

## Superintendent's Message



Spring is right around the corner as evidenced in our work within the district. Students are signing up for fall classes, taking state tests, and open enrolling into the district while staff continue to use the Board's four strategic priorities to guide their work.

### Student Learning and Engagement

- Solid education in a healthy/safe environment (Social Emotional Learning p. 2)
- Provide support services to ensure student success (Scholarships, p. 4)
- Close achievement gaps in literacy and math (Mathletes p. 3)

### Service and Partnership

- Increase partnerships and satisfaction through CQI (Apprenticeship p. 1, Service Clubs p. 2, Crossing Guards p. 4, )

### Human Resources

- Increase opportunities to build high quality staff (Student Service Director p. 3)

### Finance and Operations

- Refine systems to find efficiencies (Referendum p. 2, Enrollment p. 3)

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!



Students in the First LEGO League of Ripon shared a presentation with Superintendent Mary Whitrock.

## Service and Partnerships



### Youth Apprenticeship Program is a Win for All

Over 20 Ripon High School Seniors and Juniors develop technical and specific job skills employers want through the Youth Apprenticeship Program (YAP). YAP, a rigorous one to two year program, provides skilled mentors, active training and work experiences to our student apprentices who learn employment skills while also earning credit towards graduation.



Student apprentices interview for positions with employers, earn at

least minimum wage and often obtain additional training and certificates through their work experience. Students receive release time from school to go to work and many continue to work throughout the summer. Over 85% of student apprentices stay with their employers by transitioning directly into the workforce after graduation or by working while also attending post-secondary school. YAP increases the likelihood of college graduates returning to their "hometown" for employment.

Olivia Thacker, Class of 2020, gained experience in the field of Graphic Arts through her apprenticeship with Graphic Sign & Letter Company. "This opportunity to be in youth apprenticeship has helped me with preparing for my future. I get to create new projects for my portfolio which I can use for my college applications and future job interviews," commented Thacker.

Dan Kelm, Owner and Britney Beach, Lead Graphic Designer of Graphic Sign shared, "YAP helped our business by introducing us to Olivia, who is a fast learner and brings new ideas to the table when it comes to designing. She is never afraid to try something new, and is quick to problem solve."

Partnerships in the program continue to grow in our community. Besides Graphic Sign & Letter Company other Ripon community partners include Copperleaf Assisted Living, Chris Miller Building & Design, Golden Rule Community Credit Union, Perr Electric LLC, Agnesian Healthcare, Homan GM, Webster's Marketplace, Novitske Construction, Royal Ridges, CESA 6, Knuth's Brewing Company, and Aroma Restaurant. Other interested businesses should contact Ripon High School.



## Finance and Operations

### Community Will Weigh in on Operational Referendum

Ripon community members can weigh in on the Operational Referendum through a survey coming this Spring. The Board of Education has been engaging with parents, teachers and community to review options through a series of Community Engagement Sessions. Two more sessions will be held March 2, and March 30 before a survey to the entire community is distributed.

The current operational referendum for an additional \$500,000 in annual revenue which supports updating curriculum; updating technology; performing maintenance; and replacing vehicles, will end next year. The district has had two operational referendum over the past 11 years to combat the loss of over \$9,000,000 in funding due to budget reductions at the state level.

The survey is scheduled for distribution on April 18 with the following dates for follow up work:

- May 18 - Share survey results
- June 15 - Develop the referendum question
- July 20 - Vote on specific referendum question for the ballot
- November 3 - Election Day

The Board of Education is asking all Ripon voters to please consider attending the engagement sessions to have their voice heard regarding the needs of the school district.



## Fourth Graders Build Community Through Kindness

The Core Value of Kindness will be the focus for fourth graders at their annual Kindness Retreat with Youth Frontiers. Through music, high-energy movement, and active learning opportunities students learn how to build each other up. The program helps to inspire character and build community.

School Counselor Mrs. Emmy Jess notes, "We're so excited to be bringing back Youth Frontiers for the third year to conduct our fourth grade Kindness Retreat! The activities, stories, and songs really come together to create an impactful day that's so different than anything we provide through a normal guidance lesson or classroom morning meeting. The concepts being taught also tie together wonderfully with our PurposeFULL People social and emotional learning curriculum."

The activities are opportunities for deeper thinking of PurposeFULL People concepts like:

- Having fearless courage
- Showing gratitude
- Genuine respect

Students are able to see the ten character traits that they learn about each day in action at the retreat.



## Services and Partnerships

### Partnership Provides Service Opportunities

The Builders Club, a Kiwanis Group for middle school students and Key Club, the high school level group provide opportunities for students to give back to our local community and the global community. These student groups are part of Ripon's Kiwanis Service Learning family which also includes Circle K at the collegiate level, Early Bird Kiwanis and Ripon Noon Kiwanis, two adult groups and the Aktion Club, for disabled adults.

This year, the Builders Club is making tie-blankets for the Barrett House Assisted Living Facility residents; collecting school supplies for fellow students; and gathering shoes to send abroad. Each year, the RHS Key Club hosts the Enchanted Forest as part of Dickens of a Christmas.

Last year, RHS Band Director Sandy Polcyn reached out to local service organizations to partner with the Jazz Band event. Ripon Noon Kiwanis took up the challenge and the Jazz Gala was born. Noon Kiwanis hopes to make this an annual tradition, engaging the community and supporting the high school jazz band by giving them a platform to perform.

