

2008-2009

Report on the Educational  
Program for the Schools that  
Comprise  
the  
Riverside School District.

Superintendent's Report  
September 1, 2009

## Introduction

Let me take time to share with everyone the great things and interesting statistics that have occurred educationally at Riverside Schools this past school year. As one looks through this new format for a year end report and District report card, please note the elevation of the academic bar and the expectation of service for all students that attend Riverside schools. Building and District leaders worked with a new vision to promote all decisions to be child centered. We have set the foundations to spring forward from our already lofty position within Pennsylvania through pilot programs that allow us to be progressive with our approach toward change and challenges. Our students would tell you that our school community is very accommodating toward students, staff and parents as well as community members as we attempt to continue our proud history of unity for the betterment of the youth of our communities. In short, our District staff commit to putting Kids First, being Progressive not Perfect and continuing a Legacy of Unity.

Paging through the rest of this report, I would ask you to keep in mind that through our vision each employee of Riverside has promised to educate or assist in educating the whole child. We are not as interested in one test as we are interested in the learning and education of the pupil throughout the year. We are not as interested in what post-secondary placement a child chooses but that the placement is the correct placement for each individual that graduates from Riverside. We have committed to providing our students with a rich a diverse curriculum as well as limitless opportunities after their K-12 education. To this end, one may read about our curricular program to be in place during the coming year. Compare our statistical data provided, read our leadership representatives describe the progress they have made over the past year in the educational programs. Finally, get a preview of the coming educational goals so that we may continue to move forward in the coming years.

Indeed it is my honor to serve the communities of Taylor and Moosic through the Riverside School District!

Sincerely,

David A. Woods  
Superintendent of Schools  
Riverside School District

## Riverside School District Curriculum Plan

**Year one** of the curriculum cycle focuses on research and investigation. It is expected that the curriculum team will; review State and National standards; review current literature in subject area; create at least 10 core concepts in every subject area; review current scope and sequence of K-12 curriculum; review standardized student test scores; determine what students should know and be able to do; determine current strengths and weaknesses of the program; determine current overlapping or gapping in program; decide when concepts should be introduced, developed and mastered; analyze vertical and horizontal articulation in program; analyze current implementation of cultural awareness, technology and career awareness in current curriculum; visit other “star” programs; and develop evaluation criteria.

**Year two** is the writing and approval phase of the curriculum cycle. During this year the writing of the curriculum will be completed, which includes; write curriculum; choose new materials; choose new textbooks; design and implement new staff development programs; provide feedback sessions for faculty; refine evaluation criteria from standards; and construct instructional activities to support students in the learning process.

**Year three** is the implementation of the approved curriculum phase. The teachers will accomplish: total articulation in classroom; development of staff development activities for support; time for corrections and additions; refinement of student assessment; tracking of student achievement; monitoring of standardized testing results.

**Year four** is when the teachers will monitor and assess the implemented curriculum. This year includes: evaluate student successes and failures, explore extending curriculum into other subject areas; review new supplemental materials; evaluate teaching strategies; and evaluate delivery of curriculum.

