

Community Schools News

YOUR RESOURCE FOR UPDATES ON COMMUNITY SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS



Four Pillars Recap

This Edition

FOUR PILLARS RECAP

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The Four Pillars of Community Schools are:

- **Integrated Support.** Our integrated student support model is not about completing schoolwork for students, but about ensuring that all kids have access to the community resources and tools they require in order to maximize their potential and succeed. It's about placing students at the heart of our efforts and surrounding them with a caring community of support led by our dedicated staff.
- **Expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities.** This pillar is critical to schools' ability to support students' academic growth as well as their social, emotional and physical development. Community schools, in addition to supporting rich, student-centered instruction in classrooms, provide students with up to one-third more learning time in which they can engage in arts, physical activity, small group or individualized academic support and hands-on learning activities across a variety of subject areas.
- **Family and community engagement.** Community schools implement a family engagement strategy that solicits and incorporates family expertise and knowledge into all aspects of the community school, including asset and needs assessment, collaborative planning, and the implementation and continuous improvement of community school programs and services.
- **Collaborative Leadership and Practices.** Collaboration among school personnel, community partners, and families connects and reinforces the preceding three pillars. Community schools can help children, families and communities by building a shared vision, value system and leadership team.

Donations

Being a community school means all stakeholders hold a level of responsibility when it comes to student success. Stakeholders include school staff, support services, families, community members and others. Community schools operate under the idea that in order for our students to thrive in school, their basic needs should be met. This is where donations play a huge role. Knapp, Julian Thomas and Mitchell are grateful for all of their stakeholders and the donations they make to our students and families throughout the year. Donations at our community schools this school year have included school supplies, winter gear, hygiene items, food and so much more. Thank you to all who have donated!



School Counselors in Community Schools

All schools have at least one school counselor, but what do they do? In Racine Unified School District, school counselors promote student success, provide preventative services and respond to student needs that have been identified. They do all of these things by addressing academics, careers, personal life and and social development for all students with intentional counseling interventions.

Knapp and Julian Thomas each have one school counselor and Mitchell has four school counselors. When asked about their role at a community school, this is what a few school counselors had to say:

"Being a counselor at a community school gives us more opportunities to work with parents and community members in addition to our students." — Randy Sorenson

"Being a counselor at a community school certainly has its advantages. I am able to utilize the community school coordinator (Kira) to discuss options for bringing in particular services that I feel might be beneficial to both my students and their families, as well as brainstorm new ideas for family engagement. From my perspective, as a counselor, one of the most beneficial and absolutely necessary services is the in-house counseling program we have through Children's of Wisconsin. " — Michelle Garnette, M.S.

"Being a counselor in a community school is very awesome to experience. It's incredible to witness firsthand all of the services and assistance that our families receive. As a former teacher, I have a special connection with our students, so it truly brings me joy to see our families receive the support that all children need. My favorite aspect of being a community school is our monthly Community Nights. These events draw a large crowd. I believe that the Community school concept should be implemented in all schools." — Samantha Moe

School Highlights

Knapp

- Knapp continues to emphasize Readers Make Leaders with all of our young Clippers. On a weekly basis, we shine a light on children who demonstrate excellent leadership as well as reading skills. We are extremely proud of our students.
- Our fourth-graders and fifth-graders are preparing for basketball season! During our fundamental camp earlier this year, our kids focused on individual game performance as well as how to model being a leader on and off the court. As we prepare for tryouts, we encourage all students to put what they've learned into practice everywhere they go. We are pleased and extremely proud of each and every child who took part. Go Knapp Clippers!

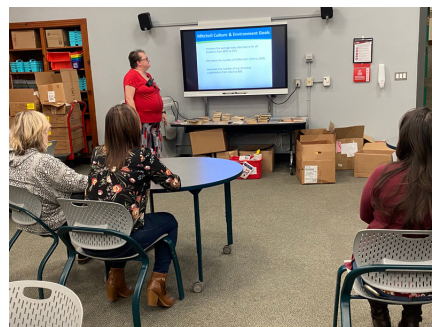


Julian Thomas

- On Jan. 12, Julian Thomas hosted "Family Game Night." Students and their families that attended were able to participate in board games, Pictionary, dancing, charades, Bingo and more! Families had the opportunity to learn about various community resources and even enjoyed delicious pasta and salad from Infusino's. Thank you to all who attended.
- Julian Thomas continues to build its volunteer base. JT would like to thank the parents who pop popcorn, mentors who come in to meet with students, Schools of Hope tutors and all the other volunteers who commit their time to the school and students!

