Hello Advisory Board! Thank you to all who attended our last Virtual Advisory board meeting, it was wonderful to see everyone’s faces and hear what you have all been up to! For those of you who missed it, or those of you who are new to the group, you can find the minutes for the last meeting [here](#).

Our next meeting will be held on **Tuesday, February 9th** at 3:00pm - please [register here](#).

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CCS has 2 upcoming community food giveaways - the first is Saturday 1/16 from 10-1 in Waterville, and then the second is Wednesday 1/20 from 10-1 in Rome. See the below flyers for details.
Wednesday, 1/20
10:00am to 1:00pm
No entry permitted before 9:30am

All are welcome. You may pick up for another family, with a maximum of 2 households served per vehicle.
Staff will be available to assist in connecting you to needed resources such as medical/mental health, SNAP, medicaid/other insurance, dental, housing, etc.

If you have any questions please call 315-533-5723
Looking to support us? Find us on VENMO
@ConnectedCommunitySchools-RAE
or call 315-313-2451

December's Monthly Report:

DECEMBER 2020

As the year came to a close, the CCS crew continued working tirelessly to ensure our community families had their needs met for the holidays. We were once more humbled by the sheer amount of love and generosity that was so easily found and shared within the community, not just in the form of physical donations, but in stories, smiles, and moments shared.
Connected Community Schools Monthly Report – December 2020

Total Number of LiNK Referrals in Rome Since July 1 2020: 299  Total for December 2020: 37
Number of Unduplicated Students Supported by SSMV Services: 135

Individuals/Families Identified By School:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Schools</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>#-December</th>
<th>#-YTD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-K</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stokes</td>
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<td>Ridge Mills</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Joy</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gansevoort</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>RFA</td>
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Utilization

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<th>Year-to-Date</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>4647</td>
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<td></td>
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Pantry

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pantry</th>
<th>Households</th>
<th>Kids (0-17)</th>
<th>Adults (18-64)</th>
<th>Seniors (65+)</th>
<th>Total Individuals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Month</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>737</td>
<td>924</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>2130</td>
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Since the beginning of the closures, our pantry operations have served 13,379 families, and a total of 6,893 families from July 1 to December 30.
Community Schools effort achieves milestone

One million pounds and 277 days later, the local Connected Community Schools (CCS) initiative continues to conduct regular free distributions of food to help meet families’ needs during the many difficulties wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The food pantry program, launched last March by CCS in response to the COVID-19 situation, reached the millionth pound of food provided on Wednesday morning during a Holiday Food Giveaway from its location at the rear of Staley Elementary School.

It is an achievement, yet also a “sad milestone” that “speaks to the volume of need” at this time, said Melissa Rova, executive director of the Community Alliance spearheading CCS, while standing outside Staley and helping to hand out food-packed boxes to people in vehicles.

A long line of waiting vehicles, snaking around the school’s main parking lot and out the entrance to continue along Bloomfield Street, had already gathered before the 10 a.m. start Wednesday for the food distribution.

Among items given out Wednesday, said Rova, were a full chicken or ham, plus potatoes, stuffing, produce, pasta, fruit, eggs and cereals. The amounts equated to about five meals for each packed box.

Rova said over 400 vehicles were at the school for Wednesday’s food distribution, noting that an average of 400-500 vehicles typically have been appearing.

The CCS food giveaways at Staley previously had been at least once a week, but as of November are now once or twice a month.

The schedule change is for volume and sustainability, said Rova, noting the giveaways now involve more food but are less often. Anyone from the surrounding area is welcome to come.

The food distribution also includes locations within the Waterville, Dolgeville and Town of Webb school districts which are part of the CCS initiative in addition to Rome.

A CCS announcement said “each area has been served in varying degrees with food assistance and programming during the pandemic.”

The CCS Response Team, which “has been up and running since the announcement of the pandemic in March,” has been continually assisting families “with a multitude of needs including regularly distributing food,” the announcement noted.

“The CCSRT has assisted to date 55,000 unduplicated people with food assistance, 20% being senior citizens, 40% being children and an additional 20% being from outside the Rome area.”

The CCS initiative’s mission includes ensuring “every student’s needs are met in order for them to fully engage in their academic opportunities,” the announcement further said.
As we have done in years past, we set up our office as the Community Elves headquarters and had parents come in to “shop” for their children’s gifts. To abide by social distancing guidelines, we only allowed one individual from the family to enter the building, all present wore masks, and gloved staff members bagged the selected items for the parent, limiting the contact with the items.

In addition to gifts, families were also able to get laundry soap and quarters from the Rome chapter of Laundry Love and gift certificates to purchase groceries. Families were also offered follow up phone calls to further discuss any other needs they may have and were provided with a phone number to call if they need any additional assistance.

All families assisted through the Community Elves initiative were also able to participate in our December food giveaway.

**Success Stories**

This is a message one of our team members received from a parent we were able to assist with holiday gifts for the children:

“Thank you so much for all you are doing for us, you have no idea how much this truly means to us right now. You have helped bring my stress levels down and even my depression is better, this time of year is not a happy one for me anymore because 5 years ago today, my grandfather passed away in September, in May of 2017 plus [name] is the only one of 3 kids, Christmas is one of my hardest...”

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**Attention ALL Parents and Caregivers!**

**FREE!**

**The Triple P – Positive Parenting Program!**

*For caregivers of children/youth 0-12 years old*

*Registration is required*

*Groups will take place via Zoom*

*Attendance in all 4 groups is required*
Stay CONNECTED

To make sure everyone is in the loop, any information/data gathered can be shared with the Connected Community Schools Team. As far as food distribution and LINK referrals, that can be shared with our project manager, Miranda. We also want to keep in contact with all community resources, agencies, and services to guarantee up to date, real time information is being circulated into the Community and to our families. As any new information becomes available, please share it with the team! We will do our best to send out periodic emails to share anything that comes in, and we will also be sharing updates regularly on our Facebook page.

Stay well, we will keep you updated!
Melissa and Miranda

Community Response Team Helpline
315.534.5648 – call or text
315.982.2520 – call or text
Questions About Donations?
315.292.3250 – call or text

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