



Dear BRE HERD Family,

Jimmy Dean once stated, "I cannot change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination." The staff at Buffalo Ridge Elementary cannot think of a better theme to encompass the 2020-2021 school year. As many of you have already experienced, COVID-19 has shifted our normalcy level and has forced us into a new reality of social distancing, virtual interactions, and vigorous handwashing. Despite these shifts, everyone has risen to the challenge and has acted in our students' best interest. For that, Dr. Thelen and I thank you from the bottom of our hearts. You are all superheroes.

While we are only four weeks into our new school year, we have already experienced so much. From orientation week to Back-to-School Night, Dr. Thelen and I could not be more proud of our staff. The teachers at BRE have worked relentlessly to ensure student learning remains authentic, and they are committed to providing a rigorous curriculum via multiple online platforms so all learners can continue advancing through their grade-level standards.

Please know that Dr. Thelen and I are aware of the challenges that Hybrid Learning has placed on families. As parents ourselves, we understand how difficult it can be to juggle the responsibilities of raising a child while meeting the expectations of our employers. Throughout these times, communication will be the key to success. If you are ever feeling overwhelmed or unable to meet your child's needs, please reach out to your student's teacher. We are here to support you in ANY WAY possible, and we are committed to making the appropriate adjustments so all families can feel successful.

As Dr. Thelen and I reflect on the past month, there are a few systematic adjustments to our school-wide procedures that we would like to empathize. First and foremost, it is CRITICAL

that ALL parents dropping off or picking up their children use the car loop. While this might feel like an inconvenience to some, this new protocol was implemented to ensure our students' safety and foster positive relationships with our school residents. Over the past three weeks, we have continued to improve our car loop system, and it is running faster and more efficient each day. Thank you for your patience.

Asynchronous learning days are an additional topic I would like to address. Rob and I have been so impressed with the work your children have been producing at home. We realize these at-home learning days can present unique challenges to families, but we appreciate your commitment to the process. However, please don't forget to have your students engage in ALL subject areas. Our specials teachers have been working feverishly to produce online assignments that are engaging and purposeful. Even more important, many of these online lessons frontload in-school learning so your children can spend the maximum amount of time engaging in the arts.

On a final note, BRE's *Read-4-Funds* fundraiser begins next week and we couldn't be more excited. Our goal at BRE is to read over 80,000 minutes and to raise \$50,000. What does this mean for you? Your child logs every 20-minute reading session they complete and seeks out sponsors (Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles, the Local Mail Man) to sponsor their reading progress. For more information, please look for the flyer that was sent home with your student(s).

Warmly,



Jen and Rob



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