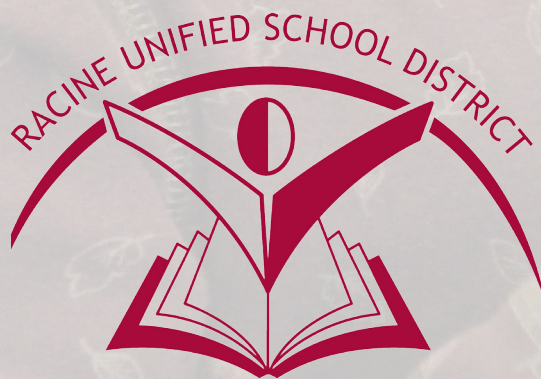


# Report to our Community 2014



*Educate Every Student to Succeed*

# A LETTER FROM SUPERINTENDENT DR. LOLLI HAWS

## MOMENTUM AND HOPE FOR RACINE UNIFIED



**Lolli Haws, Ph.D.**  
Superintendent of Schools

Dear Racine Community,

It is a great time to be part of the Racine Unified School District! On Nov. 4, the Racine community showed its support and belief in our Racine Unified Schools with its vote to support a tax decrease referendum. On behalf of the 20,000 students and all of our employees and families, we thank you for your trust and support.

We began the 2014-2015 school year with a focus on building and sustaining **MOMENTUM**. We spent more than a year gathering information, assessing, planning, re-organizing, budgeting, implementing and working extremely hard to make progress in our schools for our students.

We are beginning to see that initial work pay off and are encouraged by the momentum we see: improved test scores, more students meeting math and reading growth targets, more kindergarteners ready to read, increased numbers of students graduating, improving school climates and reduced suspensions.

With the referendum passing, we will continue to build this momentum for the entire Racine community. Every child in every school throughout the District will see and experience the positive effects of this referendum for many years.

Now, we are rolling up our sleeves and getting to work, to use these funds and this momentum to the best advantage of our students, our schools and our community. Our pledge to you is that the District will be accountable. We will involve the community throughout the process and all of our work will be shared publicly on the District website [www.rusd.org/referendum](http://www.rusd.org/referendum).

We invited community members to be part of two advisory councils, one for technology and one for facilities. Many volunteers from the community and from within the District have stepped forward and the work is already underway.

They will provide their input and expertise to make sure referendum dollars are spent prudently and wisely based on priorities and as promised in the referendum.

We know we can and will *Raise Racine*. We will continue the work of our three-year strategic plan to improve student achievement, close achievement gaps and create positive climates in all of our schools. We will work diligently with the community to ensure referendum dollars are spent to make the most impact toward these priorities. There is much to do and great momentum already! I look forward to our work together!

Sincerely,

Dr. Lolli Haws  
Superintendent of Schools

## RAISING RACINE

### THREE PRIORITIES

Close achievement gaps for students of color and special education

Raise student achievement, particularly in reading and math

Create positive learning environments for all schools

### WHAT'S RAISING RACINE?

Introduced in 2013-2014, *Raising Racine* is a 3-year plan that represents the goals and work of Racine Unified School District. Implementation of *Raising Racine* began in January 2014.

View the plan and District progress online at [www.RUSD.org/raisingracine](http://www.RUSD.org/raisingracine).

# NORTH STAR ACCOLADES

- RUSD saw a **2.6% increase** in four-year graduation rates from 69.8 percent in 2011-2012 to 72.4 percent in 2012-2013.
- Three Horlick High School students earned awards on the National Latin Exam. **Raven Golden** and **Elizabeth Simon** received a magna cum laude award. **Kyle Studey** received a maxima cum laude, silver medal award.
- Twelve **Case High School** students achieved International Baccalaureate Full Diplomas last year.
- The Gilmore Middle School Madrigal Choir and Swing Choir competed at the Heritage Music Festival in Orlando Florida in March 2014. Gilmore's Swing Choir and Madrigal Choir won Gold at the festival. **Josh Pitt** and **Angela Arnold** won the Maestro Award.
- **Mitchell Middle School** received the Charles Arnold Award for their float at the Fourth Fest parade this year. The theme of Mitchell's float was "Catching Fire" to represent the Fourth Fest's Hollywood theme and the fire at Mitchell Elementary and Middle School last winter.
- Case High School junior diver **Cassidy Bose** was selected to the 2013-2014 NISCA All-American Diving Selection Committee.
- The **McKinley Middle School** Swing Choir and Viking Voices claimed two gold awards for their performances at Heritage Music Festival in Orlando, FL.
- **West Ridge Elementary School** students in Rebecca Osters' class took first place in the Studenttreasures National Book Challenge for their book "Winter in Wisconsin."
- Case High School student **David Soller** took first place in the Woodworking display at the state SkillsUSA competition. Horlick High School students **Kinson Stanley, Devin Barry** and **Nicholas Garcia** took first place in the outstanding chapter category.
- Jerstad-Agerholm Middle School seventh grader **Hailey Kisting** took first place in the RAMAC Laws of Life essay contest.



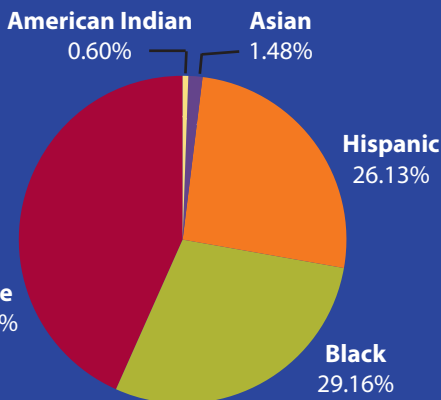
Fourth graders in Jim Moes' class at **Jefferson Lighthouse Elementary School** held first place in the state for their grade level in First in Math last year.

- **Timothy Underwood** won a National Silver Medal in Poetry as part of the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards.
- Case High School students **Paul Buhler, Jessica Heffel, Evan Humphreys, Austin Krien, Hayley Mosson** and **Shelby Wilson** placed in the top 50 percent in the country on the national German exam.
- Walden III student **Achintya Krishnan** earned a semifinalist spot in the 2014 Wisconsin State Geographic Bee.

