

RAMPED

November 2023 - Vol. 5



UPCOMING EVENTS:

- 11/20: World Children's Day
- 11/23: THANKSGIVING Holiday
- 11/28: Mental Health/Self-Care Session 3
- 12/07: Superintendent Roundtable
- 12/11: MH Advisory Council Session II
- 12/12: Mental Health/Self-Care Session 4
- 12/13: Counselor Roundtable
- 12/18: CHRISTMAS BREAK
- 12/21: Winter Begins

**RAMPED funding is made available through the U.S. Department of Education's Mental Health Service Professional Demonstration Grant.*



Happy Fall

RAMPED Stakeholders,

Greetings! Our consortium of eleven schools have been blessed with a productive and enriching Fall Semester! In that semester, we have seen students, staff and community benefiting from new district and consortium programs and initiatives. As Director of the RAMPED Grant, I am especially thankful to be working with a phenomenal team of student-centered district administrators and staff from five school districts, community stakeholders and finally, my ROCKSTAR RAMPED staff, who have never wavered from our crazy ambitious plan to be that Mental Health grant that all others aspire to be!

Thank you to all that are charged with the education and wellbeing of our young learners!

Dr. Yvette Buehring

Program Director

RAMPED I.S.D. PARTNERS

Karnes City

Superintendent:
Katherine Kuentler
KCHS Principal:
Daniel Hutchins
KCJH Principal:
Kelly Ruiz
RES Principal:
Jennifer Foster
KC Primary Principal:
Kevin Hans

Kenedy

Superintendent: Dr.
Calvin Bowers

KS Principal:
William Bailey
KES Principal: John
Smith
KES Asst.
Principal: Melissa
Leza

Pawnee

Superintendent:
Anthony Annis

EL-HS Principal:
Raymond Robinson

Pettus

Superintendent:
Dr. Katie Atkins

PS Principal:
Rickey DeLeon
PE Principal:
Laura Holder

Runge

Superintendent:
Hector Dominguez

EL-HS Principal:
Angelina Torres

EL-HS Asst. Principal:
Allison Wells



WHAT'S HAPPENING:

Karnes City Mental Health Advisory Council Session I

The inaugural gathering of the KC Mental Health Advisory Council took place on Wednesday, Nov. 15th. They represented a group of community stakeholders committed to creating positive change in the Mental Health and Well-Being of their community through education, collaboration, communication, and resourcefulness. The over 20 representatives from all sectors of the community enjoyed a Mexican meal, compliments of our host KCISD Supt. Katherine Kuenstler. Council mission and focus were discussed as well as the plan for distribution of community needs assessment surveys across all sectors. Next meeting will be held in December to evaluate the survey responses and plans moving forward. Plans to initiate the same efforts in our other four consortium communities will soon follow. Thanks you to all participants! - Dr. B



Two opportunities to learn about becoming a mental health professional arose from a couple of our partner universities in November. Dr. Bain and Dr. Garza shared very important information about the program and initiatives at Texas A&M-Kingsville. Dr. Blalock, from UTSA, also held a Zoom meeting for anyone interested in learning more about their mental health professional programs. Now is a great time to schedule a visit with a RAMPED team member if you are considering pursuing a master's degree in school counseling, school social work, and school psychology. - P.H.

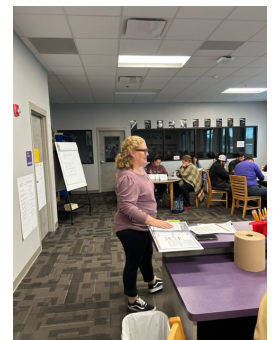
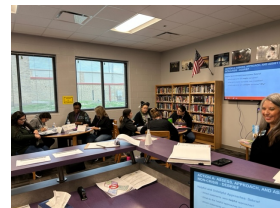
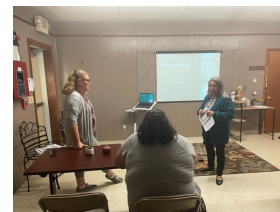


<p>Self-Care Daily Quotes for the Week</p> <p>Monday</p> <p>If it makes you happy... Do more of that.</p>
<p>Tuesday</p> <p>"Almost everything will work again if you simply stop for a few minutes, including you."</p>
<p>Wednesday</p> <p>NURTURE YOUR SPARKS FIND YOUR UNIQUENESS KNOW HOW MUCH YOU MATTER</p>
<p>Thursday</p> <p>"Self-compassion is simply giving the same kindness to one's mistakes that we would give to others."</p>
<p>Friday</p> <p>Love the person you've worked to become.</p>



Our counselors were able to gather again this month. The Social Work residents from Our Lady of the Lake were guest presenters and shared some of their favorite projects they are working on (group sessions) and some things they are looking forward to working on in the Spring (parent support). We shared 42 apps related to Self-Care to pass along to teachers and staff. Time was also provided to share some concerns across the field. We know Counselors are very busy people and we always appreciate their attendance. This month our staff handed out 1,231 affirmation stickers and 1,269 affirmation bookmarks to students in all 5 districts. - F.E

As always, supporting our community through training opportunities continues to be a priority for the RAMPED team. We would like to give a huge shout out to Runge ISD for allowing us the opportunity to provide Youth Mental Health First Aid Training to thirty-one of their staff members who are now certified Mental Health First Aiders. We would also like to invite everyone to our next Adult Education Mental Health class on Tuesday, November 28, 2023, at 5:00 PM at 303 E. Mayfield. The topic of discussion will be "Coping Skills to Use with Children & Youth". - P.H.





