

# RAMPED

March 28, 2024 - Vol. 8



## UPCOMING EVENTS:

3/29: Good Friday

3/21: Easter Sunday

April: Student Affirmation Distribution

4/1: April Fool's Day

4/3: Conflict Resolution Presentation - Pettus

4/8: Total Solar Eclipse Day

4/9: Character Building Presentation - Pettus

4/15: Tour De Counselor

4/22: Earth Day

4/23: Karnes County Resource Meeting

4/26: Administrative Professionals Day

### RAMPED Stakeholders,

What a wonderful time to be part of the RAMPED TEAM! In Year 2 of the grant, we see more enthusiastic residents from additional university partners as well as more district staff enrolling in masters programs!! The potential tuition reimbursement of \$9700/semester for staff to return to school has been a big draw! Superintendents in all five districts have further committed to grow mental health providers in their districts! This month both the Advisory and Executive Councils gathered to engage in a very enlightening discussion regarding how districts could continue to support RAMPED as the grant supports districts through services.

In the spirit of Easter, the Ramped Team pulled out all the stops spreading EASTER EGG good wishes to both students and eligible staff!

Many more exciting things to come in the coming months!

Thank you for everything you do for kids and their communities!

*Dr. Yvette Buehring*

Program Director

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

## RAMPED I.S.D. PARTNERS

### Karnes City

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

### Kenedy

Superintendent: Dr.  
Calvin Bowers  
  
KS Principal:  
Tanya Castillo  
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:

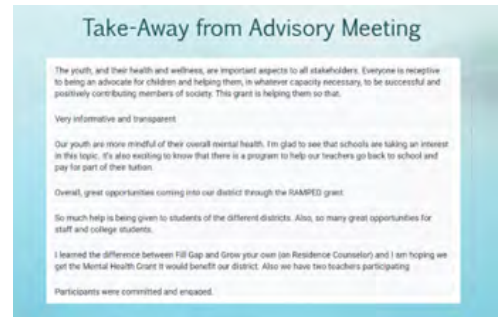


## EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF SUPERINTENDENTS

On March 21st, Superintendents from the five school districts that represent the RAMPED consortium met over breakfast at the KCISD "Learning Center" (blue bldg.). Much constructive and fruitful discussion was had throughout the meeting regarding how to maximize the potential of opportunities provided by the grant. The Executive Council serves to satisfy a grant requirement for years 2-5, serve as an additional stakeholder in the success of RAMPED, gage program effectiveness in collaboration with the Advisory Council, and to serve as an additional monitor and decision-maker towards ensuring alignment with policies and regulations. Information was provided to superintendents regarding items discussed during the Advisory Council meeting, as well as results of the survey that was completed by that Council. Finally, the group of district leaders brainstormed, then identified different strategies towards relaying to their district staffs and communities, their commitment to "GROWING THEIR STAFFS." These strategies will be shared with all stakeholders soon! The Advisory and Executive Council will gather as a group in May to speak to program status. - Dr. B.

## RAMPED ADVISORY COUNCIL UPDATE

On March 19th, the RAMPED Advisory Council convened at the KCISD Board Room. The Council includes campus principals, and business and parent representatives from the five school districts served by the RAMPED Grant. The role of the Advisory Council is to not only to satisfy a grant requirement in years 2-5, but to provide additional stakeholders, and source of insight and feedback towards gaging program status. During the meeting, information was shared with the group regarding status of different grant components, new second year developments and a review of the government approved amended Y2 budget. Finally, a survey was completed by members, the results then shared with Executive Council of Superintendents later in the week. In May, the Advisory and Executive Councils will meet together to participate in a status check of the program. - Dr. B.



## GROW YOUR OWN

Our efforts to share the Grow Your Own opportunities for our teachers continue. For 2024, we can offer tuition reimbursement for those currently enrolled in school, not just the Resident stipend. We have shared this information through emails and fliers, but this month we decided to get a little creative with the initiative and personalize the message. Each teacher was provided with an egg that held a fake personalized check for \$9,872 along with information on how to cash in on the opportunity. We want to make sure everyone is aware of this new opportunity that will be available for 2024 only. - F.E.



One of the main priorities of the RAMPED team is to provide students across our cohort, with a monthly reminder of how much they matter. This month, we used Easter eggs to deliver some important and special notes to students in hopes that the messages would inspire an introspective look at themselves and just how important they are to our schools but more importantly, to this world. The eggs were filled with one of twenty-four sentiments. We hope students take these heartfelt words and use them as a daily reminder of their unique qualities, talents, relevance and importance to everyone around them. It always brings the RAMPED team and our residents such joy to distribute monthly student affirmations. Remember, no matter what someone might be going through, extending kindness is never wasted. - P.H.



