



BACK TO SCHOOL ISSUE 2022

VOICE OF THE VALLEY

THE RIVER VALLEY LOCAL SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER

From the Superintendent

It feels like summer break began just a couple of weeks ago, while for others, the summer may not have gone by fast enough. Either way, the buses will be rolling, and school will be back in session very soon. Our custodians, building and grounds supervisor, and summer workers have done a tremendous job making our buildings and grounds look great for the coming school year. We cannot wait for our staff, students, parents, and community to see the improvements. As we prepare for the start of a new school year, below are a couple of the projects completed over the summer, as well as some safety updates:

Media Center Upgrades:

Liberty and Heritage Elementary: The library/media centers in each building have been refreshed with new flooring, seating, and tables, transforming them into Innovation Labs. Most of these upgrades were made possible utilizing 21st Century and other grant funds.

All K-5 students will be able to use these Innovation Labs, providing extension and hands-on activities in the areas of Science, Math, and Social Studies. K-5 students will still be able to check out books during their scheduled time of science extension lessons, but many books have been shifted into the classrooms, so students have daily access to more of these valuable resources.

River Valley Middle and High School: The library/media centers have also been upgraded with new flooring and furniture to create an open footprint, allowing for a more inviting space. Teachers claimed some books to build classroom libraries, while books and resources that are regularly checked out will remain in the library/media center. These upgrades were possible using the federal Elementary/Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) grant dollars.



Safety:

Earlier this year, the nation witnessed what unfolded at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas. This tragedy is a reminder that the safety of our students, staff, and community is our top priority at River Valley Schools. Stay tuned for an update from River Valley Schools in the coming weeks where we will highlight safety strategies in our schools. As we begin a new school year, we remind all students, parents, staff, and community members to remember the phrase: "See Something, Hear Something, Say Something."

Let's have a great school year!

Adam Wickham - RV Schools Superintendent

CELEBRATE THE START OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

THE 2022 VIKING BASH

Friday, August 19, 4:30 – 6:00pm
River Valley High School Campus
(Between the Middle School and Tennis Courts)



- Free Hot Dogs & Bratwurst
- Apparel Vendors & Kona Ice
- Bouncy House

PLUS - Kids PreK-5th Grade get a free football game ticket w/ parent ticket purchase

SCH  L
NURSE
NOTES



As we return to school for the 2022-2023 school year, I find myself once again reviewing vaccination records for our students. Did you know that the state requires students to have a current vaccination record or vaccination waiver on file to attend a public school? This is why those documents are requested when your child registers for school. As the years pass and boosters are recommended, we need to review our records for the health and safety of our students. If you have a student entering Kindergarten, 7th grade, or 12th grade specifically, please check with your physician to be sure your child is up to date with their vaccines. Please submit an updated copy of your child's vaccination record or a vaccination waiver to the school **before October 1st**. I appreciate your cooperation with this matter and look forward to a safe, healthy school year.

Melissa Bollinger, RN - School Nurse

BACK TO SCHOOL TIPS

There is a lot we can do to bolster our children's feelings of confidence and security as they head into a new school year. Coming back to school can bring lots of stressful changes. Some students worry about attending a new building, changing back to a busy schedule, and having a new teacher or new teachers. Here are ways to get in the back-to-school mindset and cope with any anxieties or emotions.

- 1 Create a first week of school planner.
- 2 Validate the child's worry by acknowledging that, like any new activity, starting school can be hard but soon becomes easy and fun.
- 3 A week before school starts, begin back to school year routines at home. i.e earlier bedtimes, waking up
- 4 Talk with your child about school routines and what happens before and after school.
- 5 Before school starts, arrange time to spend with school peers to help improve emotional adjustment.

Treasurer's Talk

General Fund. Bond Fund. Classroom Facilities Maintenance Fund. Have you ever wondered what these terms mean?

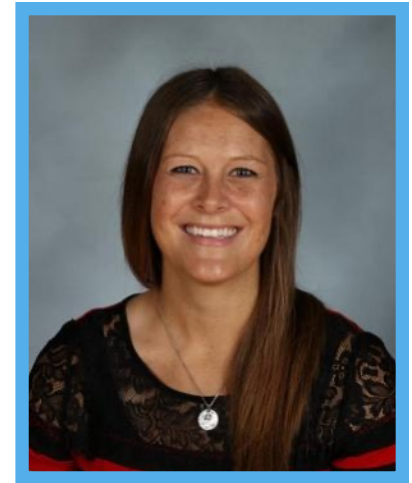
In Ohio, school districts receive funding from the state and local communities. State funding makes up approximately 39% of our revenue, while local community support makes up the remaining 61%. Local revenues come from real estate taxes and the earned income tax levy for residential and commercial property owners in our district. Additionally, we received federal grant funds to help cover unexpected expenses related to COVID-19. This additional funding has allowed us to improve our facilities and increase educational opportunities while also protecting and supporting our students and staff through the pandemic.

