

## Time Is The Difference Maker

Oct. 1, 2018

Three hundred and sixty five days ago, I arrived at 512 Peach St. and was both humbled and grateful for the opportunity to join this Crowley ISD team in pursuit of educational excellence for all students. At times, I find myself amazed that a year has passed already and, on the other hand, there are times it seems like I have been here much longer.

The older I get, the more I realize that **time is our most valuable commodity**. It is a momentary asset that should be treasured by all, and to achieve success, we must be intentional in how we use it. Time is fleeting, and it will pass — whether we are deliberate in how we use it or not. In our profession, there are many variables that have an impact on student learning and organizational success, but time is one of the most critical. How the allotted time for learning is used is often influenced by the quality of our planning and the effectiveness of our preparation. The research is conclusive for students who are school-dependent – **the usage of instructional time during the school day is a key difference-maker in educational outcomes**.

As I flipped through channels Sunday scanning football games, I came across a discussion about Russell Wilson, the quarterback for the Seattle Seahawks. It centered around the fact that Wilson was not the prototype NFL quarterback. He is not the biggest, tallest or fastest quarterback, but he has achieved what many consider is beyond his level of talent. Wilson is famous for his focus, planning, preparation and perseverance. He credits his dad as his game changer for instilling in him the belief that the separation between average and great is in the preparation. His favorite quote is, **“The separation is in the preparation.”** Wilson is known for being relentless in how he uses his time and how he prepares for his performances. He has developed his own network of colleagues that he collaborates with, and they are relentless in their attention to detail during the offseason and throughout the season. By leveraging the knowledge, skills, talents and insights of others, he has consistently increased his level of productivity.

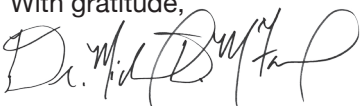
As I thought about the message for this week, I found myself reflecting on Wilson’s philosophy about time, preparation and collaborative planning. Our students have a limited amount of time to learn the content necessary so that they can matriculate through our system and become ready for their future. How we use the time that has been allotted to their education will have lasting implications on the choices and opportunities they have in the future. It is our responsibility to ensure that we are leveraging the knowledge, skills, talents and passion of our teammates to increase our effectiveness and efficiency.

What we do daily matters, and how we collaborate makes a difference. It matters that you have been intentional about planning high-quality lessons and preparing to teach from bell to bell. It matters that detailed preparation occurs so that lessons provided will be both relevant and engaging. Increasing instructional time and time on-task is one key strategy for accelerating learning and ensuring student growth. Participating in professional learning community (PLC) planning meetings is critical to ensuring that high-yield instructional strategies are being implemented throughout the district. My belief is that collaboration is a necessary part of any successful organizational improvement effort, and through collaboration in PLCs, all participants benefit as “iron sharpens iron.”



The minutes we spend planning, preparing and collaborating matters, and I am challenging you to leverage the talent of all team members and commit to making every second count. Every day, we have a new 84,600 seconds. How we use the time matters. Whether we decide to engage in collaborative planning with intention or fly by the seat of the pants, it makes the difference in the educational outcomes of our students and their future life chances.

With gratitude,



Mike McFarland