

BEFORE YOU SIT DOWN...

MAKE SURE TO SIT WITH THE PEOPLE WHO YOU WORK THE CLOSEST WITH THROUGHOUT YOUR DAY.

IN MOST CASES THIS WILL BE YOUR DEPARTMENT, GRADE LEVEL, ETC. PARAS - SIT WITH THE TEACHERS YOU WORK WITH THE MOST.

ADMINS & DIRECTORS - SHOULD FIND A GROUP OF PEOPLE IN YOUR BUILDING/DEPARTMENT TO BE A PART OF.

TABLES OF 6 IS MOST IDEAL. ABSOLUTELY NO MORE THAN 8.

# STAFF SPEAKERS

- Kathy Wilkerson - Scholarship Committee
- Heather Garrett - South Tama County Teachers Association



# AFTERNOON SESSION

## LEARNING GOALS

- **Content Objective**
  - By the end of today all staff will explore the new STC Strategic Plan and District Snapshot
  - By the end of today all staff will understand that they have the power to dramatically impact our students' lives
- **Language Objective**
  - By the end of today all staff will share the "turning points" of their K-12 career with their colleagues

# ARE YOU READY FOR A CONTEST??

- TV Show Themes - What group can name the most?
- Shows from the 50's, 60's, 70s, 80's, 90's, 00's, 10's!!
- 1-10 = 1 point
- 11-20 = 2 points
- Tiebreaker if needed!!



# TV THEME SONG ANSWERS (+1 POINT)

1. Full House
2. Andy Griffith Show
3. The Office
4. Hawaii 5-0
5. Cheers
6. American Idol
7. Charlie's Angels
8. Stranger Things
9. Roseanne
10. Game of Thrones

# TV THEME SONG ANSWERS (+2 POINTS)

1. The X-Files
2. Futurama
3. Law & Order
4. Dallas
5. Downtown Abbey
6. Bewitched
7. Narcos
8. Miami Vice
9. Unsolved Mysteries
10. Leave it to Beaver

Every time I do activities like this I see faces light up, smiles, laughter, excitement. What emotions do you experience when you hear these songs?

Why do you experience these emotions?

Discuss with your group.

*"You'll probably notice you remember more songs from your childhood/teen years than you do now that you're older. This is due to the brain's enhanced plasticity in our youth – as we get older our brain becomes less adaptable and we find it harder to take on new information."*

*“You may also notice you have a tendency to remember songs you enjoy better than the songs you don’t. This is due to the impressive power of emotion when it comes to forming memories. When we are emotionally moved by something you see or hear, the brain assumes that that information is important and works harder to store it. Your brain is going to assign more significance to a song that sends tingles down your spine than it will to a song that provides no emotional connection.”*

Do you have a song that brings up **bad memories**?

Do you have a song that physically **hurts you to hear**?

Take a moment and think to yourself and identify one song that **creates knots in your stomach**...

\*Bad breakup?

\*Lost loved one?

\*Lyrics that really hit you hard?

\*Tough time in your life?

Share with your group what you feel comfortable!



Any volunteers who would like to share their song?

My "bad" song....

