



Have a Great Year!

Aug. 15, 2022

Telling someone to, “Have a great year!” in August is a sure sign that you are speaking to an educator, so I know that if you are reading this you are as excited as I am for the 2022 – 2023 school year in Crowley ISD. I trust that your summer was restful and that you had an opportunity to reset and reflect upon the work. I pray that each of you are returning with a refreshed and renewed focus on completing the work for which we have been called to do.

For some of you, this is your first year of teaching or maybe it’s your first year on our team. For others, these are the penultimate years and retirement awaits. For me, this is my 30th year as an educator and lifelong learner. Time truly does fly when you are having fun.

Growing up in a small, piney woods East Texas town, I was fortunate that my mom was a teacher and my dad was a barber. I spent most summers in the McFarland’s Barber Shop and Record Shop. Those were good, happy memories for me and I would like to share a few with you on this first Monday of the school year.

I will never forget the day in 1977 when the World Book Encyclopedia salesman showed up at my dad’s barber shop. He was a great salesman. My dad was busy with a customer, and so the salesman asked me to take a look at the encyclopedias and tell him what I thought. I flipped through several of the pages and my attention was immediately captured by the vivid pictures of all the different species of snakes, sharks, spiders and other sea creatures. By the time the salesman approached my dad, he not only had to contend with the salesman – he also had to deal with me. I told my dad I would contribute some of my allowance to help pay for the set. He agreed, and I loaded the World Book Encyclopedia set in the back of my dad’s van. I was so excited and couldn’t wait to get home to read every one of them. Actually, I wanted to look at all the pictures, but eventually I did read through all of them, launching my love for reading and learning.



This summer, I decided to rekindle this love and launched my own learning by reading and studying the realities of education in Tarrant County post emancipation through integration. My ultimate goal was to identify what made education successful historically and to identify lessons learned from the past that could be applied to our current reality. The majority of my time was spent reading and reflecting on our development as a school district in Crowley in relation to the key developments in the city of Fort Worth and all of Tarrant County from the early 1870s through the late 1970s. I read about how various changes in infrastructure, government policy and society shaped our district over the last 150 years. I drove through neighborhoods and looked at areas and thought about the years and how time brings about a change, but I also realized that many things never change. Schools are as important now as they have always been, and I am convinced that we have the knowledge, power and ability to build an educational system with key intentional practices that will ensure that all students receive an excellent educational experience that produces exceptional outcomes.

What we do is mission work, and if you are here on this team and hope to remain, it is critically important that you embrace and operationalize the mission of Crowley ISD by taking personal responsibility for your daily effort. **We view our diversity as our strength and we are on a mission to prove that diversity and excellence are not mutually exclusive.** We are working with intention to break the link between demographics and educational outcomes. We know that all students can learn and we accept the responsibility to ensure that they all do learn. What we do and don’t do will have far-reaching implications in the life outcomes of our students. I challenge each one of you to do for your students in class and in your school what you would want someone to do for your own child.

During the next couple of days, you will see more results from the spring 2022 STAAR assessment. If you were wondering or on the fence about whether we are on the right track or not, then these STAAR results should provide ample affirmation. The results that CISD produced were simply amazing. The question about whether all kids can learn and whether schools and teachers really matter is a question that has been, “Asked and answered!” The evidence is in our results:

- **30** TEA Distinctions
- **100%** of campuses met or exceeded state standards
- **All** elementary schools and both high schools rated A or B
- **All** middle schools met or exceeded state standards

We will be preparing full State of the District reports so that we can put these amazing results in context with our cohort districts, but preliminary indications are that we will likely fall within the top three of our Tarrant County Cohorts and the top 5 of the Dallas/Fort Worth Cohorts. We will be celebrating these results over the next couple of months, and will use this information as fuel to our systems going forward. The results are clear. We know “what to do” to ensure that all students achieve high levels of learning. As we go throughout this year, our focus will be on refining the “how.”

What we do know is that there are no silver bullets. Future success will be the result of focused action, hard work, perseverance and an unwavering commitment to ensuring that all students learn. It is through our intentional efforts that we will deliver excellence in education and all of our students will be prepared to reach their full potential.

With something to think about, I am Dr. Michael McFarland.

Let’s make it a Great Year!



Mike McFarland, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Crowley ISD

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