

THE RIVER VALLEY NEWS

GREAT THINGS ARE HAPPENING IN THE RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT!

SPRING 2023

World of Work

“What do you want to be when you grow up?”

Ask kids of any age, and you'll get answers ranging from astronauts to zoologists and everything in between. But how do we help our kids find their place in the world?

This school year, the River Valley School District introduced the World of Work (K-12) career framework.

“The Wow Framework makes a difference for students because it cultivates career development and pathways to gainful employment starting in kindergarten. Wow gives our students early exposure to different career options at a young age based on their strengths, interests, and values.”

– Philip Martell,
River Valley Superintendent

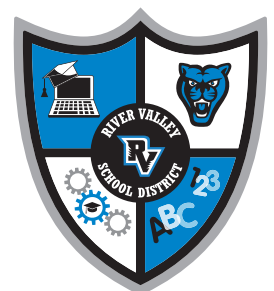
The World of Work incorporates Dr. John Holland's RIASEC test that asks students questions about their aspirations, activities, skills, and interests in different jobs to help them discover careers and fields of study that will help them find a career pathway that matches their strengths and interests. RIASEC stands for Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Entrepreneurial, and Conventional. If you are a parent, you may have heard your child talking about their RIASEC personality codes. The RIASEC model helps students identify career paths based on their aptitudes and interests.

Learning about existing job opportunities, creating relevance to the real world, and enabling students to map their educational goals to their possible future selves maximizes their investments in post-secondary education and the workforce. With the World of Work framework, students gain experience centered around six careers per grade level. The exposure to different careers helps each student follow a path where their strengths, interests, and values are needed in the workplace. World of Work helps every student see that no matter their skill set, every skill set is valuable, and every person has a place in their community and in the workforce that is needed.



Students explore the circulatory system with HoloLens mixed reality technology.

Career-driven learning continues at the River Valley STEAM Academy. This school year, RVSD launched workforce development programs in Electrical Occupations, Cybersecurity, Esports, and Sports Medicine and Rehabilitative Therapy. In 2023-2024, the STEAM Academy will offer five additional programs — Powerline, Welding, Teacher Preparation, Pathways to Health Professions, and Biomedical Engineering. “It’s really important to give students many opportunities for career paths,” said Ms. Melissa Milanak, Cybersecurity Instructor at the STEAM Academy.



Putting Their Best PAWS Forward at Blairsville Elementary

Students have been showing off positive behavior all year thanks to the **PAWS** program, Blairsville Elementary's Positive Behavior initiative. The schoolwide program has energized students and staff with a proactive approach to promoting positive behavior.

The PAWS program kicked off with a pep rally in the fall with special guests, including the high school band, cheerleaders, and school mascot, Prowler the Panther. Students participated in fun games and activities and worked with Ms. Heather Hartmann to create a video demonstrating positive behavior.



The PAWS program asks students to Be **P**repared, **A**ct Respectfully, **W**ork Together, and **S**tay Safe. Since the program started, students have become more mindful of their environment and their place in their school community.



When students demonstrate positive behavior, they are awarded **PAWS** tickets by teachers, bus drivers, custodians, and cafeteria workers. When Math Specialist, Mrs. Jessica George, hands out **PAWS** tickets during school lunch periods, all of the students cheer for the winners.

"Students are noticing each other's positive behavior and celebrating kids who set a good example."

– Mrs. George

Parents receive a **PAWS** postcard in the mail if their child gets a ticket, and each student who earns a ticket is entered into a weekly drawing. Winners can shop at PAWS Mart for prizes donated by the PTO and with funding from a River Valley Education Foundation grant.

This fall, BES aimed to reach 300 PAWS tickets, and the students exceeded expectations by earning 484 tickets!

They celebrated with a movie day, complete with popcorn from the PTO. **Since the beginning of the program, the students have earned a total of 1,442 tickets.** They are looking forward to celebrating again this spring!

Saltsburg Elementary Students Build Rube Goldberg Machine with Carnegie Mellon University

Saltsburg Elementary is immersing students in a mixed reality project with the help of Carnegie Mellon University's Entertainment Technology Center. Saltsburg Elementary and other schools in the Pittsburgh area are participating in a special event from 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. on May 17, 2023 – [ETC K-12 Presents: "How to Hydrate a Parched Spectre"](#) - The one and only visible and invisible XR Goldberg Machine that exists!

Each school will build part of a Rube Goldberg machine, a chain reaction contraption that makes a simple task comically more complex. Inspired by the work of American cartoonist Rube Goldberg, the devices challenge us to think outside the box when it comes to technology and engineering. CMU's Entertainment Technology Center will bring each school's physical Rube Goldberg machine to life with a playful story and extravagant technological innovations creating an immersive experience that solves the mystery of how to get a ghost to drink a glass of water.

Mrs. Carly Hruska and a group of students are constructing the SES Rube Goldberg Machine in the elementary's SMALLab. The SMALLab is a 3D mixed reality learning environment where students actively engage their minds and bodies to learn. It is an approach to teaching called embodied learning. The project will explore waveform synthesis and infrared positioning systems, bringing high-tech magic to the Saltsburg classrooms.



Keep an eye on the [RVSD Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) pages for details on how to see the Rube Goldberg machine in action on May 17 during [Remake Learning Days](#).



Introducing the CNX Mentorship Academy

River Valley High School students have a new opportunity with the CNX Mentorship Academy this school year. The program creates excitement for the region's career opportunities and builds the skills to pursue those careers. Students develop relationships with peers and business leaders throughout western Pennsylvania with visits to local companies where they cultivate their skills in leadership, teamwork, career readiness, resume building and interviewing, and business etiquette.

Currently, 12 RVHS students are participating in this unique program. Students traveled to CNX Headquarters, Richhill Rig 87, ChemStream, Eaton, Howard Hanna, Operating Engineers Local 66, and the Pittsburgh International Airport. The site visits are tailored to student interests, and four students have expressed interest in pursuing a career at CNX as a result of their experiences in the Mentorship Academy.

"The Mentorship Academy has been an outstanding program for students. The Academy provides experiences and learning beyond the classroom that inspires and supports their future endeavors."

- Mr. Michael Leasure,
River Valley High School Principal



River Valley School District
102 School Lane
Blairsville, PA 15717

Pennsylvania State Police Presentation Series Comes to River Valley Middle School



River Valley Middle School welcomed Corporal Aaron Allen, Heritage Affairs Liaison Officer, from the Pennsylvania State Police. Corporal Allen and Trooper Tristan Tappe presented to sixth, seventh, and eighth grades on essential topics relevant to middle school students.

The assemblies started this fall with Corporal Allen and his team discussing bullying prevention, social media awareness, internet safety, and cell phone responsibility. Next in the series was a drug awareness program in January and a presentation on Diversity in April. Corporal Allen's spring presentation focused on empowering students with topics on adversity, life skills, and integrity. The interactive and engaging programs provide students with resources and valuable information to help them make positive choices and be good citizens of their school community.



Congratulations to the River Valley Girls Basketball team on a historic and memorable season as **PIAA 3A State Championship Runners-Up!**



National Honor Society students help RV board members Connie Constantino, Mary Whitfield, and Tim Canzano load cases of water for the Hydrate Our Heroes Fundraiser.