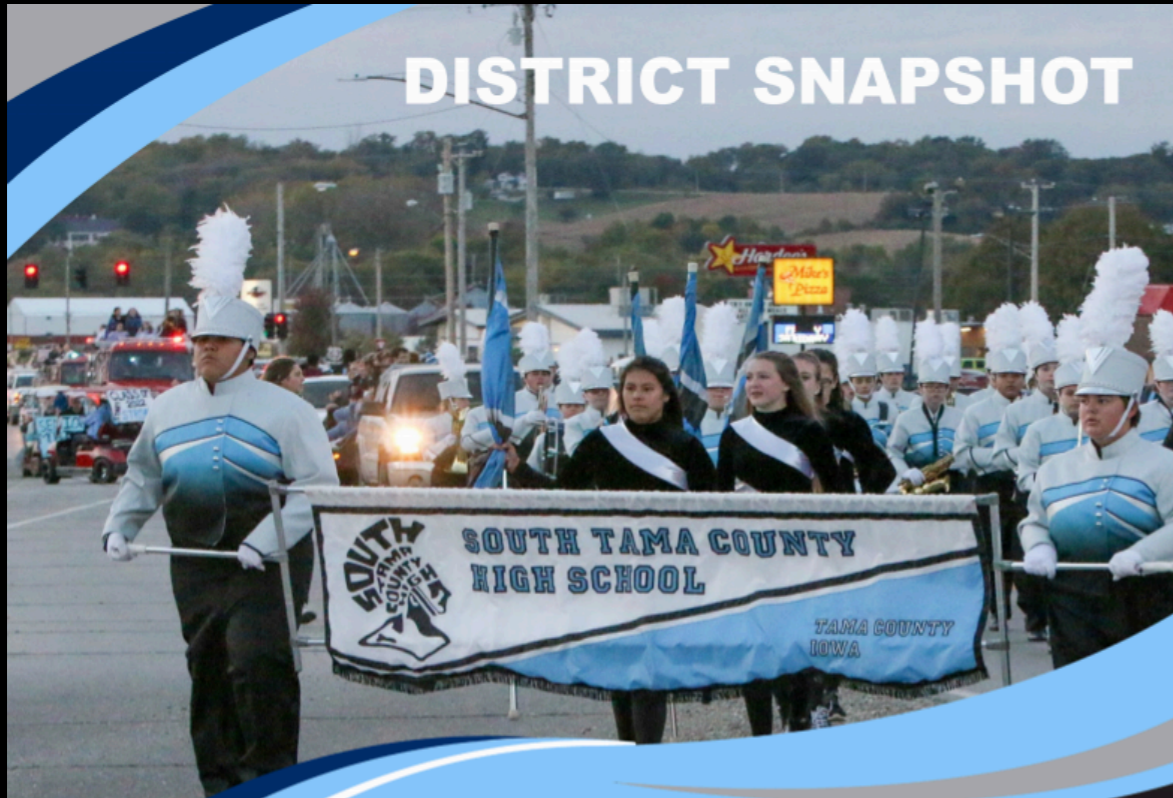


What do songs, emotions, and memories have to do with our students?

I'm going to leave you hanging for a moment.....



# DISTRICT SNAPSHOT



South Tama County School District



STC Schools - Where Every Student Has A Plan  
*#TheTrojanWay*

# STC STRATEGIC PLAN

A Student-Centered Vision for the South Tama County Schools



STC Schools - Where Every Student Has A Plan

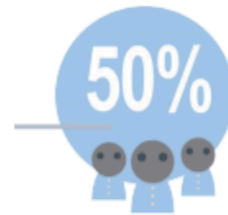


# SOUTH TAMA COUNTY *By The Numbers...*

## STUDENT POPULATION:



1,564



50% Minority  
35% Hispanic  
10% Native American  
5% Multi-Race



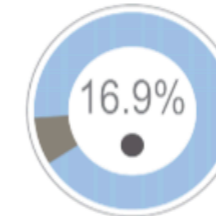
250 employees  
3rd Largest Employer  
in Tama County



1:1 INITIATIVE  
iPads for  
students grades 3-12



19 staff members specifically  
dedicated to meeting the  
social-emotional needs of  
STC student needs



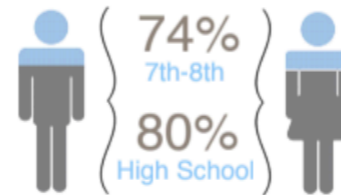
Unspent Authorized Budget  
Ratio = 16.9%  
= Financially Stable

## School Sponsored Activities (K-12)

50 Plus Sports Teams

20 Plus Organizations/Clubs

15 Plus Fine Arts Groups



Students who participate in a  
school-sponsored activity



4-Year Graduation Rate



80%  
of seniors intend to go  
to college and/or military



1444  
credits earned  
= \$287,356 saved  
for STC Families

100%

of juniors able to take the  
ACT test free of charge



**Greetings Trojans!** I am thrilled to be a part of the undeniable enthusiasm going on within the South Tama County School District! It seems you can't go anywhere in our community without people talking about the awesome things going on in our schools or seeing the black and blue Trojan colors. To maintain this momentum, we need to continue working together and be clear about our priorities and our strategies for success in the coming years. In the following pages, you will find an overview **South Tama County Strategic Plan** which outlines the vision, strategic anchors, and core values of our district. If we stay focused on these key priorities we will deliver excellence for the students, families, and community of South Tama County! - **Dr. Jared Smith, STC Superintendent**

