

GUARDIANS OF THE ASTROGALAXY

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2017

While we are only in our 4th week of the school year, some of our students are already having a hard time keeping up. I want to focus on parents and students being held accountable for the students' success and achievement, and I want to support our parents and students in taking on this responsibility. I feel that many of our students have parents and grandparents who made the deliberate decision to come to the United States. In doing this, they made sacrifices of leaving family members, jobs, familiar surroundings and came to the unknown, doing what they needed to, to give their children better opportunities. When they arrived, they didn't want their children to make sacrifices, and they wanted their kids to have everything that maybe they didn't. We see in our classrooms that we have students who don't understand what it is to struggle to earn an A, work their hardest or to be the best. Our students haven't had the satisfaction of knowing what working hard to achieve success feels like. At the same time, as humans, many of us are naturally afraid of failing. Our students are 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, or 15 years old, and they haven't learned what it is to succeed, but they also are afraid of working hard and still failing. I always wanted to give my mom more, and I had that to focus on. I feel that our students don't have that perspective, so I have been struggling with how to help our students and parents to understand what it is they need to do to become successful, and some of it is counter-intuitive.

We are supporting our students and giving their parents guidelines with our struggling 6th grade math students and with our EL students. Our sixth grade math students are receiving the time and focus of our whole math department. Three hundred fifty of our students did not pass in one or more of the four basic arithmetic operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and multiple-digit multiplication. Thanks to our math department, these students are receiving tutoring after school either on Monday and Tuesday or on Thursday and Friday. We are putting our students and their parents into the mindset that we have certain standards at Carr. As a part of this, the Carr staff is extending the school day for kids who haven't learned the material that they need to. The math department believes that our 7th graders need this intervention as well, and I love the momentum and progress our students are making.

In addition to our math students, 375 students are in ELD classes and do not have an elective because they are not proficient enough in English to be re-designated. While the students might feel that this move is punitive, it really is not. We care about them and want them to receive more academic time on task during the school day.

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By giving our students concrete goals to work towards, they can start struggling and reaching realistic goals.

Even while I am asking a lot of our students, I am asking a lot of our staff and myself as well. As principal, I ask myself if what our students are doing is meaningful and effective. I am ecstatic that our High School Readiness rate is now at 80%. However, it troubles me that our test scores don't match the readiness rate. If our students are not at grade level, it seems that we cannot be confident that they really are ready for high school. Even while we are doing our best to help our students to progress, can we show that they are learning? Our MAP scores during the past two school years made significant gains between Fall and Winter. However, they took a dip in the Spring. I have wondered if this year's scores were affected by all of the RIFs in the Spring. However, the two year pattern indicates this might not be the case. Are our students apathetic, and if they are what can we do as a school or I as the principal do to change this?

I would love to hear your ideas through [this](#) Google Form and see what Carr can do to help our students to find success.

Thanks to all Carr Guardians for everything you do for our students, many of it unseen, unheard and unacknowledged. You are what makes Carr, and you are what makes successful Carr graduates. Go Astros!