



# Goodhue County Education District

Enhancing educational opportunities through interdistrict cooperation

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## Important Upcoming Events/Meetings

January 4	Restrictive Procedures Work Group
January 9	RBEC Late Start
January 11	EL Cohort
January 14	AT Cohort
January 14	Social Worker Cohort
January 17	ECSE - Early Childhood Special Education Cohort
January 21	PRESS Workshop @ RBEC
January 23	Superintendent Council
January 25	DAPE Cohort
January 28	Special Education Leadership Team
January 30	ADSIS Teachers/Coaches PLC

## The Progress, January 2019: Volume 4, Issue 4

### The Progress archive

[Click here](#) to view past issues from the current school year.

### Comments? Suggestions for new articles?

Contact Jillynne Raymond, [jraymond@gced.k12.mn.us](mailto:jraymond@gced.k12.mn.us)



**FAST Winter Assessment Window  
(Option 1)  
is open January 2 - 25, 2019.**



## Happy New Year with "Crazy" Generosity!

Happy New Year everyone! The holidays and the start of a new year can be so exciting for us. It is a time of celebration with family and friends. Those of us in public education also surely know that it is not always a time of joy for our students and families. From time to time we all need a little help traversing through life. Our RBEC students are not different.



Each year Molly Dodge-Brage, one of our social workers, coordinates a drive to share holiday cheer with our students and families. Each year our staff members and community members respond with their compassionate kindness. According to Molly, this year was an explosion of "crazy" amount of generosity.

- Total Dollar Value in Gift Cards \$565  
*Gift cards for grocery stores, gas stations, restaurants, and movie theatres were collected for holiday distribution, with a reserve to serve future immediate needs in tough times.*
- Total Number Helped - 18 students and 17 families were helped from Cannon Falls, Kenyon-Wanamingo, Lake City, Red Wing, and Zumbrota-Mazeppa.
- One Story - A family from Lake City received a significant monetary donation from the Brand Family Foundation. Because of this generosity the family was able to purchase much needed items following a home fire. One item was a bed for our student.

***Many thanks to all for your compassionate and "crazy" generosity!***



## Show me the Data

by Cherie Johnson

Cuba Gooding's character repeated the phrase, "Show me the money!" multiple times in the movie *Jerry Maguire*. Messages need to be repeated; my phrase that needs continual repeating is "Show me the data!"

The reason why I ask for people to show me the data is quite simple, we want and need to be able to analyze our evidence to know the impact of our work. It will come as no surprise to any of you reading this that we operate with limited resources. Those resources need to be allocated for needs and need to be used effectively. Data allows us to identify students that need additional help; additional resources need to be allocated to students needing tier 2 support as well as tier 3 support. These additional supports are in *addition to* tier 1 instruction and support; if we do not have data - or evidence - how do we know if additional supports are necessary? How do we know if an intervention is working? How do we know if our core instruction is working?

Gathering data is not about a "gotcha" in any way. Gathering data is all about knowing the impact of what we are doing. For example, we first began talking about applying RIOT Framework to inform how the learner is progressing: **R**evue, **I**nterview, **O**bserve, **T**est. Special education case managers use data to monitor students' progress on their IEP goals. Alternative Learning Center case managers use data to monitor students' progress on their CLP goals. General education teachers use data to inform their instructional practices. This is best practice. It is about a *process*, a way of doing our work.

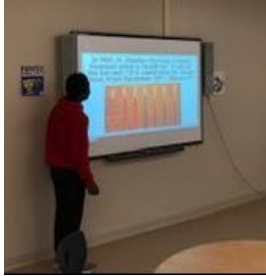
As we begin the New Year, I encourage you all to focus on your data. Is your method of data collection working for you? Are you able to monitor your students' progress in a meaningful manner? We can turn a behavior into a habit with a continued focus on the behavior for 30 days. I challenge you to strive to form a strong habit of using data to inform your practice. If you need support, please contact your coordinator, instructional coach, or myself.

Happy New Year everyone!

## RBEC Celebrates through Learning



River Bluff Education Center students taught each other during a holiday kick off on December 21, 2018. Students toured the world; they learned about different winter celebrations in each classroom



Jha-Quan Calhoun, grade 7, helps others understand the meaning and activities of Kwanzaa.



RBEC Paraprofessional Amanda McDonnell assists Riker Riegelman, grade 3, with his St. Lucia craft.

they visited. The interactive learning was facilitated by fellow RBEC students and included holiday mini-lessons, crafts, and food.

