

TO: Rebecca Rappold

FROM: Robert Petrone & Melissa Horner

DATE: March 8, 2022

RE: Description of Support for Buffalo Hide Academy

We will work with Buffalo Hide Academy (BHA) faculty and staff to develop and implement a cohesive, integrated English Language Arts and Social Studies Curriculum.

Toward this broader aim, the goals of the work would be two-fold. The **first** will be to provide a foundation for the Social Studies and English teachers on topics such as settler colonialism and decolonizing approaches to curriculum and instruction. The **second** goal will be to co-create the core Social Studies and English curriculum that centers Indigenous perspectives, people, texts, and topics (including Blackfeet specific texts, histories, issues, and practices as appropriate). In this way, our aim is to "indigenize" the curriculum while also linking it to mainstream indicators of academic achievement. An important facet of this work will be to have the English and Social Studies curriculum connect together in terms of topics, terms, and concepts to create a cohesive, integrated curricular experience for students.

Throughout this professional development, activities will include the following:

- Review/Analysis of existing curriculum
- Establishment of the format and structure of common lesson, unit, and course planning
- "Listening sessions" with BHA faculty and students to learn about current curriculum and ideas for revisions
- Discussions of settler colonialism, Indigenous and Blackfeet texts and topics, and decolonial approaches to curriculum
- Development of integrated Scope & Sequence of ELA and SS courses/curriculum, including links to BHA Social Emotional Learning goals
- In-person PD sessions (Summer 2022 & Summer 2023)

- Ongoing Virtual PD sessions through 2022-2023 school year; these will include both group sessions and one-on-one coaching opportunities for teachers through the process of implementation

Logistically, we would start working with BHA staff in late spring 2022 to lay the foundation for the work. In summer of 2022, we would visit Browning and work with the teachers face-to-face to develop the curriculum. Throughout the 2022-2023 school year, we'd regularly meet with the teachers to check in, revise, and de-brief implementation of the curriculum. At the end of that school year or in summer of 2023, we would visit Browning to debrief the experience and make revisions/refinements to the curriculum for subsequent iterations.

Facilitator Bios & Credentials

Dr. Robert Petrone has devoted his entire professional career to language and literacy education with special attention to alternative learning contexts and marginalized, rural youth. After teaching high school English in Colorado and New York, he earned a Masters Degree in English at Northern Arizona University and a Ph.D. in Literacy Education from Michigan State University. For the past 14 years, Robert has worked as a professor of literacy education at the University of Nebraska, Montana State University (for 8 years), and, for the past 4 years, at the University of Missouri.

In addition to more than 30 peer-reviewed academic publications (including several with BHA educators), he is co-author of two books—*Re-thinking the “Adolescent” in Adolescent Literacy* and *Teaching English in Rural Communities*, the second of which focuses entirely on the opportunity and challenges of teaching in rural Montana. He is also currently finishing a book, *Failing to Learn: What Skateboarders Can Teach about Learning, Schooling, and Youth Development*, which will be published in 2023 through University of Massachusetts Press.

Most importantly, since 2016, Robert has been in a collaborative relationship with teachers and students at Buffalo Hide Academy participating in curricular efforts and research initiatives.

Melissa Horner (Métis/Anishinaabe), M.A. Melissa Horner grew up in Montana, is pursuing a Ph.D. in Sociology with a focus on Indigenous Peoples, and she is an Educational and Curricular Consultant with a focus on Indigenizing and Decolonizing Practices through curriculum design, public presentations, and professional development workshops. Drawing on her experiences as a secondary English teacher in rural Montana, her curriculum development focuses on: 1) foregrounding Indigenous cultures, histories, and epistemologies and the impact that has on dominant education practices; and 2) understanding the role of settler colonialism in contemporary society—including education spaces. She has previously worked as a consultant with the Montana Office of Public Instruction on the aforementioned topics. She has presented

her work at the National Council for Teachers of English Annual Convention, the Montana Education Association Annual Conference, Montana Annual Indian Education for All Best Practices Conference, the Midwest Sociological Society, the American Indian Studies Association, and as part of the National Native American Heritage Month at the University of Missouri.