



Inside Unified

Your Guide to the Racine Unified School District

Spring 2013

www.racine.k12.wi.us

Beacons of Pride

- ▶ Park High School senior **Andrew Suchla** was named state champion for the second year in a row at the WIAA Division I state diving championships. In addition, he broke a 29-year-old state record.
- ▶ Two students qualified to compete in the national SkillsUSA competition in Kansas City, Mo. in June. Horlick senior **Mathias Nilles** qualified in Job Demonstration and Park senior **Alan Saunders** qualified in carpentry.
- ▶ 51 high schoolers were named **AP Scholars** for their success on AP exams.
- ▶ **REAL School** and **Walden III** received bronze ratings on U.S. News' rating of best high schools.
- ▶ Horlick High School senior **Ray Standiford** received an offer to publish his composition "Immersed In Time" from RGM Ltd.
- ▶ Mitchell Middle School students **Emily Bollendorf, Hawk Cardin, Stephen Hull** and **Anneliese Tomlinson** were named overall champions at the National Fluid Power Association Challenge at the Milwaukee School of Engineering.
- ▶ **10 Case seniors** were named IB Full Diploma Candidates.
- ▶ **Gilmore Middle School** band, orchestra and choir won the Festival Sweepstakes Award at the Heritage Festival in Atlanta, Ga. for receiving the highest combined score for the three groups. The Gilmore Music Department also won the Spirit of Atlanta Award for being the school that had the most well-behaved students.

District Updates

Dr. Lolli Haws to be RUSD Superintendent

Dr. Lolli Haws will begin her role as RUSD superintendent on July 1. In April, the Board of Education approved Haws' contract. She will replace current superintendent Dr. Ann Laing, who will retire on June 30.

Dr. Haws currently serves as an instructional superintendent for Washington, D.C. Public Schools. In this role, she is responsible for supervision, management and leadership development for 13 schools. The major emphasis of her work is leadership development for school improvement and reform to dramatically increase student achievement and eliminate achievement gaps. Prior to this role, Dr. Haws served as a principal, assistant principal and teacher.



In speaking about the Board's conversations with Haws' current colleagues, Board president Dennis Wisner said many of Haws' qualities came through, including her ability to manage all of the pieces, listen broadly to all people, engage in tough conversations about student achievement and create a sense of urgency regarding improving student achievement.

"It is a tremendous honor and privilege to be appointed as superintendent of the Racine Unified School District," said Dr. Haws. "I'm eager to join the smart and talented teachers, leaders and support staff in the important and challenging work of ensuring that Racine students achieve the goals of the North Star Vision."

☞ Read the full story at news.rusd.org/superintendentsearch.

RUSD Expands Choices for Students

Beginning this fall, RUSD will offer even more choices for its students to receive a high-quality education. These new choices include:

- **IB at West Ridge:** International Baccalaureate (IB) is coming to West Ridge Elementary this fall. IB is a program that focuses on educating the whole child – academic, social, physical, emotional and cultural.
- **STEM at Starbuck:** The STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) program will be implemented at Starbuck Middle School.
- **STEAM at Red Apple, Goodland and Mitchell Middle:** The STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) program will be implemented at Goodland and Red Apple Elementary and Mitchell Middle School.
- **Business Education at Jerstad-Agerholm Middle:** A business education focus will be implemented at Jerstad-Agerholm Middle School.

> **CHOICES** continued on page 3.



Case High School IB Full Diploma Candidate Iman Hammad is headed to Dartmouth College this fall.

From the Superintendent



Dear Racine Community,

It has been my pleasure and honor to serve as superintendent of the Racine Unified School District for the past two years. Together, we have worked to keep the focus on student achievement and have made progress toward helping students become college and/or career ready when they graduate.

I want to thank RUSD parents who have shared in the important work of educating our students. The support you provide for your child is vital to their success in school.

I also want to thank our community partners. Many community members have contributed to the success of students by tutoring and mentoring, serving on committees and volunteering in our schools. Schools of Hope, Mentor RUSD and the middle school AfterZones program have been very successful collaborations with community agencies. In addition, the Workforce Development Center has been very helpful with their work on implementing Career Cruising, which gives students the opportunity to explore careers and connect with local employers.

