



Mr. Philip Martell Superintendent of Schools

Innovation, early career exploration K-12, and workforce development are the keystones of Mr. Martell's vision for a future-driven school district. Superintendent Martell has created a culture of career-related learning in school by building a common language with the RIASEC framework so that every student can talk about their strengths, interests, and values. Since joining the school district as Superintendent in 2020, Mr. Martell has advanced opportunities for Pre-K to 12th-grade students. After successfully reconfiguring the former Blairsville-Saltsburg School District into River Valley School District, Mr. Martell saw an opportunity to repurpose a vacant building into the River Valley Academies at Saltsburg, which now houses an early childhood learning academy, a cyber academy, and the River Valley STEAM Academy. The STEAM Academy provides career-driven learning opportunities for high-priority, in-demand professional careers in Biomedical Technology, Cybersecurity, Electrical Occupations and Powerline, Esports, Pathways to Health Professions, Rising Educators, Sports Medicine and Rehabilitative Therapy, and Welding Technology. Automation Engineering will be the newest addition to the STEAM Academy in the 2024-2025 school year, helping to meet the growing demand for skilled workers in manufacturing, engineering, robotics, and artificial intelligence.

Under Mr. Martell's leadership, the River Valley School District has earned multiple national recognitions. River Valley School District will become a Digital Promise, League of Innovative Schools in March 2024. The District was named an AASA National 'Lighthouse' School System to help transform education. RVSD exemplifies AASA's Learning 2025 Commission Initiative and was one of only six school districts across the country recognized as a 2023 Spring "Lighthouse System" by AASA, The School Superintendents Association.

In August 2023, Mr. Martell was invited to join leaders at the White House for a Cybersecurity Summit to establish best practices and recommendations for schools to protect their digital infrastructure against cyber threats. Leaders from the White House, the Department of Education, the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Communications Commission, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, as well as school districts and state agencies, convened to amplify efforts to defend against ever-evolving Cybersecurity threats. In April 2023, Mr. Martell was presented with Saint Francis University's Excellence in STEAM Educator Award. The Excellence in STEAM Educator Award honors a Superintendent for making a tremendous positive impact in the lives of students, teachers, and the community through workforce development and technology-centered educational initiatives. In January 2024, Superintendent Martell was recognized for his unwavering commitment to educational excellence and innovation in the region and was awarded the Innovation in Education Award for Leadership by the Pittsburgh Technology Council.

Superintendent Martell continues to transform the future of education by creating a system-wide foundation that prepares all students with an academic approach embedded with career-related learning. He has built a common language, K-12, with the RIASEC language, allowing students to connect their learning to their own strengths, interests, and values. The RIASEC culture focuses on workplace values so that students know there is a place for them in this world. Mr. Martell understands the importance of the human process of personal development.

"River Valley is committed to creating a future-driven school district focusing on innovation, career exploration across all grades, and workforce development. Using the RIASEC language and prioritizing student identity are integral parts of our school culture, focusing on all students' strengths, interests, and workplace values so that they know there is a place for them in this world. River Valley takes a student-centered approach and understands the importance of the human process of personal development."

Hiring 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 development, and drive that embraces a future-driven culture. With more than 15 years in leadership roles in the K-12 public education sector and significant engagement in the broader educational and local government community, Mr. Martell formulates data-driven school objectives, innovation, and career-related learning in school.