

FLEX ACADEMY

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



For Health and Wellness Day we had Mr. Van Ekeren and Mr. Berry from The Academy come and teach a Karate class for all of our students

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QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOCUS

HEIDI SCHMIDT- FLEX ACADEMY PRINCIPAL

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.

The unique area which I want to highlight this quarter is the role of Learner Coaches. This pandemic has stretched and strengthened the staff in ways that haven't always been comfortable. However, we are all better for it. This pandemic has also strengthened family's choice in public education. It has made parents more informed consumers of the choices in education and at Flex Academy, we welcome that. Our Learners Coaches are committed and dedicated to their child's education in a very unique way. We pride ourselves on triad relationships for the success of students. We are grateful for these partnerships and are always finding ways to strengthen the work we do together.

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 enjoyed being able to learn more at the Little Chute Fire Department and the Little Chute Windmill





We will Learn,
Serve, and Be
Well!

STAYING TRUE TO OUR PILLARS

SARAH SHELESKI - SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER

Preparing for the First Annual Service Learning & Health and Wellness Fair

Celebration is defined as, “the action of marking one’s pleasure at an important event or occasion by engaging in enjoyable, typically social, activity. (Oxford Dictionary)” And that is exactly what we are planning to do! Students have been working diligently on a quarterly Health and Wellness goal and a year long Project Based Service Learning Project of their choosing.

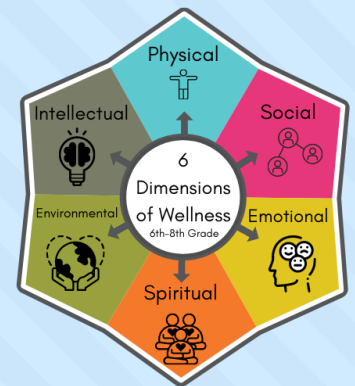
Service Learning Fair:

As Martin Luther King Jr. once said, “Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are we doing for others?’ On June 8th, with our families, students will come together to showcase and celebrate the service they have completed throughout the year. At the beginning of the school year, each student chose a project, based on their individual passions, and have worked throughout the year to intentionally plan and provide a service to the community. Each quarter we come together as a whole school to reflect, challenge, and increase our understanding of the importance of serving with gratitude and humility. Now it is time to showcase their hard work! We are excited to see the videos, posters, creations, and excitement from all of the students as we culminate our year with a Service Learning Fair.

Health and Wellness Fair:

Students intentionally set goals each quarter based on one of the dimensions of wellness. Throughout the quarter we check in and encourage students to reflect and continue to make progress. In addition, we have a quarterly all school health and wellness day in which we support students to increase their understanding of physical, social, emotional, spiritual, environmental, and intellectual well-being. At school, we will reflect on students' goals with them and create presentations that they will share with each grade band. Students will have the opportunity to reflect on their successes as well as areas that are in progress and to learn from each other.

In reflecting on the 2021-2022 school year, Flex Staff is beyond proud of the growth and resilience students have shown individually as well as a community. Through Service Learning and Health and Wellness, we continue to excel and learn together.





FORMER STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

KENSON LEFEBER-FRESHMAN AT LCCPA

How long were you a student at Flex Academy and where are you currently at in your schooling?

I was a student at the Flex Academy for 2 years and that was during 7th and 8th grade. Now I am currently a freshman at Little Chute Career Pathways Academy.

Why did your family choose Flex Academy and why did you choose a charter school for high school?

Originally my parents heard about the Flex academy from other families who went to the school previously and every family said it was a good school to go to. My parents decided I should try going there for 7th grade and if I liked it I could go for another year. It turns out that I loved going to the Flex Academy, so I was able to spend 8th grade there too.

What is one of your favorite memories from Flex Academy?

I don't have one specific memory that was better than the others. I just remember all the teachers and kids were very good to work with because they were respectful, caring, positive, and just had an overall interest in your well-being.

How do you feel Flex Academy prepared you for the next step of LCCPA?