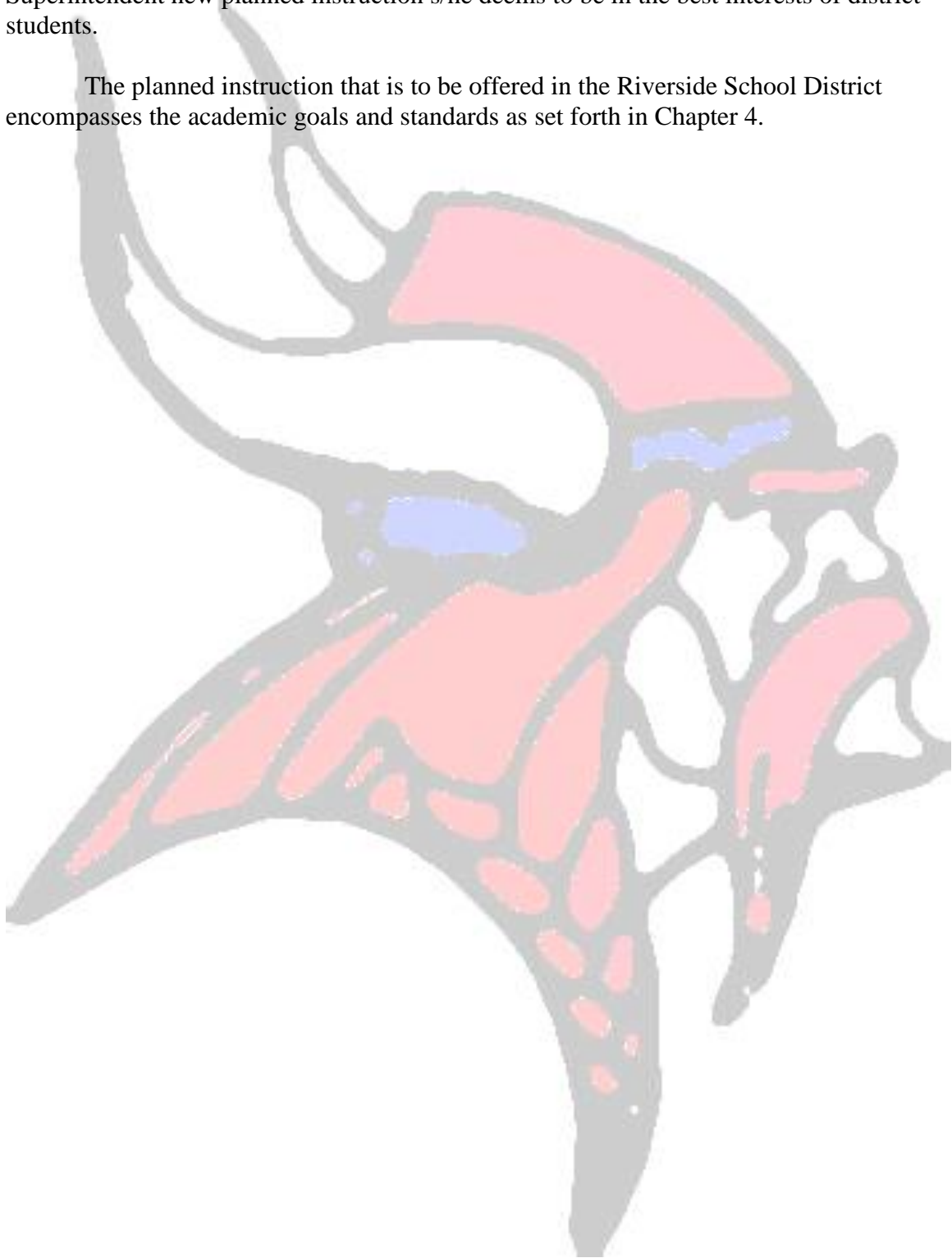
During this year the teacher may actually change specific areas that are not working in the approved curriculum and pilot new instructional strategies.

The vision behind curriculum development is to provide a comprehensive program of planned instruction to enable district students to strive for academic goals and attain academic standards. Planned instruction shall consist of at least the following: objectives to be achieved by all students; content, including materials, activities and instructional time; relationship between objectives of a planned course and the established academic standards; and procedure for measurement of the objectives.

No planned instruction shall be taught in the district schools unless it has been adopted by a majority vote of the full Board. It is the building-level administrator’s responsibility to assure the approved curriculum is taught. The Board reserves the right to determine which units of the instructional program constitutes such planned

instruction. The building-level administrators are responsible for the continuous evaluation of the effectiveness of the planned instruction and shall recommend to the Superintendent new planned instruction s/he deems to be in the best interests of district students.

The planned instruction that is to be offered in the Riverside School District encompasses the academic goals and standards as set forth in Chapter 4.



**AP Scores Greater than or Equal to 3**  
**for the 2007-2008 School Year**

AP Course	# of Test Takers	Score	# of Students Earning Score
<i>Chemistry</i>	4	3	1
<i>English Lit &amp; Comp</i>	12	3	4
<i>US History</i>	13	3	2

**SAT Reasoning Mean Scores for the 2007-2008 School Year**

SAT Reasoning Test	Test Population	Critical Reading	Mathematics	Writing
<i>Riverside</i>	<i>Total (93) (avg. includes all test dates)</i>	486	488	459
	<i>Seniors (64) (avg. includes up to last test date in which seniors took exam)</i>	479	483	448
	<i>Juniors (28) (avg. includes all test dates in which juniors took exam)</i>	501	504	486

## 2008 PSAT Averages

PSAT Exam	Test Population	Critical Reading	Mathematics	Writing
<i>Riverside</i>	<i>Total</i> (67)	44.81	45.70	43.15
	<i>Juniors</i> (43)	43	43.81	41.74
	<i>Sophomores</i> (24)	48.04	49.08	45.66

## Class of 2009 Post-Graduation Plans\*

\*based on 104 students (95 graduates, 9 anticipated graduates pending completion of summer school/graduation project)

