



# RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

## ACADEMIC SUCCESS, REAL-WORLD EXPERIENCE

102 School Lane

Blairsville, PA 15717

[www.rivervalleysd.org](http://www.rivervalleysd.org)



**45 Miles East of  
Pittsburgh, PA**



**1,465 Students**



**129 Teachers**



**5 Buildings**



**52% Free or  
Reduced Lunch**



**1:1 School District**

### **River Valley School District Developing Future-Ready Learners!**

Since 2015, RVSD has been transforming the future of education with the creation of a system-wide foundation that prepares ALL students with an academic approach rooted in real-world experience. RVSD shifted the workforce development narrative with the opening of the STEAM Academy. The [STEAM Academy](#) offers engaging, career-driven learning opportunities to students in an area where options are limited. RVSD believes that no student should be denied a career pathway based on program capacity or availability. With the addition of the STEAM Academy, students have nine new courses to pursue - Biomedical Technology, Cybersecurity, Electrical Occupations and Powerline, Esports, Pathways to Health Professions, Rising Educators, Sports Medicine and Rehabilitative Therapy, and Welding Technology. Students are thriving with future-focused programs that combine classroom instruction with innovative lab experiences.

The hiring of a visionary superintendent, Philip Martell, ignited the district's innovative approach to creating classrooms that feature the latest technologies to prepare learners for ever-evolving, highly technical industries. Mr. Martell engages students, educators, and the community with his business experience, passion for workforce readiness, and drive that embraces a future-driven culture. RVSD has implemented the [World of Work](#) framework (K-12) to provide students with resources for career discovery beginning as early as kindergarten. Using the RIASEC model, learners identify career paths based on their strengths, interests, and values. The WoW framework cultivates career development and paths to gainful employment from K-12. Students have the opportunity to learn about careers, gain skills-based experiences, meet professionals, and practice skills needed for that career. As a result, learners will have a personalized career experience that is relevant to the real world and enables them to map their education goals and maximize their investments in post-secondary education.

**Click the links to watch!**



**LET THE DAY BEGIN**



**OUR REGION'S BUSINESS**



**STEAM ACADEMY**



**Mr. Philip Martell**  
**Superintendent  
of Schools**



**Mrs. Regina Geesey**  
**Assistant  
Superintendent,  
Director of Pupil  
Services**



**Dr. Shawna Little**  
**Career Pathway  
Coordinator, River Valley  
STEAM Academy**

## Supporting Artifacts

Click the underlined texts for more information!



### **AASA "Lighthouse" School System**



### **AASA Case Study**



### **US-Czech Business Forum**



### **Radio Interviews**



### **PA Labor & Industry Panel**



### **White House Recognition**



### **CompTIA Partnership**



### **World of Work at River Valley**



### **Pittsburgh Technology Council**

## RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT



In 2023, RVSD was recognized as an [AASA "Lighthouse" School System](#) and named to Digital Promise's League of Innovative Schools. A leader in the field of Cybersecurity Education, Superintendent Martell was invited to join the [White House Cybersecurity Summit](#). The district's commitment to transforming the future of education and advancing career-driven learning was recognized at the [White House for the Rural Community of Practice](#). In April 2023, Mr. Martell was awarded the Saint Francis University Excellence in [STEAM Educator Award](#).

RVSD is enriching the educational landscape by [connecting educators, government, and the private sector](#) to create new opportunities for students to prepare for their futures. The district partners with more than 50 regional, national, and international companies. RVSD established a Business and Industry Local Advisory Council (BILAC) to design, establish, and evaluate programs of study and career and technical education courses. A partnership with South Allegheny School District resulted in the receipt of a [\\$250,000 grant from the Richard King Mellon Foundation](#) to create the second Cybersecurity Academy in the state.

In addition, River Valley offers College in the High School classes through post-secondary partnerships with the University of Pittsburgh, the Pennsylvania College of Technology, St. Vincent College, and Seton Hill University. RVSD's partnership with Point Park University allows high school seniors to earn 24 college credits. Rising Educators students earn college credit through the Indiana University of Pennsylvania. STEAM Academy learners may earn post-secondary credits through articulation agreements with numerous colleges and universities.

District students participate in the [CNX Mentorship Academy](#), where high school students explore and gain real-world experience in careers in regional industries. Most recently, RVSD developed a Career Hub with area Chambers of Commerce to provide career resources to students beyond this district's borders.

“Across the nation, as school leaders scramble to integrate career-related teaching and learning, River Valley is developing a system-wide foundation to prepare all students for a path to gainful employment. As with all successful education initiatives, the work in River Valley is advancing because of a visionary superintendent, aligned board leadership, and the engagement of teachers, school leaders, community partners, parents, and leaders from exemplary post-secondary institutions. Together they are building STEM spaces, pathways like the cybersecurity pathway, integrating innovative technologies like Beable Education, and focusing on teacher-led integration of career-related learning.

- Ed Hidalgo, Career Development Consultant