



Sunnylane United Methodist Church members are serving as tutors and mentors for Highland Park Elementary School students taking part in the new Whiz Kids program. Photo by Traci Chapman

Highland Park welcomes Whiz Kids partnership

BY TRACI CHAPMAN
Staff Writer

A group of Highland Park Elementary School students have a chance to develop their reading skills, thanks to a new program made possible by their teachers, a group of volunteers and a non-profit organization.

That program is called Whiz Kids, a non-profit organization that works to promote partnerships between school districts and partner organizations, like surrounding churches, to work with at-risk kids across the Oklahoma City metropolitan area improve reading and comprehension skills, as well as fostering relationships with mentors in the community. Whiz Kids coordinates programs bringing together more than 1,400 volunteers to 900-plus children in the area – a program long looked at by Mid-Del Schools' Highland Park Elementary administrators.

It would take a while to become part of the Whiz Kids world, however, Highland Park Principal Dr. Donna Cloud said. After years of trying to get into the program, this year the school received great news, she said – some of her students were about to become Whiz Kids.

"It really was the culmination of a lot of work and a lot of patience," Cloud said. "Our staff worked very hard to make this a reality for their students."

Highland Park teacher Adrea Johns, tasked with coordinating the school's side of the Whiz Kids program, agreed.

"Highland Park is amazing - the teachers have invested in these students, they want them to succeed so badly," Johns said. "Watching our students have a place to be where they can receive mentoring and tutoring is something that the teachers were very excited

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