

[BACKGROUND MUSIC]

Lee Allinger >> We're committed to education in this community. I think people have that desire to give back and we're pretty fortunate, I think, in the Fox Cities to have communities where that is the norm, it is part of the culture.

Wendy Blasczyk >> It's amazing to see the kids where they begin the year and where they end the year and their love of learning.

Joan Jensen >> I love watching the kids come in the morning, I was thinking about that. How enthusiastic first graders are.

Amanda Van Zeeland >> My students go every morning and it's something that they run up the stairs and are excited to go to every day.

Maren Pekarske >> You know, they get so excited that you're there. It's a treat to be with you. I look forward to it every week.

Amanda Van Zeeland >> Students are selected to be in the United for Reading Success program based on their needs as students here.

Pam Conforti >> We meet with our fellow first grade teachers and with the reading specialist and we decide who it is that would be a good fit for the program.

Tanya Lange >> We look at what are those students that are just right on that cusp of, maybe needing a little support, and also maybe they need to have that adult interaction.

Wendy Blasczyk >> They get one-on-one time with that volunteer reader out in the hallway, a connected time.

Nancy Crockford >> In a classroom where I had to 25 to 29 kids, there's no way I could meet for 30 minutes one-on-one with the student. And so that part is just phenomenal.

Bill Robarge >> Each day it's laid out a little bit differently but it's the intent is to learn a set number of words.

Stacey Crowe >> They come in and usually books are picked out for the week, so we kind of fan out the books and they pick out a book that they would like us to read to them. Sometimes they'll be like "oh, I loved the way you read that, can you read that again?" And we might do that if we have time, otherwise they pick out two books that are in their little bucket that they bring, and they decide which two books they're going to read to me.

Bill Robarge >> Then I'll usually go through their words with them, make sure they're recognizing them. And then I'll go through the words again. At the beginning they're pretty intimidated, some of us, I get intimidated also, you know. But you get to know the kids and then it's fun.

Stacey Crowe >> When we first start, they're kind of shy and they're a little apprehensive but as the year goes on you notice that they're like "let's do my words, let's write my words!"

Barb Boudry >> You can see the progress, you know, from the first of the year. It takes a while but you can see some progress and that's, you know, really worthwhile.

Maren Pekarske >> Sometimes you can just see a light bulb go on, it's like everything connects and they just take off like wildfire...

Janis Ruffolo >> ...and they get excited and they're happy and you know they want to show you what they can do and they learn...

Joan Jensen >>... by the end of the year they're much more confident.

Ryan Verrier >> With that confidence, comes that self-confidence within and then they just grow as a person because they're feeling good about what they're learning, they're feeling good about the people they're working with and as a result they're feeling good about school, then you can see that personality blossom.

Lee Allinger >> Having that United for Reading Success volunteer coming in and building relationship, I think is critical to the success of this program.

Wendy Blasczyk >> They're just so dedicated to the Program and to the kids. I can't thank them enough for everything that they've done for the kids, and even for our school.

Tanya Lange >> We definitely could not make the strides with the students, if it wasn't for them.

Christie Walter-Ness >> We are so grateful that they're taking the time to be part of their lives in our school.

Pam Conforti >> It's making a big difference and I know my students are in the program, just are a little more outgoing, feel confident and it's leading to just, um, all different areas that it's sprinkling into, besides reading and writing.

Lynae Wolfgram >> My name is Lynae Wolfgram and I've been involved with the math tutoring program for 10 years. We have adapted this program to meet the needs of the students and we found that it works best in grades 2 through 4.

Beth Verboomen >>It's just nice that they can bond with another person and get intervention and support in math from somebody that has gone through the training program and that is continually here and they depend on that.

Janis Ruffolo >> I've had kids walk in and tell me "I hate math," the first thing out of their mouth and that's a sad thing because you have to do math your entire life. But, it's really nice when you're working with a student and all of a sudden something clicks and you know, they want to show you what they can do and what they learned. The excitement is just infectious, it just makes you so happy to see them enjoying something that they were not overly fond of before.

Ancel >> My name is Ancel I'm in third grade and I go to Houdini Elementary School. Some days we'll do math problems and sometimes we'll do math sheets. I like to play math games like "Mad Math" and then a game board and we'll roll the dice. It's really fun.

Janis Ruffolo >> With the tutoring program what makes it successful is just you have another person that's caring about this child and giving them attention and giving them some time and that makes the student feel

good, it makes the tutors feel good, and sometimes they're just that little extra spark that maybe connects through and helps make everything fit together in the right way.

Ryan Verrier >> I think the number one thing I would say is thank you, for the time and effort that is put into this program. Over time, I think kids remember this program, remember the adult they work with, so they're making an impact on a student and their life forever.

Noah >> The teachers are always there for you, they consider you their number one subject to care about and one-on-one definitely helped me learn what I needed to succeed now.

Brooke >> Looking at how far I am now in my reading, being able to know the things I know now thanks to some of the two years back then is just amazing.

Jack >> I would say thank you for helping me and that they were really nice.

Greta >> I would say thank you for spending all of your time, helping us learn.

Maren Pekarske >> It's just always been lots of fun for me, it's been my pleasure.

Bill Robarge >> Yup, I've enjoyed it a lot.

Joan Jensen >> It's just wonderful to be part of that.

Len Hanstedt >> It's fun to be with those kids, you know, how far can go if you can't read? Not very far at all.

Voice >> The more you read the better you get and once you learn to read, the future is open and these children are our future and they're going to go out and they're going to be able to help in many, many ways.

Lee Martin >> Reading is so important to kids, you know they hope to have a decent life, or a good life. It's essential.

Mary Furlong >> Just think of all the doors that we've opened for these children.

Dr. John Mielke >> First graders, when they're looking at you, they're powerful. They really are.