



Dear HERD Family,

On December 7th, 1941, President Roosevelt stood in front of the American people and announced the unprecedented and horrific attack on Pearl Harbor. In a short sentence, Roosevelt began his speech with a phrase that has echoed on the walls of history from that day forward: "... a date that will live in infamy."

Roosevelt knew in his heart of hearts that the world would never be the same. Such a life-altering experience changes people and shifts their paradigms on reality. It doesn't guarantee a bleak and dark future, but it does ensure change. The direction we choose to head is up to us and us alone.

I would make the argument that the pandemic of 2020 has had a similar effect on society. Life is different and it is hard to remember the days that were. A life without masks, social distancing, and quarantines seem like a distant and unfamiliar reality, and simple acts of kindness such as hugging a friend, shaking a hand, or sharing a meal are now few and far between.

Thankfully, humans have the unique ability to adapt and move forward. Despite these challenges, people have preserved and have found the good that life has to offer. As the Principal of Buffalo Ridge Elementary, I can attest to this first hand. Over the first semester, a period



of time that has included remote, hybrid, and in-person learning, I have witnessed relationships strengthened, communication streamlined, and conflicts resolved. I have observed students collaborating virtually and learning dispersed over a variety of platforms. I have watched teachers challenge themselves professionally and take risks that once seemed impossible. I have seen people grow, love shared, and relationships formed.

I am so proud of our students, staff, families, and the surrounding community. Everyone has been so supportive and has been willing to go the extra mile to do what is best for kids. For that, I thank you.

I also want to thank our families and students for their generous red envelopes. Each year it takes my breath away and fills me with joy and gratitude. We are so lucky to have such a great support system, and your acts of kindness do not go unnoticed. Thank you for making us feel so special and wanted. It makes all the difference.

As a parting gift, I would like to leave you with two gems that are sure to put a smile on your face!! [BRE Stages of Grief](#) and [BRE Blinding Lights](#).

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jen & Rob". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and personal.

Jen and Rob

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