

## Local Schools



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# First Doctoral Program Offered in Poplar Bluff

DECEMBER 13TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

## First Doctoral Program Offered in Poplar Bluff

Poplar Bluff, Missouri - Poplar Bluff Schools in partnership with Lindenwood University—is encouraging more local educators to earn the highest graduate degree attainable by bringing the first doctoral program to the community.

In addition to Poplar Bluff R-I educators, the initial cohort of students admitted includes teachers and administrators from Three Rivers College, Leopold and Cooter. While the two-year program is designed to serve a one-time need, the hope is for the collaboration to have long-term implications, according to officials.

“Any time people study their craft, they get better,” stated Poplar Bluff Middle School Principal Dr. Brad Owings, “and we want more for our district and for our kids so Poplar Bluff will become an even better place to live.”

Based in the Metro East, Lindenwood has begun its second cohort in West Plains, where Owings previously served, and the program has been the catalyst for numerous doctorates in that region in recent years. When Owings approached R-I Assistant Superintendent of Personnel Dr. Amy Jackson earlier this year with the notion of gauging interest here, she was immediately receptive.

“This was something I felt would be a wonderful opportunity for our staff as well as other schools throughout the entire area,” Jackson said. “The goal is to be able to continue this opportunity for years so teachers and our administration can grow and learn.”

Enrolled in the program from the R-I district are O’Neal IEP facilitator Susan Schalk, Middle School teacher Shelly Ridens and interventionist Brandy Tripp, and High School math teacher Brandi Compass and assistant principal Sheldon Tyler. The tracks include educational administration and instructional leadership, along with a higher education option.

The first set of courses, administrative decision making and 21st century issues in education, will be taught by Jackson and Owings respectively beginning in January at the R-I Administrative Building on North Westwood Boulevard.

“The beauty of the program is the people teaching are practitioners themselves,” noted Dr. Terry Reid, Lindenwood director of graduate education. “There’s no program convenient at all to Poplar Bluff. It’s a great location because it’s a regional hub for much of Southeast Missouri.”

For more information about the doctoral program, email Reid at [treid@lindenwood.edu](mailto:treid@lindenwood.edu).

Shown in the photo: O’Neal Elementary Principal Dr. Amy Dill (right) last month joined R-I administrative colleagues Dr. Amy Jackson and Dr. Brad Owings in earning her doctorate in educational leadership.

Photo and article submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District.

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# The Giving Closet

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DECEMBER 08TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

## The Giving Closet

Poplar Bluff, Missouri - Poplar Bluff High School students in need of an article of clothing, a personal hygiene product or a classroom supply now have a discrete place to go directly on campus to seek relief.

The Giving Closet has been established this academic year in the library. The operation is managed by Librarian Marci Priest, who maintains inventory through donations and receives help stocking shelves from student volunteers.

School board member Alana Robertson, who also serves on the Bright Futures advisory, read about the Little Bit Foundation, a cost-free boutique for poverty-stricken schools in St. Louis. She was able to further gather information from a relative at an educational institution in Florida with a comparable operation.

“It’s the whole premise of Bright Futures and I thought, ‘How wonderful if we can do something similar,’ because we all have kids that need our help,” Robertson said. The mission of Bright Futures is to help meet the basic needs of students through community partnerships with the business sector, human service agencies, faith-based organizations and parent groups.

The high school site council for the nonprofit took its first tour of the Giving Closet on Wednesday, Nov. 25. While discussions began last school year, plans for full implementation were put on hold until a designated space was made available at the new Oak Grove facility.

“In the past (lacking an element of anonymity) might have prevented us from meeting the needs of a child who may not want to come to school because they would freeze to death with no coat, or they don’t want their stomach growling until lunch because they didn’t eat supper, or they don’t have clean clothes,” R-I Attendance Officer Misty Dodson explained. “For a child to be able to just walk in and say, ‘I need this,’ cuts down on the potential negative feeling they may have in regard to their circumstances.”

Items presently in demand, according to overseers, include gently worn winter gear appropriate for high school students, undergarments and feminine products. For more information, contact the high school directly at 573-785-6471, or message the Bright Futures Poplar Bluff page on Facebook.

