



INDIANA SCHOOLS TO WATCH MODEL SCHOOL—VISITOR'S GUIDE



School Name:

Riverside Intermediate School
2019-2020



2019- 2020 School Statistics

Source: Indiana Department of Education

Community: Size/characteristics

Rural

Enrollment: 554

Grade Levels: Grades 5 & 6

School Schedule: Flexible Team Block

Student Demographics

27 % Hispanic

70 % White

2.0% Multiracial

62 % Free/Reduced Lunch

14 % English Learners

2017 School to Watch Re-Designation 2

2017 STEM School recognition

2016 New Tech Demonstration

2015 New Tech Demonstration

2015 Generation On School

2014 School to Watch Re-Designation 1

2011 School to Watch Designation

Designated in 2011 ; Redesignated 2020

- **School:** Riverside Intermediate School
- **District:** Plymouth Community School Corporation
- **County:** Marshall
- **State:** Indiana
- **Principal:** Kyle Coffman
- **School Address:** 905 Baker St. Plymouth, IN
- **Phone:** (574) 936-3787

Riverside Intermediate School School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

Academic Excellence

- Professional growth activities are plentiful and varied for the staff members.
- Teachers meet weekly to discuss the needs, interventions and implementation of the State Standards through weekly Professional Learning Communities and a grade-level meeting

- Teachers incorporate differentiated instruction lessons and interdisciplinary projects for each learning unit
- Study Tables are available for students after school.
- Use of visual supports identifying objectives throughout the building are evident and make the school a cohesive unit
- Teachers are innovative with communication efforts to parents so all students have the chance to be successful
- Students are provided with purposefully planned reading intervention program daily
- Non-fiction reading has increased with the use of Achieve 3000 at grades 5 and 6.
- Classrooms are fully equipped with technology
- Assessments are formative and summative
- High ability students are identified in a variety of formats in elementary and at Riverside
- High ability math groups are provided and taught by highly qualified staff for both 5th and 6th grades.
- Data from ISTEP+ and Common Assessments drives instruction at Riverside Intermediate School.
- Riverside Intermediate School's Response to Instruction and Special Education program is the catalyst for expeditious interventions.
- Students are taught in a fully inclusive environment
- Flexible scheduling supports differentiated instruction and intervention classes
- Project Based Learning has benefitted students' academic and social growth, as well as public speaking and presentation skills in both the PBL and traditional school setting
- One team per grade level is designated as a Project Based Learning Team - member of the New Tech Network.
- Students are given a solid curriculum with PLTW, Achieve 3000, STEM, SOAR, and technology-supported hardware
- Parents and students are pleased with the opportunity of choice between traditional and PBL
- Traditional model allows scaffolded collaboration time for students, teachers and community stakeholders
- Community stakeholders connect with PBL students through projects that improve the community
- Junior Achievement program is provided to both grades 5 and 6

Developmental Responsiveness

- Students feel safe at Riverside Intermediate School
- Everyone is considered family at Riverside Intermediate School which directly affects the climate and culture
- Although the staff believes at times the Hispanic population is a challenge academically, they do it well and involve other students in the process to assist with translation
- Daily collaboration and teaming are strong points for this staff

