

A Letter from the Superintendent

Virtual School – A Reality at River Forest



Dr. Rice

Parents are seeing all kinds of changes affecting our public school system in Indiana today. This is because our state has been deeply involved in a major school reform movement over the last several years.

I have shared some of these changes with you in recent issues of the RF Educator. They include the establishment of charter schools, changes in transfer tuition procedures, and vouchers made available to qualified parents and children. All these new concepts have had a dramatic effect on the local public schools in our neighborhood. As for River Forest, we are experiencing a drop in student enrollment as a direct result of these options made available to parents. Some parents have chosen to send their child to a charter school while others have utilized vouchers to enroll their children in parochial or private schools. Our academic program, however, remains strong and in addition we offer a variety of extra-curricular opportunities for our students that enhance and add to their educational experience at River Forest. This has always been our goal and main focus at River Forest and that will never change. But the loss of student enrollment is impacting our financial support from the state and making it more difficult to maintain the programs we presently have. These influences have caused us to think outside the box. We are here to serve students and if changes are imposed on us in which we have little or no control then we need to adapt and change the way we provide services to the kids and our community.

obtain their education in a unique and different way, such as home schooling. The creation of a Virtual School program is a direct answer to this need. The kind of technology system we implemented a few years ago for our schools will allow us to offer the opportunity for students to participate in a fully accredited educational program leading to a high school diploma without leaving home. A computer and access to the internet is all that's needed to take advantage of this program. Parents who choose this option for their children can enroll them in high school classes through our A+ program and receive course credit. Upon completion of their home studies they will walk with their graduating class on stage in June and be given a River Forest High School diploma. But what makes our Virtual School program different from any others offered in the state is that our students are entitled to participate in any of our extra-curricular activities provided by our schools including courses in art, band, choir and sports. Our Virtual School program will be offered to any student in Northwest Indiana within reach of our technology. Changes affecting public schools today have caused us to think differently and reach out in other ways in meeting the needs of young people.

Technology has allowed us in education to do things we never thought possible a few years ago. What we are doing at River Forest is taking advantage of today's technology by providing a Virtual School Program as an option for our 21st century student. Interested in enrolling for classes beginning 2nd semester. Please call 962-7551 or email ssnider@rfcsc.k12.in.us.

This is why we have decided to implement a new way to reach kids who have expressed a need to

River Forest is Accepting Public School Transfers

For 2013-2014, River Forest Community School Corporation has the capacity to accept 165 new transfer students. By school and grade level:

Grades	Evans	Meister	RFE	Jr. Sr. High School
K	0	5	5	
1	5	5	5	
2	5	5	5	
3	5	5	5	
4	5	5	5	
5	5	5	5	
6			20	
7				5
8				5
9				10
10				10
11				10
12				10

All transfer requests may be made to the respective school of the parent's choice. Accepting transfers for second semester. See list of schools and phone numbers on back page.

A Powerful, Communication Tool to Connect School and Home



SchoolConnects parent notification service quickly delivers daily attendance, special announcements, and school-wide messages to parents, staff, and school groups within River Forest Schools. We use our new system to communicate about transportation issues, weather delays, parent nights, homework assignments, good news stories, last minute cancellations, emergencies, and daily attendance issues. It is important that any change in phone numbers be reported to your child's school office. Our system updates every 24 hrs.

Junior - Senior High School Happenings

Introducing River Forest Virtual Academy



Experience Ingot Pride from Home!
A one of a kind opportunity combining Home Schooling *with* Campus Life

Opens: January 20, 2014

Who: Northwest Indiana Students in Grades 7-12

Required: Computer with Internet Access

Cost: \$250 a year student service fee

\$125/semester per child

River Forest Virtual Academy students will:

- Have the unique opportunity of participating in extra-curricular programs at the Junior Senior High School (Sports, Auxiliary, Cheerleading, Honor Society, Academic Decathlon Teams, Intramurals, etc.)
- Work from home, while being enrolled in a public school (River Forest), and receive a River Forest High School diploma.
- Earn an actual GPA and walk with your class in our beautiful graduation ceremony!
 - Earn an Indiana General, Core 40, or Honors Diploma.
 - Have the ability to work towards early graduation.
- Have the opportunity to take classes at the High School if desired; AP and Dual Credit Classes are also available (parent transportation to and from school is required).
- Allow students to take all state assessments (ISTEP, ECA, PSAT) locally. No need to drive to Indianapolis!
- Be able to communicate with River Forest teachers as needed for coursework and also connect with counselors or administrators for additional support.
- Allow students to retake failed courses to ensure graduation on time.

