



2001 McCoy Road • Huntington, WV 25701

304.529.6205 • Fax: 304.529.6209 • 800.967.7372 • <http://resa2.k12.wv.us>

**Contact: Keith Dalton**  
304.529.6205 Ext. 28

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## **Open House Touts Gilbert Middle After School Efforts**

**GILBERT** – Parents of students at Gilbert Middle School got a firsthand look at the facility's new after school program with an open house reception on April 24, 2014.

The event, which lasted for an hour, showcased various projects students have been working on since the initiative, called the Youth Education Program (YEP), launched in January.

They included:

- Robotics demonstrations using kits provided through the county's Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Project coordinator, Dr. Richard Duncan
- Technology integration, including working with iPads to create stories, pictures, and videos
- Reading and language arts improvement using the Read 180 curriculum (<http://read180.scholastic.com/>)
- Shoring up core math skills using the Khan Academy, a web-based educational learning curriculum that covers multiple study areas (<https://www.khanacademy.org/>).

A total of 27 parents and other interested community members attended the event, which After School Site Coordinator Candace Vance said was a huge boost to the students.

## MORE

### Open House Touts Gilbert Middle After School Program

Page 2 of 2

“This is our first year, and to have parents and the community come out and support us in this way is phenomenal,” Vance said. “The kids were very excited to share what they learned this semester.”

Every Monday through Thursday when school is in session the students meet after school where they receive two hours’ worth of extra instruction, homework help, and enrichment activities. Students are fed a nutritious meal and are bused home by Mingo Board of Education buses. The goal is to improve student achievement through these enhanced educational opportunities.

Roxanne Gibson, a sixth grader at Gilbert Middle School, says the extra school time has been beneficial to her in several ways.

“When I first joined YEP, I didn't think I would meet so many new people. I have made a lot of great friends and learned many new things,” Gibson said.

Grant activities are funded by a five-year U.S. Department of Education 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Center Grant. The funding was secured by RESA 2, a regional agency that provides services to six West Virginia counties, including Mingo.

For more information, contact Candace Vance at 304.664.8197.

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