It was important for the RBEC staff to create a special day before break. Many of their students face challenges over the holidays, including additional stress and anxiety. Principal Maggie Helwig reported that she was pleased with the staff and student planning for the day; "The older students took ownership for the day and presented themselves well as role models for our younger students."



RBEC teacher Tira Petersen leads students in making a dreidel as part of the Hanukkah celebration.

## Failure, A Personal Narrative

by Cassidee Staats, RBEC Senior

I stumbled and fumbled into school; every step felt like I was trudging through quicksand. I couldn't feel my legs, they were nonexistent, how I was still managing to move baffled me. One leg jutted out in front of the other in an unnatural, shaky chaos. I couldn't breathe, the air was thinner than the patience of the secretary who was tired of marking me late or absent due to 'mental health issues.'

My sight was impaired beyond belief. You'd think I was drugged or drunk everything swayed in and out of view in a blurr. Darkness and static scratched its way at my eyes like an old Tv on its last leg. I had to fight to use my own eyes. Sweat trickled down my face while forming in my hands and armpits. I felt the gears in my legs rusting away until I dropped to the carpet practically as fast as a bullet leaves the barrel of a gun.

I was exhausted, terrified, and ashamed. My body might have given up on today, on me, but my mind didn't get the memo. Had I been on time since the first day? How many days had I missed? How angry was everyone with me? I didn't want to know... I feared the answers too much.

Back against a metal locker hidden out of view, sprawled on the carpet like a lifeless corpse, I wondered: was I dying? I felt a blackness swallowing me whole; if this was death would anyone find me? Would anyone care? If it was only a temporary death would anyone rescue me? I felt so tired, I couldn't move, I was numb. It was then I noticed the tears racing from my face to meet my hands in my lap. An endless rain that took pleasure in its destruction.

I failed. Again. And again, and again, and again, and again, and...

I could hear it now...

"Truancy... truancy, because you don't just go to school like a normal kid we now have the school breathing down our necks and myself

perceived as a terrible mother. We're going to have to go to court, stand in front of a judge and they're going to berate you with a million questions. Do you really want that? Do you even realize how serious this is? I could be in serious trouble because you'd rather fight than listen to me. What if they take you away? What if they take me away? You would like that wouldn't you."

"I'm not a bad mom. I'm not a bad mom. How do you think this feels for me?"

"I'm up so late with you and then in the mornings I have to deal with the tornado of emotions from you... you're exhausting me. I'm so tired. I can't do this anymore. I can't."

Every morning I was recited the same argument. She sat in my bedroom like the hover of a bad omen while I got ready in the bathroom behind a closed door, mentally and physically speaking. I stopped fighting the good fight against the enemy, there was no use. What I said either fired her up into even more chaos or was dismissed as if I hadn't even opened my mouth to begin with. But that never swayed her from lecturing me to near death about how much I was the cause and effect to my failure. I knew she was right, she had to be...

She screamed at me, throwing tears and words so violently it was as though they pierced the door between us like knives. I pleaded over and over again, chanting a seance on my own, whilst washing my hands for the twentieth or fiftieth time. Something was wrong with me, this wasn't normal, I knew that much at least. My hands were raw, bleeding, emitting an agony that was overshadowed effortlessly by the pain I felt inside. I wanted an escape. I wanted death. I couldn't do one more day of this, I couldn't endure one more minute of this, I couldn't withstand one more second of this. But I did so anyway; I had no choice. I mean there was a choice, no doubt, but the dread of unsuccessfulness hounded me even to that corner of my brain.

"If I could take this suffering from you I would, in a heartbeat. I would go to school for you if I could. You know that."

In my mother's few moments of clarity she would deliver that sentiment every time as if it were the only words she knew in the language of compassion and consideration.

But never did that once help, it solely lost all meaning and just became words after hearing it everyday of our routine like a robot in a monotone voice programmed to convince you it loves you.

Everything that grappled me from plunging further into the dark abyss was but a tiny pebble to hold on to. I needed stairs where I only had an immediate upwards ascension; no bueno.

I gritted my teeth. I was not dying. Not here, not now. I refused. I looked to my limp, pathetic legs and forced them to gather me into a stand. Everything ached and screamed to sit back down but I started my walk. One foot in front of the other. I chose not to acknowledge how much I was shaking. For all it wanted was to be acknowledged, to send me crashing into a pool of tears once more.

