

Superintendent's Message



As we wrap up this historic school year, there are so many celebrations to highlight. Many thanks to our students, staff and parents for the amazing work they are doing in our current virtual reality. Throughout this time our RASD team continues to use the Board's four strategic priorities to guide their work.

Student Engagement and Learning

- Solid education in a healthy/safe environment (New Family Enrollment for 2020-21 School Year p. 1, The Arts Are Alive and Well in Ripon p. 2)
- Provide support services to ensure student success (All Hands on Deck with Virtual Learning, p. 3)
- Close achievement gaps in literacy and math (Murray Park Earns State Award p. 1)

Service and Partnership

- Increase partnerships and satisfaction through CQI (BRAVE Program Launches Virtual Homework Helpline p. 2, Board of Education Results p. 3)

Human Resources

- Increase opportunities to build high quality staff (Welcome Pupil Services Director p. 4)

Finance and Operations

- Refine systems to find efficiencies (Food Service Numbers Swell p. 3, Operational Referendum Thank You p. 3, Preliminary Staffing Budget Approved p. 4)

Thank you for your continued support and investment in the amazing children and talented staff in our district. Together we live out our mission of empowering learners, engaging the community and enriching the world.

Respectfully yours,
Dr. Mary Whitrock
Go Tigers!



Student Engagement and Learning

Murray Park Elementary Earns State Award

Murray Park Elementary School received the Wisconsin Title I School of Recognition award for the 2019-2020 school year. Only 107 distinguished schools in the state received the honor.



The Schools of Recognition Award recognizes schools that receive federal Title I funding for showing a high level of progress. On the state report card, Murray Park earned 87 out of 100 possible points for growth in reading and math, well above the state average of 73.9 for elementary schools.



Murray Park Principal Renee Bunge commented "I am extremely proud of our Murray Park staff, as they work incredibly hard as a team to support our students' varying needs. While our staff explore and implement programs, services, and interventions that help us close learning gaps, they simultaneously support the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of our students. This collective work has been nothing short of outstanding."

Jill Puhlmann-Becker, the district's Title I Coordinator noted, "Murray Park receives Title I funding based on the number of students in the school who qualify for the Federally funded free and reduced lunch program. The staff has been working hard to close educational gaps for all students."



Student Engagement and Learning

New Family Enrollment for 2020-21 School Year

Do you have a child that will be four years old by September 1, 2020? The enrollment window for the 2020-21 school year is open! Get a jump start now and visit the Preschool page on our website to find detailed information about each Preschool site location. To complete the enrollment process click the "Enroll New Student" icon on the district home page, select the enrollment link, and follow the online enrollment process. Your child MUST be four years old by September 1. If you need assistance please contact Britnie Meyer at (920) 748-4604 or via email at meyerb@ripon.k12.wi.us.



BRAVE Program Launches Virtual Homework Helpline

Virtual support for students and their parents does not end at 3:00 p.m. each day. The district's after-school BRAVE program has teamed up with the Ripon College Education Department to offer a Homework Helpline for students PreK-12.

Since the Governor's order to close school and the district's move to online learning, BRAVE program staff have worked to find a way to continue to provide after school services and support to RASD families. BRAVE staff assist students PreK-8 while Ripon College students help high school students with homework questions. Tutors meet students through a live chat room Sunday - Thursday in the afternoons and evenings.

Eliza Stephenson, BRAVE Site Coordinator at Ripon Middle School and Catalyst shared "This is a great resource for all students in the district and will allow students to get help that they need when they need it." Wanda Disterhaft, BRAVE Site Coordinator at Murray Park/Quest added, "I am so grateful to my BRAVE staff for continuing to support students with this virtual Homework Help. Students will be able to receive help from a live tutor in math, reading, spelling, etc. They could even read to one of our tutors."

Families are juggling many things right now and the Homework Helpline is just one more way to offer support. The partnership between the BRAVE program and Ripon College, as well as the countless volunteers who have offered their support creates one more way that students can experience the commitment of their community.

"This is a win for all involved," Jean Rigden, Director of Teacher Education at Ripon College, shared her excitement about the opportunities this program will provide to her Education practicum students whose normal classroom experiences were interrupted or eliminated this spring. "The Homework Helpline provides a great community service for PreK-12 families. Partnerships like this are at the core of Ripon College's mission," said Rigden.



The Arts Are Alive and Well in Ripon

Prior to the Safer At Home recommendations and mandatory school closings, students were preparing for Spring concerts and art shows. How do you have virtual music and art classes? It didn't take RASD teachers long to pool their creative resources and deliver.

Music students are engaged through individual live music lessons with their teachers, creating performance videos to share with classmates, and even performing for their next door neighbors through the Porch Performances events. The first Porch Performance took place on April 3 and was met with such enthusiasm that it will continue each Friday at noon. Community members just need to step outside their home and soak in the sounds of music in their neighborhood or take a drive around the city to enjoy their own personal concert.

