

What We Can Learn From A Butterfly's Metamorphosis

March 18, 2019

I hope that you had a restful and relaxing Spring Break and you are returning with excitement for the work ahead. The weather during the break was wonderful, and I had the opportunity to engage in one of my most relaxing pastimes — gardening.

While planting spring flowers and removing the weeds from my mom's flowerbeds, I noticed several butterflies feeding on the chrysanthemums. The colors on their wings were so impressive that they appeared to be artificial.

Once I finished in the yard, I went inside and could not get the image of the butterflies out of my head. So, I Googled, "butterfly and caterpillar." As I read about the life cycle — from an egg to a caterpillar to a pupa to a butterfly — I immediately identified the similarities of nature's process and the transformation that we seek within Crowley ISD. The most important similarity is that transformation takes time.

We aspire to have a district that provides excellence every day for every student in every class. Excellence is more than a destination or an end result that we seek. It is actually a commitment to take personal responsibility for our daily efforts. However, no matter how hard we push, it is impossible to go from average, or below, to excellent overnight. **The pursuit of excellence demands a daily commitment**, and sustainable progress can only occur if we are willing to go through the change process and focus to the finish.

I see the metamorphosis of a caterpillar as symbolic to our transformational efforts. If the metamorphic process is interrupted or aborted at any point during the pupa stage of transformation, the result will be less than excellent. It is likely that if the caterpillar turns into a butterfly, it will not be all that it could have been. It may have a shortened life span, difficulty flying or may have physical challenges. In essence, it takes a complete and uninterrupted metamorphic process to allow us to experience the beauty of a butterfly.



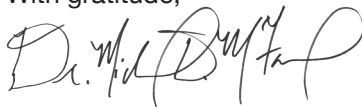
The process of school reform is very similar. Change and organizational transformation are both in vogue today, but the true test of sustainability will come in the future.

We are aspiring to build a new model of education in Crowley ISD where all of our students are equipped to take advantage of the choices and opportunities available to them upon graduation. We are building an educational system that includes systems, programs and practices designed to serve our students and our community from the cradle to their career.

To accomplish this, we must be committed to learning and changing. It is common to feel overwhelmed or uncomfortable during the change process. However, if we stay focused, these feelings will subside and, in the end, we will be better because of our commitment to change. I am sure that the caterpillar experiences some discomfort inside the cocoon, but there are no shortcuts to success in the metamorphic life cycle of a butterfly and no easy route to the transformation of our schools.

With something to think about, this is Dr. McFarland encouraging you to stay focused and trust the process.

With gratitude,



Mike McFarland