12/06/2019

Dear Dr. Daniel and the Unit 5 Board of Education,

I would like to share the Good News about several members of the Grove Elementary Student Support Team. It has become clear that one teacher cannot meet all the needs of every child by themselves. To educate the whole child, it takes a team. Today, I would like to share a little about the impact of a few of these team members.

Mrs. Beth Beaty serves as the school social worker at Grove. Beth came back to Unit 5 after taking a few years off to raise her children. Since returning she has jumped in with both feet. She regularly goes above and beyond to meet the needs of our students and families. She not only provides direct service to countless students each week, she provides crisis counseling, is a lead member of our special education assessment team, serves on our Dream Team, and is part of our Behavioral Leadership Team. In addition to all of these tasks, she finds ways to assist our families. Beth always sees the best in everyone. Most recently she helped a single mother find a new apartment, assisted with her move, and found a way for her to get a reliable car to get to her new job and school program. I am so proud to work alongside Beth to assist the Grove School Community.

Next, I would like to honor the Grove Elementary LBS1 team. Mrs. Jennifer Hawkins, Mrs. Michele Kinley, and Mrs. Katie Matthews make up the top notch team at Grove. They amaze me every day with their never ending efforts to meet student needs. They work tirelessly to plan interventions, accommodations, and modifications to ensure that our students have equitable access to an excellent education at Grove. They assist each other, filling in gaps and taking on more when there is a need. They develop strong relationships with classroom teachers to plan instruction and develop IEP goals and objectives. They regularly communicate and build trust with our families for strong and positive working relationships. I could not be more proud of this team and the supports and services they provide to our students and families.

Lastly, I would like to spotlight the extra effort of a caring duo. Mrs. Veronica Collins and Ms. Nikki Dillow have a new kindergartener this year. Early on they realized that he was not talking at school, at all. Rather than letting time go by and hoping that he would become more comfortable, they took immediate action. Veronica called the family and built a trusting relationship. The family opened their home to Veronica to come and talk with the student, where he was more comfortable. Then each week, they took an additional step. One week they walked to school and talked all the way to school. The next week they planned a play date with a peer after school. The following week they invited the student’s
mother in to start volunteering in the classroom. All of these steps build comfort and trust with the student. I am so proud to say that the student walks in the front door and says hello! He talks at school, all because of the extra efforts of this pair of educators. They truly changed the path of this child's education.

Recently, the State of Illinois released their school designations. I am so proud to say that Grove Elementary has once again been rated as Exemplary. This is due to the amazing work happening by the talented and giving staff at Grove. Tonight I shared just a few examples of the ways the staff regularly go above and beyond to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of our students. I appreciate you allowing me to join you tonight to share this Good News!

Sincerely,

Sarah Edwards
Principal Grove Elementary