- The PRIDE program was very evident in the school; the students have definitely bought into this program
- Teachers liked 5th/6th grade in one building; this was nice developmentally as well as easing the transition to Jr. High levels
- Parents feel there is always open communication and daily feedback; the overarching belief that it is not about a score but about growth is communicated
- The social worker is a HUGE asset to everyone in the building by leading three different groups of students, creating a safe environment for the students to choose to share with their parents their involvement in counseling, and teaching life-skills in classrooms during homeroom
- Teachers are organized in interdisciplinary teams that support middle school-aged students and create a personalized learning environment Department Collaboration meetings are held to discuss students both academically as well as behaviorally.
- SOAR and Math Intense are designed to meet the needs of the high ability student and the struggling student.
- Students have a full range of co-curricular activities (various sports and clubs).
- Students are recognized for high achievement (Achieve 3000, Roster Party) and for showing P.R.I.D.E.
- Student attendance is encouraged and rewarded (individually and as a class) - STAR Status
- Advanced math classes are offered
- Individualized instruction is available to students with IXL, Achieve3000
- Students participate in a variety of career-type education opportunities (SLED, PLTW, PBL projects, JA in a Day, etc.)
- CONNECT Program has helped students gain a better understanding of their classmates and has encouraged an anti-bullying week at Riverside (created by students)
- Home school communication happens in a variety of ways- all teachers send home RED Monday folders. Newsletters, emails, text messages, phone calls, and conferences are all ways teachers communicate with parents. Many teams have Twitter accounts and/or websites. Riverside also has a Facebook page to connect with parents.
- Student led conferences enhance communication between home and school.
- Students can choose traditional or PBL instruction by application
- Even though there is a PBL team, traditional team teachers also use PBL as an instructional strategy
- Foundation Community member facilitates Project Lead the Way and STEAM activities
- In-school suspension room is available, can accommodate four students, and is often empty
- Student Council consists of two representatives from each homeroom, providing student choice
- Homeroom provides time to turn in homework, make up work, build relationships, promote character education opportunities
- Students are afforded multiple opportunities to develop citizenship skills while serving the community

- Taking part in community service projects has become the culture of Riverside Intermediate School (canned food drive, humane society collections, sponsoring a family at Christmas, “Stuff a Bus”, Relay for Life, Riley collections, etc).
- Community partners appreciate the enthusiasm of students willing to put forth the extra effort with community service projects, e.g. Relay for Life
- Millers Assisted Living is very appreciative to the school for allowing students to visit the elderly; while the program was intended to be for reading time, the main emphasis has simply become more about communicating

Social Equity

- Riverside’s “Welcome Center” supports new EL students to the school.
- Riverside has several Spanish-speaking faculty in the building to support EL students that comprise roughly 25% of the population.
- Rosetta Stone and Dual Lingo are used to transition Spanish-speaking students to English
- Riverside Intermediate School keeps parent/community members informed throughout the school year through our school website, School Reach, Newsletters, committees, and Power Parent (through PowerSchool)
- Students are taught to value generational knowledge through visits to an assisted living facility to read and converse with the residents.
- PBL provides students opportunities to connect with and improve the community.
- School rules are clear, fair, and consistently applied
- Students have the opportunity to express their opinions and thoughts regularly
- The entire staff works in the best interest of all students
- College & Career Readiness is a definite goal within the school; all students are aware
- of this goal and working toward achieving this
- The school’s social worker has established several groups to work with students in need
- CONNECT program is evident in this building; there is a cohesiveness among all
- students within the student body
- Behavioral issues are dealt with immediately and comprehensively
- The teams are comprised of various levels and abilities of students; classes are full
- inclusion with support
- Fifth grade is piloting a co-teaching program for special education
- Balance balls and isokinetic disks for seat surfaces are widely used in classrooms to
- help alleviate behavior issues
- School has an open door for parents to feel welcome to contribute their time and talents

Organizational Support

- Riverside Intermediate School partners with various businesses in the community.
- The schedule offers a great deal of flexibility to meet the needs of ALL students.
- Teachers meet once a week as a team to address student programs and to plan instruction.

- There is a great deal of pride among Riverside Intermediate School students.
- There is support and collaboration by the district leadership.
- Transition program for incoming fifth grade students and for outgoing sixth grade students
- Professional development opportunities are plentiful; delayed starts on Monday allow for PD
- Teachers lead PD and share what they have learned
- School is involved in the community Relay for Life
- School is clean and orderly
- Class Dojo and Remind allow teachers to communicate daily with parents
- All staff participates in the writing and review of the school improvement plan
- All staff was well-versed in the STW application process and took part in the writing of the application
- The central office administration works closely with the building level administrators to provide the needed resources to ensure the students and staff are given every opportunity to be successful
- Parents believe discipline concerns are addressed immediately by both the administration and staff; a solid effort to work together to solve issues is in place
- Teacher communication with parents to ensure student growth is essential
- Parents spoke highly of administration's support of projects taking place in the classrooms
- There is much evidence of a high degree of unity among the staff
- Staff felt they had an open door to freely discuss ideas and/or concerns with the administration

**Indiana Schools to Watch
2020**