



Guided by Principles

By: Holly McCoy, Executive Director

Sixteen months ago, LSW pivoted our service delivery model to meet the needs of our students while addressing the challenges of the pandemic. Virtual learning has proven effective in breaking down barriers for many students as they navigate their academic goals while also prioritizing their jobs and families. As the fall approaches and we slowly reopen our doors for in-person learning, we are also restructuring and reorganizing our approach to accommodate certain pandemic-era adaptations that require lasting commitment and should be sustained into the future. For instance, one-on-one tutoring is and always will be a necessary part of programming, but now we will offer both in-person and virtual options going forward. LSW must consider hybrid options for programming that incorporate both modes and extend beyond our previous digital literacy curriculum. We have received generous donations to bolster access to technology for students and staff from many LSW supporters and the United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County. We strive to continue to find as many opportunities as possible to put technology in the hands of our students.

Extending beyond the ways in which LSW delivered services, we also reconsidered where we were providing programming, questioning how we could make more direct connections for our students. We said goodbye to our Layton Center location in hopes that consolidating sites and programming would allow us to focus on a wider range of satellite opportunities



with well-aligned community-based organizations to increase capacity and maximize our reach to potential students. We plan to share these partnerships with you in the upcoming months.

LSW will officially open our onsite adult education program at the Milwaukee County Jail this fall. LSW is also working with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) to provide the construction-focused MC3 HSED onsite at two Racine correctional facilities. According to ProLiteracy, “Incarcerated individuals who participate in correctional education programs are 43% less likely to recidivate than inmates who do not.” LSW knows that our educational programming can be a powerful resource to justice-involved students. In addition, LSW plans to facilitate valuable connections to community resources for students reentering Milwaukee, Waukesha, and Racine counties. We intend to purposefully partner with other organizations to integrate as many resources as possible into our corrections

programming and provide various opportunities for students to continue academic and career training after release.

Adult literacy education will continue to be a critical variable in addressing K-12 outcomes, higher education enrollment, and the unemployment rate. Recently released data from the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) indicates that 15% of Wisconsin residents are reading at or below a third grade level. In Waukesha, that figure is slightly lower at 8%. In Milwaukee, it is closer to 25%. There are literally hundreds of thousands of friends and neighbors in our communities who could potentially benefit from LSW’s services. Our commitment is to keep growing, improving, and adapting to the academic needs of our students, meeting them wherever possible and individualizing instruction to help them with whatever is next. Adult education is our only priority, and we appreciate everyone who has

The Sylla·bus

Literacy Services of Wisconsin Newsletter



Principles

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The Syllabus is the quarterly newsletter of the 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Literacy Services of Wisconsin.

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Volunteer Photographer

Sara Risley

Founded in 1965, Literacy Services serves adult learners with quality education programs - Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Education Development (GED) test preparation, 5.09 High School Equivalent Diploma (HSED), English Language Learning (ELL), Workforce Training and Career Pathway Bridges, and integrated and personalized Functional Literacy instruction.

Literacy Services of Wisconsin is grateful for the broad support of our community, including nearly 500 volunteers and financial support from 1000 individuals; 200 foundations, corporations and organizations; The United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County; and Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. We are grateful for our partnerships with Equus, Maximus, and Milwaukee Public Schools.

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supported us as we continue to pivot accordingly.

LSW's newly-refreshed Guiding Principles (on page 3) will create a solid foundation for how we evaluate and determine program goals behind the scenes. We will continue our commitment to placing students at the center of all that we do, creating meaningful partnerships that

build bridges for our students and their families, ensuring that all of our locations offer a safe and welcoming learning environment, and challenging ourselves to think big about our curriculum and comprehensive services. Our Guiding Principles align with who LSW is as an organization and where we want to be after five years of ongoing program growth, expansion, and refinement.



Meet Tanya Holler-Muench, our newest Board Member!

I am excited to join the LSW board and further the organization's mission to promote educational opportunities for adults in our community. As a communications professional, I know all too well the importance an adult's ability to read, write, and understand others has on all aspects of their life.