At home, we pay our bills through our checking or savings accounts. School districts pay our bills out of something called funds. River Valley has three main funds related to our state and local revenues. These funds are the general fund, classroom facilities maintenance fund, and the bond retirement fund. General fund expenses are for things like instructing students, student support, and transportation. The bond retirement fund is for repaying the bond we used to construct our buildings in 2001. The classroom facilities maintenance fund is connected to the bond and accounts for less than 1% of River Valley's total expenses paid for district-wide building and facilities maintenance.

Our bond repayment will conclude in 2023, which means we will no longer have the bond retirement fund or the classroom facilities maintenance fund as revenue streams. To help us plan for this date, we created a capital improvement plan to estimate the annual, as well as long-term, expenses we will incur related to ongoing facilities maintenance projects, technology, furniture and equipment replacement, school bus replacement and any other expenses that will have a useful life of at least five years.

One of the projects on the capital improvement plan is new roofs for our buildings. As we continue to face frequent leaks and general roofing issues, this project will need to be a priority in the near future. The roofing project alone is estimated to cost over \$3.9 million.

Being fiscally responsible has a direct benefit to our residents and business owners. We are always looking for ways to save money or find creative revenue streams, such as grant funding, to save our taxpayers' money. Over the last few years, district employees have worked diligently to reduce overall expenditures. As a result, our revenues have outpaced expenses for two years in a row. With the continued support of our community and strong fiscal stewardship from our staff, we can continue to expand the opportunities we provide our students, prepare for future large-scale projects, and support our day-to-day expenses.



Brittany Keller
RV Schools Treasurer

Did you know that roughly 74% of our general fund expenditure budget is spent on instruction, pupil support and instructional support?

Did you know that our last school levy passed was our 1% earned income tax in 2019. Prior to that, the last levy was a renewal in 2017

OPEN HOUSE

DATES AND TIMES

LIBERTY & HERITAGE

OPEN HOUSE

MONDAY, AUGUST 15TH

4:30PM-6:00PM

MIDDLE SCHOOL

OPEN HOUSE

6TH GRADE ONLY

MONDAY, AUGUST 15TH

5:30PM-7:00PM

MIDDLE SCHOOL

MEET THE TEACHER

7TH & 8TH GRADE ONLY

TUESDAY, AUGUST 23RD

5:30PM-7:00PM

HIGH SCHOOL

OPEN HOUSE

TUESDAY, AUGUST 16TH

5:30PM-7:00PM

Tips to Having a Great School Year

A new school year brings new experiences, friendships, and learning to your child. It is a team effort to help guide and support students through this journey. Here are some tips to help your child have a successful school year:

Keep to a routine.

Make sure you set a bedtime and morning routine for your child. This will help him/her get a restful night's sleep and be ready for school in the morning.

Encourage learning at home.

Encourage your child's interests and support their explorations. Fostering learning is one of the best ways to equip your child for life.

Praise your child's efforts.

Learning new things can sometimes be challenging and frustrating for your child. Praise and encourage your child even when things may be difficult.

Have fun.

A full day of learning at school can be tiring for your child. Make sure to have fun and allow your child to play at home. Downtime is much needed for your child.

Food Service News

Summer Food Program

Our summer lunch program had another successful year. Although it looked different than in the past couple of years, we were still able to provide over 6,000 delicious and nutritious meals to children in our communities. The Lunch Bunch did a fantastic job balancing the bumps of program restrictions, hot weather, and rainy days and had a blast serving all the kids that came out. Thank you for sharing your summer with us! I also want to send out a heartfelt thank you to all our community partners that came out and provided many fun activities for all our kids. Without you and these activities, a summer program could lose steam very quickly.



Universal Free School Meals Have Ended

The USDA program that has allowed us to serve free meals to all students has officially come to an end. As we begin our 2022-23 school year, I want to be sure everyone realizes we will be charging for school meals. As in the past, we strongly encourage each household to fill out an Education Assistance Application (formerly called free and reduced meal application) as soon as possible. Only those who complete this application and meet the guidelines will be eligible for waived or discounted fees associated with lunches, school fees, and athletic play to participate fees (potential savings of up to \$1650 for one student, depending on the grade and involvement of the student). You can find these applications in the Food Service section on our website (rvk12.org) under Departments. You can also pick up a paper application from any building office, or at any of our Lunch Bunch summer food sites during meal service.

