



# River Mill Elementary

Cost Center News  
November 5, 2008

Now that we are through the beginning-of-year activities, the anticipation and excitement of a new school year have developed into meaningful learning throughout the school! One reason for the excitement is the fact that our attendance was up at the beginning of the year, and with a renewed emphasis to "focus on what's most important," River Mill is making great strides in meeting the needs of all our students.

One of the "most important" pieces of our focus at River Mill is family involvement. We had a great turnout for our Open House and Annual Title I Meeting in September. We had over 80% of our parents come to meet their children's teachers, tour the school, and learn about some of the programs at River Mill Elementary.

Also in September, students participated in the Jog-a-Thon, River Mill's biggest fundraiser. Our students did a fantastic job of running, jogging, and walking their way to nearly \$7,000 for our school! This is a substantial increase from last year, and donations are *still* trickling in.

During the October 10<sup>th</sup> in-service, our staff was able to participate in the district-sponsored presentation: "Differentiating Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment." This opportunity for our staff has strengthened our school's ability to reach all students. Teachers are using tactics they learned to ensure students are challenged at all levels. This is evident by observing their approach to teaching a lesson, student participation, and engagement in their learning process, and the examples of differentiated instruction and assessment that can be seen in the work displayed throughout our hallways. I'm proud of the efforts our staff takes toward providing rich curriculum with appropriate assessment for all students.

Teachers also continue to make the best of their Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). To reiterate one of the principles of PLCs, "No school can help all students achieve at high levels if teachers work in isolation." As we navigate our way through year-two of the PLC process, teachers are using PLC time to create common assessments, analyze data from those assessments, and collaborate with other professionals to answer the critical question: "What do we do if they don't learn?"

Looking ahead to the remainder of the year, River Mill continues to "focus on what's most important" by preparing for the implementation of Positive Behavior Support (PBS). PBS is a school-wide system of support with an emphasis on "proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behavior" with the goal of maximizing learning time. The River Mill PBS Team has already attended the first of three trainings and is excited to start sharing the program with the rest of the school this month.

Another goal for the school year is to develop and introduce an elementary based technology curriculum. Technology representatives from all three elementary schools are working together to look at the district technology plan and find the best way to implement the Tech curriculum. Teachers are eager to formalize what is currently happening with technology instruction at River Mill and better prepare students for the next step in their education.

Finally, I would like to invite and encourage you to stop by and visit any time. We always welcome visitors and love to showoff our school and students. Thank you for your continued support for River Mill Elementary!