



One of my favorite educational research studies was conducted by Hallinger and Heck in 1996. These researchers conducted a review of empirical research between the years of 1980-1995 to reassess the principal's role within school effectiveness. Their work found that when researchers measured the indirect effects of a principal's role on student learning and accounted for intervening variables, such as socioeconomic status, school location, and the diversity of the student body, only one mediating variable had a significant effect on the outcome measure; school goals.

The influential power of collective goals often goes unnoticed. Many assume that effective schools have strong principals who simply navigate their staff down the pathway of success. Unfortunately, this perception could not be farther from the truth. Effective schools create collective goals through the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders. Whether it is meeting in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), School Accountability Committee (SAC), or parent-teacher conferences, all parties must believe their voice is heard and their values are honored.

At Buffalo Ridge, we are currently working on two collective goals. The first, which can be categorized as academic, is to improve our student's ability to comprehend and respond to various texts effectively in the appropriate written form that addresses all components of the prompt. These written responses will be assessed using a common rubric and will be aligned to the 2020 Colorado Academic Standards.

This goal was established after analyzing a body of evidence (i.e. CMAS, iReady, and anecdotal observations) and identifying the comprehension of literary texts through written response was the root cause behind student struggles and a clear next step systematically at BRE. Since implementing this goal, our teachers and support staff have done some AMAZING work. Since August, the staff at BRE has analyzed and implemented the 2020 Colorado Academic Standards in literacy, created common rubrics, implemented rigorous assessments, and established inter-rater reliability through their collaborative work in PLCs. The work our teachers are doing is complicated and time-consuming, but it is the right work for kids, and Rob and I are so proud of them.

Our second goal, which can be categorized as climate and culture, is to empower students, parents, and staff to meet the academic and emotional needs of EVERY child EVERY day. This goal was established after Dr. Tucker and the DCSD School Board approved the funding of a school counselor at every elementary school within the district. Buffalo Ridge has truly benefited from Alex Nardi. Our new school counselor brings a wealth of knowledge, experience, and optimism to BRE. She is a proactive counselor who believes in establishing a strong relationship with every child within our building.

Since establishing our second goal, Alex Nardi, administration, teachers, and support staff have worked collaboratively to incorporate Second Step, a social/emotional curriculum, into every classroom, established a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) committee, lunch bunch groups, and peer conflict resolution groups. The work is new and challenging, but it is exciting and good for kids.

I reflect on these collective goals because I believe in transparency. If BRE is to reach new levels of success, we need all hands on deck. Parents and various stakeholders need to know the work that is taking place behind the scenes, and all individuals must know there are platforms to voice their opinions. Whether it is our School Accountability Committee, Buffalo Ridge Educational Alliance (BREA), or a phone call with Rob or me, we are here to listen. Your voice matters and your values are honored.

It is crazy to think we are about to embark on a new year. 2020 is right around the corner, and this new year will bring a clearer vision to the work at Buffalo Ridge. I love our students, I love our staff, I love our community, and I cannot wait to continue this work with you. We got this!

Warmly,



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