

# FLEX ACADEMY

## QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



Congratulations to our 5 8th graders who are moving onto High School next year! We have 4 that will transition to LLCPA and 1 who will be going to the traditional school. All of here at Flex are so proud of everything you have accomplished!

## QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOCUS

Thank you for reading our quarterly newsletter. It allows us the opportunity to share updates of the work and learning being done and align it with everything that makes Flex Academy unique and special.

We are very proud of how we ended our 2021-2022 school year. We were able to send off five graduates who will move onto Little Chute High School or Little Chute Career Pathways. Our quarter included finishing strong while students shared their Service Learning projects through a fair and reporting out on their yearlong Health and Wellness goals.

Most importantly, this last quarter we continued to offer many opportunities for students to learn, laugh and grow with one another across grade levels. One of the unique and special parts of Flex Academy.

As we close out the year, we want to recognize Mrs. Schultz and Ms. VanSambeek for their dedication to Flex Academy. We wish them the best as they move on professionally- they will always be part of the Flex Academy family.

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

~ Heidi Schmidt, Principal of Flex Academy

### *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



Students (and staff) Enjoyed their last Flex excursion to Lambeau Field!





We will Learn,  
Serve, and Be  
Well!

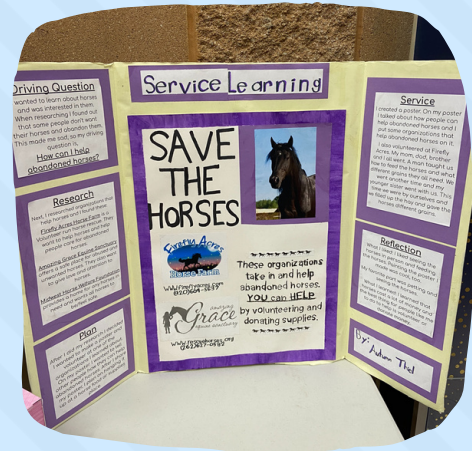
# STAYING TRUE TO OUR PILLARS

**BROOKE STORMER - 6-8 GRADE TEACHER**

This year Flex hosted its first ever Service Learning and Health & Wellness Fairs to showcase student success in their year-long Service PBL's and their quarterly Health & Wellness goals. Students presented to families and friends about their passions, what worked well this school year, and reflected on what they might change next year when doing their Service Learning PBL, as well as, their Health & Wellness quarterly goals.

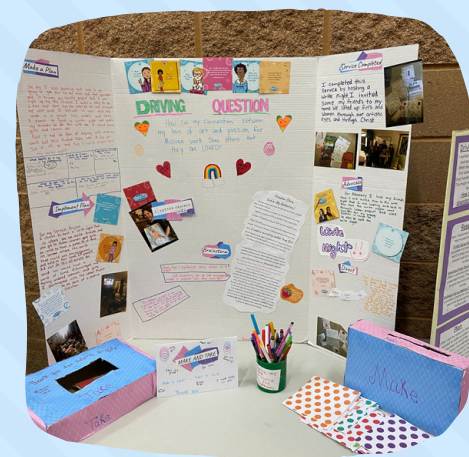
## Service Learning Fair:

Our Service Learning fair was an opportunity for students to showcase their year-long PBL centered on one of their passions. Students worked on this project in phases throughout the school year including: creating their driving question, researching organizations, directly or indirectly serving, and putting a final product together to display at our fair. Students were intentional about the information that was displayed on their final products, as they were not standing next to them to present. Instead, all students, teachers, and family members got the opportunity to walk around and explore these final products during the Service Learning Fair. This was a fun way to celebrate the year-long work these students did, and gave some students new ideas for next school year!



## Health and Wellness Fair:

Our Health & Wellness fair was a way for Flex students to reflect overall on the quarterly Health & Wellness goals they created throughout the school year. Our K-5 students could choose to reflect on three dimensions of wellness: emotional, physical, and social. Our 6-8 students could also focus on these three dimensions, but have the opportunity to expand their wellness dimensions to environmental, spiritual, and intellectual as well. During our fair, each gradeband presented and reflected on what goals throughout the school year went well and which may have needed a little more practice. This fair was for Flex students only, as they are our Health & Wellness experts and could give great feedback to their peers about their goals. This fair was a great opportunity for reflection, feedback, and to give others new ideas for goals that they can set for themselves in the future!



Overall, our Flex community is so proud of all of our students for their hard work and sense of ownership they gave to their projects and goals during these fairs. Great job to all!





