



WILL COUNTY REGIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION

MAY 2025

NEWSLETTER 1

WHAT DOES THE ROE DO?

The Will County Regional Office of Education provides essential services such as:

- Fingerprinting/Criminal Background Checks
- Licensure
- Work Permit
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Student Support
- Truancy Interventions & Juvenile Court Referrals
- Health, Life & Safety Building Inspections
- GED Transcripts & Diploma Record-Keeping
- Bus Driver Safety Training
- Professional Development/Outreach Services

LINCOLN SCHOOL REHAB: INCLUDES EVEN THE KITCHEN SINK

Published: April 26, 2024 – Herald-News

Thanks to the vision of **Dr. Lisa Caparelli-Ruff**, Lincoln School in Joliet unveiled a brand-new kitchen facility - marking the **first time in over 20 years** that students are receiving freshly prepared meals on-site.

This state-of-the-art upgrade addresses long-standing barriers to student wellness. The facility features food prep stations, modern refrigeration, and hydroponic gardens - all made possible by partnerships with community donors such as **ExxonMobil** and **Bay's Investment Company**.

"When the kids asked for ramen, I knew something had to change," said Dr. Caparelli-Ruff.



A Message from Dr. Lisa Caparelli-Ruff Will County Regional Office of Education

Dear Will County Residents,

As the seasons change and we welcome new opportunities for growth, I'd like to take a moment to connect with you on behalf of the Will County Regional Office of Education. It is both an honor and a privilege to serve our diverse and vibrant community of students, educators, families, and lifelong learners.

At the ROE, we are committed to fostering educational excellence, services and innovation throughout Will County. Whether we're supporting professional development for teachers, ensuring safe and effective school environments, or providing essential student services, our mission remains the same: to empower every learner to reach their full potential.

This newsletter is one of the many ways we aim to keep you informed, engaged, and connected with the important work happening across our schools and communities. We are excited to share updates, highlight successes, and offer resources that support educational advancement in every corner of Will County.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership in making Will County a place where education thrives.

With appreciation,
Dr. Lisa Caparelli-Ruff
Regional Superintendent of Schools
Will County Regional Office of Education

LEADERS OF IMPACT AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION

Join us in supporting the **Leaders of Impact** campaign by the **American Heart Association**, where passionate changemakers like **Dr. Lisa Caparelli-Ruff** are leading the charge to improve heart health in our communities. Your donation helps fund life-saving research, education, and advocacy efforts that can make a lasting difference. **Donate today and be part of the impact!**



Vernon Township Summer Camp

Ages: 4–7 years old Vernon Township

- Dates: June 16–August 1, 2025 (No camp on July 4) Vernon Township
- Location: William E. Peterson Park, 16652 N. Buffalo Grove Rd., Vernon Hills, IL
- Description: Offers arts and crafts, games, swimming with lifeguard-led lessons, sports, and weekly themed activities with special guest entertainers.
- Contact: Phone: 847-634-4600
- More Info: [Vernon Township](#)

SUMMER PROGRAMS

Western Illinois Youth Camp

Ages: 6–14 years old

- Dates: June 2–August 1, 2025
- Location: 2244 4H Club Lane, Jacksonville, IL
- Description: Weekly themed camps featuring activities like swimming, crafts, archery, hiking, canoeing, and rope courses.
- Contact: Phone: 217-479-4626
- More Info: [Western Illinois Youth Camp](#)



Forest Preserve District of Will County Educational Program

- Locations:
 - Four Rivers Environmental Education Center, Channahon, IL
 - Isle a la Cache Museum, Romeoville, IL
 - Plum Creek Nature Center, Crete Township near Beecher, IL
- Programs Offered:
 - **Field Trips:** Hands-on learning in science, social studies, history, art, math, and language arts.
 - **In-School Programs:** Educational sessions brought to your location.
 - **Resource Loan Kits:** Themed kits available for a two-week loan to enhance classroom learning.
- Contact:
 - Four Rivers: 815-722-9470



McKinney Vento

~ In FY24 MKV/Area 1 identified and served over 19,000 students facing housing insecurity and/or homelessness.

~ With the remainder of ARP funds, Area 1 continued to grow its relationship with Evergreen Referral GPS (therapy and counseling resource) and created a program that could be liquidated over a longer period of time than originally planned through ARP funding. \$40,000 was put into that program solely for therapy and counseling sessions for MKV students. In doing so, that allowed us to free up funds in our current McKinney-Vento Continuation grant as it was greatly needed due to the completion of ARP funds as of 9/30/24.

~ In addition, we partnered with Dick's Sporting goods purchasing 100 bicycles to assist MKV students with transportation to and from school or to and from a potential job as well as to assist students struggling with chronic truancy. We also purchased bike locks, helmets and other safety gear. The benefits of exercise and feeling a sense of belonging were an added bonus. We also partnered with Great Clips and purchased roughly 3 thousand dollars' worth of gift cards for haircuts (hygiene). This was in addition to hygiene kits for both boys and girls, suitcases with wheels for those having to move regularly, coats, hats, gloves, socks etc. We also purchased cases of sensory items such as fidgets etc. for MKV students in Special Ed or for students experiencing trauma.

~Lincoln School recently introduced a new therapy support dog to help enhance students' emotional well-being and create a more supportive learning environment. The dog, trained to provide comfort and companionship, will be available during the school day to assist students dealing with stress, anxiety, or other emotional challenges. Staff members report that the presence of the dog has already had a calming effect on many students, encouraging positive interactions and fostering a sense of safety and connection throughout the school.

IN CLOSING As we close out this edition of our newsletter, we encourage you to stay connected and involved in the incredible work happening across Will County. Your partnership continues to inspire our efforts and drive positive change in education. Be sure to look out for future updates, resources, and opportunities to engage with the ROE as we work together to support every learner's journey. Thank you for being a vital part of our educational community.

