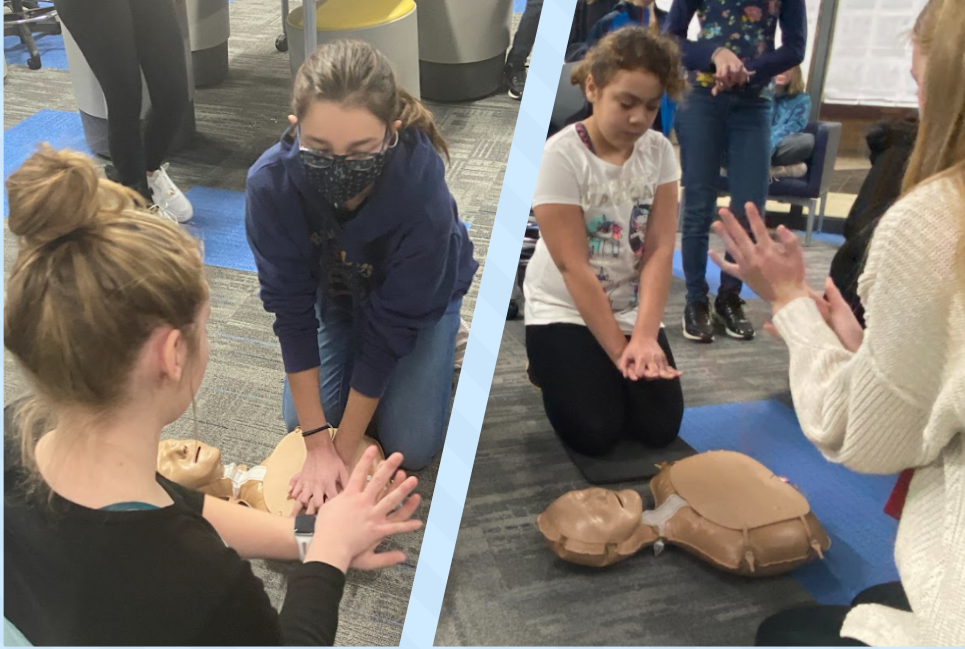


FLEX ACADEMY

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



Students in grades 6-8 had students from the LCCPA come and teach them how to do hands-only CPR.

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QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOCUS

HEIDI SCHMIDT- FLEX ACADEMY PRINCIPAL

We welcomed State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly and Deputy State Superintendent John Johnson on January 6 to Flex Academy. They were able to observe and engage with our students and staff during our day focused on Health and Wellness, one of our pillars. This truly is a celebration of charter schools in Wisconsin. Charter schools allow families to have a public school option that aligns with their values, goals and learning style. Flex Academy is a unique hybrid model and we are proud to be an option for families in our area as part of LCASD.

The input and feedback from our families are vital to our triad model. It allows us to pivot and plan when ensuring we are holding true to our mission and pillars. As we begin our second semester as well as looking forward to next school year, we are committed to serve our current families and be an option for future families. As we enter our 2022-2023 open enrollment window, please spread the news of Flex Academy and encourage those interested to attend one of our information meetings.

Enjoy our second quarterly newsletter and check out our [website](#) for more information. Thank you for your support!

~ Heidi Schmidt, Principal of Flex Academy



Students in grades K-8 attended a Flexcursion to the Barlow Planetarium & the Weis Museum





We will Learn,
Serve, and Be
Well!

STAYING TRUE TO OUR PILLARS

BROOK STORMER- 6TH-8TH GRADE TEACHER

The kindergarten through eighth grade students at Flex Academy had an opportunity to partner with Fallen Timbers Environmental Center to create informational videos about the nature you can find at Fallen Timbers. There were six categories that students were given to present about: birds of prey, forests, habitats, invasive species, ponds, and weather. Throughout the first four months of school, students conducted research about their topics, created scripts for their videos, and shot their videos live at Fallen Timbers.

Our first Flexcursion to Fallen Timbers this year was focused on collecting the information needed for the videos. We used the help of Matt, Jarrod, and Corrine, the expert team at Fallen Timbers, and walked around the environmental center to get ideas of what to put in the videos. Students then brainstormed their rough outline of what they wanted to include in their scripts for their videos.

