to come in the Knapp building. View our upcoming events below and we hope to see you there!

February 13, 5:30-7:00 p.m. : Black History Month Celebration

March 7 and 8, Parent/Teacher Conferences

K.N.A.P.P. Parent Group

Knowledgeable, Noble and Peaceful Parents is Knapp's parent group, who are supporting Knapp and all of its events this school year. If you are interested in joining, please contact Zyaire Strowder!



Zyaire Strowder

email: zstrowder@unitedwayracine.org | phone: (262) 994-5025

Julian Thomas Community School Highlights

Upcoming Events

Black History Celebration

Thursday, February 29

5 - 7pm

Spring is in the Hair

Thursday, April 25

4 - 7pm



A Message from Julian Thomas' Community School Coordinator

Greetings, Julian Thomas Families!

I cannot believe this but we are already half way through the school year! WOW!

Walking School Bus has officially started back up. Students, with the assistance of volunteers are walked to school safely. We are still in need of volunteers. If you have more questions, you may reach out to our Walking School Bus

Coordinator, Stuart Wood at swood@unitedwayracine.org.



Parent Teacher Conferences

March 8 & 9

Like us on Facebook for up-to-date information and news:
Julian Thomas Elementary School
www.facebook.com/julianthomas

Past Event Photos



Family Game Night



Family Game Night



Family Game Night

On December 7th, 2023 Julian Thomas held our annual Jammin with Santa event. The night was filled with games, holiday crafts, music and pizza. There was even a special appearance made by Santa! This event was a huge success as over 400 people were in attendance that night!



Upcoming Events

Black History Month Celebration

Thursday, Feb. 22
5:30-7 p.m.

Who Runs the World? Girls!

Tuesday, March 19
5-7 p.m.

PTSA's Daddy Daughter Dance

Friday, April 19
5-7 p.m.

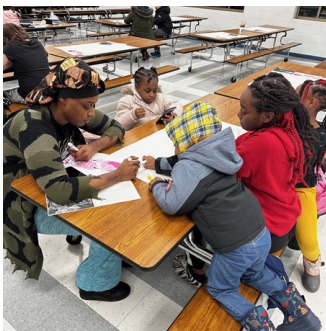
Our Story



Pickleball Clinic



Holiday Fair



Graffiti Night

Leigh Ann Martinez,
Community Schools Director

Academies of Racine at Mitchell Community School Highlights

A message from our community school coordinator

Hello Mitchell Families!

Here's a recap of the things that have been happening at Mitchell since our last newsletter:

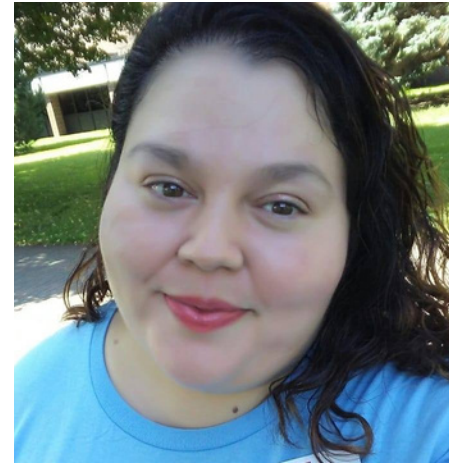
- In November, we began our KnightDragon Mentorship program. We have six mentors working with nine students to help them set and reach short term goals.
- We gave away over 300 winter coats, backpacks, lunchboxes and books to families at Parent Teacher Conferences.
- Racine Area Pickleball Club came in to teach our students how to play pickleball.
- We continued having great community nights with our annual Holiday Fair in December and our Graffiti Night in January.

What's next?

- In February we began hosting the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program for Mitchell community members.
- We are hosting our second annual Black History Month Celebration on Feb. 22.
- We will begin working on our Pollinator Patch this spring, thanks to Badger Meter!
- The search for a new community school coordinator begins. I have loved my time at Mitchell and meeting so many people! I'm going to miss it. My last day was Jan. 26. Thank you for being part of my journey. -Kira

Stay up to date by following Mitchell School on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/RUSDMitchell>

If you'd like to give us feedback on your experience at Mitchell, please complete this form: bit.ly/MitchellFeedback23-24



A word from the Mitchell PTSA

Hello Mitchell Families!

We'd love for you to join Parent Teacher Student Association!

Membership is \$10 for the school year and we help with fundraising to go towards things like field trips, teacher appreciation, classroom supplies and more. We also host

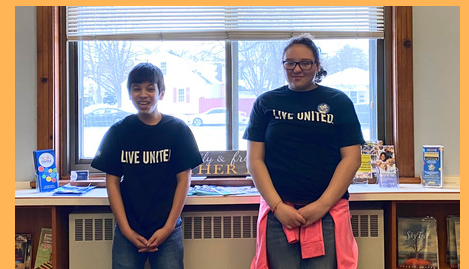
Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month. For any questions or to join, please email mitchellschoolPTSA@gmail.com.