I don't remember what happened next, no matter how hard I try. Brains pick and choose random parts of trauma to block out. For better or worse. But I do know I got out of there, mentally and physically speaking, maybe in a several few disheveled pieces, but nonetheless I didn't die. I survived failure. I survived something my brain was programmed to believe was impossible.

## MASE (MN Administrators of Special Education) 2019 Legislative Platform



### > Improve Student Outcomes Through Emphasis of Evidence-Based Practices

MASE supports the intent of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to improve instruction and student outcomes in alignment with Special Education.

MASE supports the integration of a district-wide, unified Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to meet the academic and social emotional needs of all learners and reduce the achievement gap.

### > Increase Educational Efficiency

MASE supports state standards for transportation that reflect the best interest of students, are equitable for families and are fiscally responsible for districts.

MASE supports a district's ability to set criteria to close a program, such as Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) and Transition (age 18-21 year old) programming, to open enrollment.



### > Increase Qualified Special Education Candidates



MASE supports proactively addressing current and future demands of districts for qualified, licensed special education professionals and administrators. This includes efforts of the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) and MDE's Special Education Workforce Work Group.

**> Support a Single Special Education Funding Formula that is Stable, Equitable Across Districts, and Simplified to be Predictable and Consistent**

MASE supports a single special education formula that:

- Is equitable to eliminate the cross subsidy impact,
- Eliminates growth limits on individual school districts,
- Removes individual caps and reinstates a proration factor to equally impact districts, and
- Eliminates the census-based funding formula, as it is not tied to district expenditures.



## Behaviors: When does punishment work?

We know that classroom teachers make hundreds, if not thousands, of decisions every single day. It is impossible not to as they guide multiple individual human beings in the development of academics and social emotional learning.

Think about it. A third grade teacher is in the middle of her mini-lesson on author's purpose when two students are poking at each other. The teacher tries to ignore the behavior at first, hoping to finish her mini-lesson and getting students started on their independent work so she could address the students, whose poking at each other is escalating. She quickly scans the rest of the students in class and sees that their focus has shifted from her lesson to the dysregulated students. She wraps up her mini-lesson as is and modifies the independent work to include two phases; she'll do another mini-lesson after the students' behavior is redirected. While standing between the two students now, she instructs the classroom on their next step; also while doing so she pays close attention to her two students that struggle through abrupt transition. Once the rest of class is settled, she is now free to focus on the students and their disagreement. The teacher walks through her routine of questions, what are the expectations, what were you doing, and so forth. Soon she is able to transition the students back into the work that the rest of the class is doing.

Behavior challenges do not always move so smoothly; many need a lot of time and dissection to move towards a solution. What works for one student may or may not work for another student. One thing that is for certain and the research is quite clear; punishment is never an effective strategy for challenging behavior. The research in this area has guided the work of PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports), the SEARCH Institute and its work with developmental assets, and more social emotional learning resources.

Most all of our member districts' schools are PBIS schools. PBIS, or Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports, is a system framework and approach to addressing behavior. The premise is that site teams identify expected behaviors for the various school settings (classroom, lunch room, hallway, etc.), teach students the expected behaviors, reward the expected behaviors, and reteach the expected behaviors as needed. By this point in the year, we hope that students have settled into the behavior and learning expectations of a school. We need to remember that children are under development, which includes their behaviors. Even if you have a child that has been taught the expected behaviors, it is important to not go down the path of punishment if the child still struggles. The success of any PBIS school is its consistent and clear use of the behavior matrix; when a behavior needs to be re-taught it is re-taught. To reinforce the positive behaviors, rewards are also a component of PBIS.

Rewards are effective when used to build new skills the rewards are given for specific behaviors, which can then be gradually faded over time. However, our rewards will not be effective if they are delivered ambiguously rather than for specific behavior or if they are delivered and then withdrawn. For examples:

- Ambiguous vs. Specific
  - *Tommy, I think you're a fun guy so I'm giving you a PBIS token. vs. Tommy, I appreciate how you held the door open for the new student and showed her the direction to her classroom.*
- Delivered and Withdrawn
  - *Tommy, here are 5 PBIS bucks for the school store because you kept your hands on your side while we walked down the hallway.*  
AND

- *Tommy, I'm going to take 3 PBIS bucks from you because you are not meeting the classroom behavior expectations right now.*

In the second situation, think about the hidden message that we have now given Tommy. How will this impact Tommy's buy-in to follow building behavior expectations? Guiding children as they are developing can be challenging. Likewise, guiding children's behaviors and learning can be quite rewarding.

