

(12/13/23 District Administrator's Corner Article)

There are many things that make the River Valley School District much like the districts in our neighboring areas, but I believe we are truly unique. We have a unique history, and will have an incredible future. But on a daily basis as we come to work on the campus, we ask ourselves - Why? What is our purpose as a district and how are we serving our community?

We are creating good citizens. We are purposefully developing the youth that will help to lead our communities in the future and we take this important work very seriously. We deliver content knowledge by following state and federal guidelines and implement lessons daily, while we develop the skills of being a good person.

Developing good citizens includes making sure that all students are ready for careers, community, or college. We need students to know we are preparing them for what may come next. Today, our schools offer character education and encourage students to volunteer or participate in community life, while teaching them how to evaluate information critically while engaging in the learning content knowledge. The need to transmit the knowledge, skills, and habits necessary for a democratic way of life remains an important mission for public education.

Public school classrooms are one of the first places where children form a community. By associating with children from diverse backgrounds, students learn the skills of making group decisions, establishing and enforcing rules, and negotiating decisions - skills that they will use later in their communities.

Often these are skills not seen on a typical "report card"-- but maybe they should be. A team of educators has been working recently on 5 habits of a highly effective River Valley graduate. As part of a process for academic and career planning, we believe these attributes will make our River Valley students continue to rise above the rest. We need every student to be the following:

**Collaborator:** Display social skills, flexibility, and willingness to compromise in order to achieve common goals with diverse perspectives.

**Communicator:** Effectively use appropriate methods of communication, listen and show respect when communicating with diverse cultures and opinions.

**Critical Thinker:** Organize, synthesize, question, and analyze to evaluate academic content while understanding the importance of metacognition.

**Resilient Learner:** Flexibility, adaptability, and focus on events that can be self-controlled.

**Responsible Citizen:** Make the right choices, identify and accept consequences while considering how actions affect people and surrounding situations.

Many of our businesses, when considering apprenticeships or hiring graduates, are looking for very similar skills. This work starts when the littlest of learners enter our Early Learning Center and begin the journey of a River Valley education. In every classroom, in every grade level, we hope that students are learning these life skills just as readily as they are learning content knowledge. It is true that as we get older, we hope for a better tomorrow led by smarter, reflective, and responsible young people.

Sincerely,

Loren Glasbrenner, District Administrator  
River Valley School District