



Intentionally Positive on Purpose

January 11, 2021

At the beginning of every new year, many people gear up to set resolutions and make proclamations about how the new year will be better than the old year. But it is also universally accepted that by this time in January, the excitement of the resolution begins to wane and the pull to return to the status quo begins to emerge. It is at this point that your discipline and internal fortitude begins to be tested.

I challenge each of you to hold on to whatever it was that drove you to make your proclamation. When you feel like deviating from it, remember why you decided it was important. Remember, a resolution is only a start. Without intentionality, it is only a statement. What comes next is what makes the difference.

At the beginning of 2021, I made a declaration that I would be **intentionally positive on purpose**. I committed to blocking out the noise and negativity to become fanatical about focusing on things that are positive and within my control. In 2021, I committed myself to finding the possibilities amidst all of the problems, the chaos and the uncertainty. However, I didn't know that it would take less than a week for my resolution to be challenged.

I know that many of you can relate to what I am sharing because we have all had the foundation of our mental state rocked by the events of 2020, including the ongoing effects of a pandemic, social unrest and continued political upheaval throughout our country. As I flip from channel to channel, I find myself getting sucked back into the negativity and the reality of the massive loss of life and pain that our nation is feeling right now. The more I watch the news, surf the web or engage in social media, the worse I feel and the more overwhelmed I become.

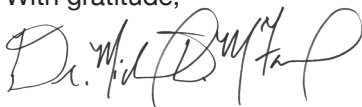
So, what did I do? I turned off the TV and put down my phone. I realized that those mediums are designed to transmit information, and unless you are intentional, the information will be mostly negative news that further exacerbates the sense of hopelessness that is commonplace. I am not saying that the media is bad, but the information is programmed to ensure the maximum number of viewers and, unfortunately, bad news, despair, hopelessness and destruction are often what attracts people's attention.

In 2021, I am committing to remain focused on the positive opportunity that our profession affords us to make a difference in the lives of children on a daily basis. Regardless of what is happening outside of school, our mission and how we carry it out still matters. In uncertain times, it matters more than ever. For many of our students and your colleagues, you may be the only bit of positivity they receive during this uncertain time. Your kind words, hopeful perspective and positive focus is needed now more than ever. Remember, we must be **merchants of hope** in times of despair, and we must be intentional in our efforts.



This pandemic has taught me that although the messages all around may be filled with doom and gloom, we can deal with the reality of the situation and reject the negativity by being intentional in our focus on the positive and the possibilities. I challenge each of you to join me in being intentional about being positive, while focusing on the possibilities that we have today to continue to carry out our mission. In 2021, remain focused and be intentionally positive on purpose.

With gratitude,



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Crowley ISD Superintendent of Schools