



School Board Presentation: Raleigh Park Elementary

December 12, 2016

Introduction

My name is Brian Curl, and I am honored to speak to you this evening on behalf of Raleigh Park Elementary. This is my third year as Principal in a community that never ceases to amaze me with their warmth, care, generosity and trust in the skilled educators for whom I am privileged to serve. Prior to my arrival at Raleigh Park, I was an assistant principal at both Beaverton and Aloha High Schools.

School Demographic Profile

Raleigh Park is a learning community serving 355 student learners and 41 full and part-time staff, making us one of the smaller schools in the Beaverton School District. Based on the Oregon State Report Card published in October, we are:

- 61% White
- 26% Hispanic/Latino
- 9% Multi-racial
- 4% Asian, Black, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- **43% Economically disadvantaged**
- 13% Students with Disabilities
- 24% Ever English Learners (15 native languages spoken)

Efforts/Actions

Raleigh Park was authorized as an International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO), Primary Years Programme (PYP) World School last August. This was a significant victory and celebration for our students, our staff and our entire learning community. It is the culmination of a multi-year process, involving an evolution of pedagogical practices that honor student curiosity and inquiry as the hub from which education revolves. I am extremely proud of the Raleigh Park staff for embracing the Primary Years Programme (PYP) standards and practices, understanding this philosophical shift doesn't happen overnight. It entails an intensive level of resources and openness to professional collaboration, exploration and growth. I'm continually humbled by the knowledge, skill and talent I witness in their work, while I am thankful for the faithful and unrelenting support from the district and our always-generous parent community.

Raleigh Park is the only PYP school (authorized or on-track for authorization) designated as one of the Future Ready pilot schools. While we are now a Future Ready district, the resources initially provided to Raleigh Park as a pilot school – primarily our Library and Instructional Technology Teacher (LITT) – have provided our teachers the opportunity to re-think and re-imagine the manner they expose students to content. With significant support from the Raleigh Park PTO, we are in the midst of a multi-phase library transformation that will bring some modernization and inspiration to the space. On tap is a Future Ready showcase scheduled for later this school year.

Raleigh Park is in the infancy of a model of intervention and support that “pushes in” to our classrooms. Whether it is English Language Development, Special Education or reading intervention, we are motivated to reduce/eliminate time out of classrooms and provide contextual connectedness when working with students. While there is still plenty of work to do, I was heartened to hear one story from our kindergarten team. Specifically, their English Language Learners do not differentiate themselves as English Learners. Simply, there are no instructional practices that would lead them to think otherwise. In their minds, they are Raleigh Park students...no more, no less, and absolutely beautiful!

With the assistance of Lydia Krivoy from the Welcome Center, one of my primary objectives since arriving at Raleigh Park is to regularly engage our Spanish-speaking parents in a series of listening sessions. Many of these are topic-based and involve a partnership with community organizations/resources. Because of the geographic separation of these families from Raleigh Park, we are most appreciative of our friends at ACMA, who graciously open their doors and allow us to use their space for this purpose.

District Goal: WE empower all students to achieve post-high school success.

The Beaverton School District recognizes the diversity and worth of all individuals and groups. It is the policy of the Beaverton School District that there will be no discrimination or harassment of individuals or groups based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, marital status, age, veterans' status, genetic information or disability in any educational programs, activities or employment.

Mission/Goals

Raleigh Park is a community committed to developing compassionate, engaged global citizens. Together we are building a rigorous learning environment that values inquiry, equity, diversity, action and reflection...for students and adults alike.

Success

Beyond the aforementioned efforts and actions, we have a tremendously warm, caring and generous school community. Serving the Raleigh Park community for nearly 40 years (yes - 40 years), the Raleigh Park After Care Association (RPASCA) is one of two independent, non-profit aftercare programs fully governed by volunteer parents.

The Raleigh Park PTO has been tremendously generous in their stewardship. Beyond the “bells and whistles” that are not uncommon for PTO-supported projects across the district, what makes me most proud is their heart for our most marginalized students, with some of the most significant financial outlays dedicated to students/families in need. They understand the success of Raleigh Park is contingent upon the success of ALL students. Their generosity is a tremendous gift that comes with tremendous responsibility.

Project BACK is a program I was able to highlight at a community partnership breakfast last year. A collaborative endeavor with our PTO and multiple community partners, it provides food and personal care assistance to 35 families on a weekly basis. We know we were/are not the only backpack program in the district, but highlighting our program proved to be the inspiration for no less than two additional schools in the creation of school backpack programs.

Challenge

Our most significant challenges are two-fold, and both related to the students we serve.

First, we are not a Title I school, but serve a significant percentage of students with financial hardship (43%); doing so with the resources of a small school (money and people). While there is a sense of pride and grit to rolling up our sleeves, the reality is that we have no choice but to do more with what we have (see push-in philosophy above). Of particular concern is standardized test data that suggests we are not serving our English Language Learners (most of whom are also identified as economically disadvantaged) in a manner compatible with their native English-speaking peers.

Second, we know the need for social and emotional support services does not discriminate based on socioeconomics. Whether reported informally via parents, manifest in the manner a student navigates the world around them, or a function of the special education process, we are working with many children experiencing levels of anxiety necessitating intervention. Inevitably, this has an impact on learning.

Finally, and not related to students, is the capacity of adult learners to learn, change and adapt. In my three years, Raleigh Park has experienced an intensive PYP authorization process, a move to Future Ready, a move to Eureka Math, an English Language Arts adoption and new diagnostic reading resource (IRLA), and a fundamental shift in the manner we provide intervention support. Some of these shifts are district-wide, while others are self-induced. Regardless, our teachers are skilled, capable and professional; they just want the opportunity to feel skilled and successful prior to adding one more thing to the bucket.

Other/Closing

Please feel free to come visit Raleigh Park. I believe we are a special community that is engaging in the right work with a heart that is always focused on putting our children first.

Thank you for your time!