As a learner coach I have learned a lot even though I was a teacher for the 10 years prior! The teachers at the Flex Academy are an amazing resource! They give me the confidence I need to be able to be successful as a learner coach. As a first year learner coach, I had a lot of questions at the beginning of the school year. The staff was so helpful and patient as I figured out how to navigate the online learning program or had a question about any of the in person learning activities they were working on. They also helped me with any tech issues that arose with our school chromebooks throughout the year. The other learner coaches have been very welcoming as well. After attending the beginning of the year orientation and learner coach development days I was able to gain a lot of great academic resources. I also feel a real sense of community where parents are wholeheartedly participating and working collaboratively with teachers to help the children grow into the best version of themselves. For anyone reading this who is considering sending a child to the Flex Academy please reach out to one of the staff members and set up an opportunity to see for yourself. Being a learner coach has helped me build stronger relationships with my children and the Flex Academy has enabled our family to grow closer.

Thank you Flex Academy!

## YOU MADE IT! FIRST TIME FAMILY AT FLEX

THE REED FAMILY

Our family chose to attend the Flex Academy following a chain of events that started a few years ago. My wife and I were never really satisfied with the way our children fit into the traditional school model. Our three children just never seemed to feel fully comfortable letting out their true personalities at our previous school. However, we stayed the course and were stuck in a bit of a rut and unwilling to take the plunge to try something different. That all began to change in the spring of 2020 when my wife and I found ourselves at home with our children during the early part of the pandemic. We thoroughly enjoyed being able to spend so much more time together as a family and it really made us wonder if there was a way we could somehow continue this type of lifestyle. At the time, I was a teacher at a local middle school and was worried that any type of homeschooling couldn't possibly have the same positive influence as attending a traditional public school. However, we signed up for a virtual open house and were able to meet some of the teachers and Principal Schmidt. Everyone was so welcoming and open to answering any questions we had. We enrolled at Flex the following school year and haven't looked back. The combination of at home learning along with the socialization in a small, comfortable classroom has our children absolutely thriving. Another benefit is that Flex Academy truly is flexible! We took our kids on a few trips this year to visit family. Also, our daughter has many appointments at Children's Hospital in Milwaukee.

Each time something comes up, the staff at Flex is very accomodating. Whenever I have reached out for guidance or resources I have felt supported so that our children are able to experience more than ever outside of the classroom while still being part of the great Flex community.



# SUPPORTING LEARNER COACHES

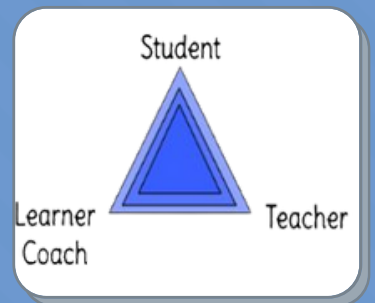
KAITLYN SCHULTZ 2-3 GRADE TEACHER & SARAH SHELESKI- SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER

“Personal development is a lifelong process. It is a way for people to assess their skills and qualities, consider their aims in life and set goals in order to realize and maximize their potential.” (Skillsofyouneed.com)

At Flex Academy, we look to empower and support Learner Coaches to grow and develop, as well as to be the best support for their children. Learner Coaches balance being parents and educational support for their children, which is no easy task. In these moments of connection and sharing, we are able to find commonalities and support from each other. One way that we support each other and further develop our community is through Quarterly Learner Coach Development. This school year, we have focused on: Health and Wellness, Service Learning, tips and strategies for our online curriculum, Social Emotional Article Share, and Community Building through sharing resources.

Each year, we look for opportunities to bring families and students together in a way to foster community and encourage personal growth. A highlight of this year was during third quarter Learner Coach development in which Learner Coaches chose an article based on character development and then came together to share their learning and foster conversation around these topics. There were head nods, smiles, ah-ha moments, questions, and reflective moments. Most importantly, there were opportunities to connect and grow!

Flex is a unique opportunity for learners and their families - with community and personal development being integral parts. Quarterly Learner Coach Development continues to be a foundational element at Flex Academy to build community through personal and educational opportunities.



# 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 Council meets monthly and agendas and minutes can be found on the LCASD website.

The Council will spend time on June 20 for their annual retreat. It is a great time to report on strategic goals as well as share input about focus areas for the next school year for both charter schools. The regular monthly meetings will resume in September.