The Art Department launched the Heart Hunting project challenging students to use the windows, doors, and driveways of their homes as their canvas to create artwork that incorporates encouragement through images of hearts and words of hope. Students embraced these opportunities to express themselves. Now community members are able to enjoy students' artwork from a safe distance.



All Hands on Deck with Virtual Learning

In making the transformation to virtual learning, Ripon once again became a model across the state. RASD committed to supporting and maintaining personal connections to all within RASD, students, staff and parents. The district did this by committing to three goals: connection, communication and continuity.

Task number one was ensuring all 1,700 students within the district had devices as well as internet access. Then, all district teachers met virtually for just one day to plan to deliver instruction to all students from our early childhood program for three year olds up through our high school students. Teachers came up with creative ways of engaging students with meaningful live and recorded video instruction. Office and support staff have willingly shifted their focus to provide virtual one to one and small group support to students who need extra assistance.

One of the greatest factors in successful distance learning are parents. Ripon has incredibly supportive parents who are showing this now more than ever with their patience, flexibility, and dedication during these unprecedented times. By having an “all hands on deck” approach, Ripon is continuing to provide meaningful instructional opportunities even in these unprecedented times.

Ripon Area School District Technology Department by the numbers

1,700  **SUPPORTED BY FIVE** **55** *cellular hotspots provided for internet*
student devices delivered and supported **STAFF MEMBERS**

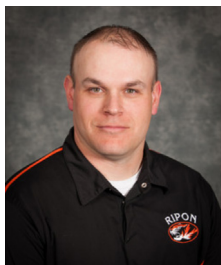
900 **SUPPORT TICKETS, CALLS, AND EMAILS RESOLVED**

50 *provided 1:1 devices to 625 students in* **FIFTEEN** **65** *preschool devices delivered and supported*
staff devices delivered **2 days** staff document cameras distributed

Board of Education Results

Service and Partnerships

Congratulations to incumbents Tom Stellmacher and Josh Rieder who were re-elected to the Board of Education in the April 7 Election. The Board will welcome back David Scott, who voters elected as a write-in candidate to the third open seat. Mr. Scott is returning to the board after taking a year off. Thank you to outgoing board member Amy Pollesch for her service to the board.



Josh Rieder



David Scott



Tom Stellmacher

Thank You Ripon Community

When students left for Spring Break on March 13 their teacher's sent their devices home with them. At that time, there was some conversation coming from the State that schools may be directed to close. Thanks to the Ripon Community for supporting the 2014 Operational Referendum which provided the district with the infrastructure to go virtual if needed. Within one week, over 1,700 students were transitioned to distance learning.

Curbside Food Service and Delivery Numbers Swell

Close to 600 students are being provided a free breakfast and lunch each week day thanks to a dedicated crew of A'viands food service staff who provide curbside pick up at the middle school and Ripon's custodial staff who provide delivery service right to families' doors. When students returned from Spring Break on March 23, they came back to a world of distance learning. The Curbside Food Service program started that very first day with just over 160 participants and has steadily grown. The meals not only provide basic nutrition, they are also one more connection for students to their school. One parent commented, "I didn't realize how a meal from the school would put a smile on my child's face". The program is possible through the federally funded Summer Food Service program. Over 24,000 meals were served in the first month.





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

POSTAL CUSTOMER

Human Resources

Welcome to the Pupil Services Director

The Ripon Area School District is pleased to announce Ms. Emmy Jess as the District's Pupil Services Director starting July 1, 2020. Ms. Jess currently serves as the school counselor at Murray Park Quest, a position she has held since the 2016-17 school year. She has an undergraduate degree in Human Services Leadership and a master degree in Professional Counseling from UWO. In this new position, Mrs. Jess will serve our brick and mortar schools as well as Odyssey Academy of Virtual Learning.



Ms. Jess (middle in white), a group of students, and Youth Frontier staff group together at their annual Kindness Retreat.

Finance and Operations

Preliminary Staffing Budget for 2020-2021 Approved

On March 23, the Ripon Area School Board approved a preliminary budget for 2020-21 that is balanced while expanding services offered to students. Anticipated increases in student enrollment next year will grow both district revenue and the expenditures necessary to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of our students. Savings will be realized following many one-time facilities expenses from 2019-20 (e.g., Ingalls Field turf replacement, Barlow Park Journey Elementary boilers replacement and nature-based playground installation). Importantly, the community's operational referendum provides significant financial support to its schools and their mission.

The growing popularity of Odyssey means that new and expanded teaching and support positions are needed to foster student learning. The budget plan increased the Odyssey secondary teaching positions and the principal position to full-time. The plan also called for adding an elementary teaching position and a guidance counselor/school assessment coordinator.

Like Odyssey, the district's traditional schools have set high expectations and are also facing increasing student needs. The budget created a full-time behavior interventionist position for Murray Park Quest Elementary School; expanded the Ripon High School math department by one full-time teaching position, with the possibility of offering math intervention classes; and created a new position for a district-wide pupil services director, who will coordinate support for students with 504 plans, connect students and families to local and county resources, and expand emotional, behavioral, and social support services for all students.

The district is excited for the start of the 2020-21 school year and the changes that will allow our students to excel.