



Area School District

MISSION STATEMENT

Empowering learners, engaging community, enriching the world.

VISION STATEMENT

One of Wisconsin's finest school districts, fostering excellence for all through innovation.

ORGANIZATION VALUES

- Integrity
- Excellence
- Commitment
- Collaboration
- Innovation
- Kindness

Student Engagement and Learning

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Curriculum

Beginning this year, RASD is piloting CharacterStrong Advisory and Leadership curriculum at the secondary level and CharacterStrong Purposeful People at the elementary level. Last spring, the Social Emotional Leadership Team comprised of teachers, principals, and school counselors recommended CharacterStrong as it best aligned to RASD goals for implementing new SEL curriculum. In selecting materials, it was important to the team that the resource compliment teachers' schedules and the morning meetings that are currently used to address social emotional learning. The team also expressed a desire to implement a K-12 program that would share a common language and similar format for addressing social emotional learning. The SEL Leadership Team will bring a formal recommendation to the Board in the Spring of 2020 after teachers have had the opportunity to pilot the various materials.



A student explains the "Zones of Regulation," a tool used to teach children about their emotions and coping skills. This student is showing Dr. Whitrock her Wheel of Emotions, including "I feel" and "I will" strategies.

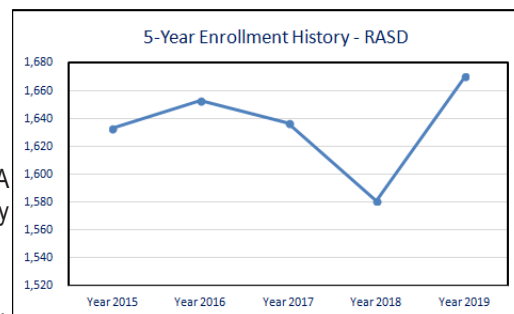


POSTAL CUSTOMER

Finance and Operations

District Enrollment Increases

Total student enrollment on the third Friday count in September increased by 89 students, reversing a downward trend in enrollment from previous years. Much of the growth is attributed to Odyssey Academy of Virtual Learning, a new 4K-12 online school. A total of 118 students were enrolled in Odyssey Academy on the third Friday in September, including 20 students previously enrolled in the district and 98 students new to the district.



As of the third Friday count, 203 total students open-enrolled into the district, which is up 79 students compared to the prior year enrollment of 124. Because of the new students, RASD will see larger open-enrollment tuition revenue in 2019-20. For more information, please see the district's financial report (https://www.ripon.k12.wi.us/cms_files/resources/Budget%20Booklet%202019-20.pdf).

Learning Never Ends

Human Resources

RASD educators recognize that there is always more to learn in order to provide the very best to students. Teachers participated in a variety of professional development opportunities this past summer and during the August inservice week. The lineup included:

- Project Based Learning (PBL),
- Bridges Math (4PS-5),
- CharacterStrong social emotional learning program,
- Continuous Quality Improvement.

The increase in training expectations during the summer months is just one of the ways education has changed in recent years.



TIGER UPDATE

Fall 2019

Excellence through innovation

Superintendent's Message

Happy Fall Ripon Tiger Nation and Welcome to the 2019-20 School Year!

Much excitement fills the air this year as we focus on continuous quality improvement (CQI) through the theme #riponwiproud. To help you stay informed on our progress, this quarterly report aligns to the four strategic priorities set by the School Board including;

Student Learning and Engagement

- Solid education in a healthy/safe environment (*Barlow p. 1, Odyssey p. 3*)
- Provide support services to ensure student success (*Zones of Regulation p. 4*)
- Close achievement gaps in literacy and math (*BRAVE p. 3*)

Service and Partnership

- Increase partnerships and satisfaction through CQI (*Drills p. 2, Summer Meals p. 3, STRIVE p. 3*)

Human Resources

- Increase opportunities to build high quality staff (*Staff Summer Trainings p. 2*)

Finance and Operations

- Refine systems to find efficiencies (*Grants p. 2, Enrollment p. 4*)

Targets and goals under each of these priority areas will be used to assist the Board in monitoring district progress during the 2019-20 school year. Thank you to everyone for setting the tone for a successful and exciting school year.