**STC Strategic Plan - How did we get here?** These past twelve months we invited our staff, parents, students, and community to share feedback on what they would like to see from our school district in the coming years. We asked them to provide candid feedback on the aspects of our schools that are going well, as well as identify areas where we could improve. Specifically, there were three questions that guided those conversations:

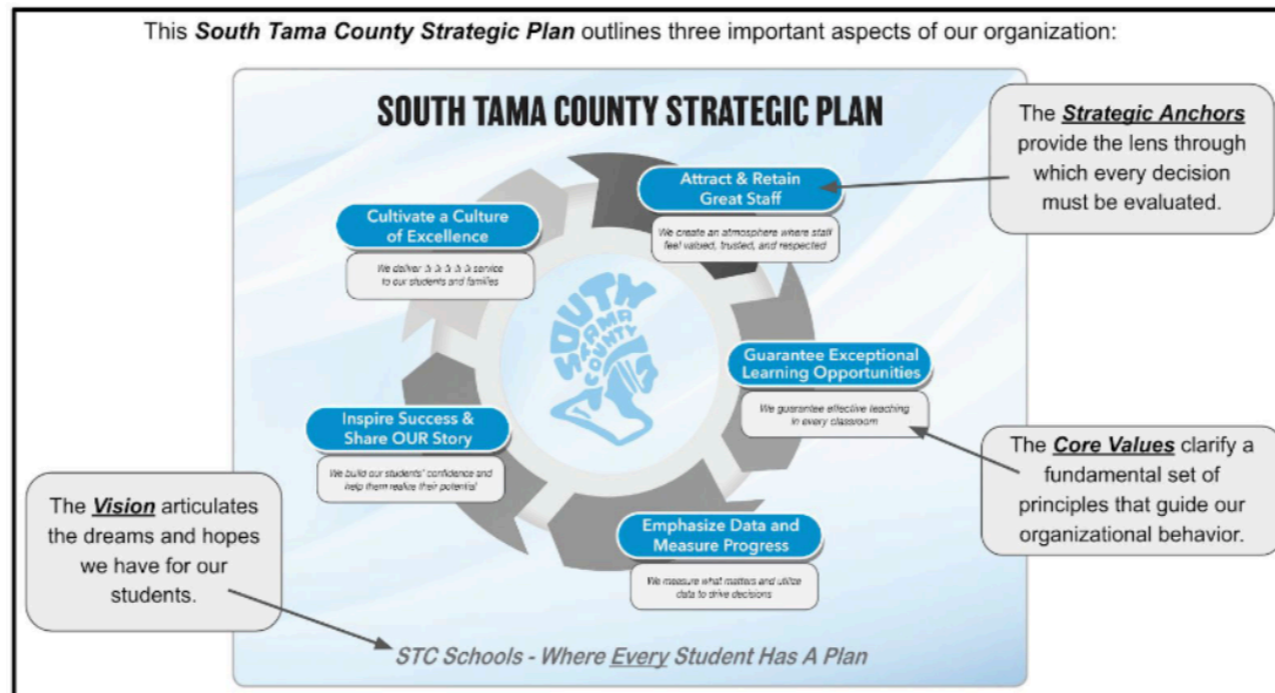
- 1) What should the STC Community School District keep doing?
- 2) What should the STC Community School District stop doing?
- 3) What should the STC Community School District start doing?

Nearly three-hundred individuals provided feedback to these three questions. Feedback was collected through face-to-face interviews as well as surveys that were distributed through social media, email, and text messaging. Additionally, thirteen focus groups supplied extended dialogue and reaction to these prompts.

