The Why of Who We Are

by Jen McCoy, IB Coordinator

As the first magical days of school begin, we are flooded with a variety of emotions. Anticipation, excitement, trepidation, and hopefulness are only a small description of the full spectrum of sentiment. These feelings fill our presence with the energy of new and exciting beginnings. We must channel this energy into a productive force by recognizing our purpose, our reason for doing. All of us strive for our feeling of belonging and there is no better a place to practice, grow and blossom in our identity of inclusion, than together, with our learning community at Riffenburgh Elementary.

Together, as students, teachers, parents, and community members we create a culture of acceptance and empowerment by recognizing the strength in the collection of people we are honored to call our community. The International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IB PYP) gathers its foundations from this idea.

“Education is a social and collective endeavor. Viewing the world as the broadest context for learning celebrates our common humanity and develops international mindedness.” (IBO.org, 2018)

As we begin our school year we can reflect on our process of learning and communicating both our needs and our accomplishments. Our entire learning community prioritizes people and relationships as the foundation for all learning. We learn about, with, and from each other. The IB PYP strengthens our commitment to this principle.

“An inclusive and caring community will prioritize people and their relationships to support well-being, self-efficacy, and agency. Continuing to foster a spirit of inclusion will build and strengthen a cohesive and positive learning community.” (IBO.org, 2018)

This is **who we are**.

Brene Brown states, “Love and belonging are irreducible needs of all people. We are biologically, cognitively, physically, and spiritually wired to love, to be loved, and to belong.”

To this end, we are channeling this cacophony of the first day’s emotions to welcome all members of our honored community to an amazing 2019-2020 school year.

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