**Lava Ridge Intermediate School**

**Principal Launa Williams**

Lava Ridge is an amazing school and they have done some great things for their students and community.  I just arrived at LRIS this school year and every day I am amazed at how much these teachers and staff really do care for our students and every decision they make is focused on what is best for all students.  Every day they live by their school mission statement "We are dedicated to doing what is BEST for ALL students". The Here and Now Attendance Club is one evidence of how they care for our students.  Our Counselor Tonya Jesienouski organized this program and make sure that it runs smoothly at LRIS, along with Mr. Bozarth the Vice Principal.

The ***Here and Now Attendance Club*** is Lava Ridge’s attendance incentive program and is designed to help motivate students to attend school regularly. Because we know school connectedness is an important protective factor for students, and, because we can’t serve students unless they are here at school, we wanted to design a program that leans heavily on education & incentives that encourage students to develop good habits and change behaviors within their control. We challenge them to be HERE and start NOW.

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing more than 10% of school days or 18 days per year. Regular attendance is defined as missing fewer than 5% of school days or 9 days per year. **This program is designed to target our at-risk population, those with attendance data between 5-10%, in order to increase our regular attendance rates.**

Students who have kept their absences under the 5% mark at the end of each semester will be invited to join the Here and Now Attendance Membership Club. They will receive a Here and Now Club card that can be presented to local businesses, the school store, or teachers in exchange for one item from a menu of donated prizes/incentives. Students/families can view prizes on the [Here and Now website](https://www.counseling.lavaridge.net/hereandnowclub). Here and Now cards will expire at the end of the next semester. Students can earn a Here and Now card each semester for a total of 2 each year.

Lava Ridge has partnered with local businesses as Here and Now Participating Sponsors. Sponsors have donated prizes or offer discounts, such as free gelato from Harmon’s, or a discounted entrance fee to Arcadia water park. In turn, sponsors are highlighted on our Here and Now website, on our school marquee, and in all Here and Now correspondence that goes home to parents. School Representatives contact and contract with sponsors over the summer and for follow up throughout the year. Parent/PTA outreach can help identify sponsors as well.

Participating teachers may also offer to punch Here and Now cards in trade for missing assignments, extra credit, special classroom incentives, or other creative ideas. Card holders also earn points to spend in our Warrior Way Mart school store. These options will be available to view on the Here and Now website.

The Here and Now program is used in conjunction with our MTSS attendance interventions, including:

* Parent & Student Education-Attendance Expectations, Newsletters, Emails
* Teacher Education-Teaching Attendance, referring to Tier 2 and 3 interventions
* Attendance Tracking & Attendance Success Plans-students can earn cards for improving attendance
* Small Group Attendance Improvement Classes-students can earn cards for improving attendance
* Practically Perfect Attendance Parties-students who have missed less than one full day are invited
* Here and Now Honor Rolls and Certificates-recognition at awards assembly at the end of the year

Last year, we added an online Here and Now Attendance Success Class to allow at-risk students who missed the 5% mark to have a chance to earn a Here and Now card by completing four modules on Schoology,  in conjunction with an Attendance Success Plan. Of the students who completed the course successfully and met their attendance goal, we saw an average increase in attendance of over 50%. This success led us to implement the course as a Tier 1 intervention for the whole school this year.

We have also been thrilled to implement Here & Now as a cone-site wide incentive program along with Snow Canyon High School. With chronic absenteeism at crisis levels throughout the country, it’s imperative that we partner with other schools, communities, and families to present a united message that school is important to their success now and in the future.

We need our students to be HERE and start NOW!