The feedback and themes generated during these conversations has provided us with valuable information needed to guide our work in the coming years. In the pages that follow, you will see how your input has helped us to create the **South Tama County Strategic Plan**.

Focus Group Meetings	Stakeholder Group
Elementary Leadership Team	Staff
Middle School Leadership Team	Staff
High School Leadership Team	Staff
STC Paraeducators	Staff
High School Leadership Class	Students
Hispanic Senior Students (x2)	Students
Native American Senior Students (x2)	Students
Hispanic Advisory Committee	Parents/Community
Native American Parent Committee	Parents/Community
State Bank of Toledo	Parents/Community
Kiwanis Club of Tama-Toledo	Parents/Community
<b>Total Focus Group Meetings = 13</b>	

Stakeholder Group	Number of Participants
Staff	109
Parents	87
Students	56
Community	42
<b>Total Participants = 294</b>	





## **District Vision: Every Student Has A Plan**

Student learning is at the center of our efforts and therefore we must focus on the learning experiences we create. For our students to reach the highest level of engagement, learning must be relevant and authentic. Learning content (facts) matters, but what matters even more is giving students the opportunity to apply that content to real-world situations, and scenarios.

As a district, we will create intentional pathways through our education system which are customized to each student's strengths, aspirations, and talents. By having a mindset where ***Every Student Has a Plan***, we help our students lead fulfilling and meaningful lives by giving each student the opportunity to do what they love and make a difference.

We will promote and encourage opportunities for our students to have learning experiences outside the walls of our classrooms. Ultimately, we must focus on each individual student's passion, aspirations, and goals. When we use an "all hands on deck" approach to ensuring all students have a plan, we will deliver each student the great life that he or she deserves.



***We will create personalized student plans as well as any school district in the state***

### **Strategic Anchor 1: Attract & Retain Great Staff**

***Core Value: We create an atmosphere where staff feel valued, trusted, and respected***

Regardless of our master plan for the school district, nothing is possible without outstanding staff working with our students each and every day. Our staff members are the backbone of our district. Therefore, we must commit to hiring the most talented individuals and we must ensure every employee feels valued, trusted, and respected as a member of our organization.



To ensure we hire great staff, we must go above and beyond to recruit highly talented individuals to apply for open positions. We will utilize disciplined and rigorous hiring practices to help us select candidates who best meet the needs of our district. And when a hiring decision is reached, we must immediately make the new staff member feel like part of our family.

Once we have the right people on board we must be passionate about retaining our staff. We will commit to providing our staff with the support and resources they need to perform their jobs at the highest of levels. Furthermore, we must demonstrate appreciation for our staff by celebrating and reinforcing the work they are accomplishing with our students and families, as well as take intentional steps to show our staff that they are trusted and respected.

***We will treat our employees as well as any school district in the state***

### **Strategic Anchor 2: Guarantee Exceptional Learning Opportunities**

***Core Value: We guarantee effective teaching in every classroom***

Of all the factors affecting student learning, we realize classroom teachers have the greatest impact. Therefore, our commitment must be that we are teaching at high levels in every classroom in our district. To realize this goal, we need to establish a common understanding of the characteristics of great teaching. Furthermore, we must ensure effective teaching is being delivered in each classroom, resulting in high levels of learning for every student.

Our district is home to a very diverse student population. We are proud of our differences, and are committed to high levels of learning for all students regardless of student background or academic history. The centerpiece of our instruction will be the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model. This instructional framework will promote solid teaching practices across all grade levels and content areas by prioritizing specially designed instruction that meets the content and language needs of all students.



***We will deliver sheltered instruction as well as any school district in the state***

### **Strategic Anchor 3: Emphasize Data and Measure Progress**

*Core Value: We measure what matters and utilize data to drive decisions*

Setting goals and tracking data are key elements of the school improvement process. We must identify key data points that define our success and be dedicated to measuring progress in those areas. Clear and defined measures of success will provide our employees, students, and stakeholders with an accurate picture of the progress and accomplishments of our district. Furthermore, having accurate and relevant data will help inform and drive future decisions.