Academies of Racine at Mitchell

- On Jan. 18, Mitchell hosted it's first Donuts with Grown Ups presentation for Mitchell parents/guardians. In this session parents/guardians learned more about Mitchell's goals, community school initiatives, how to get involved with PTSA and more. Attendees also had time to share their concerns and ideas for solutions.
- In partnership with John XXIII, select Mitchell middle school students became part of a group focused on identifying and building skills.
- Mitchell launched a partnership with Failure is Not an Option to help combat food insecurity for our students and families. Look out for registration information on a pop-up pantry in March!



Mental Health Moment: Healthy Boundaries

Having and maintaining healthy boundaries is important for self-care and having positive relationships with others. Boundaries look different from person to person. Setting boundaries starts with self-reflection and understanding your expectations of yourself and of others, then telling others what your expectations are and being able to respectfully let others know if they are not meeting your expectations for how they treat you.

When setting boundaries keep these tips in mind:

1. Be clear and direct while staying calm- "I have a personal bubble. It makes me uncomfortable being this close to others."
2. State your need request using direct language- "I need you to back up a bit." or "Can you please take two steps back?"
3. It's okay if it's uncomfortable

Program Spotlight: Racine County Foster Care

From Foster Parent Recruitment & Retention Specialist Jessica Scheeler:

I am so excited to announce our second annual sticker contest! Last year we asked you to open your heart and get involved with promoting Racine County Foster Care in 2022. This year, we are asking you to step up and step into a child's life in 2023!

Last year, we launched our new marketing campaign: "Keep Them Home Racine County: Fostering our Community, Fostering our Kids." This campaign was a follow up to the work that started in 2018, when we did a fantastic job of bringing our kids home to Racine County. Our out-of-county placements dropped from over 100 to 18 kids today. You responded and helped through 144 inquiries to "Keep Them Home." In 2022, we licensed 20 new homes and were able to keep 94 percent of our children placed in out-of-home care within 40 miles of their biological home. On average, children in care in Racine County are within 2.9 miles of their biological home. We are now asking you to step up and step into a child's life in 2023! It just takes one caring adult to influence the outcome of a child. Will you step up?

We are inviting you to get involved with a community-wide, super-fun sticker contest! Here are the details:

- Community members, adults and kids alike are encouraged to design a 2"x2" sticker that includes the words "Step Up and Step into a Child's Life" and "Racine County" and features artwork about why they believe foster care is important to our community.
- The deadline to complete and email your sticker design to Jessica Scheeler is March 31, 2023. (jessica.scheeler@racinecounty.com)
- Please make sure to include your name, age and title (community member, teacher, organization member, etc.)
- Racine County Foster Care staff members will select the top 10 entries. These finalists will be featured on the Racine County Foster Care Facebook page, and the community will vote for their favorite entries. Voting will occur April 10-17!

The winner of the contest will be announced May 1, 2023.

The winner will:

- Have their sticker prominently featured as part of May's Foster Care Month events and materials and handed out all year long at other Foster Care events.
- Have their sticker featured on the Racine County Foster Care Facebook page and website.
- Be given a specially printed t-shirt with their winning sticker design.

For more information, please contact Jessica Scheeler, (262) 638-6595 or jessica.scheeler@racinecounty.com.

Community Resources

Racine Kenosha Community Action: Skills Enhancement Program

The Skills Enhancement Program is a locally designed workforce development program that helps working, low-income individuals obtain the skills needed to compete for living-wage jobs. The program assists with tuition, books, training-related transportation and childcare costs that participants could not otherwise afford.

Upcoming Events

No School — Professional Learning Day, Friday, Feb. 17.

Black History Month Celebration, Tuesday, Feb. 14 from 5:30-7 p.m. at Knapp. Knapp will host its annual Black History Month celebration.

Black History Month Community Night, Thursday, Feb. 23 from 5-7 p.m. at Mitchell. Open to all members of the Mitchell community.

Black History Month Community Night, Thursday, March 9 from 5-6:30 p.m. at Julian Thomas.

Community School Coordinator Contact Info

Zyaire Strowder, Knapp: zstrowder@unitedwayracine.org

Katie Tuttle, Julian Thomas: ktuttle@unitedwayracine.org

Kira Muñoz, Mitchell: kmunoz@unitedwayracine.org

