

(11/29/23 District Administrator's Corner Article)

It really is pretty simple—give thanks. The River Valley School District is grateful for the continuous support and kindness given.

Interestingly, for children, it is not about the amount of stuff that they have—it is about the process of recognizing and being thankful for what they have. In the *Journal of School Psychology* (2008), grateful children tend to be happier, more optimistic, and have better social support. They also report more satisfaction with their schools, families, communities, friends, and themselves. Being grateful creates happiness. In another research journal, *Psychological Assessment* (2011), grateful teens (ages 14 to 19) are more satisfied with their lives, use their strengths, are more engaged in their school and interests, and have better grades. Being grateful builds happiness and quite often allows developing minds to be less materialistic.

By definition, gratitude is an emotional response upon receiving kindness. You can hear your parents, no matter your age, reminding you to “Say, thank you.” This quick response is procedural, but also deeply important as we model how to be responsible and grateful. Within the River Valley School District, we ask students to be responsible and respectful each and every day. And they are. The students are grateful for the schools and staff and learning (even though they won't say it quite that way).

As we enter the holiday season, sharing can also help students practice the act of being grateful while contributing to our community. Here is one example: the Spring Green Area Chamber of Commerce is hosting “Operation Hygiene” to gather important essential items, such as those listed below, for families in need:

- Shampoo and conditioner
- Deodorant, bar soap, body wash
- Toilet paper and paper towels
- Laundry detergent
- Brushes and combs
- New bath towels or socks

There are drop-off buckets at the Chamber Office and each school (as well as at some local businesses). All items will be donated back to families within our schools.

In addition, throughout the month of November, the school district is collecting funds for “Project Lunchbox.” These monetary donations are being placed in a special account to help feed River Valley students who are identified as having food insecurity at breakfast and lunch time. Every kid will always be fed without question. Donations can be sent to 660 W. Daley Street and local businesses are also collecting money.

As we focus on what is good in our lives and being thankful for what we have, we cannot take for granted that we live in incredible communities, surrounded by natural beauty, amongst generous neighbors. To all of our neighbors, in each of our communities, please know that the River Valley School District is grateful for your generosity and support.

Sincerely,

Loren Glasbrenner, District Administrator
River Valley School District