

Evidence of Excellence



Over three years, overall performance increased by nearly

19%



RIVERVIEW GARDENS SCHOOL DISTRICT • ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI



**13 SCHOOLS / 4,883 STUDENTS / 100% FREE OR REDUCED LUNCH / 1.5% ENGLISH LEARNERS / 13.5% SPECIAL NEEDS
96.5% BLACK / 2.2% HISPANIC OR LATINO / 0.9% WHITE / 0.2% AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE / 0.1% ASIAN**

One unified vision made a culture of success possible

CHALLENGE

Riverview Gardens School District, located in St. Louis, Missouri, serves 13 schools in a community that has faced significant challenges for nearly two decades. After losing accreditation 18 years ago, the district was placed under state control, and every staff member had to reapply for their position. "We lost experienced teachers and leaders who truly knew our students and our community," expressed Barbara Sharp, executive director of continuous improvement.

The effects of that disruption still linger. Riverview continues to rebuild amid high student mobility, declining home ownership, and limited commercial growth. Nearly 400 students are currently in transition or identified as homeless, and provisional accreditation remains in place. "One of our biggest challenges has been restoring confidence and building a culture where success feels possible again," Sharp explained.

Superintendent Dr. Tanya Patton echoed that sentiment: "In spite of our challenges, if students stay with us from kindergarten through 12th grade, they do well academically. Our kids are resilient, our staff is dedicated, and our community is determined to see Riverview thrive."

IMPLEMENTATION

In 2022, Riverview received ESSER funding and saw an opportunity to accelerate change. The state identified three of its schools as official turnaround schools, and several others were labeled priority schools.

"Solution Tree provided exactly what we needed to move forward academically—but also to build a culture of success," Sharp said. Working closely with Solution Tree leadership, the district adopted the Priority Schools in a PLC at Work® process, combining job-embedded coaching, leadership development, and targeted ELA and math support across all schools. Through this model, every school committed to creating high expectations for all students. Superintendent Dr. Tanya Patton emphasized, "There must be high expectations districtwide, academically and in school culture, for everyone: teachers, coaches, and administrative staff. When we hold ourselves to that standard, our students rise to meet it."

RESOURCES AND PD SUPPORTING THIS WORK

- Book studies on *Acceleration for All*, *School Improvement for All*, and *Charting the Course for Leaders*
- School Improvement for All Two-Day Workshop and PLC at Work® Institute
- Summer PD focused on Closing the Learning Gap: Acceleration for All

The district implemented common formative assessments, created guiding coalitions, and trained teams to analyze data weekly. Sharp recalled that once they started meeting weekly, unpacking standards, and diving into data, they realized the power of alignment and collaboration.

The conversations we're having now are completely different from two years ago. We're talking about data, about what's working, and how to raise the bar. There's accountability now, and that's what our students deserve.

DR. TANYA PATTON / SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Patton emphasized that the work was as much about culture as instruction: "The conversations we're having now are completely different from two years ago. We're talking about data, about what's working, and how to raise the bar. There's accountability now, and that's what our students deserve."

RESULTS

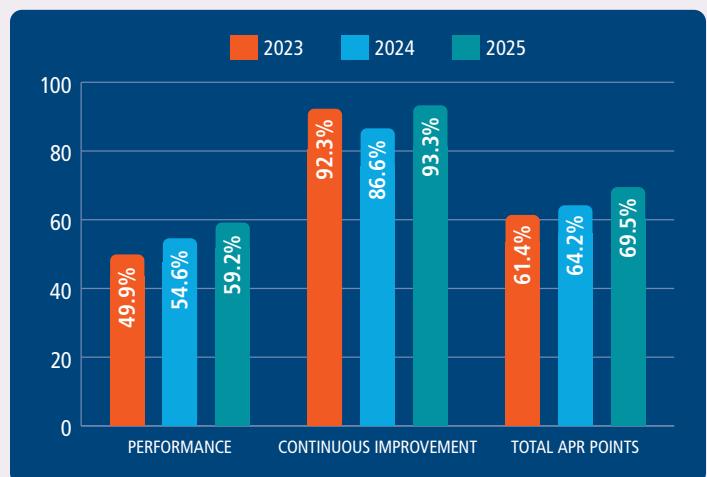
In three years of focused collaboration, Riverview's commitment to student success began to yield remarkable results. Three schools, Moline Elementary, Gibson Elementary, and Glasgow Elementary, have been recognized as Promising Practices Schools for consistent growth in ELA and math, while the district demonstrated steady progress over the past three years. Riverview Gardens' overall Annual Performance Report (APR) score from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) rose from 49.9% to 59.2%, reflecting gains in multiple areas of student outcomes and district performance, including student achievement, year-over-year academic growth, graduation rates, and attendance. The district's Continuous Improvement score, which measures the effectiveness of planning, evaluation, and improvement efforts, remained strong at 93.3%. Total APR results also increased steadily, climbing from 61.4% to 69.5% over the same period.

"Principals feel empowered to lead this work," Sharp said. "They have the confidence to sustain it." Weekly data dives,

30–60–90-day plans, and shared accountability structures have become part of the district's culture.

But raising scores wasn't the only goal. Reflecting on the district's progress, Dr. Patton added, "Our goal was never just to raise scores. It was to build something lasting, a culture where success is the expectation, not the exception. We're proving that Riverview Gardens can do this work, and we are doing it."

RIVERVIEW GARDENS DISTRICT STATE REPORT CARD



Start your success story



You have a vision for change and improvement in your school or district. You want to see results in the classroom for the lifelong betterment of your students.

At Solution Tree, we share your vision to transform education to ensure learning for all, and we can help you make this vision a reality.

OUR PROMISE: No other professional learning company provides our unique blend of research-based, results-driven services that improve learning outcomes for students.



Start your school's Priority Schools in a PLC at Work® professional development journey by visiting **SolutionTree.com/PD**, calling **800.733.6786**, or scanning the QR code.



LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN DO TOGETHER



Solution Tree

Please note that all data and people mentioned in this story represent solely the time frame in which Solution Tree actively worked with the school or district and the time frame in which the school or district committed to implementing processes and practices set forth by Solution Tree. Building and district leaders and staff featured in Evidence of Excellence stories may have changed since the stories were published.