## BY THE NUMBERS

### Our Students

20,000 Students  
43 Languages are spoken by our students



### Our Staff

3,129 total staff members  
1,696 teachers/professional staff  
394 educational assistants  
144 administrators  
61% of teachers have advanced degrees  
69% of administrators have advanced degrees

### Our District

5th Largest Wisconsin school district  
7 Cities/villages served  
100 Square miles  
9 Board of Education members  
1 Vision - The North Star - All students graduate career and/or college ready

### Our Schools

2 Early learning centers  
21 Elementary schools  
7 Middle schools  
5 High schools  
1 Virtual Learning  
1 Year-round school  
3 Magnet elementary schools  
1 Magnet middle school  
1 Charter middle school  
1 Magnet high school  
1 Charter high school  
2 Alternative education centers

**Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander:** 0.01%

# RAISING RACINE



## RESULTS FOR 2013-2014



### READING

- **Sixteen percent increase** in the number of our kindergarten students at readiness benchmark. Approximately **300 more students** will enter grade 1 with reading readiness skills than last year.
- Grades 4-8 **exceeded their expected growth** in reading from fall to spring.



### MATH

- Grades 1,4,5,7 and 8 **exceeded expected growth** in math.
- First in Math online learning program implemented to support math achievement.



### ACHIEVEMENT GAPS

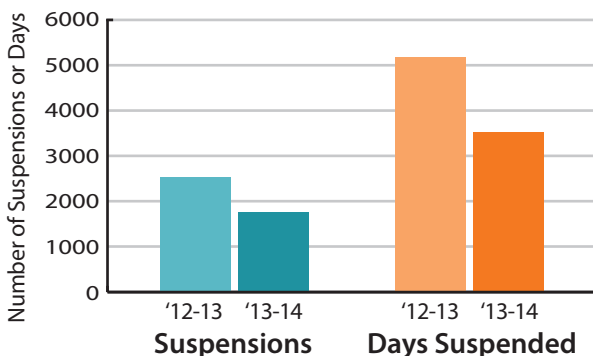
- We **cannot yet show progress** in closing gaps in reading or math growth.



### SCHOOL CLIMATE

- Suspensions were **down by 20%** (equal to 850 suspensions) compared to the 2012-2013 school year.

**+** Gained back **1,646.2 days** of instruction by decreasing suspensions



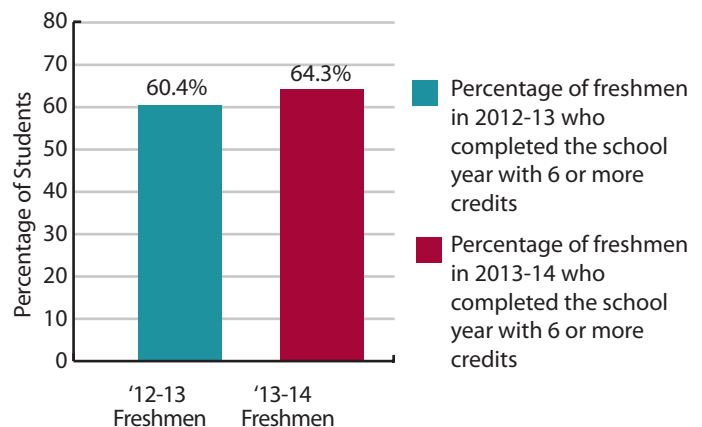
### GRADUATION RATES

- Graduation rates have **increased by 5.8%** over the last four years. We anticipate this year's work will result in even better graduation rates for the current year.
- **Twelve students** achieved IB full diplomas.
- **Quadrupled** our Alternative Program graduates in 2014 with new programs.
- **Fifty-seven RUSD students** were named AP Scholars; one achieved elite national AP Scholar distinction.

#### On Track to Graduation

- We have set a baseline this year to monitor our goal of decreasing students who are at-risk of dropping out as they enter 9th grade.
- **Four percent** more freshmen had 6 full credits by the end of freshman year (2013-2014).
- Freshman cohorts have been created at all high schools to better support freshman and ensure they are on track to graduation.

#### On Track to Graduation



To be on track for graduation, ninth-grade students should have three or more credits at the end of first semester and six or more credits at the end of the year.

# CHOICES FOR EVERY CHILD

## Fifty-Seven RUSD Students Named AP Scholars; One Achieves Elite National AP Scholar Distinction

Racine Unified School District high schools continue to excel in measures used to determine success on the Advanced Placement (AP) exams with **57 RUSD** students achieving AP Scholar status in 2014. The College Board's AP Program provides students with the opportunity to take rigorous college-level courses while still in high school and to earn college credit, advanced placement or both for successful performance on the AP Exams.

College Board recognizes several levels of achievement based on student performance on AP Exams. **Fifty-seven RUSD students earned AP Scholar Awards** in 2014 in recognition of their exceptional achievement.

One student, **Mattison William** of Park High School, was recognized as a **National AP Scholar**. It's the highest level of honor designated by College Board, for earning an average grade of 4 or higher on a five-point scale on all AP Exams taken, and grades of 4 or higher on eight or more of these exams.

## Arts, Music, Athletics & Co-Curriculars

RUSD offers a wide variety of quality art, music, athletic and co-curricular options to meet the needs of all students. These programs and the students in them continually win state and national recognition for their successes.

- **Band**
- **Choir**
- **Orchestra**
- **Athletics**
  - Baseball
  - Basketball
  - Cheerleading
  - Cross Country
  - Football
  - Golf
  - Poms
- **Co-Curriculars**
  - Academic Bowls
  - DECA
  - French Club
  - Frisbee Club
  - FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America)
  - German Club
  - HOSA (Health Occupation
- **Art**
- **Drama & Theater**
  - Soccer
  - Swimming & Diving
  - Softball
  - Tennis
  - Track
  - Volleyball
  - Wrestling
- Students of America)
- Model UN
- NHS (National Honor Society)
- Powerlifting
- Science Team
- Student Government
- Yearbook
- And more!