Fresh, Flavorful, & Fun

As our food service department moves towards the more traditional focus of account balances and filling out applications, our cafeteria staff members are determined to make our meals anything but "traditional school meals." We will continue with our fresh-made hot breakfast sandwiches every day for breakfast at the middle and high school, our pop-up iced coffee bar at the high school, and continue our push to provide fresh vegetables and salads in all of our cafeterias. In addition to those, you will see a few new things such as the addition of a new state-of-the-art air frying oven in November, a serve yourself, fresh fruit bar by spring time, some great new recipes that will wow your taste buds, and we can't forget a few tasty treats at dessert time.



Microfarming Coming to RV!

Throughout the school year, you will begin to see River Valley's very own microfarm take shape on our high and middle school campus. This will allow us to serve fresh produce in our cafeterias year round (it will not get any fresher than this). Our goal is for our students to have the very best foods available, even if it means we grow them ourselves. Leading River Valley's microfarm will be Brittany Mantey. With her joining our food service team in June, Brittany and I have partnered with the Marion Microfarm project from the beginning and taken advantage of the training they are providing through The Ohio State University. This training, along with Brittany's personal experience in RV's FFA program during her high school career, her experience in her family garden, and on her and her husband's family-owned farm, will give us the cutting edge necessary to be a success. **Welcome back, Brittany!**



Congratulations 2021-22 Retirees!



Larry Criswell
30 years



Sue Jacobs
25 years



Karen Heffley
28 years



Jay Woodruff
19 years

Transportation News!

Hi! I'm Trista Thorpe, the new Transportation Supervisor. I was a bus driver for the last six years at River Valley and have lived in the district with my husband of 12 years, Adam, and our three children, Olivia, AJ, and Owen.



Our bus routes have been updated for the 2022-23 school year. Liberty has combined a route, and a new route has been added at Heritage. Please be patient with the busing at Heritage as the 529 and 98 roundabout construction continues. This project will cause routes to be longer. This construction project, combined with the beginning of school, may add more delays. Since we utilize FinalForms for all our transportation needs, I would greatly appreciate it if you could update your transportation forms before August 15th.



Welcome to the new full-time drivers, Justine Hill & Lori Miller! A couple of drivers retired last year, Larry Criswell and Jay Woodruff. We wish them the best in their retirement!

The Transportation Department will get two new buses this year. We hope to see these new vehicles on the road sometime in October.

Welcome to the 2022-23 School Year!

On behalf of the River Valley Local Schools staff, I am thrilled to welcome you to the 2022-23 school year. We look forward to another exciting school year and have plans to ensure that our children here at RV will have every opportunity to reach their highest potential possible. We recognize that for all this to happen, we need to support our students both at home and at school. A strong partnership between us is vital and will significantly impact your child's education. We equally share responsibility for our children's growth educationally, emotionally, and personally, and I want you to know that we will do our very best to carry out our responsibility.



Donald W. Gliebe
Director of
Instruction & Assessments

We invite you to guide and support your child's learning by ensuring your child:

- Attends school daily
- Reads daily to develop a love for reading
- Completes home assignments on time as given by the teaching staff
- Knows that you support them and you expect them to give their best effort.
- Understands that EVERYTHING you do at home and that we do at school matters.

As a parent, please communicate with us whenever you have questions. Talk with your children about their day at RV. Stay involved in your child's school in as many ways as you can. The more active you are in their education, the more they will take it seriously. I am privileged to be a part of this RV community, and I am excited to see the bright future that is being offered to our 2000 students.

Heritage Elementary

Welcome Back to the 2022-2023 School Year

We hope everyone had a wonderful and relaxing summer! It is hard to believe that the 2022-2023 school year is right around the corner. At Heritage Elementary, we are excited to kick off another great year and have lots of exciting changes for the year. Our teachers, support staff, and custodians have been hard at work throughout the summer getting everything ready for a new year, and we are excited to get another year kicked off!

FinalForms & Student Information

Throughout the year, Heritage Elementary will primarily use email, text, and phone to contact you and keep you up-to-date regarding things occurring at the school/district. To make sure you are receiving this information, it is vital that you update your FinalForms account with any changes to your contact information. Also, other important documents are provided in this account, such as photo release permission, field trip permission, and additional critical information regarding your child. Please be sure to keep your child's information current in Final Forms throughout the school year.