The next step in our process was to create the scripts for the videos. Students split up their rough outlines throughout their groups and each wrote a part of the script. They included key pieces such as interviews with the Fallen Timbers experts, places they wanted to include pictures, and ways to wrap up the information they presented. Once these scripts were finished, we then went back to Fallen Timbers to film the videos. Students were scattered throughout the environmental center's land to find the most important places that complimented their topics.

Lastly, the day after our filming Flexcursion at Fallen Timbers, students in the fourth through eighth grade classes got the opportunity to create the final WeVideos. Once these videos were completed, all fourth through eighth grade students held a viewing of the videos and got to make critiques to them. These videos are still a work in progress and we are all very excited to see the final products when we visit Fallen Timbers again in the Spring for our viewing party! Be sure to check out the Fallen Timbers website in the Springtime for our videos.





FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

VALERIE VERSTEGEN - KINDERGARTEN LEARNER COACH

Why did you choose Flex?

Our family chose Flex Academy for quite a few reasons! We were ultimately looking for a program that was a little more individualized and flexible, not necessarily 5 long days each week. I have a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and Special Education and my passion for teaching has never completely left my heart. However, with two young kiddos at home, a rough cancer journey for myself, and life sometimes being a bit unexpected for us, I thought what better way to still teach, but also be present with my own children?! I heard about Flex Academy from a few close friends and it sounded too great to pass up. With the world changing constantly, I felt like this was such a safe, beautiful place where our daughter could thrive and our family could also have the freedom to choose what's best for us. When I came in on the last day of summer break, I figured I would have a difficult time beginning the new program, but, after I met the staff and saw the classrooms, I felt at "home." Everyone was so kind, thoughtful and took the time to walk me through the basics. I couldn't have made a better decision for our family.

What have you learned as a Learner Coach?

This year I have learned so much! I have seen how awesome the modules are; hands on, fun and very well guided. I love that we can work together on most lessons, but also can give independence to my daughter with hands-on experiments, worksheets, projects, etc. I LOVE that the kids are able to go on excursions every other week, have STEaM days, and also get the individualized education they deserve. I enjoy watching my daughter learn right in front of me each day, it brings me so much joy! I have also learned that if something is slightly confusing with the program/computer aspect, there are so many amazing people who can help! I love the communication piece most of all. My biggest "worry" as a mama was going to be that I would never know what my kiddos were actually doing in school. Aside from the comments "oh nothing," "I forgot already," "recess and art were so fun," etc when asked after school, lol. This way I actually have an idea of what her day "looks" like at school!)

Do you have any tips for other Learner Coaches?

I think one piece of advice I would offer is that being present at home is really important when working on lessons. All homes have a decent amount of chaos, but during our "school" time in the morning, my daughter and I are both fully present. I have most distractions set aside so we can learn and get the most out of the activity. I think she has grown immensely this year because she is so well guided in the classroom at flex and at home as well.

I would also say never hesitate to email, call or ask for help. There are many parents who have gone through this program, and the teachers are all so wonderful! Any and all questions, concerns or emotions can be sorted out through small trial and error. I just love this community.

I think remembering "why" your family chose flex academy is important too! Not every day is a cake walk. Oftentimes our children don't see us as "teachers" necessarily, even though that is our main job. So remembering all of the positive attributes this community provides even on the more difficult days.

Overall, I have really enjoyed taking on the extra responsibility to teach and explore this new program with my sweet girl. We have had so much fun working together and spending quality time learning, one on one. Thank you to the teachers, staff and parents who have helped us along the way, this community is so endearing and I tell everyone about it! :)



SUPPORTING LEARNER COACHES

HOLLY LEMM- 4TH-5TH GRADE TEACHER

At Flex we strive to have a culture of collaboration. To support our Learner Coaches the Flex team provides materials that are similar in structure for each gradeband. This especially helps Learner Coaches with multiple students in different gradebands. One of the resources is a pacing guide linked on the Flex Parent Page for kindergarten through fifth grade to help students stay on track during their at-home days. This is a recommended guide for work to be completed in the online platform. Grades sixth through eighth have this guide built right in the online platform.

Another resource provided on the Flex Parent Page is the Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies standards for each grade. This allows Learner Coaches to understand what is being taught throughout the school year.

Along with collaborating on resources on the Flex Parent Page, the Flex team collaborates on the expectations of the Flex pillars. Students in kindergarten through eighth grade all do a year long Service Learning Project. At the beginning of the year each student receives a folder with the provided materials for the year. Each step is modeled in class and then executed at home with a Learner Coach. Students share their driving question during our first meeting and then go on to share their plan for their project during our second meeting. Students then work on their plan through advocacy, in-direct, and/or direct service. During the next two meetings students reflect on their service project and create a presentation for the Flex end of year Service Learning Fair.