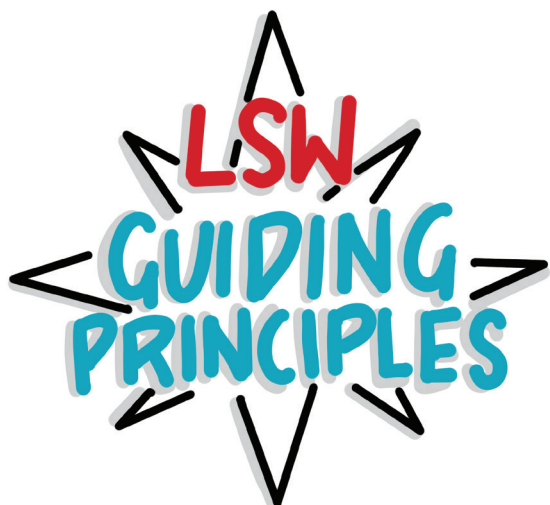
I am the director of corporate communications for WEC Energy Group, the parent company of We Energies, Wisconsin Public Service, Minnesota Energy Resources, Michigan Gas Utilities, Peoples Gas, and North Shore Gas.

In this role, I manage strategic issues and message alignment across the corporation, oversee customer and internal communications, guide reputation and brand management, and support strategic partnerships and outreach for corporate initiatives.

I find volunteering a very rewarding opportunity. I currently am a committee member for the Make-A-Wish Wisconsin - Wish Night. Previously, I served as a board member for the Franklin Educational Foundation, YMCA-South Shore Branch, and walk coordinator for the March of Dimes.

Help Improve Outcomes for Adult Learners at the Milwaukee County Jail!

Literacy Services is looking for community members that care about equitable access to education in the greater Milwaukee area. We are seeking volunteers to work with adults to improve their Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies skills this fall. Come share a few hours per week with a student and help empower our community through literacy. Learn more at <https://bit.ly/LSWMCJ>



LSW's New Guiding Principles

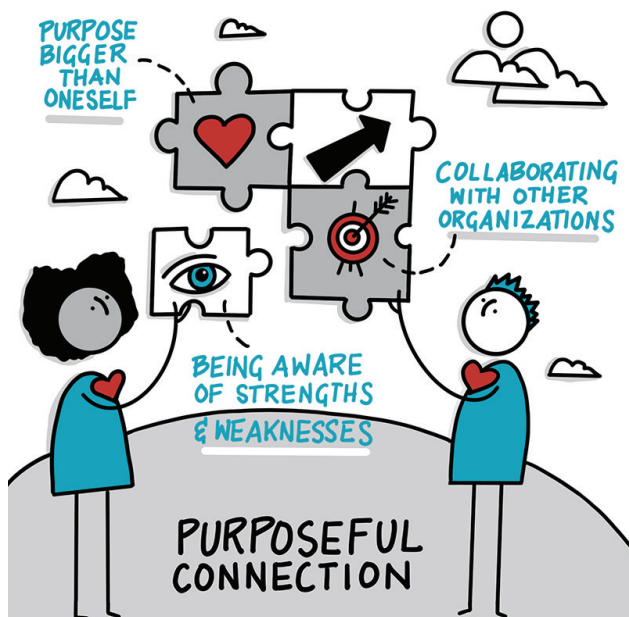
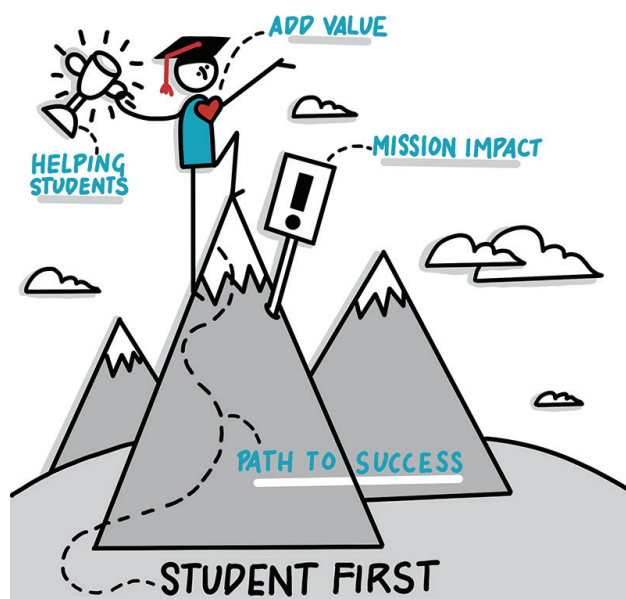
Literacy Services has done much internal reflection on who we are and who we want to be as an organization. We spent time listening and learning in response to the feedback we received from the entire LSW community. As an educational organization, we know that learning cannot happen in a vacuum; and that is why we aimed for a transparent and inclusive process throughout. While we know there is still work to do, we are excited to have this opportunity to share our refreshed and revised guiding principles with you. These four principles reflect our agency-wide priorities and provide a consistent language for our teams and programs to use.

