



Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance (WiRSA) 2016 Rural Administrator of the Year Award Winner

Tom Wermuth | [River Valley School District](#)



Tom Wermuth was honored by the Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance (WiRSA), a non-profit organization that is dedicated to helping address challenges faced by rural school districts, at the annual Rural Schools Conference on November 10, 2016.

Thomas R. Wermuth, the district administrator of the River Valley School District, embodies the district's belief

statements that he helped create:

- Students are our number one priority
- Every student has the right to learn
- Instruction is rigorous and relevant
- Assessment is purposeful and drives instruction
- Learning is a collaborative process

Though these belief statements were adopted in November of 2014, Tom has been a leader and strong presence in the River Valley School District since 1999. Before becoming the district administrator three years ago, Tom had served in the River Valley School District as a special education teacher, an elementary principal, and the special education director. Tom's enthusiasm and passion for education is contagious and positively impacts every district employee and student daily.

Tom encourages community and school connections and realizes the significance those connections can make on the success of a school district, especially a rural district. One of Tom's first initiatives upon becoming district administrator was to build upon the strong community ties within the River Valley School District. To encourage community collaboration, Tom began to write weekly "District Administrator's Corner" articles for the local newspaper. He also makes connections through Facebook and Twitter, and our award winning River Valley TV. Tom created the "Like a Hawk" campaign, where local businesses buy and display banners to show support for the River Valley School District. With this campaign, local businesses have become more actively engaged with the district. Tom's commitment to community connections are also showcased through his active membership in community and county groups.

Through his work, commitment and interactions with all stakeholders, River Valley has thrived under his leadership. While Tom would be the first to say that the school staff are the reason for the successes of our district, Tom Wermuth is the foundation of our district's success and is the heartbeat of the River Valley School District and community.

The Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance was formed to help rural school districts address the unique issues that affect rural schools as they seek to achieve the highest quality education for every student. Members include a cross-section of administrators, educators, school



board members, post-secondary representatives, rural community members, business leaders, and other concerned individuals who want a strong voice for rural education.