Chapter One
Dear Red Wing Community Members,

We are proud to provide you with our inaugural update from Every Hand Joined. As you can see, the report is titled Chapter One. Like any book, chapter one is the beginning. And that's how we hope that you'll look at the information in the following pages – it’s the beginning and there's more to come.

On September 26, 2012, leaders from Red Wing Public Schools, businesses, non-profits, local governmental agencies and foundations came together to focus on Red Wing’s most important resource - its youth. These different entities believe that joining together, working collectively, they could have a greater impact upon Red Wing youth and the community’s future than working separately. Since that first meeting, Every Hand Joined has been committed to helping all children in Red Wing reach their full potential and be successful in life. This commitment runs from cradle to career.

For over twenty months, Every Hand Joined has worked deliberately to fulfill that commitment. We've defined five goals and launched five different networks comprised of stakeholders to work toward achieving those goals. To date, almost 100 community members are involved in this initiative and the number continues to grow.

As you page through this report, please understand that a few things make Every Hand Joined different from any other initiative that has preceded this in our community:

- **Collective Impact** – All organizations are working together, aligning their efforts toward a common goal, using the same data and constantly sharing information. Using collective impact, the sum is truly greater than the parts.
- **Data Driven** – All decisions are based upon data.

Data fuels Every Hand Joined. Decisions will only be made when the data supports that decision.

- **Long Term** – The work will never be complete. There isn’t an end date to this initiative. Every Hand Joined will be successful when it becomes part of our community’s DNA. Our community’s future will be built upon the success of our children, present and future.
- **StriveTogether Network** - Every Hand Joined does not operate in isolation. We are part of a nationwide network of communities working on cradle to career initiatives. As a member of the Strive Together Network, Every Hand Joined benefits from sharing best practices. We are able to take the lessons learned from other communities and implement them in Red Wing.

This is a very exciting time for Every Hand Joined. We’re very proud of the work that has been done so far. In a good book, chapter one sets the stage and gets you hooked. We hope that our Chapter One will help set the stage regarding the current status of our children and the work that must be done in preparing them for the rigors of the 21st Century economy.

Sometime in the near future there will be opportunities for you to become involved and help us write Chapter Two. If you’d like more information, please go to our web site. At the end of this document you’ll find easy actions that you can take today to help our young people. As you know, these young people are not only our future, they may be your kids, or my kids, but they’re most certainly all of our kids!

**Working together for a brighter future,**

Chap Achen, Jr. – Co-chair, Joe Jezierski – Co-chair, and Charley Nelson – Executive Director
“It takes a village to raise a child’ is an African proverb that comes to mind when thinking of the mission of Every Hand Joined. This organization is made up of Red Wing community members who are dedicated to helping all our children meet their full potential. EHJ brings diverse community organizations together and supports our children while creating a stronger, united Red Wing community. I am proud to be a member of Every Hand Joined. As a first grade teacher, I see the collaboration between the organizations and how it has positively affected the children with whom I work.”

Michelle Swanson, Sunnyside Teacher
Imagine the impact of a united community where the schools, parents, businesses and non-profits all come together to lift up the potential of all children. Children would thrive and have opportunity in a demanding and changing world. Imagine a stronger economy as a more dynamic workforce feeds growth and innovation.

For much of its history Red Wing saw little change as many children of its immigrant settlers remained and raised their families in the city of their birth. Red Wing encapsulated the American dream – a great school system prepared children for their future, a thriving local economy provided good jobs for those children as well as the opportunity to be economically better off than their parents were.

But the start of the 21st century saw Red Wing reflecting the changes that the country was experiencing – a challenging economy, changing demographics and a lingering concern that our children would not be better off than their parents are. In 2011, 10% of Red Wing residents were living at or below the poverty line. That’s over 1,600 Red Wing citizens. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau.) In the 2012-13 school year, 48% of our kindergarten students were eligible for the Free and Reduced Price Meal program. This issue alone is cause for concern as research shows that students from economically depressed circumstances enter school behind their peers and the gap widens over time.

Relative to metro communities, the level of racial diversity in Red Wing is low, but it is increasing. The issue is the lack of preparedness for a community that had, until recently, been highly homogenous. It is critical that we offer support to all of our students in a continually changing academic and shifting social environment.

“I have been fortunate to be a part of Every Hand Joined and its Early Childhood Network. Through this experience my eyes have been opened to the possibilities we have to collaborate with providers working with our youngest children. We are taking ‘baby steps’, but with purpose to bring together those who have the most impact on early learning. We have begun to think beyond our classroom and building doors and realize that we are much stronger as a community than we are alone.”

