

River Bend Schools Ready for Another Great Year

The start of another school year brings many exciting thoughts and ideas. The summer doldrums are brought to an end as the school bell rings. Students will be encouraged to develop new friends, new hopes and new goals. The River Bend Schools would like to welcome our students, parents and community back to another exciting year. The 2014-15 school year looks to be promising and exciting. As the new superintendent I look forward to serving this great community and working with an outstanding staff.

As students begin walking in the doors, they will notice a few new items from last year. Fulton High School added twenty-five new high-end computers in one of the computer labs to teach media publications, business, and computer programming. This will allow the high school to run the video editing software. The media publications class uses the computers to produce the videos published on the "I am a Fulton Steamer" Facebook page and Fulton Steamer twitter account. New handrails and extra steps put on the home grandstand of the football field will make traversing the bleachers easier. A 3-D Printer was purchased and installed that will give students the ability to use drafting software to create 3-Dimensional items and then create them with our new printer.

River Bend Middle School has also been active in acquiring new items. Thanks to the fabulous support of the athletic boosters a gym floor is ready for action. A newly painted and polished floor awaits the middle-schoolers. Mrs. Daehler has also written some grants that will allow her to purchase more Lego sets for the middle school science curriculum. The middle school staff has also secured donations from area businesses that allow them to have an opening day speaker and staff shirts that will promote this year's theme. RBMS will be promoting #pawitforward. This theme will be encouraging students to get involved in random acts of kindness towards each other and towards those with needs. RBMS will be completing other activities throughout the first day to help communicate the importance of teamwork. Kennel Club donated money to the library so that they could purchase books on the Caudill List as well as large bulletin boards for hallway displays.

Fulton Elementary School is excited for this year's theme, "Lasso Your Learning". The FES staff will decorate the library and building in support of the theme. Thanks to a generous donation from the PTO, 64 informational books were purchased to support Accelerated Reader. LeAnn Smith, FES Library Manager, was awarded a \$1,000 FACE grant for the purchase of informational texts about each state. Fulton Elementary will also be adding "Go Math" as an instructional resource for our 3rd, 4th, & 5th grade students. In response to a survey and work completed by the School Improvement Team, FES will focus on providing additional opportunities for students to interact with each other, their families, and community members. FES looks forward to Grandparents Day on Sept. 10th. A Veteran's Day Assembly with Quad City Weatherman/Author of children's books Gary Metivier, will be held on Nov. 12th. Local veterans will be invited and introduced at the assembly. Earth Day clean-up days will be held throughout the month of April with grade levels adopting their own "clean up" or environmental day/activity. A Family Day will be held on April 29th. This is an early release day

and we will be inviting family members into the classroom for the morning to experience time observing and interacting with their children. To help support good decision making skills, the elementary school will start an Anti-bullying "Wear a Blue Shirt Day" on Oct. 6th. The anti-bullying message is endorsed by the national organization, "Stomp Out Bullying". We will host Chris McBrien for an Anti-bullying assembly on October 9th. The K-2 will add a "Friendship Bench" for outside recess with the concept being that it is a place for a student to go when they need a friend, have hurt feelings, or feel bullied. To increase parent engagement FES is sponsoring a Family Reading Night Nov. 20th, January Reading Incentive special event night January 30th, a Family Math Night on February 12th, and an Open House/Art Show/Book Fair on March 19th.

Fulton Blended Preschool is excited for another year to begin. The preschool had much success with the 'Handwriting Without Tears' and 'Phonemic Awareness', pre-reading curriculum, the past two years, that they will build on these programs by adding some additional learning tools. Mrs. Wilkens and Mrs. Stern are excited to add new learning activities on the Smart Board that further promote reading and math. The preschoolers will continue to explore and learn through the "Creative Curriculum" centers that feel like 'play' but challenge to make choices and build critical thinking skills through math, science and reading. To promote family involvement the preschool will hold their annual Fall Family Fun night, which will have a farm theme this year, a winter concert, and a spring graduation. Mrs. Wilkens' will utilize the "Steamer Strong" theme as she believes that children learn best when tapping into their natural strengths.

Each school is hoping to provide activities that will increase engagement for students and connection with our families. The staff and principals have worked hard getting ready for another outstanding year. As a district, we have adopted a "Steamer S.T.R.O.N.G." theme. STRONG stands for Standing Together Realizing Our Natural Gifts. Teachers and staff will be exploring teaching from a strengths approach.

I truly look forward to serving and working with the schools in the River Bend District.

With great Steamer Pride,

Darryl Hogue, Superintendent