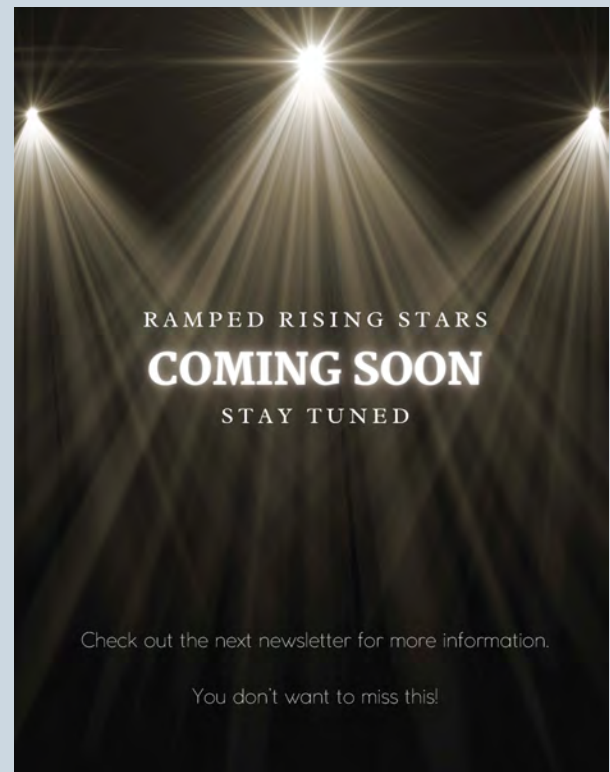


## How Can We Recognize the Signs of Student Distress

According to the CDC data, in 2019 over one-third of high school students had experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness. Early detection helps get early intervention and keeps the student mentally healthy. The following are signs to look out for from Mental Health America:

- Problems with concentration
- Changes in appetite
- Complaints of headache/ stomachache with no known cause
- Loss of interest in things that they used to enjoy
- Excessive worry
- Irritability or restlessness
- Changes in sleep
- Angry outbursts
- Not wanting to be around people or take part in activities
- Mood swings or frequent shifts in energy
- Extreme panic

According to Mental Health America, 50% of all people who will have a mental health disorder in their lifetime start to experience symptoms by age 14. The recognition of these symptoms can be crucial in advocating for a student. Visit [MHAScreening.org](http://MHAScreening.org) for multiple screeners. – Keyera Barnes, RAMPED Resident





# RURAL AREA MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL ENHANCEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT



## Heart and Mind Connection

Happy Spring! As mental health challenges continue to rise among youth, I cannot thank you enough for working in a profession that allows you to be an advocate and champion for our students. They may not always say it aloud, but they need you! Educators often go without recognition or applause for the life changing contributions they make, but please know you are valued and appreciated immensely!

It has been an exciting time in the RAMPED office because of a new grant development! For 2024 only, the RAMPED grant is offering tuition reimbursement, up to \$9,872, to degreed staff members who complete coursework (in school counseling, school social work, or licensed specialist in school psychology) from one of our university partners. This is a phenomenal opportunity for anyone who might be thinking about going back to school to earn their master's degree. If this appeals to you, please feel free to reach out to me. I would love to provide you with information from each program and university to help you make a decision that is perfect for you. If you would like to visit with someone who is already in their program and on the road to becoming a mental health professional, just look for the RAMPED poster outside their classroom door. These people are wonderful sources of information! As always, much love and admiration to you for all you do! April and May will fly by. Take care of yourself in the process.  
- Patricia Huber, MSC

## Social Work: Stories from the Field from the Field

This past month, Emma Bennet completed her second semester of field internship. Emma is a fast-track student at Our Lady of the Lake so she quickly had to jump in after the holidays to complete her hours before Spring Break. Emma is our first Resident to complete two semesters. She plans to walk the stage this May along with Keyerah Barnes who is scheduled to complete her field hours by the end of April. These two individuals have set some high expectations for future Social Work Residents. This past month they scheduled a guest speaker from Toyota to present to one of our Future Focused high school groups. The presenter shared opportunities for employment after graduation as well as continuing education through the TxFAME program at St. Phillips. We also have two Generalist Residents from UTSA working on campus-wide initiatives. They are working on a 3-part series presentation for 6th-10th graders, reaching out to parents for attendance concerns, organizing a food/clothing pantry, and assisting with guidance lessons. All Social Work Residents had the opportunity to meet with our grant evaluator to learn more about qualitative and quantitative data and how it can continue to be used in their future as social workers to tell their stories of success and struggles. One of my favorite quotes from the conversation is "Be a freckle, not a pimple." This was used to describe grant work on a campus meaning to blend into the environment and be seen as part of the system, not to be something to pop out. Great words of advice.- Frances Ehrlich, LMSW

**Any questions regarding this newsletter may be emailed to:  
April Peralta at [aperalta@kcisd.net](mailto:aperalta@kcisd.net) or call  
830-780-6225 questions regarding this  
news30-780-6225**