

Eagle Rock School and Professional Development Center, Estes Park, Colorado

Alex Kotlowitz writes in his 1999 *New York Times Sunday Magazine* piece about Eagle Rock School and Professional Development Center (ER), "We school people are really gifted and talented at finding reasons why the good things happening at another school can't possibly happen at my school," said Roland S. Barth, the founder of the Principal's Center at the Graduate School of Education at Harvard and a visitor to ERS.



"There's a lot of conversation now about character, about values, about teaching respect. It's often rhetorical. I don't think many schools are as intentional at developing community and really being clear about what the values are of that community as is ERS. It would be only fair to point out that its components – smallness, teaching values, experiential learning, service requirements, and presentations of learning are not new. Rather it is the chassis that ERS has welded with each of these parts that presents such a startling new design."

Eagle Rock, an initiative of the American Honda Education Corporation, a nonprofit subsidiary of the American Honda Motor Company, is both a school for high school age students and a professional development center for adults, particularly educators. The school is a year-round, residential, and full-scholarship school that enrolls young people ages 15-17 from around the United States in an innovative learning program with national recognition. The Professional Development Center works with educators from around the country who wish to study how to re-engage, retain and graduate students. The center provides consulting services at school sites and host educators who study and learn from Eagle Rock practices. Eagle Rock is both a school for high-school-age students who have dropped out of school elsewhere and a professional development center for adults, particularly educators. ERS's success hinges on character development as a means to improve academic performance.

Testimonials

"The strength of our house culture lies in how we strive to live our stated values - unity and family. We use these values to help students to create relationships, work through conflict, and find common ground with each other as well as with adults. We hold the fundamental belief that every student who walks through our door will graduate."

- Beth Ellis, Instructional Specialist & House Parent

"ER has been one of the most life-changing places I have been. It has opened many opportunities and broadened my horizons. I am thankful every minute I am at Eagle Rock . . . because I appreciate the staff and student relationships I have come to develop personally."

- Thu, Student

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