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First Lighthouse School in Southeast Missouri

DECEMBER 20TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Poplar Bluff, Missouri - Eugene Field has achieved lighthouse status under The Leader in Me program, joining only a dozen other schools in Missouri and less than 250 world-wide that have met the prestigious benchmark.

Students have participated in goal setting, data tracking, leadership roles, self-led conferences with parents and community events since the elementary school received a grant valued at about \$75,000 from Franklin Covey's I Am A Leader Foundation in 2013.

“It reinforces the hard work of our staff and students over the last four years and shows that, regardless of socioeconomic status or a child's age, personal leadership can be taught and modeled,” said Eugene Field Principal Jennifer Taylor, after sharing the news to the campus community on Thursday, Dec. 15. “It is completely attainable for students to achieve personal and academic goals and give back to their community, putting leadership in action to better themselves, even if they have obstacles or limited background experiences.”

At the start of the month a review team from Franklin Covey visited Poplar Bluff to evaluate the environment, culture and language at Eugene Field. The model teaches students to become self-reliant, take initiative, plan ahead, set and track goals, prioritize, manage their emotions, be considerate, express their viewpoint persuasively, resolve conflicts, find creative solutions, value differences and live a balanced life, according to company officials.

“Schools who achieve the lighthouse milestone are great examples of a strong leadership model, process and of what it means to be a Leader in Me School,” stated company Education Practice Leader Sean Covey in a press release. “This school has experienced transformational results by implementing the principles and practices related to The Leader in Me.”

The program, which is not taught as a curriculum but rather incorporated in all classroom activities, is based on Dr. Stephen Covey’s bestseller, “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.” The seven habits are: to be proactive, to begin with the end in mind, to put first things first, to think win-win, to seek first to understand then to be understood, to synergize, and to sharpen the saw.

Prior to writing the successful grant, Taylor and her team participated in a book study of “The Leader in Me,” which details how the habits can be used by school-aged children to develop the skills and self-confidence needed to succeed in class and life. Now recognized as an exemplary Leader in Me school throughout the region, having fully implemented all of the criteria in the program, Eugene Field will continue to receive annual on and off site coaching, and sustain its certification with reviews every other year.

“This is a tremendous accolade for the students, faculty and staff at Eugene Field,” R-I Superintendent Scott Dill commented. “They have worked unceasingly to improve themselves and to improve their school. All of their hard work and their persistence has merited this award.”

Shown in the photo: Eugene Field Elementary staff and students celebrate after learning last week they have become a lighthouse school under The Leader in Me.

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

LAST UPDATED ON DECEMBER 20TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

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