Student First

We believe that every decision should start with student success in mind. We foster student empowerment in the educational process and commit to recognizing students as individuals while prioritizing their distinct needs, interests, and goals over all other factors.

CORE BEHAVIORS

- Having mission impact and student needs front and center of everything we do
- Helping students to the best of our/your ability
- Focusing on activities that add value to our students
- Ensuring mutual clarity and alignment when discussing goals with LSW students, colleagues, partners, volunteers, and tutors



Purposeful Connection

We commit to deliberate collaboration and thoughtful connection with partners, donors, colleagues, volunteers, and students. Through common purpose and partnership, we seek to honor our mission, expand access to resources, and amplify our community impact.

CORE BEHAVIORS

- Intentionally partnering for a purpose bigger than oneself
- Collaborating with other organizations to increase mission impact
- Being aware of others' strengths and weaknesses to effectively work toward a common goal



Honor Diversity & Foster Inclusion

We believe in excellence! True excellence requires that every individual be able to work and learn in an atmosphere of respect, dignity, and acceptance. We commit to creating an environment where everyone feels welcomed, valued, and appreciated. This includes embracing and demonstrating distinct value for diverse identities, cultural perspectives, and differences in all people.

CORE BEHAVIORS

- Intentionally involving and providing equal voice to all
- Proactively seeking ways to help reduce inequity within LSW and our community
- Seeking the input of those that may think differently or have a different background than yourself

Courageous Thinking

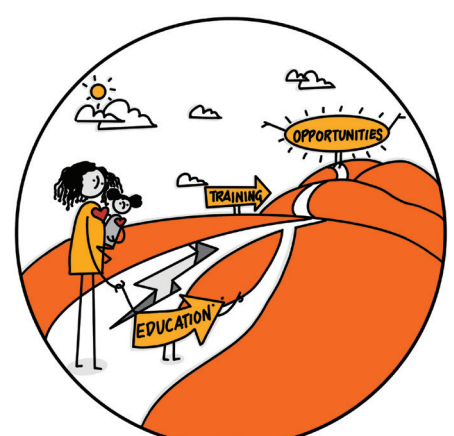
We think courageously in order to create an environment of openness, progress, and growth in every aspect of our work. We encourage the drive to express ideas, perspectives, and solutions without being limited by conventions, complacency, or fear.

CORE BEHAVIORS

- Ensuring that work is relevant and consistently evolving for the betterment of our students
- Encourage and contribute ideas/resources to achieve a desired result
- Creating a safe space for “No Bad Answers”
- Looking beyond the norm to consider more effective and innovative solutions



Learn more about our mission, vision, and purpose at literacyservices.org



Reflections of Recent HSED Grads:

"I feel really great and I can't wait to knock more goals down!"

"Words will never be able to explain how I feel because I never expected to make it this far."

"I feel like crying. I never thought I could make it this far after everything I've been through, and I did. Thanks to LSW and the staff for making this possible for me. You guys are great and don't give up on us. I appreciate it so much."

"It makes me so proud of myself cause it was really hard for me to balance school and work and this makes me want to keep pushing to my dream job."

"I feel like so great. Honestly, words can't even describe how proud of myself I am. This definitely makes me want to make new goals and I know I'm more than capable of doing so."

"I feel AMAZING! I'm excited for what the future holds."

"I definitely would like to set new goals. Higher goals were never an option because I did not have a GED or diploma. Now I can really think about the different options I have without obstacles."

Registration
is now open for
the Fall Online
HSED Classes!



**Act quickly.
Apply by Aug. 27th!**

Literacy Services of Wisconsin's High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED) sits on the cutting edge of Adult Education in Milwaukee and surrounding areas. This state-approved PI 5.09 program is based on the Common Core State Standards and emphasizes communication skills such as speaking, listening, and writing in preparation for post-secondary education and the workplace. Learners are assessed on classroom-based projects, not standardized tests, and are provided a multi-disciplinary, holistic approach to learning that equips them with the skills needed to further their education and excel in the workforce. Our learners often cite that they graduate from our program with not only a high school credential, but with real world tools, soft skills, confidence, and a renewed sense of purpose.

Enroll at
literacyservices.org



THANK YOU

for supporting adult education!

Thank you to everyone who donated to, or participated in, our Virtual Trivia Night and Silent Auction!

It was a huge success with dozens of teams showing off their trivia smarts while the bidding was just as competitive in the sold out silent auction!