While there is no perfect formula for measuring success, a comprehensive analysis of several data points will be utilized. This means when we analyze our metrics, we must focus on trends, patterns, and comparisons as opposed to isolated data points. District and building leadership will be tasked with routinely sharing district and building data in a variety of settings. Moreover, it will be important that we allow our staff to be involved with the goal setting process. By seeing how their work connects to the overall vision and goals of the district, we believe our employees will be deeply committed to the collective work of our organization.



***We will track and utilize data as well as any school district in the state***

### **Strategic Anchor 4: Inspire Success and Share OUR Story**

*Core Value: We build our students' confidence and help them realize their potential*



Our students are doing amazing things every day. Every child brings unique talents and abilities to our buildings, and we believe it is our responsibility to ensure our students are aware of the special characteristics they possess. When our staff is intentional about sharing these positive messages, our students will build confidence and start to believe in themselves. When we create these special moments, our students will dream big and understand they have limitless potential.

Beyond expressing belief in our students, we must effectively communicate with our external community and stakeholders. We believe when information is shared, it must be timely, accurate, and transparent. Furthermore, we must be intentional about sharing our stories and celebrating our successes with our families. Whether the positive messages are about our students or our staff, we believe our district has the power to enhance the culture and the perception of our entire community.

***We will share stories and celebrate success as well as any school district in the state***

### **Strategic Anchor 5: Cultivate a Culture of Excellence**

*Core Value: We deliver ★★★★★ service to our students and families*

We want our school district to stand out and feel different. Creating a culture of excellence means every employee is committed to doing outstanding work and providing exceptional "customer" service. We must develop a mindset where all staff members pay attention to detail and strive for every product, lesson, and interaction to be top quality. When we embrace a culture of excellence, the end result will be greater student learning and increased community engagement.

Visitors should have an exceptional experience every time they enter our buildings. We must commit to going the extra mile to ensure our guests realize our schools are a special place where everyone is welcome. By promoting a community focused around personalized service, we will treat every interaction as an opportunity to build relationships and trust. Finally, we are committed to treating our students, parents, and community members with professionalism, kindness, and respect at all times.



***We will generate special, memorable moments as well as any school district in the state.***



### **Strategic Anchor 3: Emphasize Data and Measure Progress**

*Core Value: We measure what matters and utilize data to drive decisions*

Setting goals and tracking data are key elements of the school improvement process. We must identify key data points that define our success and be dedicated to measuring progress in those areas. Clear and defined measures of success will provide our employees, students, and stakeholders with an accurate picture of the progress and accomplishments of our district. Furthermore, having accurate and relevant data will help inform and drive future decisions.

While there is no perfect formula for measuring success, a comprehensive analysis of several data points will be utilized. This means when we analyze our metrics, we must focus on trends, patterns, and comparisons as opposed to isolated data points. District and building leadership will be tasked with routinely sharing district and building data in a variety of settings. Moreover, it will be important that we allow our staff to be involved with the goal setting process. By seeing how their work connects to the overall vision and goals of the district, we believe our employees will be deeply committed to the collective work of our organization.



***We will track and utilize data as well as any school district in the state***

### **Strategic Anchor 4: Inspire Success and Share OUR Story**

*Core Value: We build our students' confidence and help them realize their potential*



Our students are doing amazing things every day. Every child brings unique talents and abilities to our buildings, and we believe it is our responsibility to ensure our students are aware of the special characteristics they possess. When our staff is intentional about sharing these positive messages, our students will build confidence and start to believe in themselves. When we create these special moments, our students will dream big and understand they have limitless potential.

Beyond expressing belief in our students, we must effectively communicate with our external community and stakeholders. We believe when information is shared, it must be timely, accurate, and transparent. Furthermore, we must be intentional about sharing our stories and celebrating our successes

with our families. Whether the positive messages are about our students or our staff, we believe our district has the power to enhance the culture and the perception of our entire community.

