

TEAM RIVERVIEW

Inspired in early 2012 by Dr. Tony Evans and his work with the National Church Adopt-A-School Initiative, Pastor Brad and Pastor Chris felt led to explore opportunities for Liberty Heights to be involved in volunteer efforts at a local school. They met with Principal Mary Anne Hughes to begin discussions on how our church could most effectively benefit the staff and students of Riverview Elementary in Hamilton. Soon after that initial meeting, Pastor Shawn Koonce became the Pastor of Missions at Liberty Heights and he began working to form a long-term partnership with the school. Riverview serves students from Kindergarten – 6th grade. The student population totals 850+ and is only expected to grow as new housing is currently being built in the area. There are approximately 85 teachers and staff members tirelessly leading the students each day. With a high-risk student population and new Common Core standards in place, including the Third-Grade Reading Guarantee, the need for volunteers has never been greater.

Volunteers from Liberty Heights began serving in the school in August, 2012. The partnership has grown in numbers as more than twenty individuals from Liberty Heights served in the school each week during the 2013-2014 school year. On average, the total volunteer time was 55 hours each week during the school year, not including time spent by volunteers completing tasks at home, during after-school hours at events such Riverview's annual carnival and work completed over the summer. Additionally, special events such as the annual holiday party for the staff and the Scholastic Book Fair for the students kept our volunteers busy.

The volunteers' hours of service in the school, however, don't tell the whole story. Many personal relationships between Liberty Heights' members, the teachers & staff, as well as students and their families have formed. Our priorities include helping to fill the gaps, increasing the "joy quotient" when we're in the building, building intentional relationships as we interact with students and teachers and going the extra mile. Our challenge and desire are found in 1 John 3:18 where we're told to not love only with words but with actions and in truth.

There are many needs at the school and many volunteer positions to fill. Help is needed in the cafeteria, media center, classrooms, small-group tutoring, mentoring at-risk students, copying/laminating, etc. There is also a great need for consumable school supplies as well as support with clothing donations, classroom supplies/books, teacher appreciation gifts, etc.

If you are interested in learning more about our school and finding a place to serve, please contact Suzie Rice (riverview@libertyheights.org). Your time and talents are needed and much-appreciated! There is a place for you!

"To start the community rebuilding process, a practical beginning involves the two institutions that bring people together more than anything else—the church and the public school. One significant advantage of churches is that they are located everywhere. There is an average of fourteen churches for every public school in America. They are closest to the needs of the people since they are located in the heart of the community. Churches also offer the largest volunteer force in the nation - enabling strategic mobilization to bring about lasting positive change. Likewise, churches already have buildings for use in hosting community programs. They also offer a combined spiritual and moral framework for assisting people to make good choices."

—Dr. Tony Evans, National Church Adopt-A-School Initiative