And thank you RUSD staff. Over the past two years, our collaborative District-wide efforts have helped us maintain focus on the North Star Vision of graduating all students career and/or college ready. This year, a collaborative team of staff members called the Guiding Coalition developed the Foundations for Instruction to provide a roadmap for the journey to the North Star. We have also begun the work of creating a set of principles to ensure that all students receive the best educational opportunities possible to prepare them for successful futures. A committee of dedicated teachers and administrators has developed a plan to help teachers and principals understand how to implement effective instructional practices.

And last but not least, I would like to thank Racine students for their hard work in achieving the North Star Vision. They are the future of Racine and are the reason we are here. It has been my pleasure to serve as their superintendent.

The continued progress of the District and our students depends on the dedication of all staff members with the support and help of the community. We must all continue on the journey toward the North Star. I look forward to seeing this journey continue.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ann Laing
Superintendent of Schools

Board of Education Election Results

Elections for three open RUSD Board of Education seats were held on April 2. Incumbents **Chris Eperjesy** and **Julie McKenna** and newcomer **Dr. Mike Frontier** were elected to the Board for three-year terms.

District Updates



State Superintendent Commends RUSD Programs

Career and Technical Education at Park High School

Wisconsin State Superintendent Dr. Tony Evers visited Park High School in February to see RUSD's successful Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. During the visit, Dr. Evers heard about the many successes RUSD's CTE students and staff have received, including local, state, national and international honors. Superintendent Dr. Ann Laing then spoke about the importance of CTE programs at middle and high school, including expanded middle school options and awareness about CTE programs. Echoing that sentiment, Racine County Executive Jim Ladwig spoke about how important CTE programs are for preparing a strong workforce for Racine.

Dr. Evers and attendees then took a tour of Park High School's CTE program, including classes in health science, Project Lead the Way and engineering, printing technology, construction and cabinet making and automotive technology.

While in the health science room, Dr. Evers spoke with students who were working on anatomical models and creating parts of the body out of clay. One nursing student told Dr. Evers how he is still making the final decision as to where he wants to go to college next year. His goal is to attend medical school to become a doctor. In the automotive lab, several students told Dr. Evers about how the award-winning auto program at Park has positively impacted their lives. They spoke about how the program has helped them attain jobs and prepare for successful futures.

🔗 Read the full story at news.rusd.org/CTEvisit.

Personalized Learning at Gilmore Middle School

Dr. Evers visited Gilmore Middle School in April to observe and commend Gilmore for its excellence in providing personalized learning for all students. Personalized learning encourages learners to identify their learning styles, set learning targets with their teachers and establish assessments that solidify their understanding of reading, writing and math.

🔗 Read the full story at news.rusd.org/personalizedlearningvisit.

> **CHOICES** continued from page 1.

- **Virtual Learning for middle schoolers:** RUSD continues to expand virtual learning courses. High schoolers can take core courses and a wide variety of electives. Starting this fall, middle schoolers will also be able to take core and elective courses. See article on right for more information.
- **4K at most elementary schools:** Starting next school year, 4-year-old kindergarten will be offered at all but three RUSD elementary schools.

For more information, please contact the school directly.

State Releases WKCE Scores

This year, Wisconsin raised the scores required for students to reach basic, proficient and advanced levels in math and reading on the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE), which is taken each year (in the fall) by all Wisconsin public school students in grades 3-8 and 10. On April 23, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) released 2012 WKCE results.

The new WKCE scoring system means that all school districts across the state including Racine Unified experienced a significant decline in the number of students considered to be “proficient” or “advanced.” This does not reflect a change in the abilities of students, teachers or schools, but rather reflects the higher standards and aspirations Wisconsin has for its students and schools.

“Our District is supportive of the state’s increased expectations for all students,” said Director of Standards, Assessment and Accountability Dr. Steve Miller. “We are working to share a sense of urgency regarding current results among all RUSD staff, parents and community partners. By moving forward with increased effort on the part of all stakeholders, we can continue to improve teaching and learning for every student in RUSD.”

The new, more rigorous state standards are based on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and will help better prepare our students for college and career.

