I am thrilled to be the principal at Coyote Ridge Elementary, an IB World School! This is my sixth year as principal at CRES, and it just keeps getting better!

I began my education career as an elementary school teacher in southern California. I also worked as an elementary school assistant principal there for three and half years before moving to Fort Collins. During my last year in California I had the opportunity to serve as assistant principal at the same school I attended as a child, and it turned out to be the last year of my kindergarten teacher’s long career--she was still there!

Moving to Fort Collins in 2007, I worked as an elementary teacher at Beattie Elementary, an assistant principal at Lesher Middle School, an IB World School, and as interim principal at Lopez Elementary before being hired at CRES in 2014.

My wife, Margaret, teaches 6th grade at Lesher Middle School, and we have four children, between us: Eric is a United States Marine, Ali is a sophomore, Abbey is a freshman, and Sara Grace is a 4th-grader. All are wonderful, and hilarious!

As a family, we enjoy boating, camping, road-trips, concerts, summer adventures and making up (even more) nicknames for our dog, Scout, and cat, Clementine.

Favorite book: Impossible to pick just one! Ishmael by Daniel Quinn, Rain of Gold by Victor Villasenor, and The Things They Carried, by Tim O’Brien are a few that I return to, so they must be favorites! One of my favorite children’s books is Tuck Everlasting, by Natalie Babbitt.

Favorite quote: “Far and away, the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.” Theodore Roosevelt

Education:
California State University: BA, Psychology
Chapman University: MA, Teaching and Principal Licensure
I am Jennifer Bozic, the IB program coordinator and Social Emotional Learning Specialist teacher at Coyote Ridge. I had the pleasure of opening Coyote Ridge in 2008. Prior my current job, I taught 1st and 2nd grades. In addition to my job at Coyote Ridge, I serve on the executive board for the Rocky Mountain Association of IB World Schools. In this role, I support the Primary Years Program IB World Schools in Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming.

My educational passion is increasing student engagement and well being! When students are excited about their learning, they are more likely to love school, feel safe and happy, and ultimately reach their personal goals.

I have three children, Gabi (CRES 3rd grader) Grant (CRES 1st grader), and Emmett (future CRES student, now aged 3). My husband, children, and I live in Loveland on Boyd Lake and we love kayaking, swimming, boating, and playing board games together!

Education: BA in Psychology from The University of Colorado at Boulder, MS in Elementary Literacy from Walden University
I feel extremely lucky to call Coyote Ridge ‘home’. I was part of the original crew to open Coyote Ridge in 2007 as a 1st grade teacher. It was exciting to develop our IB units of inquiry, set the tone and culture for our building, and be part of such an incredible vision.

I received an Associates of Arts degree at Cottey College (an all women’s college in Missouri) and my Bachelors Degree in Elementary Education from the University of Iowa. (GO HAWKS!) In 2007, I completed my Masters in Literacy from Lesley University. I began my career at Lab School for Creative Learning in Poudre School District teaching multi-age classrooms (various combinations of K-4th grade) with an experiential learning focus in 2000. Before teaching at Coyote Ridge, I taught 1st grade at Cottonwood Plains Elementary. Then finally landed here home: teaching 1st and 4th grade, and for the last five years as an instructional coach (50%) reading interventionist (50%).

My husband, Matt teaches PE in the Thompson School District and our son, Kaden is an avid artist and a Sophomore at Poudre High School, while our daughter, Abby is a passionate equestrian and 8th Grader at Lesher MS in Fort Collins. Both kids attended Coyote Ridge K-5 grade, and have benefitted from the amazing teaching staff we have here. We have two dogs that enjoy hiking, kayaking, swimming, skiing, traveling and playing games as a family.

I believe strongly in the importance of developing and sustaining positive relationships with students and parents. This is the heart of teaching, and opens the door for learning. I also feel strongly about instilling a sense of curiosity fostered through an inquiry approach to teaching and learning. Giving students voice, choice and ownership in their own learning, I believe sets the foundation to becoming a lifelong learner.