This collaboration continues with our Health and Wellness pillar. Students kindergarten through eighth grade create a portfolio that documents their quarters goal, documentation of that goal, and then a reflection of their goal. At the end of the year students will share their goals and progress in an end of year Health and Wellness Fair.

All of these materials are created with our Learner Coaches in mind to help support them while at home with their student(s).



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 being part of our Governance Council, contact our GC president, Carl Rambo, crambo@littlechute.k12.wi.us



INCREASING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

SHELBY VAN SAMBEEK- 2ND-3RD GRADE TEACHER

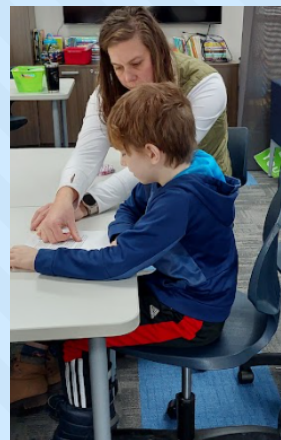
Over the past few months students, learner coaches, and teachers have shown resiliency by getting to know our new online learning platform Edgenuity. Through this journey the curriculum has displayed several peaks and a few valleys that have kept Flex teachers (including myself) on our toes.

One of the hurdles being that students in the lower grade bands (kindergarten through third grade) curriculum requires a learner coach to support their child during their instructional at home days. During Flex school days, I have had the opportunity to connect with our youngest Flex learners working through their curriculum. Completing lessons in small groups when students are working on the same lessons and working with individual students. The students and I follow the same lesson template as the program where the teacher introduces the topic, the student practices the concepts, and then finally the student shows mastery on their own worksheet that later gets uploaded and submitted within the program.



“
A SUCCESS FOR OUR
TEAM HAS BEEN IN
STUDENT GROWTH FOR
STUDENTS RECEIVING
TIER 2 SUPPORT.”

My mission for working with students is to get them back on track with the pace of the curriculum as well as encourage them to continue to be headed in the right direction. It has been wonderful spending this quality time getting to know students and it is truly Amazing seeing the “light-bulb” moments!

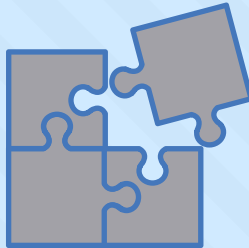


HIGHLIGHTS



QUARTER 2 SERVICE LEARNING

We have had our first check in for students Service Learning PBL's (Project Based Learning). Students did such a wonderful job developing projects revolved around their driving question. Students presented their research findings in groups and brainstormed more ideas for what to help their project grow. Many great ideas were shared and plans cultivated for next steps. We're excited to see these project take off and grow as the school year goes!



WINTER GATHERING

The Flex Academy Community came together before our Winter Break to spread cheer for all to hear! The day consisted of a meal shared together for a breakfast brunch prepared by Chef Denny and the Taher staff, followed by caroling, and activities prepared by the teachers within their given classroom. Families were able to spend time with their own and one another building connections and creating memories.

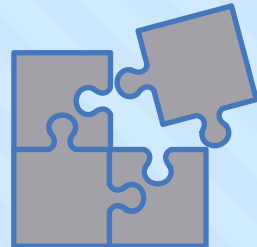
QUARTER 2 HEALTH & WELLNESS



Our first Health & Wellness Day was spent exploring how students would focus on our Health & Wellness pillar. Students learned what each of the dimensions were and chose a SMART Goal to focus on for the 1st Quarter. The second Health & Wellness day is coming up where students will reflect with their peers how the 1st Quarter had gone. After some check-in's students will get the chance to dive deeper into each of the 6 dimensions of Health & Wellness Flex Academy focuses on.

DR. JILL UNDERLY & MR. JON JOHNSON VISIT

What a special visit we had! The Wisconsin State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly and Deputy State Superintendent Jon Johnson, spent some time exploring the Flex Academy on a recent visit. During her time by us, it happened to be one of our Health & Wellness Days where she was able to see a glimpse at how one of the 3 Pillars at the Flex Academy operates.



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 February 23, March 7th and April 18th. Meeting registration information can be found on the Flex Academy Website. We hope to see you there!

