

Creating a path to success

BY KEVIN MERTZ

The Standard-Journal

TURBOTVILLE — As Becky Perruquet sat next to sixth grader Myles Edison at a table in the Warrior Run Middle School, she told him how proud she was of the way in which he mastered his homework assignment.

Perruquet is the district's community schools coordinator. She's also working as the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit's (CSIU) site coordinator for the Pathfinders program.

Edison is one of 18 middle school students participating in the program, which is now in its second week and being offered after school each Monday through Thursday.

Theresa Bartholomew, the district's director of Educational Programs, said the program is available to students thanks to a federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant awarded



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Warrior Run Middle School sixth grader Myles Edison received homework help from Becky Perruquet during the Pathfinders after-school program.

to CSIU.

She said the program will be offered over a five-year period, with the grant being administered by CSIU and

covering similar programs for students in the Mid-West, Central Columbia and

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Jay Zeigler assisted Abigail Winter, a fifth-grade student at the Warrior Run Middle School, with her homework assignment during the Pathfinders after-school program.

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Benton school districts.

Heather Taggart, CSIU public relations technical specialist, said the \$600,000 Pathfinders grant was awarded to CSIU to cover the program in the four school districts for a one-year period. The allocation expected to remain the same in years two through five.

In addition to Perruquet serving as the site coordinator at Warrior Run, Bartholomew said nine Warrior Run teachers are being employed by CSIU to educate the students after school. Two teachers per day work with the students.

On Monday, Perruquet and middle school teachers Jay Zeigler and Dawn McManus were in the classroom working with the students.

"We start with an after-school snack," Zeigler said. "From 3:30 to 4 we do homework help. That's definitely a benefit to the students. It gives them a chance to get help in areas where they may need it"

McManus said the home-

work help is one of the many valuable assets of the program.

"I know the kids have confidence going into class because they know their homework is done," she said.

McManus added that students who come to class with their homework completed are more apt to participate in classroom discussions.

The students are also appreciative of the extra assistance with their homework.

"I have teachers that can help me," Edison said. "They know the stuff I'm working on."

Bradi Warner, also a sixth grader, said she is appreciative of the help the teachers are able to offer in working on her assignments.

After having time to work on their homework, Zeigler said students in the Pathfinders program participate in a physical activity, and then complete a science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM) activity.

"We try to make it something that involves problems

solving," he noted.

Recently, Perruquet said the students learned about catapults. They researched what a catapult is and were then able to build their own.

"We saw how far things could be thrown," she said. "Then, they were able to change their designs."

Bartholomew said the program can accommodate up to 39 students and is still accepting names of Warrior Run Middle School students interested in participating. The program will also be expanded into the high school when enough interested students sign up.

She also noted the value of the program.

"We want (students) to see they can have fun in school and still learn," Bartholomew said. "This is to enrich them and also support them."

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Bradi Warner, a sixth-grade student at the Warrior Run Middle School, worked on her homework while participating in the Pathfinders after-school program being offered at the school.