IT'S MY...  
**SCHOOL**  
**MUSIC**  
**FRIENDS**

**IT'S MY CHOICE.**  
RACINE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

HEAR MY STORY  [www.rusd.org](http://www.rusd.org)

Colin Gayle - Sixth Grade Student, Walden III



## Twelve Students Earn Prestigious IB Full Diploma

Twelve Case High School seniors earned the prestigious International Baccalaureate (IB) Full Diploma in 2014. This award includes the following, done over two years, and scored by international examiners: taking six mandatory subject exams; submitting sample assignments for each subject; writing an independently researched 4,000 word Extended Essay on a topic of the student's choice; taking a course in the Theory of Knowledge for which a paper and a presentation are required; and completing 150 hours of reported and reflected upon creativity, action and service.

**Rachel Dollard** who currently attends the University of Wisconsin-Parkside; **Carmen Gosey, Isha Hammad, Kaitlyn Karls, Jason Kim, Taylor Larsen, James Moes and Abby Parsons** who currently attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison; **Haley Lynam** who currently attends Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wis.; **Madelyn Pennings** who currently attends St. Louis University in St. Louis, MO.; **Julia Rodriguez** who currently attends Columbia University in New York, NY.; and **Stephanie Zinda** who currently attends Iowa State University in Ames, IA all achieved the full IB Diploma.

## RCLA School Welcomes Students for Inaugural Year



Racine Civil Leaders Academy (RCLA), a new charter school in Racine Unified, welcomed students through its doors in September for its inaugural year. To celebrate the very first day of school, Assistant Principal Danielle Dekker-Shircel was joined by members of the RCLA Governance Board and RUSD Superintendent Dr. Lolli Haws for a ribbon cutting before students headed excitedly to their classrooms.

RCLA is currently a 4K-5th grade elementary school and will add one grade every year until it serves students in grades 4K-8.

## ALUMNI IN THE COMMUNITY

### CARON BUTLER

Caron Butler, small forward for the Detroit Pistons and a graduate of Park High School, came back to Racine to host a basketball camp for local children. The camp was held in Park's field house this past summer. During the camp, Butler brought in professional athletes to speak with students about the importance of academics and athletics.



### CHRISTOPHER MASON

Christopher Mason, an assistant professor at Weill Cornell Medical College, returned to Racine in the spring. During his time in the city, the Case graduate spoke with students at his former elementary school, Schulte. He discussed his studies involving DNA and how the body changes while in space.



### MYKEL LARRIN

The BMX stunt rider and Horlick High School graduate returned to his alma mater this summer to help combat bullying. He works with the ASA High School Tour, a group that tours high schools nationally, discussing the affects bullying can have.



### JULIA RODRIGUEZ

Julia Rodriguez is a 2014 Case High School International Baccalaureate graduate. Only twelve students earned this prestigious degree last year. Julia is now studying at Columbia University in New York, majoring in biomedical engineering, on track to pre-med.



## GIESE NAMED SCHOOL OF RECOGNITION

In September, Giese Elementary School was named Wisconsin Title I School of Recognition for the 2014-2015 school year. This honor recognizes success in educating students from low-income families, and all award-winning schools receive federal Title I funding to provide services to high numbers or high percentages of economically disadvantaged children. This is Giese's second year in a row receiving this honor.

State Superintendent Dr. Tony Evers hosted an awards program at the State Capitol in October to recognize award recipients. Each school receives a plaque and \$500 for use by the school.

"The staff and administration of these schools are committed to breaking the link between poverty and low academic achievement through rigorous programming and attention to student needs," Evers said. "The partnerships these schools create among teachers, parents, administrators, other school staff members, and the community provide an educational environment that supports children's learning so our students graduate college and career ready."



From left to right: Giese Principal Tom Hyland, Deputy State Superintendent Mike Thompson and former Giese Principal Richard Wytonick. (Award recognizes work done during Wytonick's tenure in previous years.)

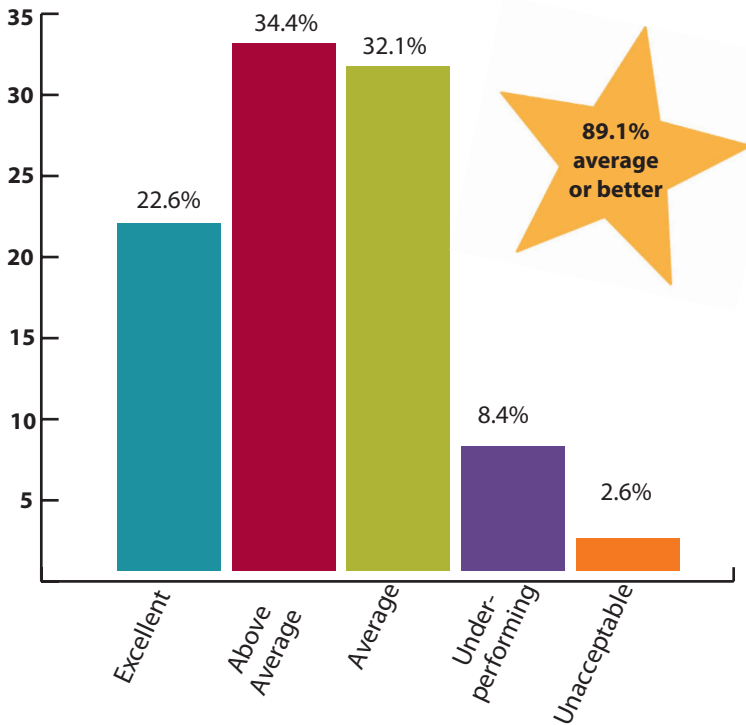
## STAY CONNECTED WITH US!