If you would like more information you can call (219)962-7551 and speak to one of our secretaries or Emailing ssnider@rfsc.k12.in.us (Mr. Shayne Snider, Principal) or twisch@rfsc.k12.in.us (Mr. Tom Wisch, Student Services Coordinator)

Introducing River Forest Intermediate School

River Forest Elementary will open its doors for the 2014 -2015 school year as an Intermediate School. River Forest Intermediate School will house all of the district's 5th and 6th graders. It is the district's intention to provide its students with the best academic program and at the same time be fiscally responsible during this time when schools are severely underfunded by the state.

Current River Forest Elementary students in grades kindergarten through 4th will be divided between Meister and Evans Elementary Schools. Bus transportation will be available.

This new configuration will provide enhanced academic advantages for our fifth grade students:

- Departmentalized Instruction
- Strategically aligned curriculum with Middle School
- Specialized team approach to meet interdisciplinary and social needs for individualized students
- Flexibility and diversity in scheduling
- Allow students to develop socially among their peers in a small stable and familiar learning environment
- Creates a bridge allowing for a smooth transition between elementary and Junior High

Addresses shortfall in state funding by:

- Providing balanced class sizes with fewer personnel
- Focusing dollars on student programs
- Optimum use of current facilities

A committee of administrators, teachers, parents and school board members are currently working toward implementation of this restructuring. Meetings at each of the current elementary schools are being tentatively planned to address stakeholder's questions, concerns and suggestions.

Elementary Happenings



Veterans Honored

The 2013 Ivy Tech Veterans Day Luncheon took place at Evans Elementary School in Lake Station.

The guest speaker was Mrs. Denise Delaney-Wrolen (Evans Elementary School 5th Grade Teacher & Husband to the late Mr. John William Wrolen SP4 U.S. Army – Vietnam Veteran, 36 year Gary Police Officer, 26 year Methodist Hospital Security Guard, 32 year American Legion Post 100 member and 1st District Commander from 2001 – 2002, Department Vice Commander from 2011-2012). Mrs. Wrolen is responsible for the wonderful Veterans Day Program dedicated to veterans everywhere at Evans Elementary School and provides a very inspirational message to veterans and civilians alike.

Mrs. Wrolen was given an award for making a difference in the lives of veterans everywhere.

At the program taps was played, the Color Guard performed Colors, and students from Evans Elementary Flag Crew Folded the flag while the Gary Campus Student Veterans Organization (SVO) VP Ruben Mendez read what each of the 13 folds of the flag means. There were a number of veterans present and each was presented with a token of appreciation from students at Evans. This program is not only in honor of veterans everywhere, but a very educational experience for all who attend.



Pro-Kids Anti-Bullying assembly at Evans Elementary School

Evans Elementary celebrated Spirit Week! The theme this year was "One School, One Goal - Bully and Drug Free".



Indiana Dept. of Education Designates John I Meister an A+ School



Meister was the winner of the Lake Station Fire Department's annual fire safety competition.

5th Grade Camp

Each fall River Forest 5th graders have an opportunity to participate in an overnight field trip—one where they learn about Science, where they learn about their classmates and teachers, and where they learn about themselves.

Students have a unique opportunity to learn about Earth Science and study various Indiana environments. For the past many years, they have traveled to Brookston, Indiana, to attend Camp Tecumseh. Here they observe Science in a fabulous laboratory—the outdoors. Nothing is more breathtaking than fall in Indiana, and the scientific findings culminate the district's first quarter standards. While the curriculum is studied in class, it is solidified at Camp. The chaperones teach and support the classroom instruction as they lead small groups of students in several 90 minute exploration segments. These RF employees have a special talent in asking questions, guiding discovery, and helping the students find answers to their questions.



