

We Raise NJ is working with our partner organizations to spotlight individual educators, students, parents, and leaders who are showing how #NJStrong they are with their resilient and creative support for students during this challenging time. We do not want to downplay the challenges our educators and students are facing but we feel that highlighting the stories and small successes of a few individuals who are making the best of this situation might be both uplifting and useful to other leaders, educators, and families across the state.



## **SPOTLIGHT:**

### **RYAN M. PRINGLE**

**4th Grade Teacher, Wayside School  
Varsity Basketball and Varsity Softball Coach,  
Ocean Township High School**

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#### ***Developing versatility and supporting students' well-being in a hybrid classroom.***

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Mr. Pringle is in his fourteenth year of teaching, and this year is like no other! He and his colleagues prepared for about a week before school started to help get acclimated to the new hybrid instructional environment. Classrooms in his school were already equipped with projectors, HD web cameras, document cameras, and speakers in the ceiling to accommodate students learning remotely. Students who opted into in-person instruction are on a cohort schedule, and one of those cohorts is dedicated to accommodating students who require tiered support and interventions as well as district personnel's children who need child care.

In addition to teaching and coaching, Mr. Pringle is also finishing a Ph.D. program and serves as a Board of Education Member in West Long Branch, New Jersey. Needless to say, versatility is his superpower! Even with face masks and plastic barriers, he knows the learning must continue, whether you're in the room physically or not.

*"I use my document camera to project my students who are learning remotely onto the screen at the front of the room, so it's like they're there with us. There are speakers in the ceiling that enable my group to have collaborative discussions, and I can use my document camera to show all students the notes and equations we complete together. I also cannot live without the Bluetooth headphones and microphone I purchased. They allow me to alternate between supporting students who are in front of me, and those who are remote can ask for help in my ear without disrupting others. I think we are starting to figure out how to maximize our time together in class."*

Although he's had success in creating a "typical" classroom setting with combined technology, he recognizes that some things on his end aren't the same.

*"I know that the pace of my lessons is much slower than it has ever been, but that's because this year, my top priority has been making sure of my students' well-being and happiness."*

He recognizes that learning can't happen if his students' social and emotional needs aren't met, and the same goes for him. He knows he's not alone when it comes to feeling overwhelmed, but he reminds himself that this a year like no other. Taking the pressure off of himself to meet pacing benchmarks and shifting his attention to making students feel comfortable in their new routine has proven to be successful.

*"I haven't held myself to same the pacing standards because I have to account for the gaps in learning that occurred at the end of last year. We have a lot of catching up to do, while also adjusting to new norms and routines. High standards are important, but don't stress out about having to slow down to take care of your students to make sure they're happy and healthy. My goal every year is to inspire my kids to wake each day excited to come to school."*

All in all, he encourages other educators to relax and make sure students are happy to come to school. Thank you again Mr. Pringle for uplifting your students during this time and showing them how to be #NJStrong!