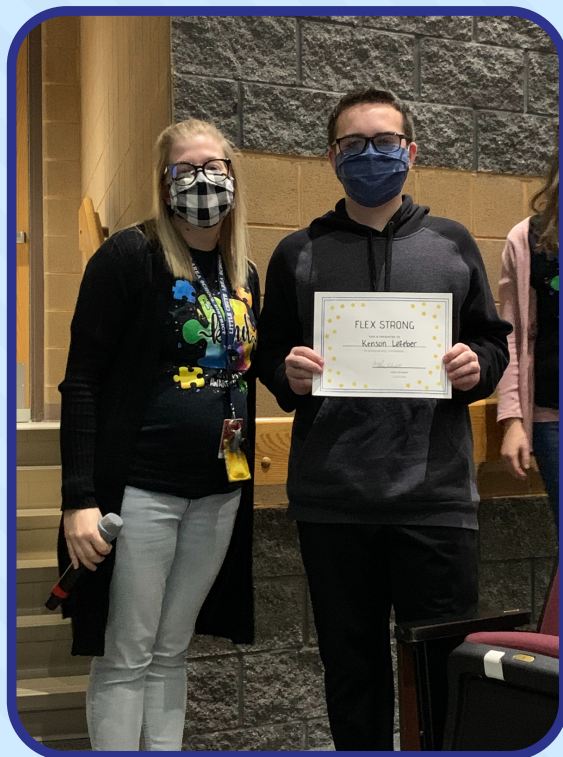
I feel that the Flex Academy had a major impact on how my next years in high school would play out, because halfway through my 8th-grade year I was able to finish up my 8th-grade work and the Flex Academy provided the flexibility for me to start 9th-grade math. So, at the beginning of my freshman year I was already halfway through my 9th-grade math.

Why do you think more students should choose LCCPA after Flex Academy?

I believe that one of the best moves someone could take just coming out of the Flex Academy would be to join Little Chute Career Pathways Academy, due to the fact that the Flex Academy And LCCPA are very similar in their teaching styles. They both focus on the skills that will prepare you for the future like growth mindset, tenacity, responsibility, productivity, and so on.

Any last thoughts you want to share with families about how Flex Academy prepares you for your future?

Overall, the Flex Academy is an extremely great school in the way that they prioritize teaching their students the life skills they will need.



SUPPORTING LEARNER COACHES

KELLY LAMERS K-1 GRADE TEACHER

Community and collaboration are a huge part of our school, the Flex Academy. With our Learner Coaches guiding the at home education of their child, having others to collaborate with is a vital part of both the student and Learner Coaches success. Each quarter, staff connect with Learner Coaches for something we call Learner Coach Development, LCD. This time offers them the opportunity to collaborate with both teachers and other Learner Coaches, allowing guided time to bounce ideas off of each other and get to know or support other families.

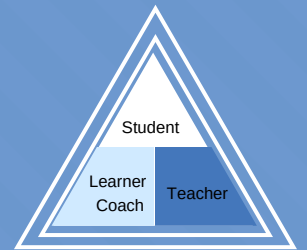
This school year, as a staff, our focus has been on Social and Emotional Learning for our students. To guide this here at school each quarter we have had focus words. Each of the focus words would be discussed followed by challenge activities to build our students' personal mindsets. The words we have focused on are; resilience, empathy, optimism, perseverance, perspective, and empathetic conflict resolution. With such a great focus here at school, we wanted to ensure that each part of our triad (Teacher, Learner Coach, and Student) is on the same page. So we decided that this middle part of the school year would be a great time to connect and collaborate with Learner Coaches to discuss each of these concepts.

Learner Coaches had the chance to pick one of the aligned words with articles that they preferred prior to our time together. They were to read the articles provided and come to our time together with ideas and thoughts that stuck out to them and/or something that may be beneficial to not only them but also other Learner Coaches. During our time, we separated into groups so that there was one person from the word topics in each group and joined in on discussions. This time together was so refreshing and encouraging.

Taking the time for Learner Coaches to come together and share their experiences, thoughts, and take-aways allowed for our community to collaborate in better ways to support our students. The conversations happening in both rooms was not only helping build ideas for at home days but also allowing for supportive parenting and Learner Coach roles. It allowed for open communication, expressing some things that may be struggles at home and how to persevere through them. Or how to teach their Learner to take more accountability for their school work and their expectations. Learner Coaches had the opportunity to see that there are other families that may be finding woes or successes in parallel things to them. Setting time for the open discussion following each of the topics was a welcomed feeling from all.