Many of the students begin to build lifetime relationships with cabin or trail mates from camp. The one thing our RF students have in common—they all have memories of camp. Many remember the canoe tips, or the tug-of-war champs, or even the friend (or teacher) who held their hand on the night hike. They can all remember the crazy camp songs, and the eco-dramas performed by the campfire, and the pig bucket in the dining hall. Boy, girl, young or old remember the first trip down the Black Hole or the Bullet, or seeing a teacher play the role of Harvey, the fairy godmother, or an evil squirrel.

For many of our students, this is the first time they have been away from home. It's their first step to independence—the first time they are on their own. They learn to make good choices, to support one another, and to cooperate. They come together and achieve tasks and goals. For many, they conquer the fear of the dark or the fear of meeting new people or making new friends. The environment of this camp experience allows kids to be kids—laugh, grow, and shine!

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." -Nelson Mandela

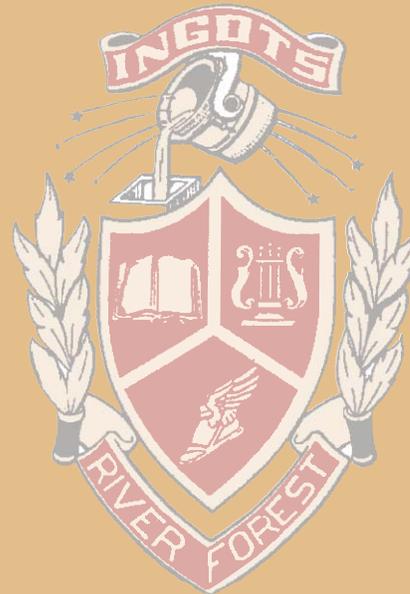
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RIVER FOREST COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION

3250 Michigan Street
Hobart, IN 46342
Phone: 219-962-2909
Fax: 219-962-4951

to empower all students to succeed in a changing world

[We're on the web!
www.rfcsc.k12.in.us **]**



School Board and School Administrators

Board of School Trustees

H. Marshall Gilliana, II, *President*
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Linda Trezak *Member*

Meetings of the Board of Trustees are held on every second Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. The Board reserves the right to add, delete or change meeting dates and locations of meetings with proper notification.

EMERGENCY CLOSING INFORMATION

The following radio stations and TV stations are the ones notified of our emergency school closings.

Indiana 105.5 FM	CBS Channel 2
Z-107.1 FM	NBC Channel 5
1500 AM WAKE	ABC Channel 7
Lakeshore Public TV	FOX 32
WGN radio 720 AM	WGN-TV
WBBM radio 780 AM	CLTV

Central Office Administration

3250 Michigan Street
962-2909

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Mrs. Debbie Pavloff
Accounts Payable/Payroll

Directory of Schools

River Forest Junior-Senior High School
962-7551 or 962-7811

Mr. Shayne Snider, *Principal*

Mr. Ira Zimmer, *Assistant Principal*

Mr. Ray Satterblom, *Assistant Principal*

Mr. Bryan Daulton, *Director of Technology*

Mrs. Victoria Rankin, *Director of Title Programs*

Mrs. Carrie Nowacki, *Director of Food Services*

Ms. Paula Thompson R.N., *Health Services*

Mr. Roland Studley, *Buildings and Grounds*

River Forest Elementary
962-7716

Mr. Tom Wisch, *Principal*

Henry S. Evans Elementary
962-1608

Mr. Andrew Wielgus, *Principal*

John Ivan Meister Elementary
962-1103

Mrs. Nancy Wojcik, *Principal*

CIVIL RIGHTS NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The River Forest Community School Corporation is committed to equal opportunity. It is an Equal Opportunity-Affirmative Action Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, religion, sex, handicapping conditions, or national origin, including limited English proficiency, in any employment opportunity. No person is excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to unlawful discrimination on such basis under

any educational program or student activity.

If you have experienced discrimination in such educational programs or activities, written inquiries about procedures that are available and for consideration of complaints alleging such discrimination should be directed to central office.