We are grateful to everyone who contributed to our \$10,000 match challenge. You rose to the challenge, we reached our goal, and everyone's donation was doubled by a very generous LSW donor and great friend of literacy. This tremendous generosity will have a positive impact on the educational outcomes of Literacy Services' students.

Congrats to the winning teams!

Champions: Learned Servants of Wisdom

Round 1 Winners: Dangling Modifiers

Round 2 Winners: Learned Servants of Wisdom

Round 3 Winners: Hoping for 3rd Place!

Event Committee

Marie Weiss - Committee Chair
Jaclyn Baker
Jenny Littmann
Joyce Mielke
William Severson
Karl Wolff

Trivia Committee

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Kelly Candotti
Noleta Franz
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 The Jewelry Center
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Match Challenge & Event

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Thank You!

The following donors made gifts or pledged support between November 10, 2020 and June 30, 2021. Thank you for empowering adult students to read and write their way to a better future. We promise to put your gifts to good work! It is our commitment to recognize every donor based on the donor's wishes. If your name does not appear as you would expect, please contact Chad Knezel at (414) 226-5357 or via email at chad@literacyservices.org.



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Cheers!

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In memory of:

Mary Aufderheide - Anne Aufderheide • **Mary Casey Brennan** - Brian & Nola Brennan • **Marianne Blunck** - Anonymous, Donna & Robert Lucht, and Heidi & Lou Valentine • **Chanderbhai & Hansa Choithani** - Anita Choithani • **Tom Christofferson** - Robert & Bobbi Abendroth, Susan & Bruce Boyd, John Brahm & Margaret MacLeod Brahm, Stephen & Nancy Carlman, Rodney & Sharon DePue, Jim & Barbara Fisher, Linda Gorens-Levey, Pam & Jeff Lueken, Dave & Mindy Pelisek, Bob & Gloria Santilli, Mary Stearns, and Abbie Willits • **Tom & Kelly Collin** - Linda Ciske • **Mary Ann Crossot** - Susan Stewart • **Maribelle & Reeves Davis** - Debra Goeks • **Sister Vonnie DeCleene** - Joyce De Cleene • **Larry Elton** - Advantage Leasing Corporation, Julianne Allenstein, Lauren Buckley, Rita Casanova, Stephan Chevalier, Jay & Bridget Christiansen, Gordon Davidson, Jean

Davidson, Lynn Davis, Gayle Elton, Thomas Fritsch, Rick & Carol Fronberry, Kristi Gruenhagen, Carol Heller, Amy Jagus, Jim & Pat Janz, Kathy Johnson, Kathleen Knott, Pamela & Frank Lessiter, Michael Lessiter, Jeff Martinka, Lisa Mauer & Edward Probst, Peter Merchant, Elizabeth Merchant, Thomas & Jody Merchant, Terry & Debbie Murphy, Gene Reddick, Deborah Reindl, Doug Richters, Edward B. (Woody) Ryder, Susan Schmidt, David Strand, Lois Thatcher, Lori Walker, Waukesha State Bank, and Kenneth & Elaine Willis • **Howard Fibich** - Carrol Fibich • **Helen Flanner** - William & Jan Severson • **Patricia Hanes** - Christine Ohlis • **Sara Hansen** - Joan & Jeff Hansen • **Sister Agnes Marie Henkel** - Karen Henkel • **Paul Henningsen** - Louis Sampson Cornelius & Priscilla Ann Borniec • **Mary Branton Jones** - Anonymous, Nancy Branton, John & Linda Buntin, Judy Burns, Barbara S. Childs, Judy & Dick Conroy, Patricia DeFrain, Barbara Duncan, Marie & Duane Filtz, Sandra & Robert Gegios, Phil & Ellen Halley, Don & Sue Halloran, Susan Hanson, Suzie Herold, Andrew & Amy Jones, Connie LeMire, Jere McGaffey, Kristen Milner, Susan Murray, Anthony & Amy Sarnowski, Dr. Donald & Mary K. Schmidt, Teresa Sherman, Christopher & Mary Ann Spivey, Mary Stearns, Marilyn Straka, John Surber, John & Vicki Turner, Carol Weber, Beth Weckmueller, and Jenny Weiss & Derek Chappell • **Dorothea Jorgensen** - Charles Jorgensen • **Janet Knezel** - Chad & Sherrill Knezel • **Steve Lambert** - Carol Josten • **Judy McNamara** - William McNamara • **Eleanor Repinski** - Gillian Lester-George • **Susan Robertson** - John Machulak • **Ted Scher** - Rena Szewczuga • **Joyce Schoenleber** - Carl & Roberta Busateri, Mark & Laura Jean Dolezar, Gregory & Linda Lahmann, and Mary Stearns • **Sister Mary Francele**