Leaving this Quarters LCD there were many comments and compliments from Learner Coaches as to how much they appreciated having the time to connect with our Community. It allows for the feeling of support with not only being a parent but also being the educator at home, empowerment as to the tasks they are taking on at home, as well as the collaboration in guiding their child's education.

In reflecting on how well this LCD has gone, we as a staff have decided to bring the Learner Coaches back in if they wish to, to have the chance to collaborate with others for our Quarter 4 LCD. We welcome the opportunity to bring Learner Coaches together and support them in a magnitude of ways. After all, as a triad; the student, teacher, and Learner Coach, is what makes a successful team here at the Flex Academy.



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.

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



INCREASING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

SHELBY VAN SAMBEEK- 2ND-3RD GRADE TEACHER & HOLLY LEMM- 4TH-5TH GRADE TEACHER

RAZ-Plus is a phenomenal resource we use at Flex to better help our students. The abundant resources within this program include, leveled texts, assessments, foundational skills, literacy skills, interventions, phonics, fluency, and phonological awareness lessons. These resources can be printed, projected, and come in digital formats too! You're probably wondering how we use this program at Flex? We use RAZ-Plus for two different purposes. The first is that we use this program for all students, specifically 2nd-8th grade students once a quarter to listen to their reading skills. Students do what is called a flight check, where their voice is recorded while reading a passage. After the passage is recorded students are asked to retell their passage, then the last step is to take a 5 point quiz on the passage. After students complete their flight check, teachers then listen to the recording and grade them accordingly on a leveled A-Z reading level scale that Raz Provides.*

*Raz reading levels differ from Fountas and Pinnell, so as learner coaches please check with your gradeband teacher to see where their level is according to your students report card.



The second way Raz-Plus is used is with our students who are in reading interventions (students who are making gains, but not quite at their grade level expected for them.) Before starting an intervention, we use RAZ assessments and determine the target goal for the student to achieve. Then we are able to build a six to eight week intervention around the goal. We use the resources provided in Raz-Plus to drive our reading interventions and work towards the student's goal. Some of these resources look like printable decodable books based on a phonics pattern, lessons based around books, practice sheets, fluency passages, phonics worksheets, ect.

Since being introduced to the RAZ-Plus program at the beginning of 2020, our reading interventions have really taken off and we at Flex are better able to help students get back on pace with grade level reading instruction. This resource is a great tool to have in our teacher toolboxes!



HIGHLIGHTS

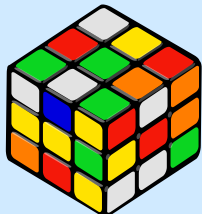
QUARTER 3 SERVICE LEARNING

On February 17th, we had our third Service-Learning day. On this day, students were able to read virtually to residents of the St. Paul Home. They had so much fun connecting with and learning more about the residents. Students also had time to reflect on how their individual Service-Learning projects were going. Flex staff shared examples of final presentations for the Service Learning fair including brochures, posters, videos, and more. At the end of the time, students had the opportunity to begin outlining their final projects.



TALENT SHOW

On February 16th, Flex hosted yet another amazing Talent Show! Students sang, danced, acted, played the piano & drums, demonstrated a Rubik's cube, and showcased their basketball dribbling skills. It was so wonderful to see the bravery and talent that Flex students have!



QUARTER 3 HEALTH & WELLNESS



On March 10th, we had our Quarter 3 Health & Wellness day. Each teacher picked a Health & Wellness activity focused on one of our six Health & Wellness Dimensions. After these activities, all students learned about Karate from Mr. Van Ekeren, a Karate instructor at The Academy in Appleton! .

FLEXCURSIONS

In Quarter 3, we went on two Flexcursions! We had so much fun going to The Fire and the Little Chute Windmill and Fire Station. At The Fire, students learned about painting techniques and painted their own tiles. At the Windmill, the students learned about the history of the windmill and its importance to Little Chute. At the Fire Station, the students were able to ask the firefighters questions and were then given time to explore the fire trucks!



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 April 18th. Meeting registration information can be found on the Flex Academy Website. We hope to see you there!

REGISTER NOW

