

Mark Twain Elementary School, in the Brentwood Public School district, was built in 1934, and is considered by our community the “best-kept-secret” in St. Louis County. Located at the eastern edge of a 2.9 square-mile city in St. Louis County, Missouri, Mark Twain is rich in traditions of academic excellence and strong character development. We are economically and socially diverse, with 13% of our 153 students attending from St. Louis City through a voluntary desegregation transfer program instituted in 1986. Holding onto small-town traditions, Mark Twain is the center of our community, with the building occupied by a variety of activities from morning until night.

Mark Twain staff, parents, and students are committed to creating a school environment where all children feel accepted and respected as individuals while eagerly engaged in cooperative learning with classmates. We believe it is our responsibility to model lifelong learning among the adult community at Mark Twain. Therefore, we continually strive to develop strategies and implement change to better meet our students’ needs. We know that we must continue to grow and learn as children grow and learn.

Curriculum development arises from teacher study groups, trained in Emotional Intelligences and Best Practices models. Technology integration happens through collaboration from each member of the staff. Teachers collaborate within and across disciplines, meeting students’ individual needs through problem-solving and then designing a plan that works best for each child. The atmosphere at Mark Twain is collegial, both emotionally and academically.

Our daily community pledge ends with the statement, “I will work hard each day to grow and learn.” The focus is on our students as learners, and the use of strategies such as collaborative learning, differentiated instruction and inclusion, define our teaching practices. Inclusion at our school accommodates students with various needs, including twelve students from across St. Louis County from the auditory/oral, deaf and hard of hearing program. Through supported inclusion into the general education classroom, we are able to prepare them to return to their home districts. Mark Twain is stronger because of the opportunity to work with all of our diverse learners.

Building relationships between adults and children is an important asset to learning at Mark Twain. Students are nurtured through a variety of adult mentoring programs including teacher provided Navigator Pals. Afterschool activities that are open to students and families include Stars Night, a once a quarter family reading night, a Spanish Club, and tutoring programs in Math and Reading. Healthy lifestyles are promoted through our “Enjoy the Game” sportsmanship program, DARE instruction, Read, Right and Run Program, and student service projects.

Mark Twain Elementary School is a unique place where individuals are provided with: the assistance needed to learn, varied modes of instruction to keep learning interesting, character development as a regular ingredient of every class, and a learning environment where students are affirmed, engaged, and challenged each and every day.