

# School pairs with restaurant for Rockin' Reading program

By Mark Johnson

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The bond between the community and students at Manor Hill Elementary School is being strengthened by the Rockin' Reader program, which was introduced at the school in October.

More than 60 guests came in to launch Rockin' Reader, which is sponsored by Cracker Barrel Old Country Store. The program takes place in a welcoming setting just inside the school's main entrance.

"It went great," Manor Hill Principal Jeff Williams said of the first week. "We had different readers every 30 minutes."

Liberty Public Schools Superintendent Mike Brewer was among the participants.

"I had a great time," he said. "This program sends a message that reading is important and gets the kids excited about reading."

Brewer said the school district has always considered reading one of the core skills students need to succeed.



Kindergartners Jake Cantwell and Destanie Dunn enjoy a Dr. Seuss tale with first-grade teacher Trisha Harmon during their turn Oct. 28 in the Rockin' Reader program at Manor Hill Elementary School. The new reading area is located by the main entrance to the school.

*Mark Johnson/Liberty Tribune*

People from throughout the community along with students from William Jewell College and Liberty High School are continuing to come in now and read with Manor Hill students on a daily basis.

“The kids just love it,” Williams said.

More than 200 students took part in the first week of the program.

Williams said all the students would have the opportunity to be involved at some point this school year.

“We work with classroom teachers to find the ideal time for this support for them,” he said.

The program provides enrichment for some students while for other students it is targeted to meet specific needs, the principal explained.

Williams first learned of Rockin’ Reader last spring through Brett Larson, manager of the Cracker Barrel Old Country Store at 8225 N. Church Road.

The school applied for the program and was soon selected.

“We worked with corporate and got the ball rolling,” Williams said.

The school now has its special reading area reflective of the past complete with two double rockers and a barrel full of books. It is an area being used to prepare today’s youngest generation for their future.

## **THE DETAILS**

To participate in Rockin’ Reader,

Contact Manor Hill Principal Jeff Williams at

736-5460 or by e-mail at [jwilliams@liberty.k12.mo.us](mailto:jwilliams@liberty.k12.mo.us) .