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Lighthouse School Shines at Leadership Day

APRIL 11TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Poplar Bluff, Missouri - More than 100 area business associates, educators, pastors, social service workers, legislators and media members participated in the fourth annual Leadership Day at Eugene Field on Friday, April 7, at the elementary school.

The student-led program featured speeches and performances showcasing why Eugene Field has the honor of being classified a Lighthouse school under The Leader in Me program. There are currently 25 schools that have reached the prestigious milestone in Missouri and less than 300 worldwide.

“In my estimate, this is the best thing happening,” commented Greg Gilberto, pastor of Northpoint Nazarene Church. “Scripture says, ‘And a child shall lead them.’ That’s what’s going on here. It inspires me.”

Gilberto, husband of long-time Eugene Field third grade teacher Jackie, observed how the community leaders in attendance were witnessing the young people, grades 1-3, who will be driving Poplar Bluff in the future.

Another church partner in attendance, David Meyes – youth pastor of Westwood Baptist, was just learning about the program for the first time. He said he wanted to test out the seven habits on his young children at home. The initiative is based on Dr. Stephen Covey’s best-seller, “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.”

During the event, students discussed their leadership notebooks, which they use to track their own progress that they review with their parents during teacher conferences. Since the school began the program four years ago, behavioral referrals have decreased annually, and attendance and MAP scores have increased, according to Eugene Field Principal Jennifer Taylor.

The student service team reported that they have raised thousands of dollars for charities such as Relay for Life, John 3:16 Ministries and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, plus donated socks for homeless veterans.

The yearbook team talked about how the students themselves design the school's yearbook in collaboration with the photography team, who could be spotted taking pictures throughout the event. The broadcast team also discussed their morning announcement program, which can now be viewed on their new YouTube channel: EFTV Leadership Productions.

Members of the lighthouse team reflected on their recent participation in the Missouri School Boards' Association's legislative forum in Jefferson City during which students toured the Capitol and got to visit with local legislators, including House Speaker Todd Richardson and Sen. Doug Libla, who were in the audience.

Principals from the Jackson R-II School District also visited Poplar Bluff to explore implementation of The Leader in Me program at their respective elementary schools. North Elementary Principal Dr. Lance McClard said Jackson is engaged in the Positive Behavior Interventions Supports process, which is where Eugene Field's journey toward improvement began.

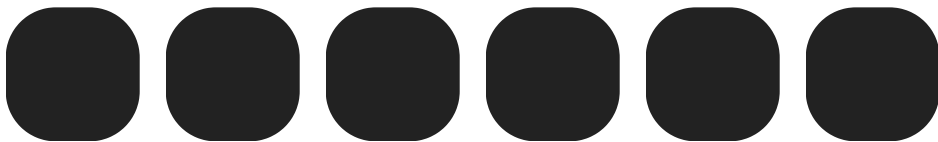
Before the Gleeders closed the show with a performance of "The Climb," this year's theme, Taylor honored broker Nathan Maurer of Poplar Bluff Realty for supporting Leadership Day for the past three years, contributing more than \$9,000 toward the program.

Shown in the photo: Third graders (from left) Kailen Skinner, Kenyon Johnson, Gracie Ruhl and Julia Scott perform "Leader on that Beat."

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

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