



MOVE THE MIDDLE

LIVE UNITED

Did you know there is a strong link between success in middle school and the high school graduation rate? In the Rock River Valley, one-third of ninth graders are not on track to graduate. Those without a high school diploma are far more likely to end up being arrested, living in poverty, or becoming homeless. By targeting middle school students, United Way is aiming to ensure the future prosperity of our community.

Research has shown that in order to alter the path of a student who is likely to become a dropout, you must identify that student and offer them assistance as early as in their middle school years. To accomplish that, United Way of Rock River Valley has implemented an Early Warning and Response System at Lincoln Middle School. That system provides resources to identify students who are at risk of becoming off

track. Known as the ABCs of disengagement – attendance, behavior, and course performance – our Achievement Advocates, United Way employees who work inside the school, use the Early Warning System to recognize students who are struggling with one or more of the dropout indicators, then assist those students in getting back on track. The goal is to one day offer similar programs at every middle school in our region.

The Early Warning System and our Achievement Advocates are just a few of the many ways United Way is guaranteeing the success of our community’s youth, and the continued promise and prosperity of the Rock River Valley. To learn more, go to unitedwayrrv.org/earlywarning.

\$292,000
is the lifetime cost of a high school dropout on a community due to the expenses of services and incarceration.

The smallest change makes the biggest difference. You can help Move the Middle by donating at unitedwayrrv.org or texting **MIDDLE** to **41444**.



United Way of Rock River Valley



IN ONE SCHOOL YEAR WE HAVE ...

- Implemented **Move the Middle** in Lincoln Middle School.
- Hired **United Way Achievement Advocates** to work with middle school students, parents, teachers, and United Way partners.
- Launched an **Early Warning and Response System** to identify struggling students and provide intervention and support.
- Funded **social-emotional intervention programming**, including individual trauma counseling, and an out of school suspension program, and social-emotional group therapy.

NOW MORE THAN EVER MIDDLE SCHOOLS NEED UNITED WAY ...

- Students may be returning to school with **symptoms of PTSD**.
- More middle school families are experiencing **unemployment, food instability, and evictions**.
- **COVID-19** is greatly **impacting academic success** of middle school students.

DID YOU KNOW ...

- **\$19,000** is the average income of a high school dropout.
- **24.8%** of high school dropouts live in poverty.
- **68%** of prison inmates don't have a high school diploma.

26 seconds

Every 26 seconds, a
student in the U.S. drops
out of school.

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United Way
of Rock River Valley