

The
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**Breton Elementary
2021 - 2024
Education Plan**

School Profile

Breton Elementary School is located in the village of Breton (a town of around 500 people) at the crossroads of Highway 20 and secondary highway 616. It serves the town of Breton and the greater surrounding rural area. We have a number of students whose parents drive them from the Warburg and Winfield areas as well.

For the 2021-2022 school year we will have 9 teachers (most full-time, some part-time) and 3 EA's (2 full-time and 1 part-time), though we may get more EA support for PUF in the fall. We also have a part-time Learning Commons Facilitator.

We are a "Leader in Me" school, meaning that we teach, model and support students in learning and practicing the "7 Habits of Highly Effective People".

Our **projected** numbers for September 2021 are as follows:

Kindergarten	20	
Grade 1	21	
Grade 2	20	
Grade 3	31	
Grade 4	23	
Grade 5	31	
Grade 6	20	Total students: 166

Vision:

To develop connected, empowered and engaged citizens.

Mission:

To provide students with opportunities to engage in meaningful learning experiences, positive relationships, and leadership development so that they can participate with confidence in their community.

Motto:

"You can't spell BEST without BES!"

Inquiry Question, Measures and Strategies

Inquiry Question: Over the last two years we worked on discovering if having a dedicated Literacy Block, with teachers using the “Daily 5” format, would allow teachers the opportunity and structure to implement consistent reading groups, including LLI reading intervention, resulting in more kids reading at grade level by the end of the year. The arrival of COVID-19 significantly impacted our ability to follow through on some of the structures, and most likely impacted student growth and progress, but we have seen significant student improvement since return to in-person learning in the fall, and teachers are happy with the structure and how much time it allows them to spend with student in small groups, so we are continuing with this process.

However, in reflecting on student literacy, teachers noticed that while reading development has been positively impacted by the Daily 5 structure, **students are showing significant deficits in their writing abilities - both in quality and quantity.** We want to find out more about why this is, and what we can do to change it. So our new inquiry question for this year is:

What areas of writing do our students struggle with, and what do we need to learn as teachers to support their improvement in writing?

This may seem less “substantial” than deciding to implement a new program or process but we believe that there is no value in adopting a writing program or process across-the-board before **taking the time to really notice which areas of writing need targeting, and then making sure that we as educators do the learning/training necessary to be able to address those needs** effectively. We are using this year as the time to **do the assessing, observing and learning to build a good foundation for subsequent steps in writing instruction.**

Our hope is that we will be able to help students improve in their use of proper writing conventions (capitalization punctuation, spelling, etc.) as well as the ability to generate grade-appropriate quantities and quality of writing (meaning being able to write an appropriate amount for their age, as well as produce organized, coherent and descriptive writing).

This question **directly connects to WRSD’s Powerful Learning Environment Framework** by being part of the “**purposeful instruction**” facet of the diagram. By digging deep into this inquiry question we can develop a clearer understanding of our students’ needs when it comes to writing, then look at research and determine which frameworks/programs/strategies would be the best fit for our students’ needs. This will **ensure that the activities and strategies we employ during our writing instruction will be intentional and relevant to what students need.**

And of course we hope that by pursuing this inquiry question it will **positively impact teacher practice.** Many of our teachers admitted to feeling that teaching writing was something they didn’t always feel they had mastery over - they felt they did “okay” and they knew most kids learned, but there is a **sense shared by all that they would love to feel more confident in their instruction and practice around writing.** They are interested in discovering new and better ways of helping kids acquire the skills to write, as well as hopefully even enjoy writing!

Strategies:

- **PD and instruction on how to use/implement the HLAT writing assessment.** Kim Wedman and Irene Heffel are already booked for the fall to introduce us to this assessment.
- Having students complete an HLAT assessment in the fall, and **having Kim and Irene walk us through the assessment/marking process.** We want to do this as either a whole group, or as Div I and Div II so that we can **develop a better sense of the appropriate progression of writing skills**, and be able to more consistently and accurately assess student writing. (We want to all have the same sense of what is “acceptable” writing at each grade level, etc).
- **Research other types of ways/means to gather writing samples/assessments.** What are other schools using?
- **Analyze the writing** we get in the fall, using our new understanding of grade appropriate expectations, and **look for key “themes”** - what are the biggest challenges for kids?
- **Based on what we notice, look for and book PD opportunities** that will support the areas we notice are lacking. This could be speakers we bring in, sessions at Convention, or organizing visits to other schools/classrooms in the division where powerful writing instruction is taking place.
- Based on what we see or learn during our PD, **choose one or two strategies that we think will have the biggest impact** and start trying them in our classrooms. Use CRM time or PD days to reflect and review on how this is going.
- **Continue to have Kim Wedman touch base with us throughout the year** - on PD days or through school-based visits, to help us with our learning.
- Have students **complete the HLAT again** (maybe March and May?) and re-evaluate the writing. Has there been improvement?

Measures:

- Our main way of measuring our improvement in writing will be through **the HLAT writing assessment.** While we need to learn more about how to implement and mark it, our understanding is that it is an effective way to track writing progress.
- In between the HLAT assessments we will make a point of **gathering other samples of student writing**, and using our better understanding of developmental writing expectations, assess and monitor writing growth. We can use the scoring/rubric from the HLAT, or develop something of our own, perhaps. We hope, through our research and inquiry about the writing process, to also come across some other meaningful ways to get a “snapshot” of student writing that we can apply across all grade levels.
- We can use the **Writing portion of the PAT** to get some data on writing for this year and then compare it to next year and see if we are making a difference in student writing performance.
- We can also try getting some “qualitative” measures, such as surveying students on how they feel about writing, or having them do self-assessment of their writing.

Implementation:

- We will begin with using one of our **staff days in August to “re-focus” staff on our inquiry question and our “why?” behind choosing this.** I want to engage staff in discussion on what they are thinking they may want/need to know more about, what type of support and resources they anticipate needing. (And at this point we may not yet know what we don’t know and so this will change and evolve as we work through this process). I want to get their **feedback and input on some timelines and expectations** - for example “What is our “center line” - the aspects that we all agree to as we explore and learn and try new things in our classroom and are somewhat non-negotiable? And then where are the “white lines” on the sides...what are the boundaries that we all have to stay within when moving our practice forward? (Allowing for some “voice and choice”, yet staying true to our inquiry question).
- **PD Days: We plan to have Kim Wedman and Irene Heffel join us for a number of half-days on our PD days.** We already have September and October booked, and depending on our needs, will decide on the follow-up dates.

- **School Visits:** Should we hear of a school that has a successful writing program/structure, I want to dedicate some PD money towards **allowing staff to observe these classes in action**, and talk to those teachers about their “journey” to better writing instruction.
- We may find that we want to have the companion to “The Reading Strategies” Book - the one on **“Writing Strategies”**. If so, I would get one for each homeroom teacher as a simple, yet effective reference for quick writing mini-lessons. (Something that is “doable” for all comfort levels).
- We would dedicate at least 2 (maybe 3) half-days on PD days to participate in **“group marking” of writing samples to build our collective understanding of developmental writing progression** and to plan for next steps.
- **Decide on how to monitor progress** (besides the HLAT)...do we collect a sample every 6 weeks? Every 2 months? What type of sample is effective yet also efficient to collect? This will be part of our growth and journey with our question this year because we don't yet have the answer for this.

2021-2022 Professional Learning Plan:

Here is our “tentative” PD Plan. I call it “tentative” as some of the sessions still need to be booked, and I also want to be flexible enough to respond to any new needs that emerge, or need for extra PD on a topic. So I have set out a plan, with the understanding that it may change a bit if need be.

Link to Tentative PD Plan:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1voKt3_-ltAfsZ_Tfz2jjmOYQ9-Oyu6hr4sJZDoJfxe8/edit#

Stakeholder Involvement

In creating our Education Plan for the 2021-2022 school year we did our best to involve all stakeholders. As a staff we shared what we noticed were some areas of need, as well as what they were interested in learning more about. An online survey was sent out to parents to ask them what aspects of our learning, wellness and leadership that they felt were going well, as well as what areas they felt we could improve on. I also presented our initial thoughts/ideas to our Parent Council and asked for feedback. The feedback we got from people outside our school (parents, etc.) was that they were happy with the learning going on in our school, but they trusted our judgement about deciding to focus on supporting writing development.