

School District of BELOIT

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January 2022 – Why I Love Being an Elementary School Principal

I Am Able to Lead and Make Changes on a Broader Scale

I have been an elementary school Principal for almost seven years and have enjoyed my experience in the School District of Beloit. I pursued this position because I wanted to lead and make changes on a broader scale than in the classroom. What I love about my job is that each day is different, and my priorities change based on the needs of our students, families, staff, and community. Being a principal in an elementary school means that sometimes I am engaging and motivating staff, placing a band-aid on a scrapped knee, watching instruction in the classroom, enjoying chicken nuggets with our littlest students, promoting our school spirit, celebrating student successes, connecting with community partners and volunteers, meeting with families, sharing our vision for the future, evaluating curriculum, or, in this case, writing a blog.

I Am Able to Create a Positive First School Experience

As a Principal of a 4K-3 elementary school, I understand that we are the first school experience for students. I love being a part of setting an educational tone and experience for students and providing that foundation for their education. Positive early childhood experiences are essential, and I am proud to be a pillar in that foundation. Along with setting a positive foundation for academic success, I also understand the importance of a student's social and emotional well-being. Research shows that for students to flourish in the classroom, they must come to school with a sense of belonging and be provided with a supportive learning environment surrounded by adults who care. At Merrill, we work hard to build and stretch our students' character education and teach them how to work together with other students. We are not only teaching academic skills; we are teaching life skills that will last beyond our walls. I am grateful and appreciative of the staff at Merrill Elementary School who understand the importance of this foundation and who provide that to our students and families.

I Am Able to Take “Belonging” to the Walls

At Merrill, we want our students to feel safe and included within our building. We have invested in artwork that showcases our student population and provides a rich sense of culture for all students. We embrace culture and realize that we play a crucial role in developing our students' self-identify and self-love. Self-love builds self-efficacy and the belief that students can conquer any goal. I love that I can be a change agent in my school and create an environment where students see themselves reflected in the artwork we display on our walls to make Merrill a second home.

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I am Able to Watch Students Grow

I enjoy watching students grow from when they enter our school at 4K and leave at the end of their third-grade year. Students begin school so excited and impressionable about school. I love to see the growth that students make academically, socially, and emotionally at Merrill. My heart is truly filled with joy when I watch a student struggle with learning how to work with another student at a young age and then grow and learn how to get along with their classmates. They support and encourage each other and develop relationships that will last throughout their life.

I Am Able to Create Long-Term Relationships with Families

While I love, as I mentioned in this blog, all my job responsibilities, one of the most important and enjoyable is working with our Merrill families. I pride myself on developing strong relationships and bonds with families from the first day they enter my school. It is rewarding to know that many of those relationships last the test of time. I really appreciate seeing former students at Walmart or at a BMHS football game. Past students and their families come up to me and share how they are doing and what is new in their lives while always taking a few moments to reminisce with me about the past.

It is often said that being a principal is one of the hardest jobs you will ever love. Yes, some days are hard and can be a little bit challenging. Fortunately for me, I have a staff that always puts our student's needs first. We work together to create a learning environment that allows our students to thrive and grow. What could be more rewarding? Absolutely nothing.