

## The Dream Bus: 2021 Update

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Thank you for your generous support for the Dream Bus in 2021. A partnership between the Dane County Library Service and Madison Public Library, this mobile unit serves to extend library service beyond our physical locations and offer accessible literacy programs to the residents of under-resourced neighborhoods in the Madison community.

With the onset of the Covid pandemic, the bus has been particularly valuable to the patrons it serves, providing access to books, free Wi-Fi, literacy activities, and makers projects for kids of all ages. This year, contributions helped expand the bus's

media collection, allowed for document translation into Spanish and English, supported the development of marketing materials, and more.

## Weekly Route

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While 2020 put a pause on much in-person activity, 2021 allowed for a return to many pre-Covid services and events. With that increase in mobility, the Dream Bus staff were happy to be able to resume pre-pandemic levels of service to their target benefitting communities, traveling to a variety of neighborhoods in Madisons each week.

During these stops, Dream Bus patrons signed up for library cards, browsed, checked out, and returned materials, placed and picked up holds, and used the available WiFi.

In 2021, the Dream Bus's schedule focused on schools and locations that offer after-school or out-of-school activities for kids, helping to build youth literacy skills and extend the library's reach. Over the course of the winter months, the Dream Bus weekly schedule has been tailored to visit 12 neighborhoods that serve not only Madison students, but also children from adjacent communities in Sun Prairie, Fitchburg, and Middleton-Cross Plains:



### **Mondays**

- Allied Drive Learning Center (2237 Allied Dr): 2:30pm-3:15pm
- Rolling Prairie Apartments (415 S Bird St, Sun Prairie): 4:00pm-4:25pm
- The Element Apartments (102 Park Circle, Sun Prairie): 4:30pm-4:55pm
- Vandenburg Park (1020 Vandenburg St, Sun Prairie): 5:00pm-5:25pm

### **Tuesdays**

- Monona Shores Apartments (2 Waunona Woods Ct): 3:00pm-3:45pm
- Leopold Elementary (2602 Post Rd): 4:00pm-5:00pm

### **Wednesdays**

- Mendota Elementary School (4002 School Rd): 2:45-3:45pm
- Kennedy Heights Community Center (199 Kennedy Heights): 4:00-5:00pm

### **Thursdays**

- East Madison Community Center (8 Straubel Ct): 3:00pm-3:45pm
- Sandburg Elementary School (4114 Donald Dr): 4:00pm-5:00pm

### **Fridays**

- Theresa Terrace Neighborhood Center (1409 Theresa Terrace): 3:00pm-3:30pm
- Wisconsin Youth Company (1201 McKenna Blvd): 3:45pm-4:30pm



## **Community Partnerships**



In addition to its regularly scheduled operations, the Dream Bus attends community functions to build awareness of library services and also offers event attendees the opportunity to sign up for library cards and check out books. Similar to resuming its pre-pandemic weekly routing, the bus also on hand more in-person events this year.

One of the bus's new partnerships in 2021 was with Madison's professional soccer team Forward Madison FC. Through this partnership, the Dream Bus was present at five soccer games over the course of the summer and fall.

Dream Bus attendance at Madison FC Games at Breese Stevens Field:

- Saturday, May 15 (first home game of the season)
- Saturday, June 12
- Saturday, July 24
- Saturday, September 11
- Saturday, October 30 (final home game of the season)

## Dream Bus & The Pandemic

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Shortly upon resuming its regular school stops this fall, Director of Dane County Library Services, Tracy Herold, was on hand to assist children at Mendota Elementary School during MSCR (Madison School and Community Recreation) afterschool programming. A group of kindergarten students were brought out to the bus, and Herold explained that the Dream Bus was a library on wheels. When she pressed further, Herold realized that these five-year-old students were unfamiliar with the concept of a library as they were too young to remember visiting the library prior to the pandemic.

Through this interaction, Herold was reminded of the important role this institution plays in children's lives. Among the many impacts Covid has had on kids, she noted how children have been missing the library and having the agency to pick their own books to read. Bringing the Dream Bus out in the community helps ensure children have access to media and literacy opportunities that are so important to their growth and development.

## Thank You

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Since the onset of the Covid pandemic, it has become clear that services such as the Dream Bus play a vital role in our community. The bus serves as an agile resource that can be directed to areas where it is most needed and serves patrons, in particular children, who may not otherwise have access to the library. Further, its presence at local events in and around Madison helps highlight the importance of literacy.

Given public reception, the Madison Public Library Foundation board has committed to securing funding for the Dream Bus for another four years, from 2022-26. We are grateful for your support and look forward to continuing to work with you to maintain this important resource in the years ahead.