- **Website** | [www.rusd.org](http://www.rusd.org)
- **Cable Access Channel 15.20**
- **Board of Education Newsletter** | Monthly e-newsletter distributed after each regular meeting. Sign up to receive e-news on our website.
- **Facebook** | Like Racine Unified Schools
- **Twitter** | Follow Racine Unified
- **School Newsletters** | Ask your child's school how to get a copy.
- **Emergency Notifications** | Register your email address on our website to get updates on school closings and other time-sensitive information.
- **Share Your School's Good News** | Click the link on our website to tell us the great things happening at your school.

# PARENT/COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

## Quality of Education

Overall, I would rate the quality of education services my child(ren) receive(s) at his/her school as:



In spring 2014, RUSD conducted its annual online survey of parents and community members. The survey focused on satisfaction and communication. The number of people who participated increased from last year. Results of the survey provide District staff with valuable information to help inform at both the District and school level.

## Quality of Education in RUSD

- Eighty-nine percent of parents said that the quality of education services provided by their child's school is excellent, above average or average
- Eighty-two percent of parents said that the quality of education services provided by the District is excellent, above average or average
- More elementary parents are satisfied with the quality of education their child receives in an RUSD school, with 93 percent rating it average or better. Eighty-five percent of middle school parents and 87 percent of high school parents rated the education received by their child as average, above average or excellent.

## Preferred Communication Methods

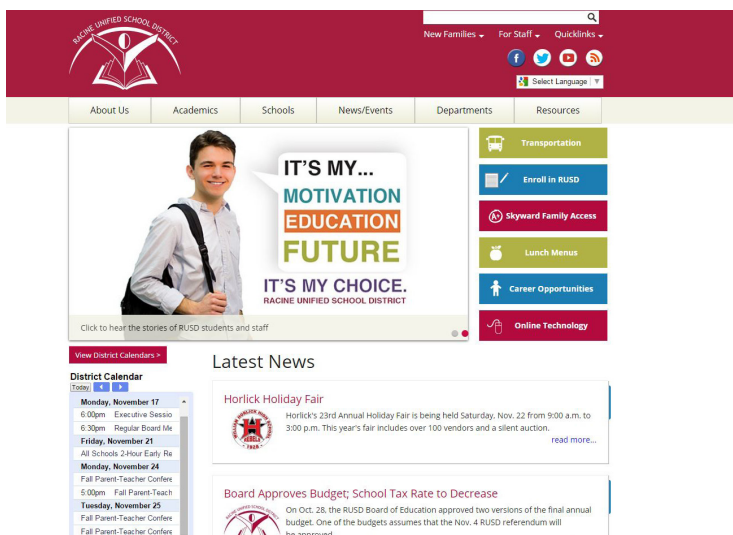
- Parents prefer to receive information about RUSD and their child's school via email (84 percent) or by visiting the District or school website (49 percent).
- Of the parents who responded, 34 percent said they prefer to receive information through the automated telephone message system and 31 percent prefer to receive information via the newspaper.

Complete results of the parent/community survey are available at [www.rusd.org](http://www.rusd.org) or can be obtained by emailing [info@rusd.org](mailto:info@rusd.org).

## NEW DISTRICT WEBSITE

Last spring, RUSD launched its new website: [www.rusd.org](http://www.rusd.org) in an effort to improve communication with school families and the community.

For the past three years, parents have told us through the annual parent/community survey that they prefer to receive information via school and District websites and email. This was a consistent message that the District heard loud and clear.



So, last year, the RUSD Office of Communication & Community Engagement embarked upon a website re-design project. A major undertaking, the goal of this project was to give the District website a fresh, contemporary look and feel while re-organizing and simplifying content so that parents and community members can easily navigate the site and find the content they need.

Since the launch of the new website, we have received positive feedback. Web traffic to the site has increased by 44 percent (unique visitors) over the past year!

The next step is to re-design all RUSD school websites. Parents want the most current, accurate information about their child's school and we want to ensure it's easy to find. Over the coming months, you'll see these sites re-launch with a new look and feel and easier navigation.

We look forward to input from school families as we improve this communication tool. Please don't hesitate to share your feedback at [info@usd.org](mailto:info@usd.org).

**Check out our new look  
at [www.rusd.org](http://www.rusd.org)!**

# RUSD REFERENDUM 2014 EVERY SCHOOL. EVERY STUDENT.

## Thank you Racine Community for your vote of support!

On Nov. 4, residents of the Racine Unified School District approved by more than 56 percent a referendum that will provide the District with an additional \$8.5 million each year for 15 years. This referendum will impact every student and every school for years to come.

### The work will include:

- Repairing schools and rebuilding schools that are too costly to fix
- Upgrading security and safety systems
- Improving technology in our schools to help prepare graduates for the jobs and careers of the future

## GETTING TO WORK

In October, we invited community members to be part of two advisory councils, one for technology and one for facilities. Many volunteers from the community and from within the District have stepped forward to join this work. They will provide their input and expertise to make sure referendum dollars are spent prudently and wisely as promised in the referendum.

## FACILITIES ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Facilities Advisory Council includes members from the community as well as District staff. This council includes four subcommittees to focus on the work ahead:

- Knapp Elementary Rebuild Subcommittee
- Olympia Brown Rebuild Subcommittee
- Gifford Elementary K-8 Addition Subcommittee
- Deferred Maintenance Subcommittee



## Our Commitment to Accountability

Our pledge to the Racine community is that the District will be accountable. We will involve the community throughout the process and all of our work will be shared publicly on the District website [www.rusd.org/referendum](http://www.rusd.org/referendum).

## TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Technology Advisory Council also includes members from the community as well as District staff. The council will work to prioritize technology needs for all schools. There is still room on both councils. To sign up, email [info@rusd.org](mailto:info@rusd.org).



Updates will be made regularly to the District website to ensure transparency for use of referendum funds.  
Visit [www.rusd.org/referendum](http://www.rusd.org/referendum).