***We will share stories and celebrate success as well as any school district in the state***

### **Strategic Anchor 5: Cultivate a Culture of Excellence**

*Core Value: We deliver ★★★★★ service to our students and families*

We want our school district to stand out and feel different. Creating a culture of excellence means every employee is committed to doing outstanding work and providing exceptional "customer" service. We must develop a mindset where all staff members pay attention to detail and strive for every product, lesson, and interaction to be top quality. When we embrace a culture of excellence, the end result will be greater student learning and increased community engagement.

Visitors should have an exceptional experience every time they enter our buildings. We must commit to going the extra mile to ensure our guests realize our schools are a special place where everyone is welcome. By promoting a community focused around personalized service, we will treat every interaction as an opportunity to build relationships and trust. Finally, we are committed to treating our students, parents, and community members with professionalism, kindness, and respect at all times.



***We will generate special, memorable moments as well as any school district in the state.***

How can all of us in this room share **positive messages** with our students and build up our students' **confidence** so that they start to **believe** in themselves?



## TURNING POINTS EXERCISE:

Focus on the “turning points” of your K-12 career.

What were the **best moments** and the **worst moments** that have impacted you to this day?

Do you think turning points are just about the teachers you have?

# KINDERGARTEN



My first day ever riding the bus and I missed getting off at my bus stop.

After this event I was terrified of going back on the bus.

This was 32 years ago and we still talk about it to this day!

# 1ST GRADE



My first grade teacher said I was good at math! She gave me a math booklet to complete over the summer.

I felt so smart!! (I remember inequalities  $<$  &  $>$  were really hard to figure out!!)



## 2ND GRADE



I was in a new school. So scared and nervous!

My teacher found another new student named Daniel and introduced us as we were the two new kids.

We immediately became best friends!

## 5TH GRADE



Parents told me they were getting a divorce. The next day I cried in class.

My teacher asked me if I wanted to go out into the hallway.

That was the extent of the support I received at school that day.



## 6TH GRADE



My mom became a waitress. She made very little money and my three siblings and I were on free lunches.

I had a different lunch card than everyone else and I had to stand at the back of the line with the other students on free lunch.



## ALSO IN 6TH GRADE

PE Teacher worked with parents to create a traveling basketball team. I experienced a lot of success as a player.



I learned valuable skills (work ethic, teamwork, communication, grit) and grew confidence as a young person.

## 8TH GRADE



I received my first C ever in a class. It was art class. I never recall receiving feedback on how I could do better.

To this day I believe I have very little "artistic" ability.