<i>4-year College/University</i>	58.7%
<i>2-year College/Community College/non-degree program</i>	20.2%
<i>Full-time Employment</i>	9.6%
<i>Undecided</i>	8.7%
<i>Military</i>	2.8%

**Allied Medical & Technical Careers**  
**Bloomsburg University**  
**Cedar Crest College**  
**Coastal Carolina University**  
**Dickinson College**  
**Drexel University**  
**Drury University**  
**East Stroudsburg University**  
**Empire Beauty School**  
**Full Sail University**

**Marywood University**  
**Moravian College**  
**PA University of Technology**  
**Penn State University**  
**Pratt University**  
**Princeton University**  
**Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute**  
**Temple University**  
**University of Pittsburgh**  
**University of Scranton**

**Johnson College**  
**Keystone College**  
**Kings College**  
**Lackawanna College**  
**Luzerne County Community College**  
**Lycoming College**  
**Lynchburg College**  
**Mansfield University**

**US Air Force**  
**US Army**  
**US Coast Guard**  
**US Coast Guard Academy**  
**Utah State University**  
**West Virginia University**  
**Wilkes University**  
**York College**

**Dropout Data 2008-2009 School Year\***

\*Based on 223 students (junior and senior combined class sizes at start of school year)

Dropout Rate 4.2%

**2008-2009 PSSA Data**  
**High School**

**7<sup>th</sup> Grade**

	<b>Math</b>	<b>Reading</b>
<i>Total Test Takers</i>	128	128
<i>AYP or Greater</i>	75	87
<i>Less than AYP</i>	53	41

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

	<b>Math</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Science</b>	<b>Writing</b>
<i>Total Test Takers</i>	112	112	111	113
<i>AYP or Greater</i>	78	87	49	73
<i>Less than AYP</i>	34	25	62	39
<i>No Score Due to Attendance</i>	0	0	0	1

### 11<sup>th</sup> Grade

	<b>Math</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Science</b>	<b>Writing</b>
<i>Total Test Takers</i>	100	100	99	102
<b>AYP or Greater</b>	47	74	32	89
<b>Less than AYP</b>	53	26	66	13
<i>No Score Due to Attendance</i>	0	0	1	0

### East Elementary

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

	<b>Math</b>	<b>Reading</b>
<i>Total Test Takers</i>	41	41
<b>AYP or Greater</b>	33	31
<b>Less than AYP</b>	8	10

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

	<b>Math</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Science</b>
<i>Total Test Takers</i>	52	52	49
<b>AYP or Greater</b>	40	35	42
<b>Less than AYP</b>	12	17	7

#### 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

	<b>Math</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>
<i>Total Test Takers</i>	111	111	112
<b>AYP or Greater</b>	86	68	78
<b>Less than AYP</b>	25	43	33
<i>No Score Due to Attendance</i>	0	0	1

#### 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

	<b>Math</b>	<b>Reading</b>
<i>Total Test Takers</i>	118	118

<b>AYP or Greater</b>	89	72
<b>Less than AYP</b>	28	45
<b>No Score Due to Attendance</b>	1	1

**West Elementary**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Grade**

	<b>Math</b>	<b>Reading</b>
<b>Total Test Takers</b>	68	68
<b>AYP or Greater</b>	59	52
<b>Less than AYP</b>	9	16

**4<sup>th</sup> Grade**

	<b>Math</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Science</b>
<b>Total Test Takers</b>	56	56	56
<b>AYP or Greater</b>	49	44	49
<b>Less than AYP</b>	7	12	7

**2008-2009 ATTENDANCE PERCENTAGES**

**East Elementary**

<b>Kindergarten</b>	94.6
<b>Grade 1</b>	95.4
<b>Grade 2</b>	95.2
<b>Grade 3</b>	95.1
<b>Grade 4</b>	95.1
<b>Grade 5</b>	95.3
<b>Grade 6</b>	95.1

**West Elementary**

<b>Kindergarten</b>	95.8
<b>Grade 1</b>	95.0

<b>Grade 2</b>	95.1
<b>Grade 3</b>	95.4
<b>Grade 4</b>	95.9

### **High School**

<b>Grade 7</b>	94.4
<b>Grade 8</b>	94.3
<b>Grade 9</b>	94.3
<b>Grade 10</b>	94.6
<b>Grade 11</b>	92.3
<b>Grade 12</b>	92.2

### **Elementary West**

A collaborative approach enabled Riverside Elementary WEST to accomplish many things. Teachers were teaching hard and this new energy was brought to my attention through many compliments from the staff and parents throughout the year. New leadership should bring this and we did. Every student was welcomed with a smile as they entered the building EVERY morning. This welcoming school climate was carried throughout each and every day. In fact, it didn't stop at the school level. There was a tie between the school and community. This was accomplished by communication and consistency. Accountability was at a new found high. By being consistent and fair, a new standard was set for the building.