# BUDGET & FINANCE

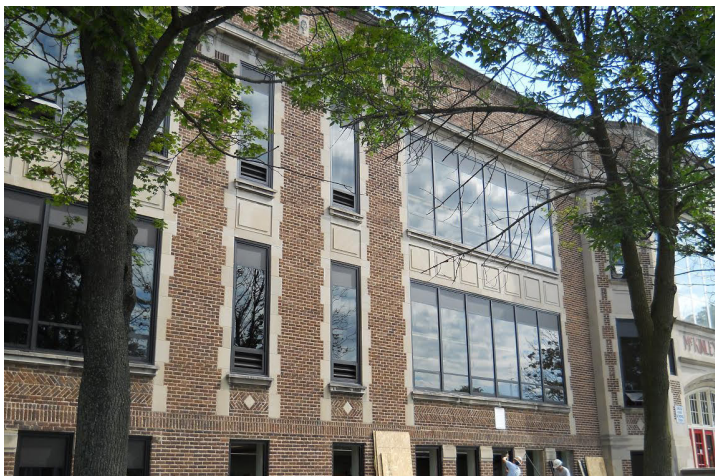
## Energy Efficiency Initiatives in Schools Save \$501,038

In 2013, the Racine Unified School District entered into performance contracts with Trane and Johnson Controls to implement projects designed to upgrade the RUSD learning environment, reduce operational costs, install energy efficiency systems and upgrade critical infrastructure which is beyond useful life.

The projects served as great examples for students, staff and community demonstrating how clean energy solutions can be both fiscally and environmentally responsible.

Some of the work done at RUSD schools included replacing windows and doors, upgrading to energy efficient lighting, replacing boilers and water heaters, improving heating and cooling systems, upgrading insulation and weatherproofing.

The projects completed by Trane are expected to provide \$264,593 of energy savings in the first year. Projects done by Johnson Controls are expected to provide \$236,445 in energy savings. The District will also benefit from other efficiencies in the operational and maintenance areas from these projects.



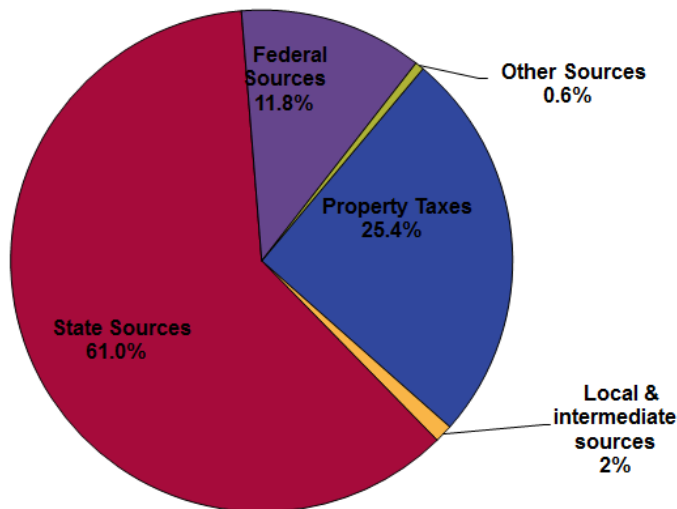
Performance contractors put new energy efficient windows on McKinley Middle School last summer.

## RUSD Property Tax Levy Goes Down

We operate under state revenue limits that control the amount of revenue districts can collect through state general aid and property taxes. State aid used by the District to reduce property taxes increased by \$9.6 million. This state aid increase when factoring in the approved \$8.5 million referendum led to a 2.08 percent reduction in the property tax levy. This is the first time since 1996 that the tax levy decreased two years in a row. The District's tax rate remains lower than the state average and all comparable urban districts in Wisconsin.

## Sources of Revenue

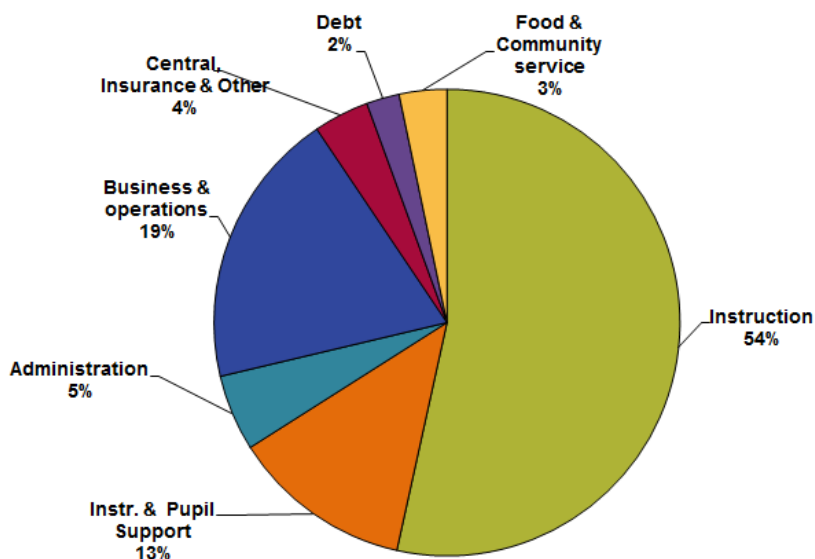
RUSD receives its funding from the following sources (figures are budgeted for the current school year):



## How Revenue is Spent

We carefully target our dollars to have the greatest impact on the classroom and student learning. When compared to the state average, a **higher proportion of RUSD expenditures have been for educational purposes**. This is the case even though District per pupil spending is below the state average.

## 2014-2015 Expenditures by Function



# Mitchell School



"The building is a part of our family."  
-Soren Gajewski



On February 27, 2014 at 2:30 a.m. Mitchell School Principal Soren Gajewski awoke to his phone ringing.



Principal Soren Gajewski

"They told me, 'your building is on fire and you need to get down here now,'" said Gajewski.

When he arrived, Gajewski quickly realized this was far from a drill.

"I thought it would be some smoke. Maybe something electrical," explained Gajewski. "But, when I pulled up, I saw huge open flames everywhere."

Just after one o'clock in the morning, Racine firefighters say a fire started in the gymnasium on the elementary side of Mitchell School. By the time crews arrived on scene, the entire building was up in flames. Forty-two firefighters spent hours battling the blaze and the freezing temperatures outside.

"All we could do at the beginning was just watch," explained Gajewski.

