



Roseville Area Schools

UNITY CENTER

2024-2025

End-of-Year Report

Thriving in School and Far Beyond

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MISSION

Excellence, Innovation & Equity

As a program of Roseville Area Schools, Unity Center aligns with our school district's mission statement: Excellence, Innovation & Equity in All We Do. We foster a learning environment where students can explore and grow in all three of these areas. Our mission is also emphasized in our programming and demonstrated by our Unity Center staff.



OVERVIEW

About Unity Center

Unity Center offers students in 4th - 8th grade and their families a place to get extra help and participate in a variety of academic, artistic, cultural, career, and social and emotional growth opportunities outside the school day, on some non-school days, and during the summer. These opportunities equip students with the skills to thrive in school and in life.

Grant-Funded Programming

Unity Centers are federally funded through a 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant. To make this project successful, we rely on partnerships from families, community members, businesses, the Suburban Ramsey Family Collaborative, Shoreview YMCA, the Links, Incorporated, and 4-H.

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OUR FOCUS

Long-Term Goals of This Grant



Increase access to high-quality afterschool programs.



Improve academic performance among historically under-resourced students.



Increase levels of community collaboration and support in planning, implementing and sustaining expanded learning programs.



Our Program Prioritizes...

Access

We provide high-quality programming that is accessible to all students. There is no cost for registration, and we provide transportation to Unity Center students within their school's transportation area.

Engaged Learning

Teachers and youth workers partner to design hands-on learning experiences for our Unity Center students. We strive to hire staff and partners that are culturally representative of the students we serve, understanding that having demographically representative staff improves learning and engagement for students. Targeted support and homework help encourage student success and involvement in school and Unity Center activities. Unity Center has an academic focus, offering academic enrichment that complements, but does not replicate, school day instruction. We also focus on social/emotional and skill development through enrichment programming.

Partnerships

Partnerships are a critical component of Unity Center. We prioritize intentional outreach to and engagement with families, in order to gather input and feedback and encourage family involvement. We also prioritize meaningful relationships and collaboration with community partners in order to increase the types of programs and services that are brought into our program and that our students and schools have access to.

PROGRAMMING

What have Unity Center students been up to this year? Highlights from 2024-2025

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math)

- Elementary students visited the Works Museum where they engaged with hands-on engineering challenges, explored interactive STEM exhibits, and participated in collaborative problem-solving activities.
- Elementary and middle-school students engaged in hands-on learning and sustainability, plant science, and food systems, connecting science and health standards to real-world environmental stewardship.

Arts & Culture

- In partnership with KidCreate Studios, elementary students created unique art projects during their lessons.
- Each month, middle school students participated in arts-focused programming through Greater Twin Cities Links. Activities included African drumming, mindfulness and yoga, self-affirmation, and a visit to the Minneapolis Institute of Art's "Giants: Art from the Dean Collection of Swizz Beatz & Alicia Keys" exhibit.

Health & Wellness

- In partnership with 4-H, middle school students took part in weekly cooking classes where they learned essential food safety and cooking skills.
- Elementary students engaged in swim lessons with certified Water Safety Instructors to learn important water safety skills and explore the joys and health benefits of swimming.
- Middle school students participated in after-school tutoring and advanced speed, agility, and basketball training through a partnership with professional basketball player David Stanley's #RiseUp Academy.



PROGRAMMING

What have Unity Center students been up to this year? Highlights from 2024-2025

Leadership Development

- Elementary students went on a Base Camp field trip, where they strengthened teamwork and leadership skills through collaborative adventure challenges, practicing communication, problem-solving, and peer support while working toward shared goals and building trust.

Mentoring

- Elementary students visited Roseville Area Middle School to tour the building and familiarize themselves with the new environment. This partnership helped to ease the transition to middle school, reduced anxiety about change, and fostered a sense of belonging.
- Students created a Raider Reach Mentorship program that partnered Roseville Area High School AVID students with both elementary and middle school Unity students. AVID mentors visited sites regularly to build relationships, offer academic support, and share personal college-and-career readiness experiences.

Literacy

- Grant Coordinators paired enrichment activities with our district's literacy curriculum, Wit & Wisdom. Example: Students were learning about the literal and figurative heart during the school day. During Unity programming, students made a "pumping" heart and learned about the mechanics of how the heart functions. Unity is a perfect space to connect school day learning in fun and interesting ways.

College & Career Readiness

- Elementary students visited Biztown where they learned about financial responsibilities and financial literacy while working a "job" for the day.
- Middle school students toured Bethel University and Saint Catherine University. Students gained exposure to college life, met with students and staff, and learned about academic programs and campus resources.



OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS



total students



35,555

**total hours of learning
among students at all sites**



88% of students in Unity Center identified as students of color

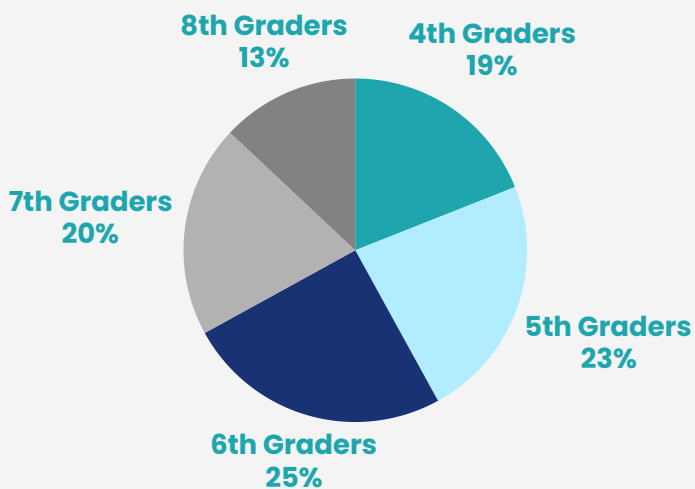


80% of Unity Center staff members identified as a person of color



91% of students in Unity Center attended at least 25 hours of programming

Percentage of Students by Grade Level



Year 6
of the 21st
Century Grant

4
school year
sites



2
summer
sites

OUR IMPACT



PRINCIPAL FEEDBACK:

We asked, “What does Unity Center mean to your students and families?”

“Unity at Edgerton is a program that decreases opportunity gaps. Families, students and staff share that it increases student sense of belonging at school. One of my favorite moments of the school year was listening to the panel of students share what experiences at Unity were important to them. What I noticed was how they were able to be a part of the planning of activities. This is elevating student voice in action. Unity supports academic and social development for our students.”

- Maura Weyandt, Edgerton Elementary Principal

“Unity has provided countless opportunities for our students - opportunities to connect with each other and with staff, to play games, try new things, and most importantly, to have fun in a safe and supportive environment. The impact is clear: from the waitlist of eager participants to the students who try to “sneak down” just to say hi to Victor in the mornings, to the many who choose to stay after school - it’s obvious how much our students value Unity. Beyond the incredible after-school programming, Unity takes things to the next level with engaging opportunities during summer and school breaks. These experiences - field trips, hands-on activities, and meaningful learning - enrich our students’ lives in ways that go far beyond the classroom.”

- Rebecca Suttan, Central Park Elementary Principal

“Unity Center is an opportunity for students to build relationships, further connect to school culture, and expand their learning. Students get to explore activities outside of school to deepen their understanding of school-day concepts and gain exposure to new interest-based opportunities. Unity gives students a purpose after school! The Unity Center team is a staple in our community.”

- Heidi George, Roseville Area Middle School Principal