

(8/16/23 – District Administrator’s Corner Article)

We are the River Valley community. We are also identified by where we live in the municipalities. And, in River Valley, that is a point of great pride. I often hear, “I am from (*“one of the following”*):

- Village or Town of Arena
- Town of Ridgeway
- Town of Black Earth
- Town of Clyde
- Village of Lone Rock
- Town of Bear Creek
- Town of Buena Vista
- Town of Ithaca
- Village or Town of Spring Green
- Town of Honey Creek
- Town of Franklin
- Town of Troy
- Town of Wyoming
- Village of Plain

I also hear people claim being from Hyde, Loreto, Bear Valley, the White Mound area, Tower Hill, out in the pines, or on the flat by the river. But, these are my favorites... *“You know, out on the home Nelson farm” or “around the corner from the Wittmans.”*

Each of us has to belong. Yet, what is absolutely great about The Valley is that we take all these spaces and become one—the one and only River Valley community. “Community” is defined as “a group of people who live in the same area who have the same interests, beliefs, or home.”

This easily gets extended to the classroom. One may assume that the definition of a classroom community is a group of students and their teacher who are in the same class. But, it is so much more. A classroom community consists of a space composed of students—who feel a sense of belonging—coming together with the common goal of intentional learning. Feeling a sense of belonging is critical, as students who don’t feel connected will not put in the effort to unify with their classmates and learn.

Another way to define a sense of community is a feeling of belonging, the belief that members of a community matter to one another, and the confidence that everyone’s needs will be met. Therefore, if students feel like they belong to their class group, they may also trust their classmates to cheer them on and have their backs.

As our staff return this week and prepare for our students to return next week, we are creating safe, fun, organized, and academic spaces that are filled with compassion, belonging, and care. Wish them luck! It’s a big job—and they are incredible at what they do.

Sincerely,

Loren Glasbrenner, District Administrator
River Valley School District