

WBSD IN-DEPTH

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE WEST BEND SCHOOL DISTRICT
MARCH 2018



Making Connections That Truly Count

Assisted a family who came to West Bend with almost nothing in getting winter coats, hats, and gloves...

Connected a mother who was a victim of domestic violence with a legal advocate and her children with an art therapist at Friends, Inc...

Started a food pantry for students and families at Green Tree...

Helped a student get gym shoes and a lock to ensure success in physical education class...

Helped arrange for transportation for a student to get to school because their parent was ill from chemotherapy and unable to drive...

One may think these are activities of a local nonprofit organization. Rather, these are just a few of the actions of the five tenacious West Bend School District family-school liaisons. Each day, their work to coordinate these wraparound supports by connecting students and families to community resources requires them to partner not only with community organizations, but also school administrators, counselors, attendance officers, and other staff.

These unsung heroes include:

Decorah: Christine Steinmetz

Fair Park: Marcia Tamez

Green Tree: Sheela Pudwell

Jackson/McLane: Ashly Kammerer

Silverbrook: Dana Lisowski

Badger: Heather Mier

West/East: Jamie Thomas and Krystal Monday

Worked with a local charity to provide Thanksgiving dinners to 150 school district families...

Met with families in their homes who are struggling to get their children to school on time, coming up with transportation plans and morning checklists...

Assisted in a job search for a high school student...

Created an opportunity for five high school students to volunteer for a food pantry and in return get \$140 worth of food for their families...

Referred several students to Elevate for truancy support and counseling...

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It takes a high level of trust and relationship building between the liaisons and students and families for these five staff members to be successful. Their work touches several important areas of concern, such as when they assist in the facilitation of skill-building groups for at-risk students and when they support the preventive and reactionary processes to increase student attendance.

Developed a team of representatives from the WBSD and Washington County Human Services to make sure children in foster care don't fall through the cracks...

Co-lead a Family Center support group for elementary level students experiencing loss...

Followed up with parents to make sure their kids went to eye exams and got needed glasses...

This group doesn't take for granted the amazing community organizations that partner with them daily. They organize the yearly Gifts that Give Hope alternative gift fair in December that encourages holiday gifts of donations to area community-based organizations.

While arranging for the needed items or services so children can be successful in school is paramount, one family-school liaison summed up their most important job, "We give out as many hugs, high fives, head rubs, and fist bumps as we possibly can to show love to children who are desperate for it."

Assisted a domestically abused woman with preparing a resume, connected her to before- and after-school care and counseling services...

Helped a student get dental services through Albrecht Free Clinic...

Connected a single dad with Big Brothers Big Sisters...

Helped a widowed mother with clothing for her children and connected her with resources in the community for food, insurance, and counseling...