RURAL AREA MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL ENHANCEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Heart and Mind Connection

Happy November! I am inspired by the tremendous dedication and spirit I continue to see as I visit the five RAMPED campuses! November is always filled with various activities and the anticipation of the holidays is at an all time high. Exhibiting gratitude has shown to offset anxious thoughts. What a great time to put gratitude into practice. Don't forget to breathe! We're almost there!

It has been an exciting month for the RAMPED team as we strive to provide the best experience possible for our residents! We stand to honor the requirements of our partner universities while also attempting to meet the diverse needs of each campus. All this so that we can achieve our goal of increasing the number of mental health professionals in our rural schools. We are so excited to announce that this month, our very first counselor resident, Mr. James Peralta, completed his practicum at Pettus Secondary! We acknowledge Mr. Peralta's perseverance, tenacity, and hard work towards achieving this monumental goal. We are grateful for the teamwork among Lamar University as well as all the stakeholders at Pettus ISD who made this possible for him. We are proud and ecstatic about this milestone we have reached in the RAMPED grant, and we look forward to many more in the future.

I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to you for the countless ways you positively influence the lives of others! The work you do is truly a work of heart. May you never forget the power of your impact. HAPPY THANKSGIVING! - Patricia Huber, MSC

Social Work: Stories from the Field

November is a time to reflect, be thankful, and show gratitude. As I reflect on my days since the last newsletter, I continue to see opportunities to connect with students through sticker and bookmark distributions, self-care challenges which continue to grow in participation, and training opportunities. The RAMPED Supervisors and Social Work Residents received certification in PAX Tools as a Community Educator. As conversations continue with our teachers related to graduate programs we are adding yet another university as a partner. Next, I am very thankful for our social work residents. They have kept me on my toes. These past couple of weeks, they finally began to work with students through individual and group sessions. They have spent countless hours prepping for groups to create meaningful curricula and surveys. Their planning is paying off. I look forward to our debrief meetings and those opportunities to support them each week. Lastly, I am grateful and extend my gratitude to my RAMPED team and each administrator who continues to support our RAMPED program. The world of school social work is unknown to many and we are excited to inform and open the doors to the help we can provide. - Frances Ehrlich, LMSW

Any questions regarding this newsletter may be emailed to:
April Peralta at aperalta@kcisd.net or call
830-780-6225

FIRST SCHOOL COUNSELOR RESIDENT REFLECTION

When this school year began I was scrambling to figure out where I would complete my counseling practicum. We were required to have a site supervisor who had at least three years of counseling experience, and the counselor on my campus only received her certification in August. I had a few options with neighboring schools, but nothing was certain. Then, I was reminded of a grant program run out of Karnes City by a flyer sent in an email. The program was called Rural Area Mental Health Professional Enhancement and Development or RAMPED.

I had initially heard about the program in my summer residency at Lamar University, and I hoped they were still taking applications. I called the number on the flyer for the RAMPED program, and they explained more about what the program consisted of and what they do. After expressing my interest in being part of RAMPED, I was asked to come in for a meeting with the staff. I suddenly knew how I would obtain my hours. It was amazing to be gifted with such an opportunity when I was beginning to lose hope. When I came into the RAMPED office, I met with Mrs. Patricia Huber, who would become my site supervisor. She was very warm, endearing, and knowledgeable. She made me feel immediately welcomed as she explained the duties and expectations of the program. RAMPED works with five school districts in the Karnes city area, and one of them just happened to be my alma mater, Pettus ISD. This made my choice of schools easy. Just like that, I had a practicum supervisor and location.

Being back in Pettus was an interesting experience. The school had completely changed in the years since I graduated—new facilities, new staff besides a select few, and a new feeling walking through the halls. Although different, I was instantly welcomed. The staff were incredibly helpful and were accommodating to my needs, especially the secondary school counselor, Mr. Paul Rodriguez, the secondary principal, Mr. Rickey Deleon, and the ACE coordinator, Ms. Sereena Martinez. These individuals gave me access to counsel students, allowed me to help in any capacity I could, and gave me guidance and insight into what it is like to work as a counselor on their campus. I am extremely thankful for their help throughout this process, and I cannot believe how quickly ten weeks working at Pettus secondary flew by.

The person who I am most thankful for through this experience is Mrs. Huber. I have always heard that people come into your life for particular reasons, but I do not know if she knows how much of an impact she has made on me. Her friendly demeanor coupled with unfailing optimism inspire me to emulate her as much as I can. She always takes the time to talk to me, give me ideas, and continuously motivate me to succeed. There were times when I struggled mentally, but she always reassured me that I would make it through. I honestly do not know if I would have gotten to this point without her help and guidance. She is a very special person, and I am extremely grateful to have someone like her be my supervisor and mentor.

Thank you to Dr. Buerhing and all the RAMPED staff for allowing me to be part of this wonderful program. I am very appreciative of all the support along the way.

-James Peralta,
School Counselor Resident,
Lamar University

