



VOICE OF THE VALLEY

THE RIVER VALLEY LOCAL SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER - SUMMER 2023 ISSUE

River Valley Community,

It is an exciting time as our students and staff celebrate the end of another successful school year! The month of May was chock full of numerous student events, and in this edition of the Voice of the Valley, you will see and read about many of these activities. You'll see pictures throughout this edition of our newsletter showing end-of-year events. We are proud of the work of our staff and the growth our students have shown this academic year.

As we move into summer, we look to the future of planning for our district. The May 2nd election result leaves the district in a difficult position, needing to choose between maintaining programs for our students and addressing the maintenance needs of our 20-year-old buildings. The critical state of our facilities combined with the election outcome has caused us to not fill some vacant positions for next year. Unless the financial outlook at RV changes, we will be forced to make more significant changes for the 2024-25 school year, which will undoubtedly have a negative impact on our students.

The physical upgrades needed for our buildings and facilities will continue to be a significant need in our district. Although the issues on May 2nd were defeated, the need still remains. Our roofs and heating and cooling systems (HVAC) are the greatest of these. These systems are two decades old and are showing increased signs of age. On March 30th, a significant section of the roof on the high school was torn off. The pictures here show this damage and include a visual of our Middle School HVAC system. We will continue to provide updates to our community on the plans for the future. Enjoy this edition of the Voice of the Valley, and we hope you have a great summer!

Go Vikings!
Adam Wickham
Superintendent



Field Trip to the Marion Palace Theater to hear from best selling author, Margaret Peterson Haddix



High School Roof Damage on March 30th



Middle School HVAC system

High School Highlights

As the school year wrapped up, there were many activities that have took place over the last few weeks. I want to take this opportunity to highlight some of those events.

The high school musical "Mean Girls" was held April 14th, 15th & 16th. The students and staff that participated and helped put the performance on did an excellent job, which was very well attended. I would like to thank those involved and the community for supporting this year's musical.

The County National Honor Society Induction was held at River Valley on April 27th. This is a great event put on by the NCOESC, and we are fortunate to host this event yearly. This year we had over forty juniors and seniors inducted, and I am very proud of the accomplishments of these individuals.

Our FFA banquet was held on April 30th in the high school gym and auditorium. This yearly event continues to demonstrate the great opportunities and achievements that our students in the Vocational Agriculture program have participated in throughout the school year.

This year River Valley hosted the Harry Alexander Music Festival on May 2nd. This event included Band, Choir, and Orchestra students from the Marion County Schools. The music festival is a day-long event which included practices with guest conductors and a performance in the evening. This was a fantastic event that showcased the talents of our students as well as other students from around the county.



River Valley Orchestra performing at the Harry Alexander Music Festival

On May 12th, the 8th grade transition day was held at the high school. The 8th-grade students spent the day getting familiar with the staff, classes, facilities, extracurricular/club offerings, and the policies and procedures to help them succeed as they transition from middle school to high school.



RVHS athlete, Cooper Miller, sails through the air in the pole vault. RV had four athletes qualify for the State Track Championships.

Along with these events, we had many more activities that students were engaged in, including spring sports, field trips, choir contests, and conventions, to list a few. As you can see, the students continue to be involved in activities even as the school year comes to a close.

I look forward to seeing our students, families, and community members at the upcoming events this spring and throughout the summer as we prepare for the next school year. Thank you for a great year. Go Vikes!

Barry Dutt
High School Principal

DISTRICT FINANCIAL UPDATE



When we put together our five-year forecast each year, it is always a challenge to anticipate how local and national trends will affect our revenues and expenditures. While constructing the forecast, we utilize mostly historical and current data to put together the best plan we can with the available information. The last few years have brought new planning challenges, such as supply chain challenges, staffing, student curriculum needs, inflation, the uncertainty of school funding at the state level, having two levies on the ballot in May, and other legislative bills being introduced at the state level with the potential of negatively impacting our schools.