Respectfully yours,
Dr. Mary Whitrock
Superintendent of Schools
Go Tigers!



Students play on the Barlow Park/Journey Nature Playground.

Service and Partnerships

Barlow Park Charter Initiative Through Innovation

In July 2019, RASD received a five-year \$800,000 grant to implement a competency-based charter school at Barlow Park Elementary. The charter grant provides flexibility for innovation, funding for staff training by experts in the field and materials to support teaching. The 2019-2020 school year is a planning year.

While students in the charter will still be grouped by grade level and be with their classroom teacher for the majority of their day, they will also attend specific academic blocks where groupings will be according to their strengths in literacy and math. In the academic blocks, students will receive direct instruction at their level in small groups and for more minutes each day than is possible in traditional grade level groupings.

"Student placement in the academic blocks will be flexible and last over several weeks, more like swimming lessons. Once a student obtains the skills, they will move to the next competency level. The structure of this part of the learning day will position students to enjoy growth and movement from one skill to the next without the gaps that result with more traditional math and reading groupings," notes Superintendent Mary Whitrock.

"One new element will be dedicated classroom time for structured and unstructured play to increase the level of creativity, leadership and collaboration between students. The charter will continue to use the current Board approved curriculum as our end goal is still the same, to have students master end of 2nd grade competencies and be prepared to move on to 3rd grade. We just want more students to be better prepared."

Teachers participated in multiple days of training this summer and continue to research, study, and learn while carrying out their current teaching duties. Staff meet regularly to analyze current literacy data to discuss the possibilities for greater improvements with a competency-based structure in place. A dedicated curriculum coordinator has been hired with grant funds to align the priority standards within the competency levels and identify how students will progress.

Over 115 guests attended the September Powerful Play family event hosted by BP Charter staff to engage in purposeful play building their skills in communication, problem solving, creativity, spatial relationships, planning, eye-hand coordination, reading instructions, measuring, and written responses. Families can look forward to more Powerful Play events as well as Public Consultation events to learn more about the charter school and have their specific questions answered.



Families enjoyed an evening discovering the Power of Play. Barlow Park Staff hosted the event aimed at providing families with the experience of learning through purposeful play. Over 115 people attended the event.



District Awarded over \$605,334 in Grants for the 2019-20 year

- \$150,000 to Barlow Park Charter School for the first year with a total of \$800,000 over five years
- \$32,000 for a Transition Readiness Grant
- \$75,000 as a second one-year grant for School-Based Mental Health
- \$115,000 for the first year of five-year grant for the 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant at Barlow Park Elementary
- \$233,334 for the second year (\$900,000 over five years) for Odyssey Academy of Virtual Learning



Over 13,000 Meals Served to Children in Summer Months

Recognizing the importance of offering nutritious meals to children during the summer months, Ripon Area School District partnered with food service provider A'viands to offer free week-day breakfast and lunch to children 18 years of age and under from June 17 - August 30. The response was tremendous with a whopping 13,127 meals served.

The program was at no cost to the district as it was funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and administered by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

A'viands Food Service Director Briony Storz notes, "We know hunger doesn't take a summer vacation. From the RASD admin team and DPI coordinator to the volunteers, staff, parents & students, I truly appreciate everyone's efforts and commitments to successfully transitioning from the school year into the summer feeding program. Over 13,000 meals in just 53 days! WOW!" The district looks forward to continuing the program for the next 4 years. More information will be provided later this spring for summer 2020 menus and details.



RASD staff debriefed with Ripon Police Chief Bill Wallner and EMS staff following their August training exercise on the proper response to an active threat incident.

Local EMS and District Participate in Drill

In August, over 50 RASD staff joined the City of Ripon Police, Ripon Guardian Ambulance, and the Ripon Area Fire District in a training exercise on the proper response to an active threat incident. Staff members attended the training to build a context for what will occur and the priority of each of our city agencies regarding emergency response, incident command, radio traffic, and dispatch of services.

Superintendent Dr. Whitrock shares, "The level of coordination between emergency response teams in Ripon is incredible. We are all learning to work in sync to secure the location, provide care to individuals who may be injured, and get students and staff safely home. Through this training, we now have a greater understanding of how communication will flow and who will be responsible for all of the different elements of the process."