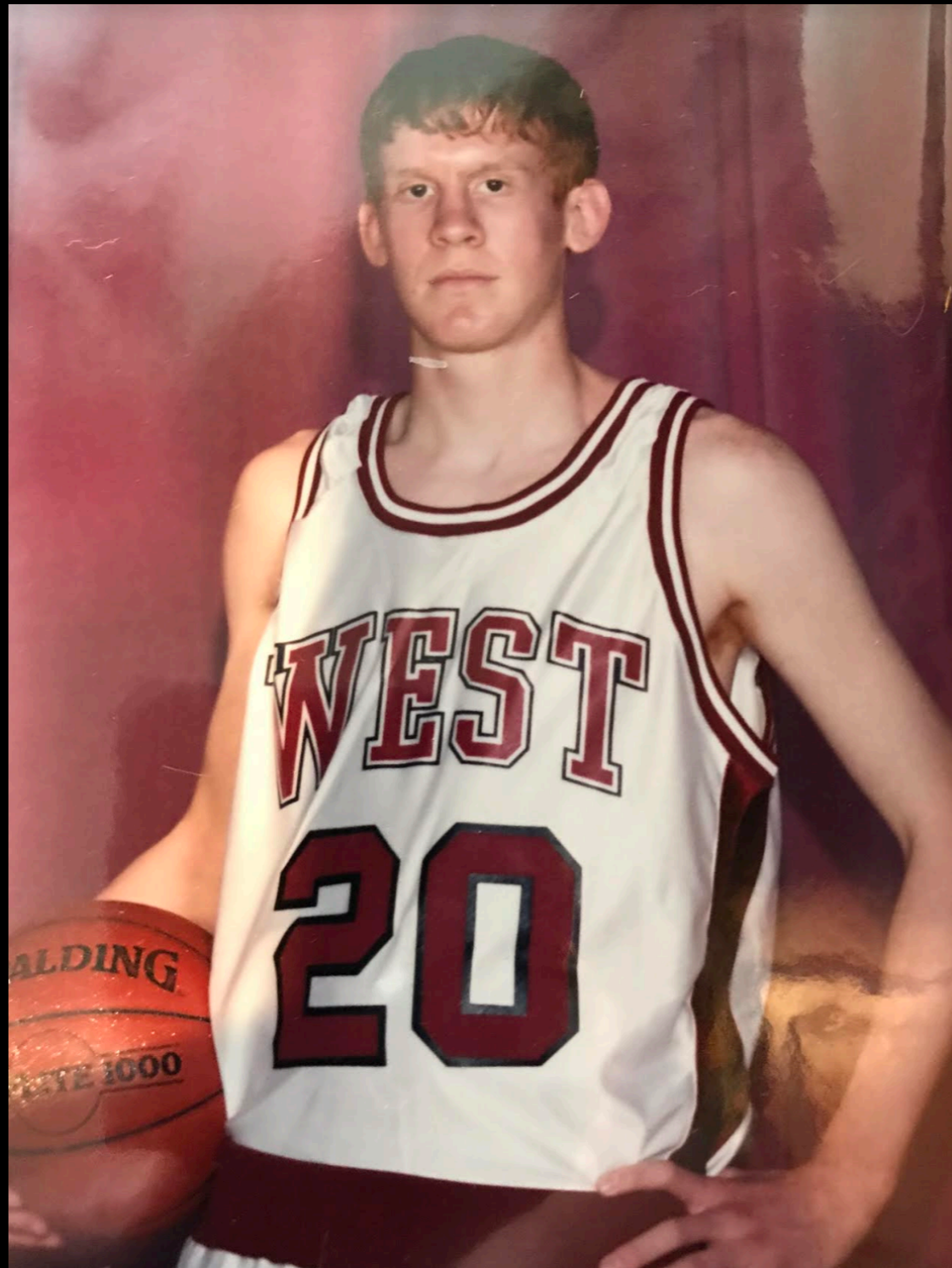
# 9TH GRADE



Excelling in athletics!

- \*Football = Starting Quarterback
- \*Basketball = Played on the Sophomore Team
- \*Tennis = Varsity