Favorite Book(s): To Kill a Mockingbird, Where the Red Fern Grows, Charlotte’s Web, Wonder...
I have always loved being a student, and I especially love studying languages and cultures. I received my BA in International Studies from Miami University in Ohio and my M.Ed. in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) from Boston University. I have been an educator most of my professional life, teaching English to students of all ages from many different countries so they could reach their personal, academic and professional goals, but I have always known that my students have taught me much more than I ever taught them.

Not long after retiring from Colorado State University in 2018, I began volunteering in my granddaughter Gabi’s class and my grandson Grant’s class at CRES and loved every minute of the experience. So when the opportunity to join the CRES family this fall as a literacy intervention aide presented itself, I didn’t hesitate, and now I am the third generation of my family to be at the school, joining not only my grandchildren but also my daughter, Jennifer Bozic, CRES PYP Coordinator and Social Emotional Learning Teacher. I love seeing my family every day and being part of such a wonderful, caring, creative, and supportive community of students, parents, teachers, staff, and administrators.

When I’m not at CRES, I am home with my husband of 39 years, Randall, discovering how we can optimize our health and energy and sharing those discoveries with others. I also love walking, running, listening to music, and reading.

Favorite books:
The Secret Garden
Charlotte’s Web
Dancing at the Rascal Fair

Favorite Quote:
“Be kinder than necessary, for everyone you meet is facing some kind of battle.”
Mrs. Elens,
Gifted and Talented Teacher

This is my 19th year of teaching, 9th year at Coyote Ridge, and 11th year teaching gifted students.
I have my Bachelor of Science degree from Northern Arizona University in beautiful Flagstaff, Arizona. My Master’s Degree is from the University of Central Florida in Orlando, Florida. My Gifted and Talented Certification is from Regis University here in Colorado.
I’m an educator because I love instilling a passion for learning and love to learn to laugh with my students daily.

My Favorites:

- Hobby: SCUBA diving
- Place to Travel: Bonaire (for SCUBA diving)
- Books: All Adventurous Books
- Quote: “Earth is what we all have in common” Wendel Berry
- Color: Purple, of course
- Food: Italian or Mexican cuisine
I am the Intensive Learning Center teacher here at Coyote Ridge Elementary, an IB World School! This is my thirteenth year at CRES. I have been at CRES from the beginning. I love the IB program! I have a kindergarten and a preschool at CRES this year.

I attended the University of Northern Colorado for both my undergrad and masters. I earned two bachelor degrees in speech-language pathology and audiology and a masters in special education. I recently graduated from Colorado State University with a Ph.D in Education and Human Resources and also completed a principal licensure program.

I began my education professional as a special education paraprofessional. Then, transitioned into the role of a special education teacher. I have taught both middle school and elementary school.

I was born and raised in Colorado. I love to be active. I especially enjoy running, snowboarding, and yoga. I also enjoy traveling, reading, and spending time with my family. My husband and I have two sons, Rylan (5 years) and Jarrett (3.5 months years old), and a daughter Lyla Grace (19 months). We also have two dogs Gizmo (terrier) and Baxter (goldendoodle).

Favorite book:
Yoga 365: Daily Wisdom for Life, On and Off the Mat

Favorite quotes:
Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot; nothing is going to get better it’s not. - Dr. Sesus
In this life we cannot always do great things. But we can do small things with great love. -Mother Teresa
Specials at Coyote Ridge

At CRES, students have one hour of specials each day. These include P.E., Art, Spanish, Music, and Media.

Specialists collaborate with classroom teachers to align with I.B. Units of Inquiry.
I am thrilled to join the Coyote Ridge Elementary staff this year as a music teacher! I moved to Fort Collins from Florida last year with my wife, Susan, and our dog, Penny.

I began my teaching career in Florida, where I spent most of my life. In fact, my first teaching position was at the very same middle school I attended as a student! This provided me with a wonderful opportunity to teach alongside the high school music teachers whose patience and love for their craft initially inspired me to become a teacher. Thus far, the majority of my teaching experience has been at the secondary level, having taught both band and choir, as well as directing numerous percussion ensembles. In addition to my teaching position within the Thompson School District, I also serve as the Artistic Director of the Cheyenne All-City Children’s Chorus and conduct the Concert Choir.