Whitrock notes, "Each time we complete a training or drill, I am reminded of how fast things will move and yet how long it will actually take to ensure all students are safely back in the care of their family. Communication will be extremely important. Resources and personnel will be flooding in from other cities and we need to know how to work together. This school year our goal will be to help educate parents and students about the reunification process and how they can help in the event of an emergency. While our first instinct as parents is to go to the event location to get our children and bring them home, that is the opposite of what our emergency teams are telling us. The District will work to get accurate information out to families about where they can find information and what they can expect through the reunification process."

In the event of a critical situation, the entire district will go on a hard lockdown which means that students in all buildings other than the location of the incident will be secured in their classrooms and the school buildings will be locked with no one entering or exiting the building until the all-clear has been given by law enforcement. The District will utilize its website, social media channels, and emergency Infinite Campus notification system to keep parents and community members abreast of the situation and most importantly to give parents directions on reunification with their children."

Jolene Meyer, Public Relations Specialist & Executive Assistant to the Superintendent reminds parents to stay home with their phone handy, make sure it is charged and monitor the District website, their email, and the District's social media channels for directions on where and how to reunite with their students. "The primary work of the District will be to account for each child and staff member in our care and to assure that they are reunited with their family."

Odyssey Academy Enrollment Exceeding Expectations

Odyssey Academy of Virtual Learning opened its "virtual doors" this fall to offer students in grades 4K-12, a flexible and customized learning option. Odyssey is a public, virtual charter school that offers a customized learning pathway through a high degree of student voice and choice. 97 students started on the first day of school; a few weeks later, enrollment has grown to 129 students which exceeded expectations. Parents and students continue to inquire about Odyssey as an option for their child(ren)'s education. The District anticipates continued growth throughout the school year.

As a first step to joining Odyssey, parents complete an Individualized Learning Plan that outlines each child as a learner. Then a learning plan for the year is developed by choosing the curriculum and courses that will allow the child to be successful. The teacher, student and parent meet virtually to discuss and finalize the learning plan so it is unique to that child. Student success in the virtual school requires a strong and effective educational partnership between parents, students and teachers focused on each individual student. From here, students begin their education at home, connecting to the live instruction, online courses and Project-Based Learning Classes as identified in their Individualized Learning Plan.



Odyssey students and families do connect in person during the school year for activities and field trips such as the Back to School Picnic held in August.



BRAVE Expands Programming

The Barlow Park/Journey Charter BRAVE program received a 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant (CCLC) to serve students in Kindergarten through 2nd Grade.

The CCLC Grant enhances and expands the BRAVE program by providing students and families with opportunities

such as free before-school and after-school enrichment programming Monday through Friday, additional family outreach events, transportation options, and educational and enrichment support through community organizations.

In addition, Murray Park/Quest (MP/Q) families benefit from the grant through the addition of Friday programming. MP/Q students have the option to be transported to Barlow Park/Journey after school on Fridays for enrichment. The district encourages families to take advantage of these exciting learning opportunities for students.



Getting creative with the nature playground during BRAVE. Note the homemade fishing pole!

Students Striving with Ripon Rotary

Ripon Rotary has supported Ripon High School students through the STRIVE program since 2006. Each year, Rotary members hold 10 monthly meetings designed to provide up to 30 area high school students with a look at life after high school. STRIVE has 5 tenants:

- To motivate students with targeted grade point averages to improve their grades, attendance, attitude and behavior
- To educate students who would not qualify for admission to a traditional four-year college about the opportunities available to them after high school
- To provide recognition to students who would not qualify for such recognition through traditional high school programs
- To provide students with "street smarts" or "life experiences"
- To provide students with shared scholarships totaling \$2,000 a year

STRIVE events are specifically designed to show students the opportunities, choices and challenges they will face after graduation. Events include hands-on activities relating to budgeting and managing finances, continuing educational opportunities, and a variety of "real world" experiences. Guest speakers from businesses, community institutions, and political venues are recruited to participate in the sessions.

Students receive scholarships based on their participation in the program and their demonstrated efforts in school by raising their GPA and exhibiting their best attitudes and behaviors.



Students from Crossroads Academy joined other local students and Ripon Rotary members for teamwork training with the Ripon Fire Department.