

Nazareth, School 9 deepen ties

Programs are being expanded with more college students involved

JAMES GOODMAN AND JUSTIN MURPHY

STAFF WRITERS

Nazareth College has deepened its involvement with School 9 in Rochester by expanding existing programs, with a larger number of college students involved in more ways.

The college has a longstanding relationship with School 9 in northeast Rochester. Expansion of the college's commitment comes in response to Rochester Superintendent Bolgen Vargas' call about a year ago for local colleges to help city schools.

Some of the changes took effect at the beginning of the school year. Other steps have yet to be taken.

"What is new is a more focused commitment in trying to help the school," said Craig Hill, dean of of the School of Education at Nazareth.

The partnership is not as wide-ranging as the one between the University of Rochester and East High School, but targets a similarly vulnerable group of students. More than a third of the 744 students at School 9 are English language-learners and 97 percent are considered economically disadvantaged, according to 2012-13 data.

Under the expanded partnership, announced Monday:

Nazareth has taken over running of a school tutoring program, which is after school at School 9 and School 54, and in the morning at School 46. Previously, this initiative was known as the Mercier literacy program, founded by local businessman George Mercier.

Nazareth athletes are now teaching School 9 students sports skills and will tutor them in reading.

"The men's and women's soccer teams have gone there and introduced soccer skills and will be teaching reading next semester," said Naomi Erdmann, who is director of graduate literacy program at Nazareth and has been a consultant with School 9 since 1995.

Nazareth's graduate literacy program will continue at School 9, with a college faculty member there twice a week and about 10 Nazareth graduate students in education helping with the tutoring.

This fall, School 9, in consultation with Erdmann, launched a program to help about 25 6thgrade students — 40 minutes a day, five days a week — develop reading skills.

Five Nazareth graduate education students are now working with teachers at School 9 to diagnose problems and tutor as part of the college's expanded commitment.

"We're building the momentum of getting help from across the community," Vargas said Tuesday. "Nazareth has students who are young and energetic, with great dreams for a great society. ... (The college) needs to be commended for its work." Nazareth also expects to have its health and human service programs at School 9. The collaborations could give hearing screenings with the Communication Science and Disorders program at Nazareth, provide a health and wellness program with the college's physical therapy students and practicums in pediatric nursing at School 9 and Baden Street.

"We want to focus on the immediate needs of students," Erdmann said.

JGOODMAN@DemocratandChronicle.com [Twitter.com/Goodman_DandC](https://twitter.com/Goodman_DandC) [@JMURPHY7@DemocratandChronicle.com](https://twitter.com/JMURPHY7) [Twitter.com/CitizenMurphy](https://twitter.com/CitizenMurphy)