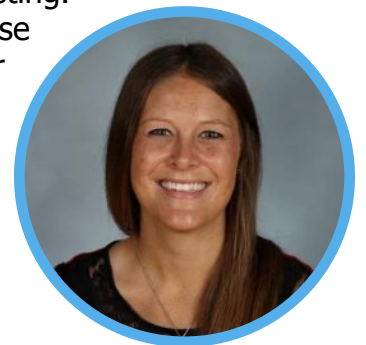
As we end this school year, we are also reaching the end of the current biennial budget at the state level. This means state funding has not yet been determined for the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 school year. The Governor proposed his biennium budget, which is currently going through the state legislative process. There have also been a few bills proposed by the legislature that could have a negative financial impact on school districts if passed as they are currently written. With these funding components being uncertain before planning for next year, school districts are forced to make decisions regarding what level of conservativeness they will take in budgeting and forecasting. Additionally, having having two levies defeated in May compounds these uncertainties, making it very difficult to know what the financial future of River Valley looks like at this time.

As we update our five-year forecast in May and prepare budgets for next school year, all of these challenges must be considered and reflected upon. Despite these challenges, our staff has worked hard to stay within our budgeted revenues and expenditures this school and fiscal year.

While we try to take a conservative approach throughout the planning process, our ability to offset some existing costs and fund additional services with grants has helped this year and will continue to help us until the end of the 2023-2024 school year. We continue to look at available grant opportunities to determine what applications we should complete to help us stretch our resources within the allowable uses of these grant dollars.

As always, our goal is to be good stewards of the resources that our community entrusts to us; both the financial resources and our children. Despite the financial uncertainties that lie ahead of us at this time, we continue to strive toward this goal and to continue providing an excellent education to our students and a great resource to our community.

As we finish out this school year, I want to express my gratitude to our District staff for all of their hard work this year and to our community for their support. I look forward to a bright future for our District, students, staff, and community. Go Vikings!



Brittany Keller
RV Schools Treasurer

Hello Summer!

It's time to say goodbye to long pants and hello to shorts! As you clean out your children's closet of those long pants that will be too small by Fall, please consider donating your gently used pants to our elementary clinics. Accidents happen, milk is spilled, and recess puddles win on the daily in our elementary buildings. Dry clothes are loaned out often, but not always returned. We are always on the hunt for elastic waisted pants or leggings. So, if you have a pair or two headed to the donation pile, please keep Heritage and Liberty in mind. Our students would appreciate it.

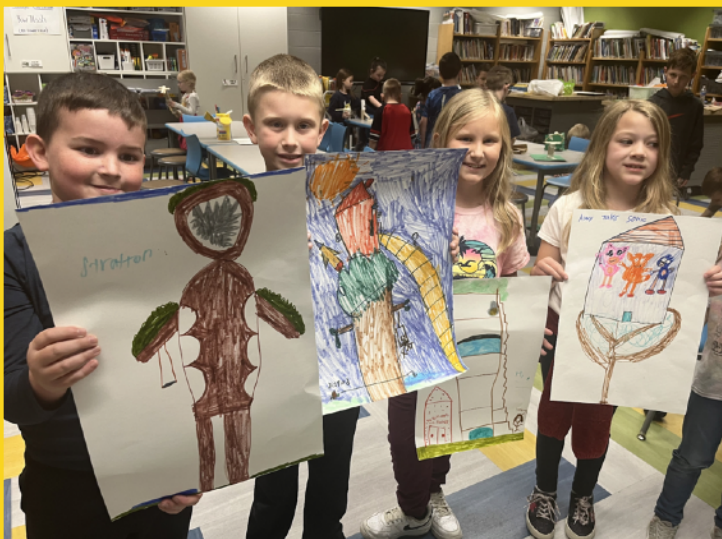
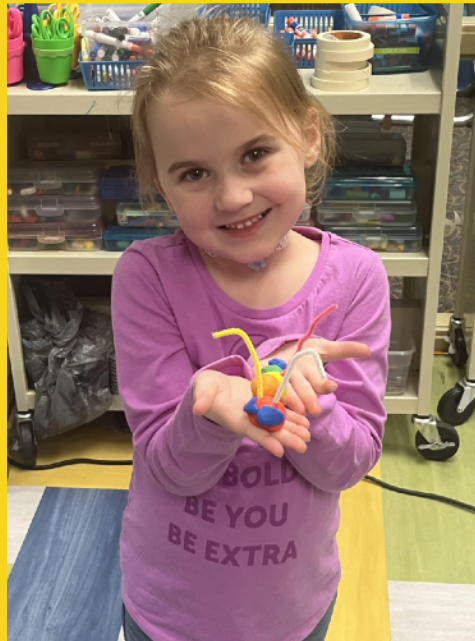