Sherburne, SSND - Anonymous • **Louis Szep** - Rudy & Marjorie Cudzinovic • **Teresita and Luis** - Paul Rodriguez • **Charles Thunander** - Marge Brewer • **John Weishan** - Ryan Burwell • **Henry J. Wright** - Judith & James Callan

In tribute to:

Bill Bernard - Lois Bernard • **Bianca & Kelly** - Kathleen McKeown • **Frank Clines** - Anonymous • **CJ Davis & Raejean Kanter** - John Davis • **Daniel & Mary Ellen Fromm** - Carl & Ellen Baehr • **Mel Henke** - Charles Jorgensen • **Daniel Meinecke** - Christine Ohlis • **David Russick** - Kayla Russick • **Irene Washington** - Curtis Washington

SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL HALF PRICE LITERACY MONTH

Shout out to
HALF PRICE BOOKS
for highlighting us!

During National Literacy Month, Half Price Books will highlight our organization on their online platforms and local stores will feature Literacy Services on the coin boxes at the cash registers.

When you are ready to give:

There are many ways to support our students' hard work!

Gifts of cash • One-time or recurring online gifts •

In-kind gifts such as furniture, books, or office supplies (check out the wish list on our website for current needs)

- Deferred income gifts, including charitable gift annuities and charitable remainder trusts • Bequests to Literacy Services as part of a will and last testament •
- Gifts of stock, mutual funds, and other securities (may be additional benefits for supporters over 70 ½ years old)



\$5/month • Provides GED practice test vouchers for 15 students.



\$20/month • Provides two tablets for supporting our English Language Learning digital literacy curriculum.



\$40/month • Supports a student through an entire 16-week high school certification course.

Questions about giving? Call Chad Knezel at (414) 226-5357

Upcoming Events

Downtown Tours

With the merger of our Layton Center, things look a bit different downtown these days. As we prepare to welcome some students back to our space this fall, LSW staff has worked hard to create a new layout that will allow for maximum capacity while still protecting the health and safety of our LSW community. Join us for a tour of our new downtown layout on **August 31st at 5pm or September 1st at 12pm**. Keep an eye on your inbox or our social media for information on registration!

Waukesha Open House

As many of you know, LSW merged with Greater Waukesha Literacy shortly before the onset of the pandemic, adding a new space in downtown Waukesha. We are excited to open this space to the public for the first time ever this fall! Come join us for an open house on **Thursday, September 23rd between 5:30-7:30pm**. More information to come!

We look forward to seeing you!

*COVID-19 is still a very real and present threat to the health and safety of our community. Masks will be required for both of these events regardless of vaccination status.

If you or anyone you know is interested in the COVID-19 vaccine please visit <https://city.milwaukee.gov/CovidVax>.

Literacy Services of Wisconsin
Summer 2021 HSED & GED

Virtual Commencement Ceremony



Celebrate the Class of 2021!

**Monday, August 30th
6 p.m.**

and

**Monday, September 20th
6 p.m.**

Help us congratulate our summer HSED graduates at our two upcoming Virtual Commencement Ceremonies!

In August, we are honoring over 40 of our summer HSED grads. Then in September, we are hosting a separate celebration for graduates from our new HSED -EL program. Please visit the links below to join the parties promptly at 6 p.m.

HSED Commencement

Monday, August 30th @ 6 p.m.

<https://zoom.us/j/98239012389>

HSED-EL Commencement

Monday, August 30th @ 6 p.m.

<https://zoom.us/j/99707612768>

The event is free and hosted by Zoom. After visiting the Zoom link, you'll be guided through the steps to join. You do not need to have video camera capabilities to participate.



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info@literacyservices.org

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Student Enrollment

Accepting new students! Sign up for our Initial Assessment Sessions. Call **414-344-5878** for available dates and times.



The Syl·la·bus

Summer 2021

Literacy Services of Wisconsin Newsletter

In this issue:

- Guiding Principles
- Words From Our Grads
- Upcoming Events
- And more!



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We hope you enjoy reading about our mission, but we understand if you would prefer not to receive our mailing. To be removed from our mailing list, simply send a message to chad@literacyservices.org or call us at **414-344-5878**.

LIGHT
THE HOAN FOR
LITERACY

September 14th
More info to come...

#litforliteracy