



# RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mr. Philip Martell, Superintendent of Schools



November 22, 2024

## To the Editor:

As Superintendent of River Valley School District, I have long championed the pursuit of educational excellence tailored to meet the diverse needs of our students and their families. On this premise, I wholeheartedly support the initiatives outlined in recent discussions on expanding school choice and parental involvement in education.

Our education system must offer more than a one-size-fits-all solution; it should provide a platform for real choice and opportunities. Parents must be free to choose the best educational path for their children, whether through traditional public schools, charters, private institutions, or homeschooling. Recent policies promoting school choice highlight the need to empower parents to use educational funds to select a provider that best aligns with their child's needs.

Moreover, the importance of transparency in curriculum and educational standards cannot be overstated. Parents deserve the right to have a critical role in knowing and deciding what their children are learning. As education leaders, it is our duty to ensure that all materials and curricula reflect accuracy, cultural relevance, and historical integrity, free from undue biases or political slants. Engaged and informed parents are pivotal in crafting an educational environment that is not only inclusive but also accountable.

Our own River Valley STEAM Academy stands as a testament to what can be achieved when educational frameworks are aligned with the real-world applications of science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics. Since its inception, the Academy has set a benchmark for academic excellence and innovation, significantly outperforming traditional public education models that too often fail to adapt to the evolving educational needs of our nation's youth.

Our district has witnessed the numerous benefits of involving parents in their children's educational journey. We see higher engagement levels, improved educational outcomes, and more tailored learning experiences that meet the unique needs of each student. By advocating for policies that enhance school choice and parental involvement, we are not just advocating for a policy change; we are fostering a culture that values and uplifts the voice of every family in our community.

In conclusion, I urge policymakers at both the state and federal levels to consider these points seriously. Only through collaborative efforts and a shared commitment to enhancing educational freedom can we truly transform the landscape of education in America. Our children deserve no less.

Sincerely,

Mr. Philip Martell  
Superintendent of Schools  
River Valley School District

