

Dear Russell Families,

I am excited to welcome back every student and I commit to you the support of our entire staff to ensure your student(s) have a successful school year. Our staff members are passionate, committed to student success, and professional. We have invested in our work as Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) over the past five academic years. This year, we are doubling down on that investment district-wide with a focus on the day-to-day work of our PLCs ensuring that each of our actions form a collective impact to improve student outcomes.

In order to ensure staff in our school face every day with uncompromising excellence in the quest to improve outcomes for all of our learners Russell staff are committed to following a data driven dialogue process. This allows every staff member to focus on school improvement, develop strong instructional practices, and build skills in using evidence-based practices and data. We, at Russell School, are committed to answering one essential question: *Are all of our students learning?*

We look forward to spending this year together as parent and teacher teams focusing on improving student learning. Together, we will realize the success for every one of our students. Through the hard work of our teachers, instructional coaches and teaching and learning department, we've aligned our assessment practices to make sure we are not over testing kids and we are providing every classroom teacher with assessment data to guide their instruction.

This year, we have removed the DIBELS test from the student's year.

In its place, we will be using the STAR 360 formative assessment in our school and district-wide. This 20-30 minute assessment is designed to:

- give teachers, students and parents a touchpoint to see each student's math and english language arts skills in that moment in the school year.
- It allows the teacher, student and parent to set goals for mid-year and end of the year progress.
- The quick STAR 360 assessment given three times per year is only used for instructional purposes such as:
 - Identifying instructional groups within the classroom
 - Identifying specific instruction and skills needed by students
- This assessment is never used in isolation to make classroom or grade level placement decisions

If you are interested in learning more about the STAR 360 assessment, [check out this parent guide](#).

We look forward to working together to celebrate and prepare our students for success across the school year.

Sincerely,

Cindy Christensen, Principal