

Hello Barton Family,

First and most importantly, I would like to say I am so excited and proud to be a part of this amazing community, it feels like coming home to my progressive education roots. I began my journey of progressive education before I even knew what progressive education was as a young high school student fighting for literary justice when my school began banning literary classics. I attended Illinois State University and received Bachelor degrees in Political Science and History. Following a short stint as a mortgage broker, an inspiring, life changing trip to New Mexico changed my professional path. I returned and enrolled in Loyola University Chicago's Master's program for Curriculum and Instruction. It was during my time at Loyola that I read, researched and found my true passion, progressive education. I packed my bags and moved to Minneapolis, which was and still is one of the few public progressive school supporters in the country.

This move led me to my first teaching position at South High School where I began my career in 1998. I taught in the Open Program from 1999-2014, coordinated the Open Program and grew as a progressive educator and leader. While at South, I was able to collaborate with other progressive educators, focus on social justice learning and explore my identity as an Indigenous, progressive leader. Together we grew the Open Program that continues to thrive today.

During the 2014-2016 school years, I was the Assistant Principal at Anishinabe Academy which is a school dear to my heart because of the possibilities each child holds. The children captivated me personally as an Indigenous person and taught me what experiential learners are all about.

Being here at Barton Open is a comfortable home coming. Progressive Education continues to be my passion; I desire for all students to grow in their learning through experiential opportunities, project based learning and service learning. To me, progressive education attends to the learning and growth of the whole student. It takes into account their multiple intelligences, and focuses on community, collaboration and intrinsic motivation through a lens of social justice and equity. Nurturing these gifts in all students, we provide the opportunity for self-advocacy in the world. These opportunities provide students with the justification and skills to be active participants and leaders in their own education, while empowering them to seek opportunities to lead inside and outside of Barton Open School. It has long been a desire of mine to lead at a progressive education site and Barton has opened its doors to me as your Assistant Principal. I am thrilled to be here, migwiich, many thanks.

*Diane M. Bagley*