

MONDAY MESSAGE

FROM DR. MCFARLAND



Change and transitions

December 4, 2017

I hope this message finds you well and in good spirits. It is amazing that we are a few weeks away from the end of the 2017 calendar year. I recognize that this has been a year of significant transitions for the Crowley ISD family as a collective and for each one of you as individuals.

Change and transitions always bring a level of discomfort and anxiety. I recognize this and realize we are all experiencing both in some way.

In addition, this time of the year is always challenging and overwhelming. If you don't feel just a little overwhelmed, overworked and stressed, then it is likely you are not pushing hard enough. I assure you, all of the feelings you have are real, and I understand and share in most of them.

These feelings come from many different places, but one is the reality of where we are in relation to where we thought we would be. In most cases, the progress that we expect may not be visible at this point. We may actually see no progress at all. I challenge you that in spite of what you see or what you feel, do not give up.

I know that as a result of the leadership transition, we are also asking you to do things that in some cases may seem different, unnecessary or repetitive. I understand these sentiments and recognize they are real.

Please know that we are listening, and I assure you our goal is not to create busy work. **Our goal is to institute practices in a systemic way that have been proven to increase the likelihood of success for all students.**

We are asking you to engage in **collaborative planning** both on your campus and across the district.

We are asking you to be intentional in designing **highly engaging lessons** because we recognize that the learners in our classrooms today learn best if they are actively engaged or can see a connection to what they are learning to their life.

We have heard your concerns about **curriculum resources and materials** and are working to address this issue, but it will take time. We are asking you to help us by assisting in **developing common assessments**. We expect you to **administer these assessments** to your students, **monitor their progress** on an assessment wall and **take rapid and responsive action** based on the results of the assessments.

The instruction in your classroom and the activities you use to teach concepts should change based on the information you get from the results of the common assessments. The "who" and "what" of interventions should be determined by the results of our assessments. We are asking the principals to develop **campus action plans in response to the data**, and we are asking teachers to **analyze data and develop teacher action plans**.

I am convinced that these actions and systems of behavior we are initiating will lead to the results we desire for our students. Since arriving in Crowley ISD, I have constantly communicated my expectation that in a short period of time our district will become the example of how to educate students of diversity. I believe, and I am convinced, that Crowley ISD will be the **Top in Tarrant County** within the next three years. We will have the highest graduation rate. We will have the highest performance in tested areas. We will become the school district of choice for families moving into this area.

The brutal fact is that we are not at the top today, but where we are is not where we will stay. In order for us to get to that point, we must be intentional about the systems, practices and programs we put in place today. We are doing foundation work and will likely be engaged in foundation work for the next 12 months or so. It will be difficult work, it will be frustrating work and it will be tedious work. But if we stay the course, trust the process and realize that we are focused on providing the absolute best for our students, then we will see results soon.

I encourage you to take care of yourself, manage your energy and your attitude and realize that change and transitions are always difficult. Don't quit, don't give up and realize that we will get through the foundation work. Our students deserve it, our community demands it and our parents expect it.

With something to think about, I am Dr. Mike McFarland reminding you that we are laying the foundation for success.

Dr. Michael D. McFarland
Superintendent, Crowley ISD