I earned a Bachelor of Music Education degree *summa cum laude* from Stetson University in DeLand, Florida. At Stetson, I also had the privilege to direct a male A’Cappella group called Hat Trick. Upon graduation, I was offered a position to study percussion performance at the University of Wisconsin-Madison as a Paul Collins Distinguished Graduate Fellow. My graduate studies exposed me to music from a multitude of genres, cultures, and perspectives. My involvement within UW’s instrumental ensembles also made for many life-changing performances, including opportunities to play in China and at Carnegie Hall!

My greatest joys in music come from shared experiences with students and fellow musicians; a feeling of being part of something bigger than one’s self, no matter what age or level of experience.

“Somewhere, something incredible is waiting to be known.”
-Carl Sagan
Hi! I am the art teacher at Coyote Ridge and Mary Blair elementaries. I have been teaching for Thompson since 2006. I moved to Colorado from Iowa, in 2003, after graduating from the University of Northern Iowa. I live in Fort Collins with my husband and dog, plus 6 chickens and a colony of honey bees.

Things I love (besides art): cooking, stand-up paddleboarding, hiking, archery, rock climbing, volunteering for organizations that support people with disabilities

One of my all time favorite book series is the Giver series by Lois Lowry.

One of my favorite quotes is: “You can’t use up creativity; the more you use, the more you have!” (Maya Angelou)

Education:

BA Art Education (K-12), University of Northern Iowa, 2003

MA Special Education, University of Northern Colorado, 2006
This is my 15th year of teaching Physical Education and my 12th year teaching at Coyote Ridge. I earned my Bachelor of Arts, Kinesiology: Physical Education degree from the University of Northern Colorado. Five days before graduation, my husband, Doug and I took custody of our two sons, Dylan 21 and Alex 19. I was fortunate to stay home with them until they were in school full time.

I grew up in Montana. Even though I have lived in Colorado longer, Montana will always be home.

Travelling is my passion. I love immersing myself in new cultures and learning about their lives.

Physical fitness is not only one of the most important keys to a healthy body, it is the basis of dynamic and creative intellectual activity.

John F. Kennedy
I am the music teacher at Coyote Ridge and Carrie Martin Elementary. I grew up in New Mexico and Wyoming and graduated from the University of Wyoming. I taught elementary music for seven years in Bremerton, Washington before moving to Loveland in 1999. I've taught in the Thompson School District for twenty years. I absolutely love living in Colorado, and specifically Loveland.

Things I love: going up to Estes Park, hiking in RMNP, visiting my nephews in California, going to the beach, spending time with friends and family, going to outdoor music concerts, bicycling, walking my dogs, reading

I love to read as well. One of my all time favorite book series is the Jan Karon Mitford series.

One of my favorite quotes is: Find joy in the journey

Education:

BA, University of Wyoming, 1992

Masters Degree in Creative Arts in Learning, Lesley University, 2002
Kim Opfer
Media and Technology Teacher

I grew up in Chicago and am a die-hard Cubs fan. After getting married to my husband, Brad, we decided to try teaching overseas for one year. 12 years later we finally came back to the states! We lived and taught in Korea, England, Belgium, and Hong Kong. When we moved back to the U.S. we traveled in an RV and homeschooled our kids for a year before settling in Colorado. I have been at Coyote Ridge for six years, first as a 4th grade teacher, and now as the Media & Technology Teacher in the Library and Inquiry Lab. I have two kids and one rescue dog, Ranger. In my free time I like to go on hikes, play games, watch movies, and of course READ!

**Favorite Book:** Too many to choose from! If I must, anything by Kate DiCamillo

**Favorite Quote:** “If you’re always trying to be normal you will never know how amazing you can be” - Maya Angelou

**Education:** BA in Elementary Education - Augustana College
MA in Library & Information Science - Dominican University
¡Hola! My name is Leticia. I was born in Mexico, and raised in California. I am a native Spanish speaker and the 2nd oldest of seven children. I was the first to go to college and the first to become a U.S. Citizen.