Updates from the Innovation Lab

The Innovation Lab spent most of April doing activities inspired by Earth Day!

Mrs. Isler read a different book related to an environmental topic to each grade level; then students engaged in an activity related to the book. Fourth-grade students at Liberty read a book about the woman who helped bring trees to San Diego, specifically Balboa Park, then explored New York's Central Park with the VR goggles. They wrapped up the unit by designing their own city park. We were also lucky enough to spend some time outside exploring and writing about nature. With Mrs. Miley, students also engaged in activities centered around nature, creating butterflies, flowers, and insects. Kindergarten and first-grade students designed and painted kites with watercolors. K-5 students read the book Everything You Need for a Treehouse and created their own "dream" treehouses. Students worked with recyclable craft materials, legos, and various art supplies to complete their creations. Each one was unique, and the kids were so proud of their designs and loved sharing them with their classmates.



Making Wellness a Priority

Earlier this year we had three staff members Mrs. Herdman, Mrs. Neel, and Miss Tressler further their education through Wellity Education and become certified youth yoga instructors. Mrs. Herdman has been running programs in the classroom and for the 21st century students at Heritage Elementary to include wellness and mindfulness in their day. Mrs. Neel and Miss Tressler utilized breathing practices with third graders in preparation for testing at Liberty. All three staff members use guided meditations and yoga when working one on one with students as well.

Both elementary schools hope to provide more services utilizing yoga and mindfulness throughout the school next year in hopes to promote overall wellness for our students.



The first group yoga session at Liberty where we taught a group of 13 5th grade girls the "sun sequence."



A group of second graders practicing their butterfly poses and breathing exercises.



New Wheels for RV Preschool!

RV Preschool and the specialized skills unit at Heritage received a generous donation of six balance bikes from Wheelz4Kidz. The bikes will be used for students to work on their core strength and balance during recess time! Thank you to Tina Gross and Wheelz4Kidz! Check out <https://wheels4kidz.com/> to find out more information about this amazing program!



Kindergarten Learning

Kindergarten students studied butterflies, as well as living/non living things. They began writing informational texts on animals and are also learning about animal habitats, diets, and animal groupings.

Mrs. Deem's Market Day

Mrs. Deem's students participated in a market day on May 15th. Kids chose a product/service, set up their store, advertised by making Canva sites to advertise and learned about economics vocabulary and concepts.

Reading Intervention at Heritage Elementary

During the 2022-23 school year, Heritage Elementary offered reading intervention to 77 students who are striving readers in 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades. Each quarter, the teachers analyze i-Ready and classroom data and place students in working groups. Students go to the reading intervention room to receive 30 minutes of reading instruction every day. Each group's reading instruction is based on phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Striving readers often struggle in multiple areas of reading. One of the goals with reading intervention is to provide the students with an opportunity to increase reading, writing, test taking and study skills at their level. Each group is designed to meet the needs of the individual students in a small group setting.





RV FFA News

Recently, the River Valley FFA held its 62nd annual FFA Awards Recognition. Over 350 members and guests were present to watch chapter members celebrate their successes. Four chapter officers were recognized for their Gold Ratings on officer books submitted to the state for annual review and ratings.