The entire building sustained significant fire, smoke, heat and water damage. On the elementary side, forty-one classrooms, the library, the gym, an office and several hallways were destroyed. The part of the building that houses the middle school was severely damaged by smoke. It soon became clear to administrators that classes wouldn't resume at Mitchell anytime soon.

## **Everybody, clean up.**

After assessing the damage, Paul Davis, a professional restoration company, assured the District that the middle school portion of the school could be cleaned up in just three weeks so students could return.

"We had hundreds of people in here 24/7. Every single thing in this building was taken out, professionally cleaned and put back in," explained Gajewski.

Because of the hard work of District staff and professional contractors, just three weeks after the fire, middle school students were back in their seats.

"That day they came back, the kids had smiles on their faces," explained Gajewski as he thought back to March 18, the day Mitchell Middle School was officially back open. "There was just exceptional enthusiasm to come back to school. It was nice to get a little back to normal."

The elementary students, however, were not as lucky. "That side of the building was just destroyed," said Gajewski.

So, for the remainder of the school year, Mitchell Elementary students went to Wind Point Elementary School. Wind Point was closed at the end of the 2012-2013 school year and that meant the building was available for Mitchell's 450 elementary kids.

"Students were dropped off at Mitchell and then bussed to Wind Point," said Gajewski. "Teachers would go with them. They really did all they could to make that school feel like home."

Teachers even designed and wore shirts that said "We Are Mitchell," which they wore as they welcomed students to their new, temporary home.

While students were adjusting to their new school, clean-up began at their old one. For months, caution tape and a chain-linked fence lined the outside of the elementary school as crews worked to repair and renovate the damaged building. That included replacing ceiling tiles, lighting and flooring, while hallways, rooms and offices were repainted and everything was professionally cleaned.

The fire was eventually ruled accidental and totaled about \$10 million in damages. Most of that was covered under Racine Unified's insurance.

In April, Racine Unified announced plans to build a new gym and multipurpose room. Before the fire, Mitchell had a combination gymnasium and cafeteria, where students had gym class, lunch and school assemblies. Staff say that setup limited when and how the space could be used.

"The new structure will provide much more flexibility," Director of Buildings and Grounds Bryan Arnold said.

The plan called for the multipurpose room to go on the first floor and a separate gym on the second floor. An elevator and restrooms compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act were also included. The project totaled about \$1.8 million. The District insurance covered about \$1.6 million.

# Life After the Fire

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ajewski



## Back to School

Construction was nearly completed over the summer months. On Sept. 5, 2014, Mitchell Elementary students, parents, teachers and staff celebrated the start of the new school year at their home school.

"This is their neighborhood school," said Gajewski. "This is where they want to be and we're so glad to be here."

Even the firefighters who helped battle the blaze that February morning stood in line to greet the students as they walked through the hallways for the first time since the fire.

"We've all gone through this together," said Gajewski. "This building is a part of our family."

But still, not everything was back to normal.

**"The Racine community embraced Mitchell and we can't thank them enough."  
-Soren Gajewski**

## New Gymnasium and Multipurpose Room Unveiled

Construction and renovations continued on the gym and multipurpose room through the first two months of school. On Nov. 16, the new facility was finally unveiled.

That morning Mitchell Elementary Physical Education Teacher Annie Sireno blasted her music. To her, and the students, it was a day to celebrate.

"We've certainly had to get creative with our classes," explained Sireno.

For two months, Sireno had to hold PE classes outside. If it was raining, the only place to go was the hallway.

"I set up fitness stations, like jump rope or lunges," explained Sireno. "It's really all we could do that wouldn't disrupt the students in the classrooms."

But now, they have a brand new space of their own. As students walked into the gym for the very first time, smiles lit up their faces. Chatter of, 'this is so cool,' and 'whoa!' filled the room.

Asking around, students weren't interested in talking about the past, about the fire. It was all about the now. All about moving on.

## Moving Forward

The fire at Mitchell School was devastating. It destroyed an elementary school, badly damaged a middle school and forced hundreds of students and staff to pick up and start over.

But with the tragedy came a sense of unity. The fire took so many things away from parents, students and the community but it also demonstrated the kindness, generosity, courage and talent that exists here.

"The generosity and kindness was incredible," Gajewski says of the outpouring of community support after the fire. "From donations of money, school supplies, food and furniture to volunteers bringing meals and helping teachers set-up classrooms, to the bravery demonstrated by our local firefighters that night. The Racine community embraced Mitchell and we can't thank them enough."

After thousands of hours of very hard work, hundreds of acts of kindness and giving, dozens of stories of courage and hope, the Mitchell School community has shown the world what they're made of and who they are.



# TRANSFORMATION UNDERWAY IN RUSD HIGH SCHOOLS

The RUSD high school transformation model emphasizes improving both academic and career instruction through the use of small learning communities. Phase I of RUSD high school transformation is the formation of the Summer Bridge and Freshmen Cohort Programs at our comprehensive high schools: Case, Horlick and Park. These efforts have also been greatly assisted through our partnership with Project CAPE, a non-profit corporate giving program.

## NATIONAL RESEARCH

Ninth graders are adolescents undergoing a sometimes difficult transition from middle school to high school. As they face the social, emotional, physical and intellectual challenges of this stage of development, it is easy for them to feel overwhelmed, confused and alone. Subsequently, over the last thirty years the national average for ninth grade non-promotion has more than tripled from approximately four percent to 13 percent.

Statewide data indicates the non-promotion rate for Wisconsin students is 14 percent, a significant leap from 8.4 percent thirty years ago. The increasing number of non-promoted ninth grade students both nationally and locally has become a critical focus point among all educators. Additionally, statistics indicate the importance of creating Ninth Grade Academies (Freshmen Cohorts), as schools with operational transition programs reflect a dropout rate of only 8 percent on average compared to schools without transition programs at an average of 24 percent—three times higher (National High School Center).