I attended Cal Poly Pomona University where I earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Liberal Studies. I have used my degree in several positions including teaching Korean students Spanish, E.S.L teacher, Dual Language Teacher, Family Literacy Specialist, Adult Citizenship classes and currently as the IB World Language Spanish Teacher.

I met my husband while serving a mission for our Church. We just celebrated our 20th year wedding anniversary. We have three children, Sidney, in her 1st year of College at BYU-Hawaii. Caden a Sophomore, and just started driving, and Julia an 8th grader who loves all things.

I love being able to share a bit of my language and culture with the students at Coyote Ridge Elementary.

Favorite Book: The Moment of Lift by Melinda Gates
Favorite Quote: It always seems impossible until it’s done.
-Nelson Mandela
Welcome to kindergarten! We are so excited to welcome your child to school and help them grow to love learning! In kindergarten we spend lots of time learning through play. We incorporate both structured and free play in all subjects throughout our day. In addition to learning our ABC’s and 123’s, we will have fun learning to be inquirers, to be respectful members of our community, and to discover new concepts about the big world around us. We are excited to partner with you to lay the foundation for your child’s development as a lifelong learner.
I am passionate about teaching kindergarten! The wonder and excitement of kindergarten brings me joy! I hope that your child loves coming to school each day! This is my 13th year of teaching and my 10th year at Coyote Ridge. My husband and I have three sons. Our two oldest sons attend Colorado State University and our youngest is a junior at Loveland High School. I feel fortunate that all three of my boys are Coyote Ridge alumni.

I grew up in a large family in Pennsylvania and spending time with my family is one of my favorite things to do!

Favorite quote: "Play is our brain's favorite way of learning."
-Diane Ackerman

Education: Bloomsburg University, BS Elementary Education
Hello! Teaching is an absolute passion of mine, and I am so excited to be in my 16th year teaching, and my 8th year at CRES! I adore teaching kindergarten and have a passion for teaching early foundational skills in a play-based environment.

I was raised in Loveland, and went to Thompson schools from Kindergarten through 12th grade! I attended UNC in Greeley, and then moved to the east coast for a few years before ending up back in Loveland. When I am not in the classroom, I enjoy spending time with my husband and our two girls. I love to read, run (or jog!) and spend time outdoors.

Education: BA in Social Sciences and MAT in elementary education, both from the University of Northern Colorado.

"The mind of an adult begins in the imagination of a child" - Kwame Alexander
I feel so lucky to teach kindergarten at Coyote Ridge! I started my teaching career at another elementary school in the district and taught for three years before staying home for five years to be with my children while they were young. This is my third year at CRES and I absolutely love my job! Kindergarten holds a special place in my heart and it brings me great joy to lay a foundation for learning while having fun at the same time.

Outside of school, I enjoy spending time with family and friends, especially my husband, Alex, and our two kids- Easton (CRES 2nd Grader) and Logan (CRES Kindergartener). I also like to organize all things, read, run, hike, and downhill ski.

Education: BA in Elementary Education from the University of Northern Colorado

Favorite Children’s Author: Mo Willems

Quote: “There are no limits to what you can accomplish, except the limits you place on your own thinking.” -Brian Tracy
Welcome to First Grade! It is amazing to watch the growth throughout the year! In First Grade, students will spend a lot of time reading, writing, and investigating numbers. Through our IB Units of Inquiry we will focus on signs and symbols, light and sound, communication, discoveries, peacemakers, and structures of living things.

We are looking forward to working together to make it a fantastic year!
Hello! This is my 18th year in the Thompson School District and my 3rd year at Coyote Ridge. In my career, I have taught 6th grade, 2nd grade, reading interventionist, math interventionist, and 1st grade. I have spent the last 12 years in 1st grade and it is my absolute favorite! Nothing in teaching is better than watching a child learn to read and love it.

I grew up in Nebraska and attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and am an avid Husker fan! My husband and I were high school sweethearts and have been married 30 years. We have 3 children. Our oldest, Ashley, is a pastry chef in Denver. Alyssa, works for Triple Crown Sports and our youngest, Aaron will graduate May 2020 from University of Colorado-Mesa with a Civil Engineering degree.

My favorite thing to do is spend time with my family and friends! And watch Husker football of course!

