

FLEX ACADEMY

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



Students in grades 2-5, attended their gradeband team building day at TNT Adventure Course. (Pictured Left) Students in grades K-1, attended their gradeband team building day at Warrior Jungle (Pictured Right)

In this Newsletter:

- Introduction- 1
- Staying True to Our Pillars- 2
- Family Spotlight- 3
- Supporting Learner Coaches- 4
- Governance Council- 5
- Increasing Student Achievement- 5
- Highlights - 6

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOCUS

HEIDI SCHMIDT- FLEX ACADEMY PRINCIPAL

This is our first quarterly newsletter for the 2021-22 school year. While we communicate weekly with our families around the highlights and logistics of our school, we wanted to share with our larger community on a regular basis what makes Flex Academy a very special educational option for our families. We pride ourselves in providing an enriched educational experience for kindergarten through eighth grade, which is grounded in our three pillars: Personalized Learning, Health and Wellness, and Service Learning. This year, out of continued response to COVID-19, we again decided to offer a fully virtual option.

Our Flex Team includes; Ms. Schmidt- Principal, Mrs. Lamers- K-1 teacher, Ms. McDaniel & Ms. VanSambeek- 2-3 teachers, Mrs. Lemm- 4-5 teacher, Mrs. Stormer- 6-8 teacher, Mrs. Sheleski- Special Ed teacher, and Mrs. Peyton- Administrative Assistant. Mrs. Peyton will be transitioning to a role in the district office. While we are happy for her new opportunity, she will be missed as she has had an immeasurable impact on Flex Academy since it opened.

~ Heidi Schmidt, Principal of Flex Academy



Students in grades 6-8th, attended their gradeband team building day at Badger Sports Park at the start of the school year.



SERVICE LEARNING PBL (YEAR LONG PROJECT)

Click the buttons for the guides

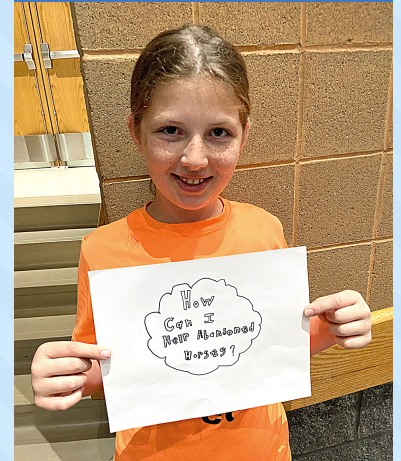
Q1: September 29th	Q2: December 9th	Q3: February 17th	Q4: May 12	June 9th (afternoon)
"Find your Passion" Determine Project and create Driving Question	"Research to Serve" Research project and create action plan	"Create and Implement" Follow through with service plan, continue research	"Reflect and Prepare to Share" Reflect on project and complete Fair Project	Service Learning Fair Share project and view peer projects

We will Learn,
Serve, and Be
Well!

STAYING TRUE TO OUR PILLARS

KAITLYN MCDANIEL- 2-3 GRADE TEACHER

Flex has revamped Service Learning for the 2021-2022 school year with a theme of "Grow through Service-Learning". Students began in Quarter 1 by finding their passions and determining their project's driving questions. Throughout the year, students will research their topic and create an action plan, implement their service plan, continue research, reflect on their project, complete a Service Learning Fair project, and share their completed project with peers.



In Quarter 1, students found their passion by researching community or larger scale problems. From here, they determined possible solutions through intentional inquiry. After students chose their topic, they created a Driving Question to guide their project including questions such as, "How can I improve...", "How does...affect...?", "What impact does...have on...?". This allowed students to think about what they could do to better their community and those that live in it. Sample Driving Questions include, "How can I impact the children and families at the Children's Hospitals?", "How does NAMI help adolescents with mental health and suicide awareness?", and "How can I use my skills to indirectly help young women aging out of foster care get items they need for daily living?". Along with this, the Flex staff also came up with a Driving Question for their project of, "How can the K-8 Flex teachers support students to improve their self-awareness related to their own emotional and academic needs?".