"We really didn't know what to expect last year," commented Kiwanis member Brian Reilly, "it was a pretty solid success. We had a great turn out, we raised money through a 50/50 raffle for the band trip. We plan to do the 50/50 raffle to benefit the band again."

The Kiwanis Youth Service Leadership Programs provide middle and high school students a chance to learn about service opportunities right in their own community with the hopes they will continue to serve others for years to come.

This year's Jazz Gala is February 22 in the RHS Commons from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. and features toe-tapping music with plenty of dancing space for guests.



Student Engagement and Learning

## Innovative School Choices

Being the parent of a student in Ripon means having choices. Each school teaches the same curriculum, the difference is the delivery method. School Choice information has been sent out to elementary families to note their school preference by February 28. All children can thrive in each of the models. Ripon Area School District is unique in that parents may choose the delivery model to match their family's needs or further expand on their child's strengths and areas of opportunity.

New families that reside outside of Ripon are offered the same innovative school choices through open enrollment. The open enrollment window opened February 3 and goes through April 30.



## Middle School Mathletes Enjoy Success

The Middle School Math Team is having an amazing season, returning from their last meet with two team awards and six individual awards. The current team of 24 is comprised of six students from each grade 5 - 8. Fifth graders have the opportunity to join the 6th through 8th graders which provides one more bridge for transition into middle school.

Middle School Math Team members need not be the top in their class, but rather really enjoy mathematics and love a good challenge. Different students may attend each meet so many students have the opportunity to experience a math meet. RMS Math Teacher, Mrs. Angie Osheim explained "Many of the students who fall in love with it at the middle school level go on to be successful, loyal members of the High School Math Team. It's such a joy to be able to encourage kids beyond the school day to enjoy the beauty of mathematics!"

Osheim has been the advisor of the team for the past eight years and explained that in addition to knowledge gained in the classroom, students use perseverance and critical thinking skills to compete against approximately 100 students from area schools. The meets are held after school three times a year in Rosendale, Fond du Lac, and Ripon.

## Human Resources



## Morrin Named as New Student Services Director

The Ripon Area School District is pleased to announce Ms. Becky Morrin as the District's Director of Student Services.

Ms. Morrin was most recently teaching in the intellectual disability program (ID) at Ripon High School, a position she has held since 2016. Ms. Morrin was a teacher and elementary principal at a private school in Hortonville for over 8 years prior to joining the RASD team. She received a Bachelors of Science degree from UW Stevens Point and a Masters in Educational Leadership from Marian University.



## Finance and Operations



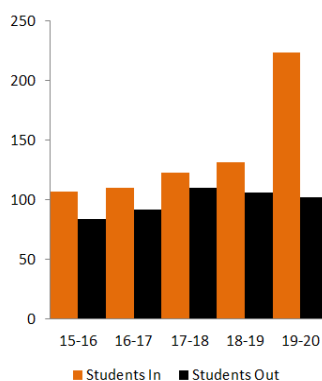
## Ripon's Student Population is Growing

The Ripon Area School District student population is growing. Total student enrollment as of January 10, was 1,681. This is an increase of 10 students (.6%) since the third Friday count in September and an increase of 111 students (7.1%) compared to the January 2019 count.

Ripon is seeing an increase in students choosing to open enroll into Ripon too. Total open enrollment for this year is 223. This is an increase of 92 students from last year. The number of students that chose to open enroll out of Ripon has decreased by four students since last year.

It is uncommon to see a district grow. The statewide student-aged population has been declining since the 2013-14 school year, with roughly 70% of Wisconsin school districts currently facing declining enrollment.

### Students Open Enrolled





## 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



#### Services and Partnerships

### Crossing Guard Appreciation

In honor of Crossing Guard Appreciation Week, Ripon Crossing Guards enjoyed a hot, delicious breakfast with administrators. Crossing guards, who are employed by the Ripon Police Department, provide an important service in the community by protecting students traveling to and from school each day.

Guards, who are often the first and last school personnel a student interacts with each day, get to know "their kids" and sometimes become a trusted adult students can turn to for support. A guard's job goes beyond helping students safely cross the street. Anyone interested in being a part of the crossing guard team should contact the Ripon Police Department.



POSTAL CUSTOMER



#### Student Engagement and Learning

### Ripon Education Foundation Scholarship Drive Just Around the Corner

RHS students will canvass the city April 18 and 19 for the the Ripon Education Foundation Annual Scholarship Drive. They will be easy to recognize wearing orange fleece vests when they come to community members' doors.



The goal of the drive is to ask every resident of Ripon to consider contributing to the scholarship fund, which supports Ripon students attending either two-year or four-year accredited colleges and universities. All money collected will be awarded to graduating Ripon High School seniors.

Students who assist with the drive for one or more years are entered into a scholarship lottery for each year of participation up to four years. The lottery, held each May, determines up to eight winners of one-time \$500 awards. No application is necessary as the student's participation is their ticket into the drawing. In addition, students who participate in the drive at least twice, are eligible to apply for four merit scholarships each worth \$1000.

Since 1999, the foundation has awarded more than \$150,000 to Ripon students headed for colleges and technical colleges. Every penny collected in the drive goes to support students. RASD students benefit greatly through the generosity of the Ripon community.