

MONDAY MESSAGE

FROM DR. MCFARLAND



Are you a Crowley ISD Game Changer?

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Recently I was in the barbershop on Main and Roberts in downtown Crowley, waiting to get my hair cut, and the fellows and I got into a discussion about who were the greatest game changers in sports of the last 30 years. It was really interesting and entertaining to hear the experts debate which athletes were the true game changers.

The debate went on for about 15 minutes, and they asked me my opinion. Now, I grew up in the barbershop and had been around this conversation many times. So, instead of answering I decided to ask my own question. I asked, "So what is your definition of a game changer?" That took the discussion in a totally different direction. It was interesting to hear the different interpretations of the definition of a game changer. The definition we settled on was a game changer is one who enters a game or a team, and the momentum of the game or team goes in a totally different direction than before, resulting in sustained success.



Even when the game changer is gone, the performance of the team remains at a level much higher than before. The team ends up accomplishing much more than was ever thought possible as a result of the game changer's influence, and the expectations are greater, assuming the game changer's influence was positive. But if a game changer brought negative energy, the opposite happens.

It was a great conversation that led to a heated debate. I thought about the debate on the way home and began to reflect on how each of us has game changing experiences, both good and bad. As I thought about my life and the game changers, I realized that most of them were educators. I remember Mr. Hatch, my kindergarten teacher. He gave me his favorite picture in his classroom on the last day of school and told me he was so proud of me and that I was a special student. He also gave me a certificate to prove it. I hung the picture and my certificate in my room and kept both throughout college. I can't remember much about his class, but I remember he made a quiet, shy, little country boy feel special.



I also remember my seventh grade speech teacher who was a game changer for me. She told a skinny, little seventh-grader that he had a better chance of being struck by lightning than going to college on a college scholarship. Her laughing at me in front of the class was a game changing experience for me. I remember my eighth grade English teacher, who was a family friend, told me I should not enroll in advanced English, and I remember her sarcastic look when I asked for her guidance. That was a game changing experience for me.

I remember my English professor from Baylor who taught me developmental English, and I remember the comments she wrote on my paper. She told me "Michael, you are a budding writer." She said it. I believed it. And I did everything in my power to live up to it. Today, I love to write because she changed my game by writing that note on my paper. She was the ultimate game changer for me.

As educators, we each get multiple opportunities to be game changers for the children we serve in Crowley ISD, whether we realize it or not. I am sure that many of the game changers in my life have no knowledge of their impact because the experiences appeared insignificant at the time. I now recognize that I must be intentional in my interactions with our students, and I challenge you to become game changers for our students as well. **Recognize that your attitude is important, and choose your words and actions wisely for they all have consequences.**

With something to think about, I'm Mike McFarland, challenging all of us to become positive game changers for the students of Crowley ISD.

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