Patti Roberts, Sunnyside Elementary School Principal
Although our current graduation rate is slightly above the state average, each year we have students who don’t graduate from our high school on time. 40 years ago, a high school diploma was often enough to ensure economic stability as in 1973 only 28% of jobs in the United States required a post-secondary degree. But 40 years ago is history and the future will be a different place as it is estimated that by 2018, 70% of Minnesota jobs will require some type of a post-secondary degree. (Source: Governor’s Workforce Development Council, All Hands on Deck: Fifteen Ideas to Strengthen Minnesota’s Workforce.) That economic reality tells us that students who don’t graduate from high school seem destined to a lifetime of economic instability.

A student’s path to success begins with kindergarten readiness, followed by reading at grade level in third grade. Next on the path comes understanding eighth grade algebra. In high school, the path to success requires earning good grades as it allows a student to get into the college or technical training program of the student’s choice. The path to success requires more than just academic success, it also requires healthy families, after school programs, extracurricular activities, positive role models, and a community that supports and catches students when they falter.
To ensure that our children receive the support that they need and deserve, Every Hand Joined, with input from school district personnel and community leaders, has developed five goals and we will continually measure our impact upon these goals:

Our Goals

1. Kindergarten Ready
2. Social & Emotional Support
3. Academic Success
4. Post-High School Learning
5. Career Readiness

Every child is PREPARED for school
Every child is SUPPORTED inside and outside of school
Every child ENTERS some form of post-secondary education or training
Every child ENTERS a career
Every child SUCCEEDS academically

So how do our young people get the support they need on a path to academic success and a meaningful career?
Kids who are not ready for kindergarten start off as much as two years behind their peers who’ve benefited from high-quality early learning opportunities. Many of these kids never catch up, they eventually drop out of school, and they have a hard time succeeding in life. It’s critically important that we focus our collective energies to ensure our children are prepared to succeed when they take their first steps in their education.

In 2013, 81% or 164 of Red Wing kindergarteners attended preschool.

In the fall of 2013, in Red Wing, 19% or 39 of our kids were assessed as not ready for kindergarten.

In 2012-13, 31% or 62 Red Wing kindergarten students required additional support outside the classroom (not classified as special education).

In 2012, 60 Red Wing students attended Kindergarten Boot Camp. In 2013, with assistance from Every Hand Joined, 91 Red Wing students attended – an increase of 50%.

In 2013, 81% or 164 of Red Wing kindergarteners attended preschool.

Data provided by the Red Wing School District.

“Every Hand Joined is built around the idea that if we all work together on the same goals for kids - they will do better. It’s that simple. With five clear goals we will follow and support all our young people from cradle to career.”

Mike Melstad, YMCA Executive Director
To succeed in school and life, kids and teens need healthy and nurturing relationships with friends, family, and caring adults in school and the larger community. There is a strong link between these positive relationships and getting good grades and being hopeful about the future.

Every Hand Joined has implemented the Search Institute’s Developmental Asset Profile Assessment as a pilot program within seven local organizations. This assessment measures the skills, relationships, and behaviors that enable young people to develop into successful, contributing adults. Scores are ranked in one of four categories – Vulnerable; Challenged; Adequate; Thriving.

According to the Search Institute, “surveys of more than 4 million children and youth from all backgrounds and situations have consistently demonstrated that the more Developmental Assets young people acquire, the better their chances of succeeding in school and becoming happy, healthy, contributing members of their communities and society.” We’re working to enhance the skills, relationships, and behaviors that enable young people to develop into successful, contributing adults.

**Initial data from the Red Wing pilot programs in 2013:**

- 19 of 154 Red Wing students (12%) scored in the “Thriving” category (National Average is 11%).
- 85 of 154 Red Wing students (55%) scored in the “Vulnerable” and “Challenged” categories (National Average is 52%).

“We have an obligation to raise every single child in Red Wing so they have equal opportunities to prosper. It’s the right thing to do. Every Hand Joined has provided a platform for all parts of the community to come together to achieve this common vision.”

Dave Murphy, President and CEO Red Wing Shoe Co.
It's no secret that children who do well in school get on a college or technical training track that leads to earning a much better living than kids who don't graduate high school or get on that career track. And that track starts early. National research strongly suggests that it is critical for kids to be skilled readers by third grade as they shift from “learning to read” to “reading to learn.” Teens with hopes of getting good jobs need to develop strong math skills because college, technical programs and employers require them. Eighth grade math is the foundational piece for higher level math skills. Every Hand Joined is supporting efforts to improve these critical academic skills.

