

Wednesday, March 17, 2010

Tutoring program combines mentors, struggling students

Little Miami is one of the first Warren County schools to partner with service.



Nicole Niemeyer, sophomore at Little Miami High School pictured here reading with a 7-yr-old Maineville girl, is one of several tutors volunteering their time through the Whiz Kids program.

MORROW — Little Miami School District is partnering with a nonprofit group that provides free tutoring services to children struggling in the classroom.

The program was launched Wednesday, March 17, at Park Church in Morrow, one of two tutoring sites — the other being Christ Fellowship in Hamilton Twp.

Whiz Kids is a program started in 2005 by City-CURE, a non-profit agency serving Greater Cincinnati. Whiz Kids, which has tutoring sites in about 45 area communities, works through local churches to recruit and train volunteer tutors and provide those services for local school districts, said Area Director Carole Bower.

Little Miami is one of the first Warren County schools to partner with Whiz Kids,

Bower said, and comes at a time when the district is struggling financially to provide basic services.

Initially 12 second-graders from Salem and Hamilton-Maineville elementary schools will be selected for the program, meeting with the same tutor at the churches on Wednesdays for one hour a week.

“Whiz Kids has found that schools report attendance increases on Whiz Kid day, improved attitudes and relationships,” Bower said. “We also have found the tutors walk away finding it to be very satisfying and a real positive experience for them.”

Patricia Stevenson, Little Miami resource coordinator, said the students are identified through referrals from teachers and parents, who must sign an agreement.

She said she is very supportive of the program because it’s organized well and it’s “such a positive, upbeat project.”

“It will be helpful to connect the mentors in the community with students and families,” Stevenson said. “I think it can work for all the children who are needing a little extra help.”

Volunteer tutors are screened and undergo a background check, then they are trained before they work with children.

For more information, call (513) 621-2873 or e-mail whizkids@citycure.org.

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