Education: Bachelors in education - UNL

Quote: "All you need is love. But a little chocolate now and then doesn't hurt.” Charles M. Schulz
Hi! I am Dara Vandenberg, a 1st grade teacher at Coyote Ridge. I had the opportunity to be part of the opening team at Coyote Ridge! This is my 16th year teaching and 12th year at Coyote Ridge. I was born and raised in New York and moved to Colorado to attend college. I have two children, Ellie (CRES 3rd grader) and Connor (CRES 1st grader). I love enjoying time with my family traveling, skiing, swimming, and playing games together!

I absolutely love 1st Graders! It is such an incredible year, there is nothing better, than watching students become independent readers!

Education: BA in Elementary Education from The University of Colorado at Boulder, MS in Elementary Literacy from Walden University
This is my 17th year teaching and my 8th year at CRES. I am a native of Arkansas and I graduated from John Brown University in Siloam Springs, Arkansas. I moved to Colorado in 2012. My husband and I have three children. Ava is in 7th grade, Madison is in 5th grade, and Ashley is 2 years old. I enjoy spending time with my family, running, reading, and cheering on my Arkansas Razorbacks! I love teaching and helping children learn and grow.

Favorite Children’s Book: Curious George

Favorite Quote: “Be kinder than necessary, for everyone you meet is fighting some kind of battle.”

~J.M. Barrie
“Tell me and I’ll forget; show me and I may remember; involve me and I’ll learn”  -Benjamin Franklin

We love Second Grade! We love the students and working collaboratively with each other to plan and implement amazing learning experiences.

We try to incorporate hands-on learning often. Our team loves to have community members share their expertise to enrich our IB Units of Inquiry. We also go on several field trips during the year and bring history to life with artifacts from the Loveland Museum. Students love to learn about animals when we bring in the Critter Crates.

We are changing the world one second grader at a time!!!!
My name is Michelle Valasek. I moved to Colorado in 2012 from Nebraska via California. My journey to Colorado has been full and interesting. I was born in a small, rural town in central Nebraska. I graduated from high school in Arizona and returned to Nebraska to complete my teaching degree at Doane College. I promptly headed out west to start my teaching career. I also received my Master’s Degree from Doane in 2005. Most recently, my love of shoes has been replaced by my new puppy Neo. As a native Nebraskan, I am an avid Cornhusker fan-GO BIG RED!

All students have great potential and I am dedicated to helping your child be successful in the classroom. I believe that as active participants in their learning, children should be encouraged to think independently, question and become problem solvers. The responsibility for learning is shared with the teacher, student and parents. I believe that what a child takes home in their head is more important than what they take home in their hands.

Education
Bachelor’s Degree-Education
Minor-Early Childhood
Master’s Degree-Curriculum and Instruction

Favorite Quote
“Knowledge is power.”

Favorite Books
Pride and Prejudice and The Velveteen Rabbit
Hi! My name is Tracy Baker. I have taught at Coyote Ridge for 11 years. Before teaching at Coyote Ridge, I taught in Denver. What do I love about Coyote Ridge? Everything! I love the students I teach. I love the wonderful people I work with. I love the parents of my students. Most of all, I love teaching at an IB school. The IB philosophy jives with my personal beliefs about life and learning!

I earned my Bachelor’s degree in music from Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado. I received my Masters in Education from UNC.

I have many interests outside of teaching. My daughter is a kindergarten student at another area IB school. I love to road bike, garden, fish, camp, run, knit, and read.

My favorite children’s book is *The Empty Pot* by Demi. My favorite novel is *The Pillars of the Earth* by Ken Follet.

*I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.* Maya Angelou
I grew up in Fort Collins. I love the area...the mountains, the lakes, and the fun activities you can always find to do. I have a husband named Brad. He works at Dellanbach Chevrolet. I named my daughter Eva, after my incredible grandma. Eva is a sixth grader at Conrad Ball Middle School. We have two dogs, two lizards, and a fish. On sunny days I like to spend as much time as possible outdoors. I enjoy my flower garden. I love all flowers, but my favorite flowers are tulips. Going to Gulley's Greenhouse to pick out flowers is one of my favorite things to do. I usually make five or six trips to the greenhouse a year. I also like to run and lift weights. In 2018 I was excited to complete my first triathlon. Since then I have completed two more. They are a lot of fun, and I enjoy training to get ready for them. My favorite color is purple. When I was little I had my whole room painted purple!