## PHASE I

### SUMMER BRIDGE PROGRAM

The first task of Phase I in RUSD has been to successfully re-design the freshmen orientation model to ensure greater focus on high school readiness skills and to increase participation. This year, RUSD successfully changed the model of our freshmen orientation to the Summer Bridge program. We provided more time as well as more emphasis on study skills, career exploration and exposure to the cohort model. During the first year of Summer Bridge, approximately 50 percent of the ninth grade students participated in the summer sessions. The other fifty percent of students were provided the information covered in Summer Bridge through homerooms, Link Crew assemblies and freshmen mentor programs.

Through partnership with Project CAPE, RUSD has been able to ensure more students participate in the Summer Bridge experience by assisting with the transportation costs, planning time for staff and supply costs. The collaboration between counselors, teachers and administration allowed for not only better preparation but multiple perspectives from which to learn.



### FRESHMEN COHORTS

Phase I of the high school transformation initiative also included implementation of additional freshmen cohorts in the remaining two sub schools of Horlick High School and the three sub schools of both Case and Park High Schools. Each sub school was assigned four core subject teachers (English, math, social studies and science) along with special education support staff, one Freshmen Advocate position, a support staff assigned to work in collaboration with counselors, and a social worker to build relationships with ninth grade students and assist with closely monitoring their progress. Horlick High School has already had success with its established cohort model. Data during the 2013-2014 shows that 97 percent of freshmen in the cohort were on track to earn 6 or more credits by the end of the school year, meaning the students are on track to graduate in four years.



## PHASE II

### CAREER PATHWAYS

As a continuation of the high school transformation work in RUSD, we have begun the work of Phase II. Phase II is focused on developing the foundation of career pathways through community engagement, local business support, local college and university articulation agreements (dual credit options) and course alignment. Additionally, RUSD will be exploring the Ford Next Generation Learning model. This model supports multiple career academies and other themed programs within the comprehensive high school setting to ensure academic rigor, real-world application and strong career and technical programming.

# ★ Encore!

## AWARDS IN EDUCATION

This year, 117 RUSD teachers were recognized for their success in improving achievement for their students by receiving an Encore! in Education Award.

In this inaugural year of the Encore! Awards, 63 elementary teachers, from 4-year-old kindergarten through fifth grade, were honored. These teachers led their students to significant growth from fall to winter.

According to test data, utilizing Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening, Measures of Academic Progress or the Children's Progress Academic Assessment test, these teachers have met or exceeded the national standard for exemplary growth.

Thirty-one RUSD middle school teachers, 18 RUSD high school teachers and five educators who serve the District in the areas of teaching and learning, special education and student support also received Encore! Awards.

In addition to a plaque, each recipient received \$100 for the classroom through the generous support of S.C. Johnson. A special thanks also to Educators Credit Union for sponsoring the event held at Memorial Hall.



Wadewitz Elementary School Encore! Award winners from left to right: Chad Chapin, Patsy Rockow, Donette Bonk-White, Bonnie Panka, Jennifer Pfeffer, Susan Kwapil, Deisy Cardenas and Christina Cook.

## Thank you to our sponsors!



## VIRTUAL LEARNING



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- Mentor teachers **keep students on track**
- More than **3,000 course enrollments** to date!

## NEW BADGER EXAM 3-8: WISCONSIN'S SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT

As part of a move to the Common Core State Standards, the state dropped the math and English sections of the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts exams (WKCE) this year. This spring, our schools will use the Badger Exam 3-8, part of the Smarter Balanced Assessment consortium, to test third through eighth-graders in math and English.

The exams complement the Common Core, adopted by Wisconsin in 2010. Forty-five states adopted the standards, which set benchmarks for learning in math and English.

Smarter Balanced Assessment exams are designed to accurately measure student progress toward college and career readiness.

The style of questioning will change with this new exam. New tests are computer based and will include technology enhanced questions.

As part of the change, the ACT Suite of exams are required for grades 9-11. Students in grades 9 and 10 will take the Aspire while students in grade 11 will take the ACT.

The work of Smarter Balanced is guided by the belief that a high-quality assessment system can provide information and tools for teachers and schools to improve instruction and help students succeed.

# COMMUNITY RESOURCES

RUSD recognizes the value of community-based partners and the work they do to support students in achieving success in school. Below are some community resources that provide services for students and families.



The John XXIII Educational Center is open to all middle and high school students in the Racine community. The support programs are designed to help students succeed in school and in life as they prepare for the future.

## Tutoring

- **RUSD Extended Learning** (grades K-8)  
3109 Mt. Pleasant St., 262-664-6990
- **John XXIII Educational Center** (middle/high school)  
1101 Douglas Ave., 262-898-7250
- **Mead Street COP House** (all grades)  
1750 Mead St., 262-635-7862
- **Cops & Kids Reading Center** (age 3-12)  
800 Villa St., 262-632-1606
- **Urban League of Racine** (low income, black/Hispanic, inter-city, math tutoring for age 11-17)  
718 N. Memorial Drive, 262-898-9066
- **Emmaus Lutheran Church**  
1925 Summit Ave., 262-634-5515

## Educational Programs

- **Racine Family YMCA** (age six months to 18 years)  
725 Lake Ave., 262-634-1994
- **Racine Family Literacy: Girls Inc.** (girls in elementary, middle and high school)  
1510 Villa St., 262-898-3968, 262-456-1779 (En Español)
- **Peace Care Ministries** (all schools)  
1619 N Newman Rd., 262-898-0975
- **Racine Community Outreach**  
703 Washington Ave., 262-994-2802
- **Peace Learning Circles Inc.**  
430 West Point Ln., 262-939-1285

## Mentoring

- **Mentor RUSD** (grades 4-8)  
3109 Mt. Pleasant St., 262-664-6990
- **RUSD Extended Learning** (grades K-8)  
3109 Mt. Pleasant St., 262-664-6990
- **John XXIII Educational Center** (middle and high school)  
1101 Douglas Ave., 262-898-7250
- **Big Brothers Big Sisters** (at-risk students, single-parent families)  
3131 Taylor Ave., Building 4, Box 7, 262-637-7625