Featured Gold rated officers and books are:

- Reporters: Makenzae Eager and Alexis Stiverson
- Secretary: Abigail Isler
- Treasurer: Taylor Dunlap

Five chapter members were also recognized for their achievement of the Ohio State FFA Degree which they received at the State Convention on May 5.

State Degree recipients:

- Addison Comstock
- Connor Corwin
- Taylor Dunlap
- Abigail Isler
- Alexis Stiverson

Four more members were honored for their pursuit of the highest degree in the FFA, the American Degree. The following members had their applications approved at the National level and will receive final confirmation of their achievement in November 2023.

American Degree Recipients for 2023 are:

- Maci Carter
- Joseph Crawford
- Mitchel Seckel
- Kyla Stockdale

The new officer team was installed for the 23-24 school year. They are:

- President: Abby Isler
- Vice President: Marinn McGuire
- Secretary: Sidney Street
- Treasurer: Kenzae Eager
- Reporters: Becca Baldinger and Isabelle Combs
- Historian: Olivia Thorpe
- Sentinel: Karis Beineke
- Student Advisor: Makena LaBarge
- Finance Chair: Caitlin Pierce
- Leadership Chair: Khloe Kee



Third Grade Explorations

Third graders in Mrs. Burke's class learned about Edwin Binney, the inventor of Crayola Crayons by reading The Crayon Man. They watched a short video on how crayons are made and then completed a STEM activity building towers out of crayons. Students had to work together as a team to come up with a plan to build the tallest free standing tower. They had multiple opportunities to build their towers and discuss the ways they could change and make their towers stronger and better.



Congratulations Ms. Wood's class!



We ruled the school and won the Viking Ship race to 1,000 lessons passed in iReady this Spring!!



Liberty second graders made volcanoes while learning about different landforms!



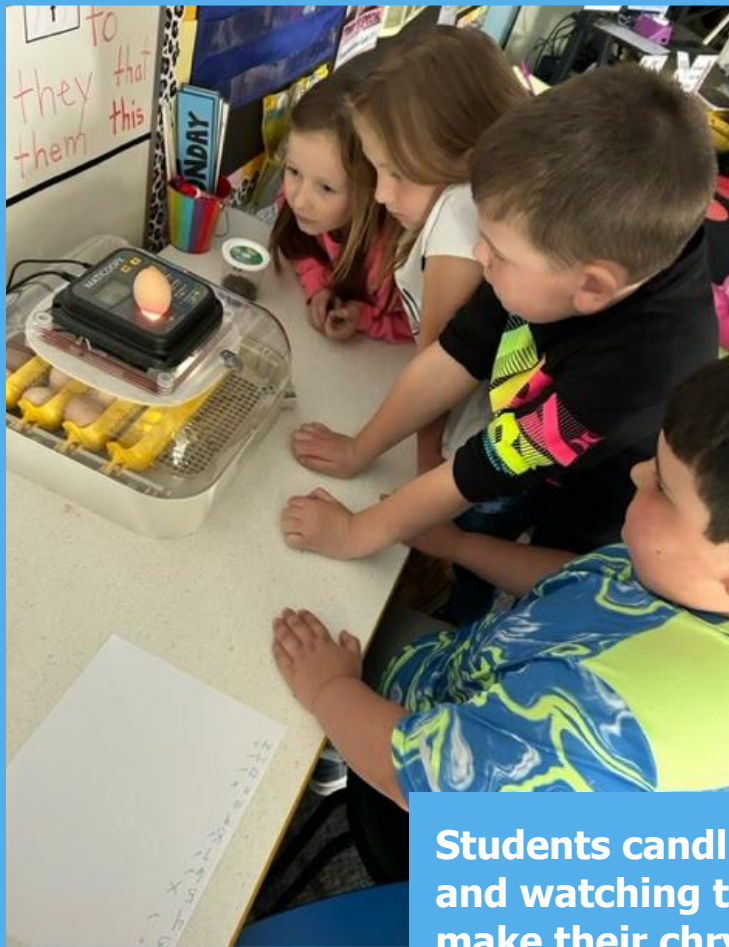
First Grade News

The first graders have been holding a store, celebrating the 120th day of school, and learning about the life cycle of a tree. Thank you to Graphic Packaging for coming in to teach the first graders and provide all of them with a tree to take home!