I have been teaching for twenty-six years. I have taught second through fifth grade. I love my students' energy and enthusiasm for discovering and learning new things. Their energy is contagious. I love teaching at CRES. IB is incredible, and I can't imagine being at another school. I enjoy working with the staff. We have a lot of fun, and I am always learning new things from them. My favorite attribute of a student is kindness. One of my favorite quotes is by Mother Theresa: "Spread love everywhere you go--Let no one ever come to you without leaving happier." My favorite children's author is Mark Ludy. His books always have a great lesson. My favorite book by Ludy is The Farmer.

Education: Bachelor Degree in Elementary Education- University of Northern Colorado

Master's Degree in Gifted and Talented -University of Northern Colorado
I am so excited to be a member of the Coyote Ridge Elementary School community! Having been an educator for over thirty years, I am always excited by the new experiences and opportunities that the teaching profession has to offer. To that end, I have been an elementary school counselor, a middle school instructional coach, an elementary school interventionist and grade level teacher through middle school. I absolutely LOVE teaching. In my free time I love to hang out with my standard poodle, dabbling in gardening, maintaining my acre of land, home decorating, furniture painting, and finding cool surprises while thrifting.

Education: BA Buffalo State Teachers College  
MA Curriculum and Instruction CSU  
Special Services Provider, Elementary Counseling, CSU  
Reading Specialist, IDA, Colorado Dyslexia Center
Hello! This is my 3rd year at CRES and my 6th year teaching. I was born and raised in Southeast Texas and moved to Colorado in 2011. I attended college in Huntsville, TX where I received my Bachelors and Masters degrees in Health Education from Sam Houston State University. After moving to CO, I received my Masters in Elementary Education in 2013 from the University of Northern Colorado. I absolutely love living in Colorado and teaching at CRES. I can’t imagine being anywhere else!

When I am not teaching, I am adventuring! I love to travel and explore the world around me. My husband and I have visited many states as well as Germany which is where he is from. In the winter you will find us on the slopes enjoying our love of skiing. In the summer we love hiking with our two pups, wakeboarding, surfing, exploring the local scene and the many adventures that colorful Colorado has to offer!

Favorite quotes: “Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?” -- Mary Oliver

“And into the forest I go, to lose my mind and find my soul.” -- John Muir

Favorite Book: To Kill a Mockingbird
Whitney Gebhart 3rd Grade Teacher

This is my 14th year teaching and 8th year at Coyote Ridge. I’ve taught a number of different grades, but I love teaching 3rd grade the best! I love teaching at an IB school for many reasons, but especially for the active inquiry and action that our students get so excited about. Learning resonates for students when they are engaged and passionate about their work!

My husband and I live in Loveland with our two children, dog, cat, and chickens. As a family we enjoy traveling, spending time outdoors, and being with family. Red Rocks Amphitheater is one of our favorite places to spend our time.

Favorite Book: 100 Years of Solitude by Gabriel Garcia Marquez

Education: B.A. in Psychology from Kansas State University and M.A in Elementary Education from University of Northern Colorado
Welcome to 4th Grade

Fourth grade is an exciting year that is full of growth! We believe that students who are curious and resourceful will become lifelong learners. Through the gradual release of responsibility, fourth graders become agents in their own learning and begin to gain skills that will carry them throughout their educational journey.

We also manage to have fun along the way! Students run a classroom microsociety, take 3 field trips, and hold an Invention Convention, just to name a few exciting activities!
Trisha Andersen- 4th Grade

About ME- Hello, this is my sixth year at Coyote Ridge Elementary. I have taught Pre-K, 1st, 3rd, 5th and this is my 9th year teaching 4th grade. Teaching is my love and passion and being at a an IB school is a great fit for me. My second passion is to and attend live music venues! My son is currently a senior at CSU and a percussion major. I am a proud mom- Go RAMS!