We are currently open to adding interested community members to our Council. If you have any interest in being part of our Governance Council, contact our GC president, Carl Rambo, [crambo@littlechute.k12.wi.us](mailto:crambo@littlechute.k12.wi.us)



# INCREASING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

KELLY LAMERS - K-1 GRADE TEACHER

In the Education world, there are so many ways for us as teachers to assess where our students are academically. These assessments can range from daily worksheets, or exit tickets students can complete at the end of the day, all the way to unit tests, or whole school/district assessments. The season of the school year we are in includes many different forms of testing. This is a time we get an idea of where students are at towards the end of the year from where they started back in September. With that being said, we are going to dive into some of the things the Flex Academy staff has seen throughout the school year and this testing season.

The first test we are going to talk about is the Forward Exam. The Forward Exam is the State-wide computer assessment that 2nd through 8th Graders are expected to take. This is an exam that tests students on the state standards in Reading and Math, as well as Science and Social Studies for 4th and 8th Grade students. Once completed, this is an exam that DPI and the state of Wisconsin review to give our school a "grade" for our report card, giving us a general idea of where our students are mastering academically.

The next assessment that students here at the Flex Academy complete is the NWEA MAP test. This test is an adaptive computer assessment that students take at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. As Educators this is a great snapshot for us to see where students are at throughout each part of our school year. Once students complete this test, it gives us an idea of areas of both strengths and weaknesses, which then leads us to better guide our instruction and guidance for our students' learning.

Once all the tests are wrapped up for the year and we prepare for the next journey of the school year, we head into the summer months. With that being the case, each year we do something to help families prepare for how to continue learning throughout their time away from our brick and mortar school.



We took on this mindset for our final Learner Coach Development of the school year. Before our Learner Coaches attended our time together we asked them each to include a resource that they use with their students in their learning time at home. Each of them searched through their resources and found items that fit within one of the five categories: Reading, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Social Emotional Learning. Once we were together we took time to connect as a community and in small groups, chatting about the different resources that each of us presented and how we can continue with an educational mindset even through summer activities. So many wonderful resources were shared! Such as resources of incorporating a nature journal, a mapping activity to get kiddos involved in long travel times, including outdoor reading and math activities, or different STEaM activities getting the gears going. During our time together and our want to continually support our community, our PTO President and the Little Chute Library Directory both presented programs and connections that will be happening throughout the summer months. Upon leaving there were so many reflective comments and feelings of wonderful connection and a new found way to continue education activities through the summer without being mundane and worksheet loaded.

Wrapping up the school year can have many moving pieces, emotions, and final activities taking place, but continuing to guide our Learner Coaches to grow alongside our students is a main goal of the staff here at Flex Academy. We feel that through our weekly focuses here at school, the variety of testing our students complete showing us growth or gaps, and our connections we are able to guide and structure intentional time for each to grow. We will continue to build our community, supporting each other along the way.



# HIGHLIGHTS

## QUARTER 3 SERVICE LEARNING

We had our final Service Learning Day at Flex in May. Students had the opportunity to share their final presentation that they shared during our Service Learning Fair. During the day we were also able to be advocates for Flex Academy. Each student shared how they have grown through social emotional learning, academics, health and wellness, service learning, and cross gradeband activities throughout the school year. They put their writeup in a bag with a seed packet to show appreciation to those in the community. The message also stated, "With your support, Flex Academy continues to blossom and grow." Students then hung the bags on local residents' doors. Then on June 8th we had our fair to celebrate the conclusion of our Service Learning PBL (Project Based Learning). It was an amazing time for families to come together to share what they have been working on throughout the school year to help our community.



## INFORMATIONAL NIGHTS

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 July 11th. Meeting registration information can be found on the Flex Academy Website. We hope to see you there!



## QUARTER 4 HEALTH & WELLNESS

In April, we had our final Health and Wellness day. Students enjoyed doing a circuit course to focus on their physical wellness. They also created an affirmation poster to hang in their lockers that showcased things that bring them joy! In June, we had our Health and Wellness Fair where students had the opportunity to share their favorite SMART goal from our dimensions of wellness.



## FLEXCURSIONS

We went on five Flexcursions in quarter 4. The first trip to Fallen Timbers taught us all about maple syrup. For the next trip out to Fallen Timbers, our K-3 students learned about bones and the green planet life cycle, while our 4-8 students learned about land use planning and water quality. At Vande Hey Company, they explained different careers needed for landscaping and each student painted a pot for planting their very own succulent. Then, we ventured to Lambeau Field for a behind the scenes tour and information about Packer history at the Hall of Fame. Our final Flexcurison for the quarter ended with a reptile encounter from MToxins. Tortoises, lizards, and snakes, Oh My!