*Akin-Little, Eckert, Lovett, Little, 2004; Cameron, Banko & Pierce, 2001; Horner & Goodman, 2010; Metzler, Biglan, Rusby, & Sprague, 2001; PBIS.org; Skinner, Williams, & Neddenriep, 2004; Sprague, Walker, Golly, White, Myers, & Shannon, 2001.*

## Going the Extra Distance: Jeimmy Yusty-Rojas



We are so fortunate to have Jeimmy Yusty-Rojas serving GCED to meet our interpretation and cultural liaison needs in the county. For those that know Jeimmy, it will come as no surprise that she consistently goes the extra distance to do what's best for students and families. Jeimmy sets high expectations for staff and students, then is available to support meeting those expectations with students' needs always coming first. She is a problem solver and things about other ways to approach challenges or needs. She connects and bridges people to help build cultural understanding and deeper connections. Jeimmy has worked hard to excel at her job and is a caring, kind professional to the core of her existence. Thanks for always going the extra distance Jeimmy!



## In the Spotlight: Instructional Coaching Team



L to R: Dave Craft, RW; Laura McAnally, KW; Kim Betcher, LC; Carissa Hjellming, CF; Carol Redmond, Goodhue; Weston Johnson, RBEC; Not pictured: Courtney Bonnin, Goodhue

Our teachers work hard; there is no denying that. To help support their instructional practices, coaches are available as a resource. Through a Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS) grant, GCED is able to offer each district an instructional coach. This team of coaches is in the spotlight for their dedication to supporting teachers and students. Districts have their own needs and were able to identify an area of focus for their coach.

**Carissa Hjellming (CF)** taught elementary school for 16 years, plus she is a certified healing practitioner and lay counselor. She had been on a leave of absence with CF to develop and grow her own ministry and counseling organization. Cannon Falls Elementary School has Carissa focused on behavior. In addition to working directly with students or staff members, she supports a system level movement to help students feel welcome. She greets students at the door upon arrival in the morning and as they exit each day. It may seem like a little thing, but she can now see the big picture value. Students that were not on her radar are seeking out their morning hello and hug. Some had a challenge to share with Carissa, which allows her to be proactive with students. Recently a parent's interaction with Carissa summed it up, "Now I feel good to leave my child at the door."

**Carol Redmond (GD)** is a long-time elementary teacher that loves spreading her joy of reading. Carol has been an instructional coach with GCED since 2013 and is also an adjunct professor for Concordia in their reading program. Goodhue has been implementing the American Reading Company (ARC) curriculum, which she really likes but wanted to work more on comprehension strategies for grades 4-6. Beginning with grade 6, they are now implementing the Anchor Comprehension Series by Benchmark; it compliments ARC well. The curriculum includes a mini-lesson for the specific strategy along with pre-assessments to determine class needs. After the mini-lesson students practice the same skill

from the mini-lesson with guided reading books. The interventionists also support the comprehension strategies, using reciprocal teaching with *The Six Minute Solutions* to work on comprehension. Sadly, we say goodbye to Carol as she moves to Shakopee where her husband is the new superintendent.

**Courtney Bonnin (GD)** is new to Goodhue this year. She works alongside Carol as a coach and as an ADSIS teacher. Courtney and her husband recently welcomed their first child, son Chase, to the world. We look forward to working with her again after her maternity leave.

**Laura McAnally (KW)** has taught middle school language arts in KW; this is her first year in a coaching role. As she is learning FASTbridge, she is learning its viable resources. To help with the ever-challenging task of comprehension when reading, Laura is leading 7th and 8th grade teachers in using the "Re-tell with Partner" from FASTbridge. The work has helped students tune into their own metacognition and to pay attention to making meaning of the written word while reading. When not working, Laura and her husband enjoy life together here in Minnesota but love geocaching and traveling.

**Kim Betcher (LC)** is not new to Lake City. She had been thinking of a transition to retirement. She and Bluff View Elementary School Principal, Jim Borgschatz, saw this coaching opening as an incredible opportunity. Kim is sharing her EBD expertise with others, such as Zones of Regulation and a bona fide Check in/Check out strategy. This work is imperative "Because kids don't come with instructions," which is the tagline on [Julia Cook's website](#), a go-to resource for Kim.