## Family Programs

- **United Way: Advancing Family Assets**  
1220 Villa St., 262-456-4701
- **Racine Family YMCA** (age six months to 18 years)  
725 Lake Ave., 262-634-1994
- **Focus on Community: F.A.S.T. - Families and Schools Together** (children and families)  
1220 Mound Ave. #307, 262-632-6200
- **Racine Family Literacy** (low-income, low-literacy families)  
1510 Villa St., 262-898-3968, 262-456-1779 (En Español)
- **Racine Family Literacy: Family Smart/Kid Friendly** (families, early childhood development)  
1510 Villa St., 262-898-3968, 262-456-1779 (En Español)



Photo Credit: United Way of Racine County

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View this report online at [www.rusd.org](http://www.rusd.org)

# OUR SCHOOLS

## Early Learning Centers

**Racine Early Education Center**  
2015 Franklin St. • 262-664-8200

**Red Apple Early Childhood**  
914 St. Patrick St. • 262-619-4527

## Elementary Schools

**Bull Fine Arts**  
815 DeKoven Ave. • 262-664-6800

**Dr. Jones**  
3300 Chicory Road • 262-664-8050

**Fratt**  
3501 Kinzie Ave. • 262-664-8150

**Giese**  
5120 Byrd Ave. • 262-664-8250

**Gifford**  
8332 Northwestern Ave. • 262-619-4550

**Goodland**  
4800 Graceland Blvd. • 262-664-6850

**Janes Year-Round**  
1425 N. Wisconsin St. • 262-664-6550

**Jefferson Lighthouse**  
1722 W. Sixth St. • 262-664-6900

**Jerstad-Agerholm**  
3535 LaSalle St. • 262-664-6050

**Julian Thomas**  
930 Martin Luther King Drive • 262-664-8400

**Knapp**  
2701 17th St. • 262-664-8000

**Mitchell**  
2713 Drexel Ave. • 262-664-6350

**North Park**  
4748 Elizabeth St. • 262-664-6450

*(elementary schools continued)*

**Olympia Brown**  
5915 Erie St. • 262-664-6650

**Racine Civil Leaders Academy**  
1325 Park Ave. • 262-664-8500

**Red Apple**  
914 St. Patrick St. • 262-619-4500

**Roosevelt**  
915 Romayne Ave. • 262-664-8300

**Schulte**  
8515 Westminster Drive • 262-664-6300

**S.C. Johnson**  
2420 Kentucky St. • 262-664-6950

**Wadewitz**  
2700 Yout St. • 262-664-6000

**West Ridge**  
1347 S. Emmertsen Road • 262-664-6200

## Middle Schools

**Gilmore**  
2330 Northwestern Ave. • 262-619-4260

**Jerstad-Agerholm**  
3601 LaSalle St. • 262-664-6075

**McKinley**  
2340 Mohr Ave. • 262-664-6150

**Mitchell**  
2701 Drexel Ave. • 262-664-6400

**REAL School**  
5915 Erie St. • 262-664-8100

**Starbuck**  
1516 Ohio St. • 262-664-6500

**Walden III**  
1012 Center St. • 262-664-6250

## High Schools

**Case**  
7345 Washington Ave. • 262-619-4200

**Horlick**  
2119 Rapids Drive • 262-619-4300

**Park**  
1901 12th St. • 262-619-4400

**REAL School**  
5915 Erie St. • 262-664-8100

**Walden III**  
1012 Center St. • 262-664-6250

## Virtual Learning

262-664-8734

## Alternative Learning Center

**Racine Alternative Education**  
2405 Northwestern Ave. • 262-664-6600

**Turning Point Academy**  
1101 Douglas Ave. • 262-456-1777

### Enroll Now!

Welcome to RUSD! To enroll your child in an RUSD school, please contact:

**Welcome Center**  
3109 Mt. Pleasant St.  
262-631-7194

# BOARD OF EDUCATION

The RUSD Board of Education represents, leads and serves the District's stakeholders and holds itself accountable to them by committing to act in their best interests and by ensuring that all Board and organizational action is consistent with law and the Board's policies. The Board typically meets on the third Monday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at the District's Administrative Service Campus.

- **Mr. Dennis Wiser**, President (dennis.wiser@rusd.org)
- **Mr. Chris Eperjesy**, Vice President (chris.eperjesy@rusd.org)
- **Mr. Guadalupe (Wally) Rendón**, Treasurer (wally.rendon@rusd.org)
- **Ms. Pamala Handrow**, Clerk (pamala.handrow@rusd.org)
- **Dr. Mike Frontier**, (michael.frontier@rusd.org)
- **Mrs. Julie McKenna**, (julie.mckenna@rusd.org)
- **Mr. Don Nielsen**, (don.nielsen@rusd.org)
- **Ms. Kim Plache**, (kim.plache@rusd.org)
- **Pastor Melvin Hargrove**, (melvin.hargrove@rusd.org)





RACINE UNIFIED  
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## Early Learning

- 4-Year-Old Kindergarten
- Bilingual Education
- Parent-Child Oriented Classroom (P-COC)



## Middle School

- Walden III Magnet Middle School
- REAL Charter Middle School
- Career & Technical Education  
Family & Consumer Science, Technology, Business Education, Engineering
- International Baccalaureate Programme
- Extended Learning Programs
  - Virtual Learning
- Arts, Music, Athletics & Co-Curriculars
- Bilingual Education

## Elementary School

- Jefferson Lighthouse Elementary Magnet School  
Gifted & Talented, International Baccalaureate
- Bull Fine Arts Magnet Elementary School  
Arts Education
- Red Apple Magnet Elementary School  
Science and Environmental Education
- Janes Year-Round Elementary School
  - Extended Learning Programs
  - Bilingual Education
- Racine Civil Leaders Academy Charter School



## High School

- Career & Technical Education  
Youth Apprenticeships, Family & Consumer Science, Technology, Business Education, Manufacturing
- Walden III Magnet High School
- REAL Charter High School
- International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme
- Advanced Placement (AP) Classes
  - Virtual Learning
- Arts, Music, Athletics & Co-Curriculars