There were some things that remained the same from the past, but a lot did change. Involving all stakeholders and putting technology and professional ownership at the forefront was important. It resulted in the perfect recipe to a successful year. Smartboards were integrated into the instruction. Innovative programs and ideas surfaced throughout the school year. Some of these included, the "Best in the West" scholastic bowl, a website that was unparalleled, and a new look into strategies that was implemented in order to hold students accountable for their behavior.

All in all, whenever a teacher or student accomplished something great – they were acknowledged. This notoriety snowballed into a collaborative progression. In the end, WE were able to accomplish many great things. More importantly, we were able to *Put Kids First!*

### **Elementary East**

Our full day kindergarten program is one that is developmentally appropriate and stresses social skills through interaction. The program revolves around Language Arts & Math (Phonemic Awareness and Fluency is stressed).

We are continuing with a “guided reading” component to our first, second grade and third grade program – students are placed at their appropriate reading level and guided through different reading levels with the help of their teachers. On-going training and assistance is always provided for our staff. We have instituted a “research-based” Houghton Mifflin Reading program in all grades K-6. Skills taught are coordinated with Pennsylvania’s state academic standards in Language Arts.

We have recently developed planned instruction courses that have a strong correlation to adopted state academic standards. Our Science planned course will be fully implemented this fall along with a research-based science program from Houghton-Mifflin. Our Social Studies planned course was revised over the summer.

We are presently using the “Everyday Math” program in grades K-6. The program is a spiral based skills program that focuses on NCTM standards and higher order thinking skills. Teachers involved with the program receive in-depth training in current teaching methodologies and strategies.

Art, Library and Physical Education courses are developed and based on National Standards.

\*We pride ourselves at being at the forefront of computer technology in I.U. #19. All classroom teachers have been trained. Every classroom has at least two up-to-date computers connected to the Internet. Classrooms have their independent e-mail addresses. All students who use the Internet must have parent release forms signed. Finally, during the teacher selection process, computer literacy is an important selection criterion. Teachers have their individual web links so as to actively send/receive e-mail with parents. Our district’s web site ([www.riversidesd.com](http://www.riversidesd.com)) provides a link to our monthly newsletter. Our sixth grade students successfully garner top accolades in competition in the I.U. #19 Middle School Computer Fair.

Our 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students work with our Technology teacher in the computer lab weekly to address technology standards. Projects integrating technology with content area subjects are highlighted. Our students regularly represent I.U. #19 at the state computer fair in Harrisburg.

Our students receive Music, Physical Education and Library every week for thirty minutes and Art every other week for one hour. We also offer instrumental lessons for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students.

A fifth and sixth grade chorus is established at East. A holiday show and spring recital is performed annually. Also, students in grades K-4 perform in annual shows.

We are very proud to announce that our school has again received the Keystone Award for the 5<sup>th</sup> straight year. The award is given based on our PSSA scores in grades 3 through 6. Students in grades 3-6 continue to score above the state average in Reading and Math.

Third, fourth, fifth and sixth grade teachers are trained in Compass Learning Software which is used to remediate or enrich students with regards to Pennsylvania Academic Standards.

Our students operate W.R.E.E.-Channel 19-our building's TV station. Student anchors and camera people must audition for their positions. Our anchors present their written stories daily at 8:55 A.M. to the entire student body on Channel 19.

We have developed standards-based report cards for all grade levels. Grades reflect how students do with regards to the Pennsylvania Academic Standards. This project to revise the grading system was implemented in September 2006.

"Kid Writing" is implemented in grades K, 1 and 2 to help our students become better readers through writing.

We are fortunate to have the Accelerated Reading Program in grades 1-6, to provide encouragement for our students to read.

As a district our curriculum is best served with manageable class sizes. We try to keep our numbers low especially in the primary grades.

## **Secondary Schools**

During the 2008-2009 school year we have concentrated our efforts for school improvement in various areas. First, we were able to continue to strengthen communication and collaboration between ourselves and the guidance department to ensure academic, social, emotional and behavioral growth of our students. Collaboratively we worked with both teachers and parents to address student issues in the aforementioned areas. Also, we continually met with and closely monitored the programs and progress of those individuals placed in alternative settings. Periodic meetings were conducted with the students themselves to discuss their individual progress and goal setting for their future. Meetings were held with administrators from alternative schools and parents of those who were exhibiting issues whether academically, socially, emotionally or behaviorally where proper plans of instruction were discussed in the best interest of the student. We also communicated and collaborated with our seventh and eighth grade staff members regarding student performance and issues. Meetings were conducted every third week in order to foster communication between colleagues to meet the needs of all learners and to address specific academic and personal student needs. During these meetings we were able to

gain an understanding of those students who were struggling with the transition into seventh grade. Once targeted, teachers, guidance counselors and administrators were able to work together to meet students needs to promote individual success.