Mel Comstock
Heritage Principal

Welcome to Heritage

The following are new staff members that we would like to welcome to Heritage Elementary for the 2022-2023 school year:

Devan Cox - Kindergarten Teacher

Katie Herdman - Student & Family Support Provider

Lisa Rinker - Kindergarten Teacher

Melissa Shirley - Intervention Specialist

Amy Stauffer - Kindergarten Teacher

Natalie Darst - Second grade

Student & Family Support Provider

For the 2022-2023 school year, we have made a change to the school counselor position at Heritage Elementary. Katie Herdman will be our Student and Family Support Provider for the Heritage Elementary Community. Mrs. Herdman brings with her 25 years of varied

experience in the areas of children's services, education, and the medical field. She is excited to be joining our team and will be a great asset for the students and staff. Mrs. Herdman will continue to support our students through classroom lessons, small group instruction, and one-on-one meetings with students, while also helping our families and providing resources and guidance for additional community needs. Welcome to the staff, Mrs. Herdman!

Open House

Open House for the upcoming school year will be held on **Monday, August 15, 2022, from 4:30-6:00 p.m.** Open House provides families with the opportunity to discover who their child's teacher will be and to tour the building and classrooms. Open House is also an excellent opportunity for you to bring in your child's school supplies to lighten their backpacks on that first day of school. We hope to see everyone there!

Liberty Elementary

Welcome back to the 2022-2023 school year! We are gearing up for another great year and want to give you an update on some important changes in our building.

First, we would like to invite you to our Open House on Monday, August 15th from 4:30-6:00 p.m. At that time, you will be able to tour the building and classroom, receive important forms and kick off the year. You may also bring your child's school supplies in at this time.

- Please make sure before coming to Open House that you have updated all of your contact information in FinalForms.
- We will be asking that parents use Open House to visit classrooms. Once the school year begins, parents will not be able to walk students into the building. We will have staff available to help students find their rooms on the first few days of school.

We also have some items that we would like to inform you of prior to Open House:

- School fees are \$40.00 for the 2022-2023 school year. Please make sure you have paid your balance before the end of the first nine weeks.
- Students will need to bring their Chromebook and charger back to school with them on the first day.
- Students may receive a small amount of homework throughout the school year. We also encourage students to read nightly for 20 minutes to continue to build those reading skills.
- We will be continuing to go paperless this year. Newsletters, school announcements, etc. will be emailed to parents and information is always current on our school's web page at www.rvk12.org.
- Drop off/Pickup- We will continue our drop off / pickup procedures that we had in place last year. Cars may line up in the morning along the curb, but students may not exit the vehicles until 9:00 am. We will begin dismissal of car riders at 3:40 each afternoon.
- We have been working hard over the summer to transition from a traditional library to an Innovation Lab for our students. Please make sure you check out our new space during the open house. Our renovations were made possible through the use of grant funds.
- Gentle start this year is for kindergarten students only. The students will attend their first day based on the child's last name.
 - August 17- Kindergarten last names A-F
 - August 18- Kindergarten last names G-M
 - August 19- Kindergarten last names N-Z
 - All kindergarten students will attend starting August 22, 2022

Preschool gentle start will be communicated by the classroom teachers. All students in grades 1-5 will start on August 17, 2022.

These are just a few of the exciting things that will be occurring during this school year. Please stay tuned for more to come.



Sandy Richards
Liberty Principal

RV Middle School

I hope everyone has been able to enjoy summer break, and your students have been able to recharge before coming back to school in a few weeks.

Open House/Meet the Teacher :

August 15th - 6th grade Open House - 5:30pm - 7pm

6th Grade students will get your schedule from your Viking Period teacher and can drop school supplies off in your Viking Period teacher's room. You will get your locker on the first day of school and have time to set up your locker that day as well. You are able to move throughout the building and meet your teachers at your own pace.

August 23rd - 7th & 8th Meet the Teacher - 5:30pm - 7pm

7th & 8th Grade students will get their schedules and locker with combinations on the first day of school. This date is for the parents to move through their student's schedule. During this time you hear from your students' teachers about what will be covered in class. There will be a brief Q&A session with each teacher.



Mike Davis
RVMS Principal

Social Emotional Curriculum (SEL)

This year we will take our Social Emotional learning a bit farther than we did last year. We will be implementing Second Step to our curriculum during Viking Period. The Second Step (SEL) Curriculum will: provide an extra dimension to education, focusing on improving cooperation, communication, and decision-making. In a world where emotional intelligence is critical for happiness, successful careers, and healthier relationships, SEL gives students a framework to developing these skills.