Shown in the photos: PBHS Librarian Marci Priest displays a tote of granola bars donated by Poplar Bluff Regional Medical Center.

Photo and article submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District.

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# 6th Pink-Out Day Raises \$20K

NOVEMBER 21ST 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

## 6th Pink-Out Day Raises \$20K

**Poplar Bluff, Missouri** - A total of \$20,000 was raised for the United Cancer Assistance Network during the sixth annual Pink-Out Day, which concluded Friday, Oct. 14, at the Mules Football game.

Pink-Out Day is a citywide observance founded by the Poplar Bluff High School Student Council. Citizens participate in a T-shirt fundraiser, the proceeds of which go toward UCAN, a nonprofit organization that provides monetary assistance for local patients receiving cancer treatment.

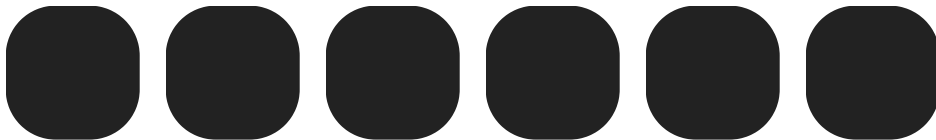
In the photo: Wearing their Pink-Out Day T-shirts to school, students and staff members present a check to UCAN in the PBHS commons area.

Photos and article submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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## Elementary School Recognizes STARS

NOVEMBER 21ST 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

### Elementary School Recognizes STARS

**Poplar Bluff, Missouri** - Oak Grove Elementary has joined Lake Road and Eugene Field in implementing the Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support program designed to reward students who are meeting and exceeding building expectations.

Through the new program that goes by the acronym STARS, students who are spotted by staff doing something exceptional earn points which they can use to purchase prizes in a makeshift store set up monthly. Classes can also earn reward parties. The store is funded by the Parent Teacher Organization as well as the Latch-Key program.

“If you put in those positive expectations, maybe you’ll ward off the negative behavior by bringing more attention to the good things,” Principal Jenifer Richardson explained. “It feels good to be praised so other students take notice.”

Upon meeting the required staff buy-in quota, Richardson and a team of colleagues attended a summer training institute in 2015 and proceeded to collect data last school year. Implementation of the action plan kicked off this year with an Olympic-themed boot camp that was designed for students to rotate through stations that defined expectations in various school settings such as the lunchroom and the bus.

The final component of the program is the Monday morning celebration during which students learn their behavioral focus of the week. Students are encouraged to wear their STARS T-shirts supplied by school sponsor Poplar Bluff Realty.

Richardson credits her staff for the early success of the program. First grade teacher

Sheila Henderson commented that she enjoys “starting the week on such a positive note.” The biggest benefit third grade teacher Hilary Taylor sees, she added, is the “consistency of the new building-wide approach to classroom management.”

STARS stands for: The expectation is for our Star students to Take responsibility, Always be safe, Respect yourself and others, and Strive to do your best.

Promoting the STARS program are students (from left) Alexis Jameson, Laynie Riggins, Emma McCracken, Kale Caudel, Kinley Young, Samantha Painter, Cayden Innes and Zada Camden.

Photos and article submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

LAST UPDATED ON NOVEMBER 21ST 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

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## Science Students Have a Blast

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## Science Students Have a Blast

**Poplar Bluff, Missouri** - Poplar Bluff Junior High students concluded their unit on the scientific method with a rocket launch on Thursday, Oct. 27, at Fred M. Morrow Stadium.

Rocket Day was founded several years ago by retired science teacher Vic Clark, who still returns for the occasion to help operate his homemade compressed air launcher. Eighth graders later make qualitative and quantitative observations about the data.

Prior to the event this year, students watched “October Sky,” which was inspired by Homer Hickam Jr., a NASA engineer, who actually wrote a personal letter to the class after teacher Ashley Woolard connected with him via Twitter.

“Best wishes to you and remember, if you never have dreams, they never come true. Aim high,” Hickam stated and included an autographed self-portrait, which he addressed to Poplar Bluff Schools.

Shown in the photo: Makaya Mitchell launches her rocket under the instruction of Vic Clark.

Article and photo submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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