In quarter 2, students will research and serve. Students will share what they have learned through research and will then model how they will implement their project plan. From here, students will follow up with an action on their project. This could include direct service, indirect service, or advocacy. For example, the Flex staff will answer their Driving Question by talking to school counselor, Tracy Schmidt, researching about and talking to staff members at NAMI, and reaching out to other mental health organizations.

In quarter 3, students will create and implement. They will share an implementation plan in class and Flex teachers will model sample presentations. Throughout the remainder of the quarter, students will work on and complete their final presentation. These presentations can include posters, videos, Google Slides, and more.

In quarter 4, students will celebrate and share. Final projects will be brought to school to be reviewed. Students will complete their final touches on their projects as well as fill out an overall reflection. On June 8th, students will present their masterpieces at Flex's Service Learning Fair. Students can then share projects with their peers and learn from one another about community and larger scale needs as well as how they can leave a lasting impact on others.





FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

TERRI WERNER 3-YEAR FLEX PARENT

Why did you choose Flex?

Our family selected Flex because we were looking for a personalized environment for our kiddos. It was our focus to not go 100% homeschool, but to offer them the space to serve in their church and community while also progressing and being challenged in their education. We had reached a point where the JOY and passion for learning was slipping away from our kids (at way too young an age) and holding onto that was very important to us. Being at the Flex has restored that for the kids, and us as parents!

“ ...you never know until you ask the questions what adventures might lay ahead - so #adventureon and ask the questions of yourself, your learner and the teachers to be joyfully challenged!

What have you learned as a Learner Coach?

As a learner coach I have learned how much I appreciate teachers - LOL. I have been blessed with an opportunity to practice patience and to acknowledge how much I truly love and like my own kids. We have a great time together and it is so refreshing to "re-learn" some of these things as an adult. Being a learner coach comes with good days and bad days and I have learned that kids and adults all have them (and that they can all be turned around with a good dance party and ice cream!)

Do you have any tips for other Learner Coaches?

My tips to other learner coaches would be to set a tentative schedule, but be willing to deviate some days we learn in our "classroom" , some days in the kitchen, some days at the picnic table :) -- if you have multiple learners like our household does it's ok to tell one or many to read a book or draw a picture while you focus on something with another (and in fact it's great to do it -the 1x1 time with each of our kiddos teach me so much) on that note it's great to schedule in those "off" days where we go to the library and pick out new books and games when we'd normally be doing math or when we go pick apples in the morning and do our reading at night - there is such a big world out there we desire to be a part of -- and lastly I would say to remember your why everyday and know that what is hard today might be easier tomorrow and vice versa. The Flex has an amazing set of teachers and staff - they have supported my every question, emotion, idea and desire for our families journey and for that I am grateful - but you never know until you ask the questions what adventures might lay ahead - so #adventureon and ask the questions of yourself, your learner and the teachers to be joyfully challenged!



SUPPORTING LEARNER COACHES

SARAH SHELESKI- SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER

One of the best parts of Flex Academy has always been the community! Last year was a time to connect virtually through events like our Winter Wonderland Activities, Game Night, and Relish with Relatives. This year we are excited to connect both virtually and in person. In talking with veteran Flex families, they have shared that the connections and relationships created during these in-person times are a highlight. We have many planned events for our families and Learner Coaches to collaborate, connect, and build community.

At the beginning of the year, we hold in-person Learner Coach Development to assist with planning for the year and allowing parents to meet each other. We also have Triad meetings between the student, Learner Coach, and Gradeband teacher in which individual families are able to connect and ask questions.



BUILDING COMMUNITY AND CONNECTING

Throughout the school year, we intentionally plan Quarterly Learner Coach Development in which we delve into topics identified by Learner Coaches as areas of growth. Learner Coach Development is an amazing opportunity for Learner Coaches to share ideas, build relationships, and learn new ideas related to their student's academic, social, and emotional needs.



Families also receive a weekly newsletter with timely information and opportunities which include information and fun pictures of our Flexcursions (all school community-based field trips), STEaM events, Health and Wellness all school days, Service Learning all school days, and additional opportunities for Learner Coaches to connect.