PBIS

We will be continuing our Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) this year. Each morning, students will be reminded to demonstrate their P.R.I.D.E. Viking P.R.I.D.E. at the middle school stands for being **P**ositive, being **R**espectful, living with **I**ntegrity, making a **D**ifference, and expecting **E**xcellence. Staff members nominate students every month for exhibiting one or more of these values.

New Staff

- **Brooke Scheff** and **Aaron Berg** will be our new 7th grade ELA teachers. Both are first year teachers with a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm for learning.
- **Anna Moore** will be taking over as our new 7th grade SPED teacher. She is a veteran teacher and is coming from Marion City.
- **Michelle Owings** will be switching roles. She previously was a 7th grade ELA teacher and will now be taking over teaching Career Explorations to 6th - 8th grades.
- **Rachel Osborne**, while not new, will be coming back to RVMS as our building substitute teacher.

Our staff is working tirelessly to prepare our building and classrooms for the upcoming school year, and we look forward to making this year a memorable one!

RV High School

Greetings River Valley Families,

Hope this finds that you have all had a wonderful summer!

First of all, I would like to welcome our new students, incoming Freshman, and our returning high school students and their families to the high school for the 2022-23 school year. It is always an exciting time as we prepare for the start of school and having the students back on campus for the preparation of their various fall activities. We encourage you to come and support our students in these endeavors across campus.

During the summer months the Buildings & Grounds staff and custodians have been working hard to prepare the facilities for the start of the year. I would like to share my appreciation for all their efforts. A big change that has taken place this summer is the renovation that our River Valley High School Media Center received. Through the use of federal grant dollars, we were able to purchase new furniture and flooring for this space. Students now have an enhanced environment for their independent studies and/or classes for collaborative learning opportunities

This year at the high school we will have a few new faces on staff and I would like to welcome those individuals. Joining our Ag Science staff will be Madeline Elfrink. Miss Elfrink will be teaching our Food Science courses. Also joining the high school staff this year is Kaitlin Mabrey. Mrs. Mabrey, a River Valley graduate, will be our new Band Director for the 5th – 12th grades.

With the start of school quickly approaching, I wanted to highlight a few important upcoming events occurring at the high school.

- Tuesday, August 16th – Open House at the high school from 5:30 – 7pm
- Wednesday, August 17th – First day of school for 9th grade students only
- Thursday, August 18th – All high school students in school
- Friday, August 19th – Viking Bash 4:30 – 6:00pm & the first home Football game vs. Upper Sandusky

Again, I look forward to seeing our students and staff back in the buildings as we get the 2022-23 school year started. Go Vikes!



Barry Dut
RVHS Principal



RV Athletics & Activities

Each year as we approach the beginning of fall sports and the school year, I am more and more impressed with the support our students receive from our community. Over the course of the summer, numerous projects and improvements have been made to our athletic facilities, thanks to the generosity of our boosters club and our partnership with OhioHealth Sports Medicine.

New soccer goals were installed in the soccer stadium, and repairs were made to our all-weather track. In addition, our middle school gym floor was repainted and will look great for the upcoming volleyball season. The high school gym had its annual maintenance completed and some repairs were made to the floor as well as we wrap up the repainting project.

The 2nd annual River Valley Athletic Boosters car show was a great success again this year, raising nearly \$10,000 for our booster club. A

special thanks and shout out to Jessica Rowe and her family for taking the lead on the car show, and putting together a

wonderful event for our community to enjoy. We have already begun planning the 2023 car show. Thanks as well to our booster club for their continued work in supporting our student athletes through their countless hours of volunteer work.

Shifting focus to the upcoming year, we are going to have a great fall season. Parents should be looking for numerous updates coming from the athletic department, particularly if you have a fall sports athlete at the high school or middle school level. As always, feel free to contact the 7-12 athletic department at 740-725-5806, or by

email at: tstout@rvk12.org.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone at a game this fall,

Go Vikes!





**River Valley Local Schools
Board of Education Members**

PRESIDENT- DON RENGERT

VICE PRESIDENT- CHERYL BEINEKE

STACI GLENN-SHORT

ROBERT STUMP

BEN ALBRIGHT

River Valley Administration Office

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Heritage Elementary

740-725-5500

Liberty Elementary

740-725-5600

River Valley Middle School

740-725-5700

River Valley High School

740-725-5800

**“The cure for boredom is curiosity. There is no
cure for curiosity”**

– Dorothy Parker