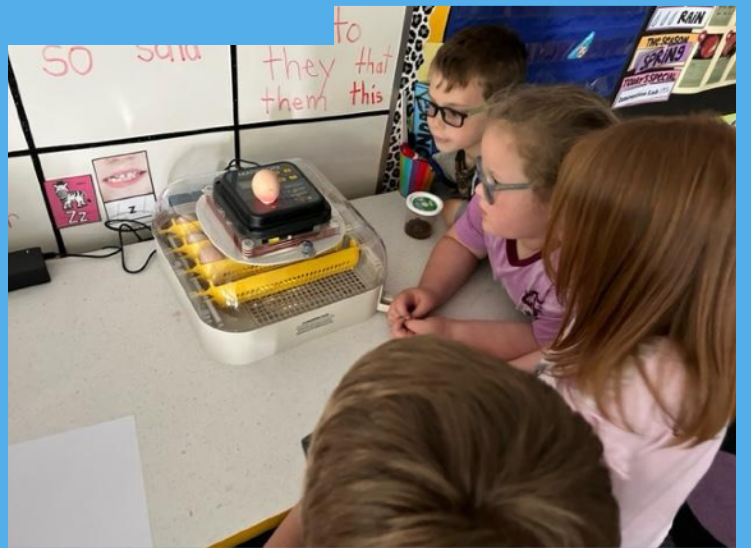


Liberty Kindergarten Classes Hatch a Plan

Mrs. Gantt's kindergarten class spent time learning about oviparous animals. The students worked hard to study several animals that are oviparous and then learned hands-on by hatching chicks. The class has been learning about the life cycle of a chicken, how to hatch chicks in an incubator, and all about chickens. The boys and girls are also witnessing another oviparous animal firsthand while watching caterpillars go through metamorphosis. They couldn't wait to see their butterflies emerge.



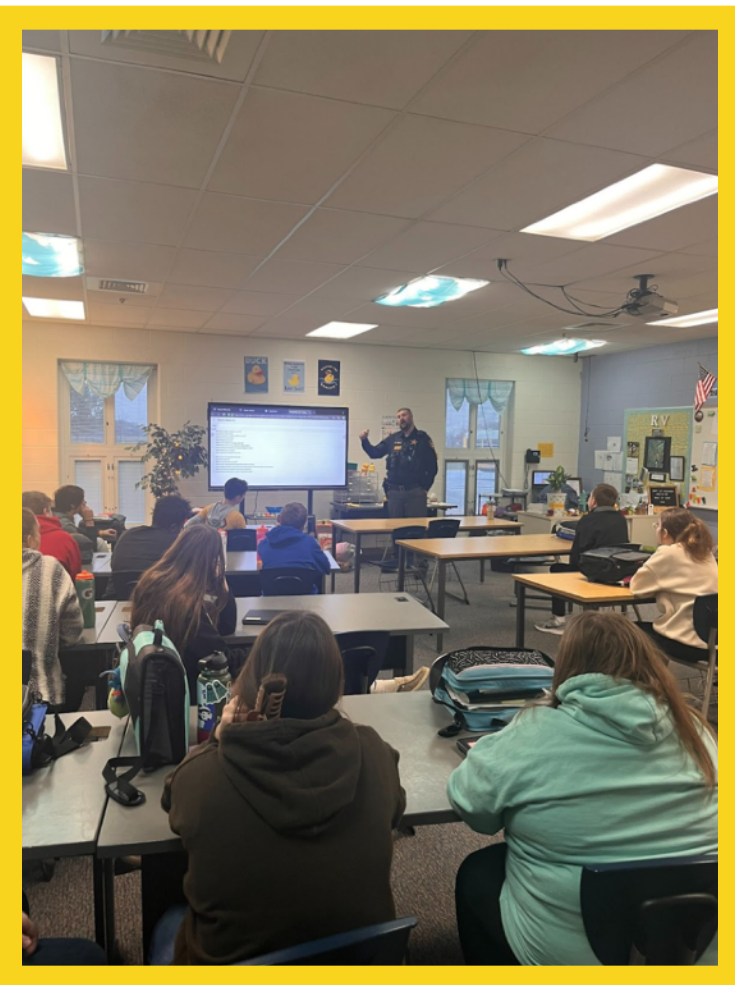
Students candling the eggs and watching the caterpillars make their chrysalis.