GOVERNANCE COUNCIL

HEIDI SCHMIDT- FLEX ACADEMY PRINCIPAL

Little Chute Area School District hosts two charter schools, Flex Academy and Little Chute Careers Pathways Academy, and collaboratively they are supported by the Governing Council. This eight-member Council meets monthly and agendas and minutes can be found on the LCASD website.

Members of the Council have diverse backgrounds and invested interests in the charter schools, which allows them to offer input and provide guidance through staff sharing reports and posing questions.

This year we are finding ways to include the council members to be involved in specific areas of the strategic plans. One example will include, members interested in learning about K-8 charter schools and how we can market for the targeted Flex option. Another example is the emphasis on business partnerships through out LCCPA and how those can strengthen student experiences.

If you have any interest in the Governance Council, contact our GC president, Carl Rambo, crambo@littlechute.k12.wi.us



INCREASING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

BROOKE STORMER- 6TH-8TH GRADE TEACHER

During the 2021-2022 school year, Flex Academy will be personalizing work for our students through a new Edgenuity program called MyPath. MyPath is a personalized learning program for reading and math that delivers high-impact, engaging lessons that target the specific skills students either need to get back to grade level or will accelerate students to lessons above grade level. MyPath pulls students' scores from their NWEA MAP math and reading tests to assign them their paths.



**SUCCESS IS THE SUM OF
SMALL EFFORTS,
REPEATED**



This supplemental personalized learning program also offers adaptive sequencing to better meet student's needs in math and reading. Smart Sequencer for MyPath prioritizes lessons and activities based not only on a student's skill level but also on what the student needs to succeed in their current grade-level work. This program delivers content to students through engaging gradual release lessons and keeps their interest with a reward system of characters for completing different performance tasks. Flex Academy's goal is to use MyPath to both enrich and support our students through the lessons that are given to them on their learning paths. The use of MyPath can help students with their future NWEA math and reading scores for our Winter and Spring tests by giving them what they need to succeed.

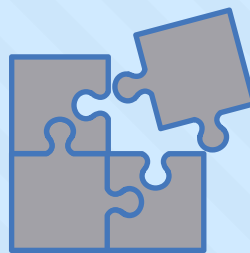


HIGHLIGHTS



QUARTER 1 SERVICE LEARNING

This year Flex has a new take on Service Learning! Students are diving into a Project Based Learning (PBL). Throughout the year students will have check-ins with their teacher which will lead to an end of the year Service Learning Fair Celebration! For this first quarter, students created their driving question. Essentially students posed a question and are working on researching and brainstorming an action plan as to how to find solutions to their questions. Students came up with amazing ideas, stay tuned for more in quarter 2!



TEAM BUILDING

Students and Flex staff had a blast on September 16th during Team Building Day! This day is dedicated to building peer relationships, practicing communication skills, and incorporating problem-solving skills. Our students went to three different locations throughout the area. Our youngest learners spent time at Warrior Jungle. Second through Fifth Grade students went to TNT Adventure. Our oldest learners spent time at Badger Sports Park. To students and staff alike this is one of the many highlights of being a learner at Flex!

QUARTER 1 HEALTH & WELLNESS



Flex's Health and Wellness pillar has also changed a little bit from previous years, with this new revampment, students have an online portfolio that they will throughout the quarter add artifacts, reflections, and photo proof of them working towards their wellness goal set with their gradeband teacher. Students in Kindergarten to Fifth Grade focus on three dimensions of wellness (Physical, Social, and Emotional) while students Sixth to Eight Grade focus on six dimensions including the previous three but adding Environmental, Intellectual, and Spiritual wellness.

INFORMATIONAL NIGHTS **REGISTER NOW**

All families interested in enrollment at the Flex Academy are required to attend an Informational Meeting prior to receiving an enrollment application. Upcoming meetings are on November 9th and January 4th. Meeting registration information can be found on the Flex Academy Website. We hope to see you there!