Favorite Book- Esperanza Rising by Pam Munoz

Education- Major: Liberal Studies at CSU/Elementary Education
Master Credit in Teaching and Learning from Regis University.
Catie Ruch
Fourth Grade Teacher

I was born and raised in Oklahoma. After graduating from college, I moved to Fort Collins to explore another part of the country. I began working at Coyote Ridge in 2015 as the Intermediate Interventionist. In 2017 I moved to 4th grade. Before joining the teaching team at Coyote Ridge I taught 2nd grade in Greeley.

I truly love spending my day with a classroom full of children and all of the craziness and joy that comes with it.

Education
- Bachelor’s Degree - Accounting
- Master’s of Art in Teaching - Elementary Education
Welcome to Fifth Grade!

Fifth grade is a wonderful place to be. We love to exemplify student agency through voice, choice and ownership. We challenge students to push themselves to new levels, while also offering lots of support along the way.

This year we will explore many skills in reading and writing, including writing short stories and multi-paragraph informational essays. We will dive into fractions, decimals, multiplying and dividing, as well as geometry, measurement and data. We will utilize research and Design Thinking skills to inquire about mixtures and solutions, ecosystems and biodiversity, and the solar system and stars. We will be open-minded to new perspectives as we learn about the American Revolution, foundations of American government, economics, and reasons for movement and migration. We are also looking forward to attending Eco Week at Pingree Park again this year for a three day, two night learning experience!

As leaders of our school, fifth graders have many opportunities to develop and demonstrate their leadership skills throughout the year. Experiences include the Welcome Bridge on the first day of school, planning and running the Turkey Trot and Turkey Round Up, leading school-wide Teach-Tos in the spring, and Exhibition in May.

Near the end of the year, we as teachers hand over the reins of learning to the students as they create an action project around a topic they are passionate about. The Exhibition is the capstone of the IB Primary Years Program, and we always look forward to the unique topics our students pick each year. Anything from saving animals, to protecting the environment, to supporting those in need, fifth graders at CRES have a true opportunity to have a positive impact on their community.
I absolutely love teaching fifth grade at Coyote Ridge, an IB World School! I feel so fortunate to be teaching in the school district that I grew up in. I can proudly say I have been in Thompson School District since I was a kindergartener. I started teaching fifth grade in Fort Morgan, CO, before moving back to my hometown and starting at CRES. This is my second year here.

I am an avid runner, though I don’t run as much now as I did when I was competing collegiately at UNC in track and field and cross country. I specialized in the 3,000 meter steeplechase during my time there. I enjoy hiking with my dog, Cleo, coaching BStrong BFit, reading, and being outside in my free time.

I believe in the potential of each and every student, in their ability to find their own passions, and in helping students grow to be successful world citizens. My favorite part of fifth grade at CRES is our Exhibition, where students get to fully take charge of their learning and take action in an area they are truly passionate about.

Favorite Book: A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens

Favorite Quote: “The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you.” —B.B. King

Education: University of Northern Colorado, BA Elementary Education, currently pursuing MA in Educational Leadership also through UNC
Kevin Hale, 5th Grade Teacher

I am delighted to be part of the CRES Team! I have recently returned to the FoCo area after teaching at International IB schools in Vietnam, Philippines, and Taiwan. This is my 31st year teaching; my first 22 years were in Gifted Education where I did my Master's work in Albuquerque.

I have a deep seated love for kids and I cherish the opportunity to help provide them with the tools they will need to be successful in life.

Quote from Thomas Edison: "Genius: one percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration."

Favorite Book: The Pushcart War by Jean Merrill
Hello! This is my 6th year at Coyote Ridge, and my 15th year teaching. My experience includes teaching grades 1, 2, 4, and 5. Before moving to Colorado, I lived in New York City for 9 years and taught at P.S. 71 in the Bronx. I’m from a small town in North Dakota, so traveling the world is my favorite thing to do!


Favorite quote: “Life’s most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?” - Martin Luther King, Jr.

Education:

University of North Dakota- BA Criminal Justice

Mercy College, NY- MA in Urban Education.