

A secure place for children and youth to rest and study is an essential need. Having a personal sense of security assists in their well-being and frees up valuable space in developing brains to focus on thriving rather than surviving. Parents and guardians want this for their children and youth but some temporary situations bring with them a greater need. **Camas CARES**. To assist families in providing this sense of well- being during a tough time, the Camas FCRC seeks to provide a greater sense of Community and a variety of Resources for Excelling Students.

Camas CARES: Community and Resources for Excelling Students

Camas CARES will come alongside all households who self-determine to create stability for their students. Camas CARES holds the fundamental value of being person-centered and will seek to understand what the parents and guardians determine is needed to attain and maintain stability and then work with the community at large: counselors, teachers, parents, Faith Based Organizations, City personnel, and businesses to find the specific resources that can help ALL families to thrive.

***When we lift others up, we ALL rise together.***

**Camas CARES relies on the proven “time and time again” generosity of the Camas community to share resources. Below is a variety of ways to provide resources. Choose one that comes most naturally for you – and that is all there is to it! 😊**

**RENT:** Assisting with short term rent or first and last month’s rent is a goal for the FCRC to achieve. If you are hosting a gathering, make it a rent party and encourage friends to make a donation. If we can raise $10,000-$15,000 for the school year, we can partner with a housing agency to assist 10-30 Camas families to find or maintain their housing. Ensuring a safe place to sleep and rest is the best thing we can do to ensure all students can excel.

**Home Repairs and Furniture:** Assisting with fix-it projects – like good lighting and comfortable desks and chairs – allows students a place to focus on being creative and doing their best thinking. If there are people in the community who can provide maintenance repairs for improving conditions that directly impact a student’s ability to sleep and study, that would also ensure all students can excel.

**Networking for Employment:** If you are stable in your work environment and can provide a short-term working situation where a parent or guardian can either add to their work experience or build their skills, this ensures the long term excelling of students. Households experiencing temporary instability benefit from a supportive connection during a time transitioning to increased stability and this ensures students can excel.

**Alleviating cost burdens by providing meals:** When households are severely cost burdened, the more of a relief it is to freely obtain the day to day essential needs to be able to save the household’s money for rent. When shopping for items for your family, consider picking up an extra to donate to the FCRC. Below is a list of essentials: healthy food options, hygiene products, and certain clothing items.

Pick up fresh protein or produce options and deliver to the FCRC on your way home from the grocery store (we have a fridge!): Fresh meat (beef, poultry, pork), eggs, milk, butter, cheese and snacking veggies: zucchini, tomatoes, cucumber, celery, carrots, avocados help students excel!

Pick up a few extra cans of tuna, chicken, or peanut butter or a bottle of olive or coconut oil

Make an extra meal and deliver it to the FCRC and we will find a family who needs it that day! (Now that will feel like community!)

Put together a meal kit and attach the recipe!

Pick up an extra: backpack, pack of undies, socks, shampoo, conditioner, liquid soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, a package of a feminine product, toilet paper, and paper towels.

**Building Morale with New or clean, gently used clothing**: When children and youth have access to what their peers have, they feel more like they belong. An essential part of Camas CARES is the communication of worth and value to our parents, guardians and students by proudly providing new or very clean, gently used, seasonal school clothing for school aged children and youth – (infant clothing or message t-shirts are not needed, for example. (It takes so much time to sort so we hope you will do the sorting for us!) If you are out shopping and find a sale on school shirts or pants or adult office wear, pick up more than one! 😊 Self-respect happens when a person feels supported by the community in a way that communicates their value and worth. This happens when they get to choose quality clothing and shoes and if they are able to attend the dance, afford the uniforms and the instruments. Students who feel like they belong are more likely to excel.

**Being creative because no one size fits all when it comes to essential needs**: Other services the FCRC may provide as it grows its networking and donor base is transportation for certain student appointments, simple auto repairs or oil or filter changes, gas cards, gift cards and new toys for holidays and birthdays, quarters for laundry and emergency child care or short-term tutoring in a certain subject.

**Camas CARES** exists to lighten someone’s load by a smile, an encouraging word and a timely resource so ALL of our community families and their students can thrive!! If you or someone you know is experiencing a severe cost-burden, there is no shame or judgement and you will be treated with respect. Access is FREE and ***by appointment*** from 8:00-4:30pm daily. (It is always suggested to call ahead first.) FCRC participants will be asked to fill out an optional and confidential survey so we can continue to identify gaps in service to Camas school district families.

*I sincerely hope you will come by so I can meet you in person and so you can talk about ways to participate. I’ll look forward to it!*

 – Brenda Schallberger, Camas FCRC Coordinator and Liaison to Households Experiencing Homelessness

Camas CARES

Community and Resources for Excelling Students

Family Community Resource Center \* 2033 NE Ione Street, Camas, WA 98697

Located at the Jack, Will and Rob Community Center