We continually monitored our newly hired teachers and provided constructive criticism to improve performance and communicated best teaching practices. This process was completed in accordance with the teacher induction plan within the district strategic planning language.

We began developing a safe schools committee in which members began discussing particular issues that need to be addressed in pursuit of developing district wide and building specific safe schools plans.

Regular meetings with department heads were conducted to discuss curricular and ongoing topics in education along with the all important information pertaining to our school needs.

We continually promoted, supported, and participated in school wide fundraisers and extracurricular activities to strengthen school and community relations. For example, we continued to encourage active involvement in all of our Fine Arts programs through fall and spring band and choral concerts, celebration of the seasons, and Riverside Alive just to name a few.

### **District Technology**

Technology integration continues to move forward at Riverside. For the 2008-2009 school year, successful goals were met in the areas of: technology enhancements in the learning environment, improved communications tools, technology integration into the daily processes at Riverside, and the exemplary application of 21Century learning skills in the classroom. This is evident by the various invitations we received to present our best practices at many events during the 2008-2009 school year.

October 2008 – a selected group of students, staff and School Board members were asked to attend the PASA-PSBA School Leadership Conference as a “School of Excellence in Technology.”

January 2009 – Two Riverside Teachers were asked to present at the University of Scranton Internet2 Symposium.

March 2009 – Many students from the High School and Middle School levels received awards during the Regional Computer Fair competition.

May 2009 – Riverside had two high school students compete at the State level in the High School Computer Fair.

May 2009 – Riverside was select to showcase “Authentic Learning Environments” that

integrate technology at the PAECT (Pennsylvania Association for Educational Communications and Technology) Student Showcase in Harrisburg.

In addition, noticeable changes were made in daily processes such as the automation of Transcripts in our Guidance Office, improved PIMS data collection systems, online access to Food Services for Parents (implemented but will begin Fall of 2009), Business Office web site “Forms” access, daily announcement postings on the High School website and various other website improvements.

Email communication tools improved and Information Technology Audit required components were implemented with great success, even receiving praise from State Auditors upon completion of our IT Audit.

Technology enhancements in the learning environment and the application of 21 Century learning skills were a direct result of grant funding and the planned use of funds such as Classrooms of the Future, E-Rate, and the E-Fund grant. A new District Technology Plan is under development and will be completed this summer. Meetings have occurred with School Board members (at the “Spring Retreat”), with various staff members, teachers, administration, and community members where sustainability was discussed as a major goal of the new Technology Plan. Parent access to online grade reports was implemented in the High School but currently in a testing/training phase. Full activation in the Jr/Sr high School is expected in the fall of 2009.

Title I and IDEA Stimulus funds enabled Riverside to provide a Summer Academy where an estimated 120 qualifying students will attend a six week program at Riverside Elementary East designed to improve student learning with supplemental instruction.

Successful acquisition of technology equipment was obtained from the Computers for Learning program. Twelve network laser printers and twenty-four 17” flat Panel screens were donated by the Federal government for free.

### **Special education**

Various professional development opportunities for special education professionals were implemented. This year our special education staff attended two seminars presented by lawyers from the law firm of Sweet, Stevens, Katz, and Williams. One seminar was about special education law and the second was on writing legally correct IEPs. The Special Education teachers also attended NEIU and PATTAN in-services on Chapter 14 Forms and Format, Functional Behavior Assessments, Gifted Educations, Co-teaching, transition, Assistive Technology, differentiated instruction, RTI, etc. The school psychologist and director of special education attended the Special Education law Conference at Lehigh University.

All para educators (district and NEIU) have either attended district in-services or NEIU in-services. They have achieved their yearly 20 hours of staff development mandated by the state to achieve highly qualified status.

The co-teaching program is continuing for next year and is expanding to seventh grade. The special education and regular education teachers continue to be trained in this initiative.

Training continued on the new Chapter 14 forms to all special education professionals in our district (district and NEIU). These trainings have taken place at the NEIU and during meetings in district. We have formally and informally observed all special education professionals throughout the school year. We are currently revising the guidelines for our district's home school program.