8th Grade Science Club

Ms. Itterly had 9 students attend a voluntary after-school program for 11 weeks in the winter. Students learned how to do the Experimental Design steps as they created their own hypothesis on ideas they were curious about. They worked in groups and analyzed why things worked out and why they did not.

They also participated in STEM activities where it often became a competition between groups of students to see who built better bridges, catapults and even made homemade ice cream. They actually came to me last month and asked me for a reunion tour for one night only to finish some of the STEM projects we did not get to. It was an incredible group of students who learned how much fun science can be. Quinn Marsh, Kael Swartz, Mattix Lust, Val Reigel, Zadriona Vandall, Zoey Totaro, Havyn Rogers, and Brooklyn Huffman.



Career Exploration 2

8th graders participated in Cash Class this semester. They applied for jobs, earned paychecks, paid bills, and spent their discretionary money at a monthly auction. Little Debbies, Prime Hydration, and Bug Juice were the hottest items. Unfortunately, there are no auction photos, as the auctions were fast-paced and exciting!

Career Exploration 1

7th/8th graders hosted several guest speakers this semester. Mr. Durain, director of Heart of Ohio Homeless Shelter, Deputy Rinker, Mr. and Mrs. Starkey, owners of The Brook- a destination venue, Ms. Klingel, RVMS guidance counselor, Mrs. Andrea Bayles-AgCredit branch manager, Mr. Kinzel RVMS educator, and Mrs. Elizabeth Moore from Marion County Children Services all spoke about their careers. Last semester we also had Mrs. Hypes from Love INC., Mr. Jake Moore from Cornerstone Home Remodeling, Mr. Ed McCants, from MTC, Ms. Washburn, Mrs. Crabtree, Mrs. Robinson, and Mr. Luke Henry, Owner of ProScapeLawn and Landscape Services LLC and Henry Development Group, as well.

6th Grade Math

6th Grade Math classes finished the year strong by creating games based on concepts learned throughout the year and doing hands-on geometry. Games had specific criteria to meet, and students had to work together as a collaborative team. The students were creative and developed digital escape rooms, scavenger hunts, matching games, and more. When finished, the students presented their games to the class, including their math topic, and ended by playing each other's games. Students also created 3D geometric models by graphing the nets on the coordinate plane and then found the surface area and volume of each model.



Contact:

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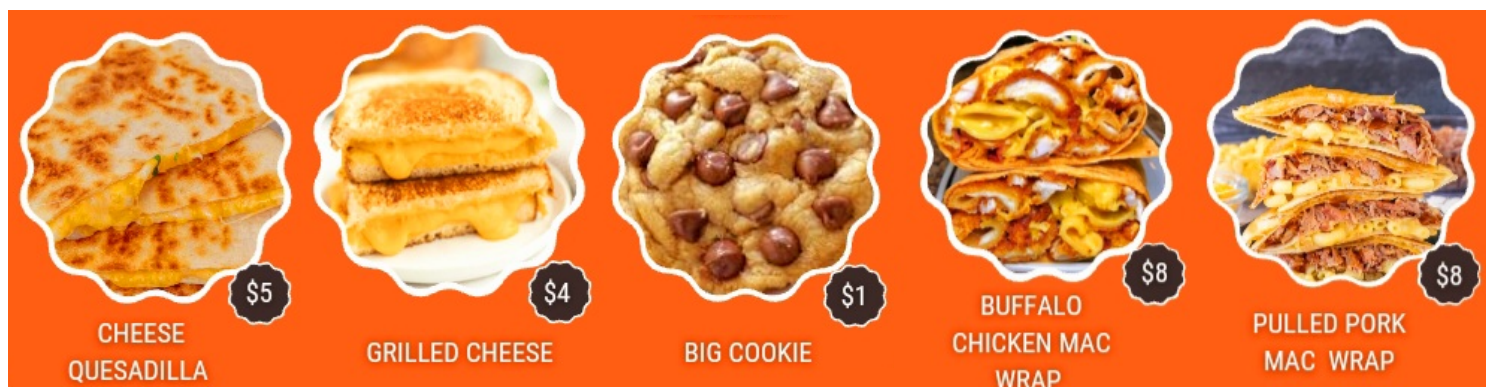
or

Jenny Kitts (jkitts@rvk12.org)

📞 740-725-5420

facebook.com/k12lunchbunch

Contact us to cater your next event!





The Lunch Bunch Summer Food Program

FRESH AND FREE MEALS FOR KIDS

All kids ages 1-18 eat free.

No registration required. No district residency required.

**Please note, you must choose between 5-day Weekly Meal Pick-up
and the Daily Meal Pick-up Sites**

DAILY MEAL PICK-UP SITES - Designed for small communities

Every Monday through Friday

June 5th - August 4th (Closed July 3rd-July 7th)

Children will also receive a Breakfast for the next day at each site.

12:00-12:30

Caledonia Anselment Park
5824 Caledonia Mud Pike

11:45-12:15

Waldo Community Park
275 W Main St.

12:30-12:50

Marion Meadows (closed site)
343 Barbara Ln

12:45-1:15

Grandview Estates Park
1964 Harris Dr. Marion

11:30-12:15

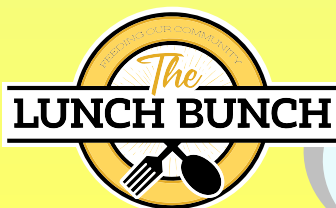
Cardington High/Pool
2812 OH-529 Cardington

WEEKLY MEAL PICK-UP SITE—Designed for more rural areas

Liberty Elementary School every Monday 4:00pm - 6:30pm

June 12th - August 4th

Our 5 day meal pick-up option will have 5 days worth of breakfast & lunch.



River Valley's summer meal program is in partnership with The United States Department of Agriculture & the Ohio Department of Education. This institution is an equal opportunity provider. Please like us on Facebook (The Lunch Bunch) for more information.

6th Grade Social Studies

This year, we learned about geography, government, ancient civilizations, world religions, and economics. We made pyramids while studying Egypt, created Google slides about countries around the world and their governments, and will be creating ones on a company for economics for our last project. Our 6th-grade class has had an exciting year!

Important Dates



**First day of school
August 16, 2023**

Elementary Gentle Start

Gentle start this year is for kindergarten students only. The students will attend their first day based on the child's last name.

- August 16- Kindergarten last names A-G
- August 17- Kindergarten last names H-N
- August 18- Kindergarten last names O-Z

All kindergarten students will attend starting on August 21, 2023

Elementary Open House

Monday, August 14, 2023 - 4:30-6:00 p.m.

River Valley Middle School Orientation

August 14, 2023 5:30 - 7:30pm

River Valley High School Open House

August 14, 2023 5:30 - 7:30pm





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 740-725-5400

Heritage Elementary
740-725-5500

River Valley Middle School
740-725-5700

Liberty Elementary
740-725-5600

River Valley High School
740-725-5800

**“Success is no accident. It is hard work,
perseverance, learning, studying,
sacrifice, and most of all, love of what
you are doing or learning to do.”**

– Pelé