

Stay connected with McDowell

McDowell County is an American story that deserves a new chapter—one filled with promise, with goodwill, with the type of shared commitment that offers solid reasons to believe in a brighter future. Be a part of this historic partnership and show your support for McDowell's children and the greater community by joining the effort at www.ReconnectingMcDowell.org.

Broader Horizons mentors McDowell students

Reconnecting McDowell welcomed 19 new students to the Broader Horizons mentorship program, which is now in its second year. School counselors at River View and Mount View high schools select the program participants each year. The program provides students with a mentor, career development and college tours.

In January, the students spent a week in Charleston, W.Va., where they received communications training from the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and leadership development from former State Board of Education President Gayle Manchin. They were given a tour of West Virginia State University and the Capital Complex, and attended the governor's State of the State address.

Many of the students were excited to fly for the first time when they went to Washington, D.C., in June. They were hosted at the AFT national office, where they practiced public speaking, completed mock college applications and spoke with AFT President Randi Weingarten. The students were taken on a tour of Georgetown University, where they spoke with students from similar backgrounds about Georgetown's financial aid packages and what it was like adjusting to life in a big city. The students wrapped up their week in Washington with a tour of the national monuments and other attractions. Job shadowing was the highlight of both the Charleston and D.C. trips, with one student saying, "I saw myself in that career!" after visiting a sports management firm. In addition to learning about career opportunities and exploring various college options, the Charleston and D.C. trips exposed the mentees to new cultural experiences, travel, and a variety of restaurants and cuisines.



▲ Sen. Joe Manchin posed for a picture after talking with the students about various issues affecting West Virginia.



▲ AFT staffers Julie Washington and Leonard Edmonds lead a session on effective public speaking with Broader Horizons mentees.



▲ Broader Horizons students prepare for takeoff to Washington, D.C.

Oral Health Update

The McDowell Board of Education and the SMILE Initiative have collaborated to establish an oral health program, scheduled for implementation in October. Through this joint effort, students will have their teeth cleaned and sealed by certified dental hygienists.

Additional efforts have been made to improve oral health in West Virginia through a State Board of Education policy which recommends that students have a dental examination prior to school entry, starting with the 2015-16

school year. This policy will affect pre-K and kindergarten students for the first year of its implementation and students in grades 2, 7 and 12, respectively, in the subsequent three school years. A Vaccination Tab that monitors each student's vaccination record contains a module that also tracks which students have not received dental care within the previous six months. These students will then receive an in-school examination from a dental hygienist and follow-up care, if necessary. A training session on the program's

data-tracking component will take place by the end of October, so that community school facilitators can begin utilizing the database to coordinate dental examinations.

Reconnecting McDowell also is committed to its own Oral Disease Prevention Project, which will provide preventive services to children in the school setting. The project's goal is to help eliminate any barriers in accessing dental healthcare and to minimize lost instruction time.

Southside—now a community school

Southside K-8, in War, has completed its first official year as a community school under an Innovation Zone Grant from the West Virginia Department of Education. The school has a full-time site facilitator who coordinates the efforts of a variety of partners to successfully address the issues identified by the school steering committee. Southside is in the process of final procurement of oral health, social and emotional services for the upcoming school year. Through a series of grants and support from the state department of education, RESA 1 and the district, the school is set to have a fully functioning clinic in place by early fall. Southside is also prepared to start additional after-

school programs that include tutoring, physical activity and family engagement.

In an effort to expand community schools throughout the County, the Reconnecting McDowell team has met with officials from the McDowell Board of Education, as well as all of the school principals in the County to discuss the strategy and process of becoming a community school.

The district and AFT staff will be supporting both Mount View and River View high schools in the process of becoming community schools. Reflecting on the progress being made, Gayle Manchin notes, "This is exactly what the West Virginia Board of Education envisioned when it approved the Innovation Zone Grant to McDowell County."

SAVE THE DATES



Board and Partners Meetings

The next Reconnecting McDowell board meeting will be held Aug. 31 at Twin Falls State Park. The partner meeting will immediately follow and conclude on Sept. 1 at the Welch Armory.




D.C. Fundraiser

Sen. Joe Manchin and Gayle Manchin will hold a Reconnecting McDowell fundraiser on Sept. 24 in Washington, D.C. For more information, contact Leah Daughtry, ldaughtry@aftwv.org.

Expo

The next McDowell Expo will be held Oct. 3 at the Welch Armory. The Expo will provide resources and information on job opportunities and community services as well as offer health screenings for the community.

Social Media

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For a list of Reconnecting McDowell partners, visit <http://www.ReconnectingMcDowell.org/partners>

Want to get involved or learn more?

For more information about Reconnecting McDowell or to find out how you can get involved, contact Kris Mallory, kmallory@aftwv.org, or Debra Elmore at delmore@aftwv.org or 304-552-5766.