

MONDAY MESSAGE

FROM DR. MCFARLAND



Our Most Valuable Asset

April 30, 2018

The most valuable asset that we all have is our time. I heard this fact often from my father growing up in Jasper.

My father was a stickler for time and despised the wasting of it. He would often tell me that time is money, and if you waste it, then it is like rolling down the window and throwing out valuable possessions. I had an uncle who, when anyone asked him how he was doing or what he had been up to, Uncle Willie Lee would always respond, "Nothing much, just passing time."

Uncle Willie was probably one of the most talented carpenters, mechanics and plumbers in the county. However, he spent most of his time fishing. My dad and Uncle Willie would always get into it because my dad would be going to work and Uncle Willie would be going fishing. My dad and Uncle Willie were one year a part, and they were both very talented; however, my dad was a barber and businessman, and Uncle Willie was kind of a floater. They both had about the same amount of time, but what was different was their usage and view of time.

As they got older, Uncle Willie began to have both health and financial challenges, and my dad would always help him out but never before he reminded him of how much time and talent he wasted by going fishing. They both had the same opportunity, but they differed in their perspective and usage of time.

As I think about the challenge before us, and specifically ensuring that all students are learning at high levels, I realize how important it is for us to have the right perspective on the value of the time we have students in our care.

I challenge all of you to recognize the importance of time, its impact on student learning and our responsibility to use it wisely. Time is the one variable in the student learning equation over which we all have direct control and influence.

The reality is that we dictate how the time is used during the period we have students in our care, and what we do with the time we have matters. What we know is that when students are not in school, the likelihood that they are engaged in activities that reinforce what is taught in school is not very high.



Our students are school dependent, and whether they learn or not is dependent on how deliberate and intentional we are with the time we have them in our care. Understanding this fact means that it is imperative that we are intentional about using every minute we have available to ensure that students are engaged in high-quality learning experiences. Whether you are in the classroom, the front office, the gym or the cafeteria, it is important that you are cognizant of the importance of your interactions with students and parents and the significance of the time we have with them.

This is the time of year that we must all circle the wagons and identify those activities that will allow us to use the available time to focus on those most important learning objectives. I am encouraged when I see all the things occurring to support students in classrooms and during the interventions. The Saturday schools, the morning tutorials, the afternoon tutorials, the power hour and other intervention efforts are critical to increasing learning time, but the most important time is the time you have students in class during the regular class period.

I am encouraging all of you to stay focused. You may get tired, but whatever you do, don't quit. Keep preparing, keep planning and keep collaborating because all of these things will lead to a better use of the time we have available to ensure students are learning. The most valuable asset our students have is the time they are assigned to be with you under our care.

I challenge each one of you to refuse to pass time, but instead value what you have. Recognize that time is precious and what you do with what you have been given not only matters in the end, it will make the difference in the learning experience of your students.

With something to think about, I'm Dr. Mike McFarland, reminding us that time is our most valuable asset, so use it wisely!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Michael D. McFarland".

Dr. Michael D. McFarland
Superintendent, Crowley ISD