**Dave Craft (RW)** has taught elementary school and served as an elementary school principal, most recently for Northfield Public Schools. Though ready to retire from administration, he was not ready to leave school. Dave is assigned to Burnside Elementary School in Red Wing, focusing on math but also working on behaviors and system level work. Dave co-facilitates Burnside's Student Assistance Team, supporting teachers' needs with the MTSS framework. Outside of school, Dave keeps busy raising a family with his wife Kristen. Their daughter Catie graduated in December from UW-LaCrosse. In addition to their daughter, they have 5 boys: Michael, 19; Matthew, 17; David, 15; Joshua, 13; and Elijah, 9.

**Weston Johnson (RBEC)** was a special education teacher with Chisago Lakes before coming to GCED as an instructional coach in 2012. Weston was instrumental in developing our MTSS framework and training staff members from member districts. In addition to his coaching responsibilities, Weston serves as our Q-Comp PLC/Peer Review Coordinator and provides direct interventions to RBEC students as needed. Weston and his wife Kristin live in Cottage Grove where they are raising Easton, 5 and Bennett, 10 months.

**Finally**, if you are reading this and would like to be entered to win this month's fabulous prize, send an email to [jraymond@gced.k12.mn.us](mailto:jraymond@gced.k12.mn.us) with the word BELIEVE in the subject line. The first respondent wins!

*"When we grow, improve, and learn, when we strive to become a better version of ourselves, we tap into something deep in ourselves that craves that kind of growth."*

- Dr. Jim Knight, Director of the Kansas Coaching Project



## Just for fun...Baby Bellies!

Our birth to 3 team is always fun. This fall has been especially fun as we've watched baby bellies develop. By the time this newsletter is published, we will have welcomed 2 new GCED babies.

From left to right in photo to the right:

- Sarah Sperger [ECSE] is expecting her daughter and 5th child on December 28th. The date seems certain as the C-section has been scheduled. The new daughter joins her older sister Emerson, 8; twins Boyd and Lincoln, 6; and Harmon, 4.
- Lindsay Woodard [Speech] is expecting her daughter in April. Big brothers Grayson, 5 and Brecken, 1 1/2 are ready to

welcome their new baby in exchange for a dinosaur room.

- Nicole Meyer [ECSE] is expecting her daughter at any time now. Kevin, 6 and Eric, 3 were both early so they're not quite certain why their sister has not arrived yet. Mom takes it all in stride, letting colleagues know that there is a "50-50 chance that I'll be here tomorrow."

**UPDATE:** The Meyer family welcomed Abby on December 27th and the Sperger family welcomed Maude on December 28th!



**Remember that you have access to free resources through Infinitec!**

**January Webinars**

**Resources for All Learners: A Guided Tour of [myinfinitec.org](http://myinfinitec.org)**

By Jenn Skalitzky, Assistive Technology Facilitator, Infinitec

-January 14th - 3:30-4:30 - [Click here to register](#)

**The Physiology of Seating vs. the Physics of Sitting (Archived)(Beginner/Intermediate)**

By Karen Kangas, Occupational Therapist, Seating Specialist & National Speaker

-January 17th - 3:30-4:30 - [Click here to register](#)

**Have You Tried Google Keep? It's a Keeper! (Archived)(Beginner/Intermediate)**

By Lynda Hartman, M.A., M.L.S.; Educator/Consultant on the Integrated Technology Support Team at Northern Suburban Special Education District (NSSSED)

-January 24th - 3:30-4:30 - [Click here to register](#)

**Please Teach Me to Communicate! Expressive Communication Strategies for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (Archived)(Beginner/Intermediate)**

By Susan Stokes, SLP, Assistive Technology Specialist & National Speaker

-January 28th - 3:30-4:30 - [Click here to register](#)

**Teaching Cognition & Reading for Students with Autism (Archived)(Beginner/Intermediate)**

By Christi Carnahan & Pamela Williamson, Autism Consultants & Educators

-January 30th - 3:30-4:30 - [Click here to register](#)

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**Goodhue County Education District, 395 Guernsey Lane, Red Wing, MN 55066 651-388-4441**

Goodhue County Education District is a group of six southeastern Minnesota school districts: [Cannon Falls](#), [Goodhue](#), [Kenyon-Wanamingo](#), [Lake City](#), [Red Wing](#) and [Zumbrota-Mazeppa](#). Working together, the districts provide effective and efficient educational services and funding for special education programs, staff development, extended and alternative summer school services.