Thanks!

Ashlee Tonar, PTSA President

Youth As Resources

The Youth As Resources (YAR) Board is accepting applications for YAR grants. Youth groups interested in doing a service project in Racine County can apply for funding until March 8 at unitedwayracine.org/YAR.



Email: lmartinez@unitedwayracine.org | Mitchell Office: (262)664.6400

Mental Health Moment:



Julie Hueller, Manager of Racine Collaborative for Children's Mental Health

Building Good Mental Health Habits in 2024:

As we begin a new year, it is time to focus on you! As with typical New Year's resolutions for a variety of reasons which include setting goals that are not attainable. Setting resolutions can be a positive way to focus on self-improvement, but it is important to approach them in a manner that promotes good mental health and well-being.

Here are some tips for creating resolutions that support your mental well-being:

Pick a goal that motivates you: You are more likely to stick to your goal if it motivates you!

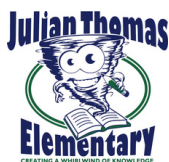
Breakdown Your Big Goals into Smaller, More Manageable Goals: By taking this approach, you are less likely to feel overwhelmed and reach those big goals.

Lean on Others for Support and Motivation: Reaching your goals can be easier with the support of others. Having a support and Motivation: Reaching your goals can be easier with the support of others. Having a supportive partner or community group working on the same goals as you can provide encouragement and accountability in meeting your goals.

Don't compare Yourself to Others: Set goals with only you in mind!

Practice Self-Compassion: The most important step in making long-term changes. Be easy on yourself! Acknowledge that setbacks will happen and that's okay. Celebrate your progress that you have achieved and pick up where you left off.

Always remember no matter how small or big your 2024 resolutions are, show yourself some grace and forgiveness during the times when you may struggle as you work to reach your goals. Take time this year to engage in something meaningful to you, but most importantly, be kind to yourself. You deserve it!



A WORD FROM OUR PARTNERS

Lil' Explorers Preschool at Racine Zoo

Lil' Explorers programs provide children ages 2-5 and their caregivers with the opportunity to spend one hour at the zoo meeting and learning about our resident animals in a structured and safe environment.

- Build essential skills such as letter, number, sound, shape, and color recognition
- Create wildlife-themed crafts
- Learn through engaging activities and games
- Enjoy a small snack during story time
- Financial assistance available through April 2024

Scan the code below with your phone's camera to visit our website, <https://racinezoo.org/lil-explorers-preschool>, to apply for financial assistance, and register for the next session!



Safe Families WI

SFFC is an organization dedicated to providing support for families who are feeling isolated and alone in our communities. We are a parent-led, volunteer-supported nonprofit that links overwhelmed parents with a network of local support. All our volunteers are vetted and have passed background checks. Our first step is to connect referrals to Family Friends who can text, call, or meet for playdates (depending on the needs of the family). Our Family Coaches meet with the referrals to assist in goal-setting and community networking to services. Lastly, in some situations our Host Families can take children on a temporary basis with families they are friending. All Host homes go through the same safety checks as foster homes.

If interested in making a referral, call 262-221-8804 or go to <https://safe-families.org/request/>.



Girl Scouts

Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast offers trained volunteer and staff-led meetings twice per month during after school programs for girls of all backgrounds and abilities to engage in STEM, outdoors, life skills, and entrepreneurial activities that help them explore the world and discover who they are.

This spring, Girl Scouts can participate in the iconic Girl Scout Cookie Program to build essential skills, like decision making and goal setting. The fun continues in the summer! Summer camp registration is now open, with options ranging from day camp to week-long overnight camp at properties across southeastern Wisconsin.

For details about how to join, contact your school. Learn more about Girl Scouts of Wisconsin Southeast and register for camp [here](#).



Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) is a national program staffed by local IRS-certified volunteers to provide free preparation and electronic filing of tax returns. It's an important service to thousands of individuals and families in Racine County with low-to-moderate incomes who are eligible for tax credits. Our IRS-certified volunteers help to take the stress and confusion out of tax season and save clients on average \$200 per tax return. VITA offers a variety of services to allow taxpayers to file for free including in-person services, DIY software, and a 100% virtual option to allow you to connect with our local IRS-certified volunteers from the comfort of your own home.

This year, VITA will be serving families at our three community schools. Each school will hold 3 site days during the tax season. We offer full-service tax preparation and filing for both federal and Wisconsin returns, including Homestead only returns. Services are by appointment only. To schedule your appointment during one of our community school VITA days, contact your community school coordinator. For services at one of our other weekly sites, schedule your appointment online at www.unitedwayracine.org/vita or call our automated scheduling line at 262-383-2504.