National research also shows that hungry children don’t thrive in school, nor socially or emotionally. They struggle to pay attention, they may act up and miss school, and their grades suffer.

Often called “the most important meal of the day,” eating breakfast has direct and indirect effects on educational outcomes. Every Hand Joined, working in conjunction with the United Way of Goodhue, Wabasha and Pierce counties, is also focused on increasing breakfast participation by students at Sunnyside Elementary and Red Wing High School.

The results below represent a statistical trend based upon test scores from the last 6 years. Historically, Red Wing 3rd Grade Reading proficiency scores are 2% above the state average.

“I firmly believe that Every Hand Joined will be a ‘game-changer’ for not only the young people it will positively impact, but also for the entire community. This long term initiative will help to continue to make Red Wing a great place to live, work and play. Investments now with Every Hand Joined will help create a productive and healthy workforce to insure economic viability into the future.”

Dan Massett, Senior Regional President at Merchants Bank
In 2012, 40 of 251 students did not graduate with their class. If these students do not receive their high school diploma, they each will miss out on potential earnings of $2,182,000 over their lifetimes and a potential $87 million impact upon our economy. (Source: Governor’s Workforce Development Council, All Hands on Deck: Fifteen Ideas to Strengthen Minnesota’s Workforce.)

Every Hand Joined is working with Southeast Technical College, the Workforce Center, Port Authority, Chamber of Commerce, and other organizations to unite forces in support of our high school students. We are also supporting the Red Wing School District’s commitment to Ramp-up to Readiness in 2014-15 - a program of the University of Minnesota designed to help students develop plans for post-high school learning and careers.

On average, 73% of Red Wing students enroll in higher education within one year of graduating high school. This is comparable to the state average at 72%. (Source: National Student Clearinghouse.)
According to a 2014 Pew Research Center analysis of census data, young adults with a high school diploma earned 62% of the typical salary of college graduates. High school graduates were more likely to live in poverty and be dissatisfied with their jobs, if not unemployed. It’s estimated that 70% of jobs in Minnesota will require a college or technical training degree by 2018. Our young people need our support to complete college and technical training so they can enjoy fulfilling careers.

The latest historical data from the National Student Clearinghouse shows that less than 50% of Red Wing High School graduates (Red Wing High School and Tower View Alternative High School) who attend post-secondary schools, complete their education and obtain a degree or certificate within 6 years.
“Have you ever known someone whose future seems to have been determined by fate? People with so many limitations that they don’t dare to dream big because their dream seems unreachable? When you are in school and your parents don’t speak English, or are not able to help you with homework, or are not as involved in school because they don’t understand the system, or can’t advocate for you, you feel you are disadvantaged. When you, the student, struggle to fit in, or struggle to understand what the teacher is saying because you haven’t mastered the language, you feel you will never make it.

Hispanic students attending Red Wing schools experience that, but thanks to Every Hand Joined, now they, too, can dream big. Every Hand Joined is a collaboration of various sectors of the community that have one thing in mind: help children reach their full potential. This way, the dream of one student becomes our dream: Red Wing’s dream for a brighter future for every child. This is why Every Hand Joined is so important to me. It’s not just the work of a few, it’s the entire community supporting our students, so they gain the knowledge and skills needed to fulfill their dream.”

Adriana Thuerauf, Owner Green Frog Translation and Interpretation Service
Like all of our kids, Every Hand Joined is a work in progress. We are so excited that the journey has begun. In the near future, look for opportunities to become engaged in Every Hand Joined. Please go to our web site for additional information and opportunities. You can find us at www.everyhandjoined.org.

“There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than the way in which it treats its children.”

Nelson Mandela
What can you do?

Parents
1. Read to and with your young children… every night!
2. Help with your child’s homework.
3. Take part and attend parent/teacher conferences.
4. Advocate for your child – if you have questions or concerns, contact your child’s teacher.
5. Take part in the activities that support your child; i.e. Kindergarten readiness, school concerts and plays, sporting events.
6. If you feel that there is something wrong with your child, ask.
7. Know your child’s friends.
8. Monitor your child’s grades.
9. Set achievable goals and expectations.
10. Constantly talk to your child about his/her future plans.

Business Leaders
1. Provide internships, apprenticeships and job shadowing opportunities for high school and college age students.
2. Share your career expertise with students.
3. Provide summer employment.
4. Mentor a student.
5. Participate in the Every Hand Joined process.

Community Members
1. Greet young people that you see on the street.
2. Mentor a young person that you know.
3. Attend school sponsored events like plays, concerts and sporting events.
4. Meet and get to know the kids in your neighborhood.
5. Contact the school for volunteer opportunities.