🔗 Learn more online on the Department of Public Instruction’s website at oea.dpi.wi.gov/oea_wkce_home.

Interested in Mentoring an RUSD Student?

Are you interested in mentoring an elementary or middle school student? You can be a positive role model for a child and support your community – all it takes is one hour a week! For more information about Mentor RUSD, contact David Power at david.power@rusd.org.

🔗 Learn more online at news.rusd.org/MentorRUSD.

We Want Your Feedback!

The feedback gathered in the RUSD survey for parents and community members is very important and helps us improve communication and school operations.

🔗 Please take the survey online by **May 31** by visiting the RUSD website at www.racine.k12.wi.us or scanning the QR code on the right.



Racine Virtual Learning to Expand This Fall

Electives to now be offered for middle school students

RUSD offers Racine Virtual Learning (RVL), an option for students to take courses online through their home school. High school students can take courses ranging from core subjects such as math and English to electives such as Mandarin Chinese and marine science. Offerings for middle school students are expanding to include electives this fall. Some students take a few classes at their home school and the rest online, while others take all of their courses online. The best part is RVL allows students to take online courses while maintaining all of the benefits of attending a traditional school, including access to science and computer labs as well as activities, co-curriculars and electives such as band, choir and drama.

Although online learning isn’t best for every student, it works very well for students who need a different learning environment, want more challenging or unique courses or, for one of multiple reasons, cannot attend class on campus.

If your child does not currently attend RUSD, please contact Kelly Pochop at 262-676-2170 or kelly.pochop@rusd.org. Current RUSD students should speak with their counselor about enrolling in online courses.

🔗 Learn more online at moodle.rusd.org.



**RACINE UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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RAMAC Excellence in Education Award Winners

Teacher of the Year

Park High School teacher Dave Dixon is the teacher of the year. As the automotive teacher at Park, Dixon has inspired countless students to pursue careers in the automotive industry. He's led students to win state, national and international auto competitions based on the technical expertise they learned in his classes. Dixon is highly respected by the businesses he works with as well as students, parents, colleagues and supervisors.



RAMAC Teacher of the Year Dave Dixon (left) with two of his auto program students

Program of the Year

Racine Reads: Dream Big!

inspired more than 10,000 children in Racine to read more than one million books. The educational achievement that increased reading brings is tremendous, but the excitement and pride of students enjoying reading was the real success of this program. The program was a partnership between many local businesses and organizations, including RUSD. Wadewitz Elementary was the grand prize winner for reading the most books per student. The school was awarded \$100,000 to renovate their library with new furniture, 30 iPads and great new learning tools, books and publications. The program had a profound impact on Racine children.



RAMAC Administrator of the Year Soren Gajewski

Administrator of the Year

Mitchell Middle School Directing Principal Soren Gajewski was named administrator of the year. As principal, he gives staff the opportunity to collaborate by scheduling a common planning time for all teachers. He also aligned different duties to administrators, dramatically reducing the number of disciplinary referrals and allowing the administrators to be more actively involved in instructional leadership. Finally, Gajewski has created a model to transform Mitchell into a STEAM school where science, technology, engineering, arts and math are included in the project-based curriculum.

📖 Read more about the winners at news.rusd.org/ramac2013.

Important Reminders

- **Register now for 4 or 5-year-old kindergarten** at your attendance area elementary school or during the summer at the Administrative Service Campus, 3109 Mt. Pleasant St.
- **Summer School** brochures are available on the District website.
- **Elementary school boundary changes** will take effect for the 2013-2014 school year. For more information, visit the District website, www.racine.k12.wi.us.

Mark Your Calendar

- **Memorial Day (no school)** May 27
- **Graduation** June 7 (REAL, Walden, Park), June 8 (Case) June 9 (Horlick)
- **Last day of school & two-hour early release** June 11
- **Summer School** June 19 - July 31
- **First day of school 2013** Sept. 3

Get More District News

- **Website** www.racine.k12.wi.us
- **Cable Access Channel 20**
- **Inside Unified and Board Notes E-newsletters** Sign up on our website.
- **School newsletters**
- **Emergency Notifications** Register your email address on our website.
- **Like Racine Unified Schools**
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