# 10TH GRADE



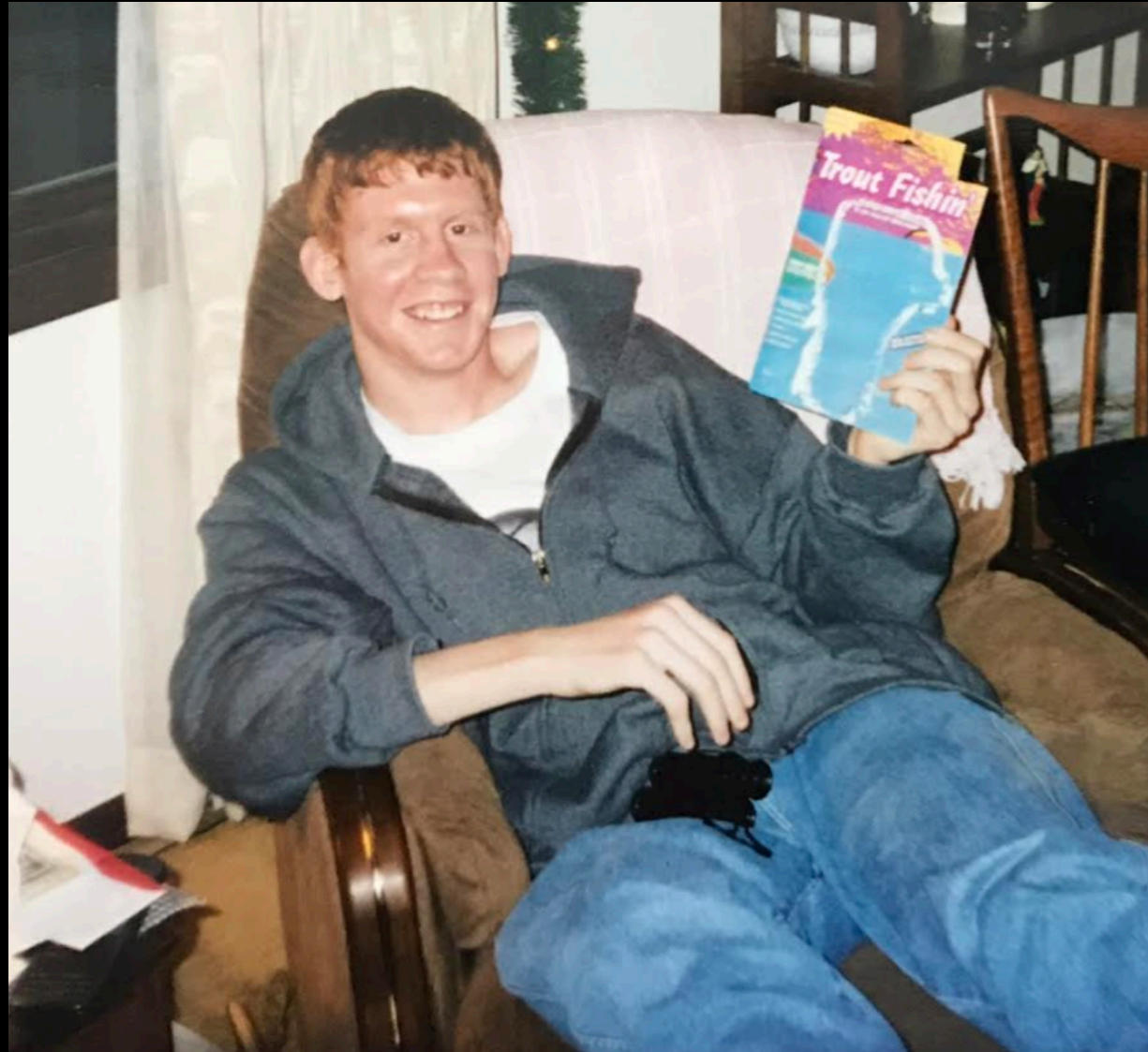
I started developing significant anxiety. This impacted my social life and my athletics.

I was so nervous before every sporting event!

No one seemed to notice or take time to talk to me about my anxiety.



# 11TH GRADE



Created a movie called "Paramedics" (It's like COPS, only with Paramedics).

My teacher showed significant interest in the movie - praised me for my creativity. Took the time to show it to my class!

# 11TH GRADE



I recall a teacher who told me "you would be really good at working with kids!"

I started volunteering at a local middle school. I realized that teaching would be a good career.

# TURNING POINTS EXERCISE:

- 1st Grade: Bus Driver (Negative - Missed bus stop)
- 1st Grade: Teacher (Positive - "Good at Math")
- 2nd Grade: Teacher (Positive - New kid in class)
- 5th Grade: Teacher/Counselor (Negative - Crying)
- 6th Grade: Food Service/Admin (Negative - Free Lunches)
- 6th Grade: PE Teacher (Positive - Noticed basketball skills)
- 8th Grade: Art Teacher (Negative - C with no feedback)
- 9th Grade: Coaches (Positive - Athletic Success)
- 10th Grade: Coaches, Counselors (Negative - Anxiety Issues)
- 11th Grade: Science Teacher (Positive - Said I was creative)
- 11th Grade: Teacher (Positive - Told me I was good with kids)



## NOW ITS YOUR TURN:

- Grab a notecard from the middle of the table
- What were the “turning points” in your K-12 career?
- What interactions did you have with school staff that have impacted who you are today?



**10:00**

## SHARE WITH YOUR GROUP

- Your group will have 60 minutes
- Each of you should take 8-10 minutes sharing your own turning points
- Discuss how each positive or negative interaction with a school staff member has impacted your life
- If you need to take a short break now that is fine

60:00

**Stop**

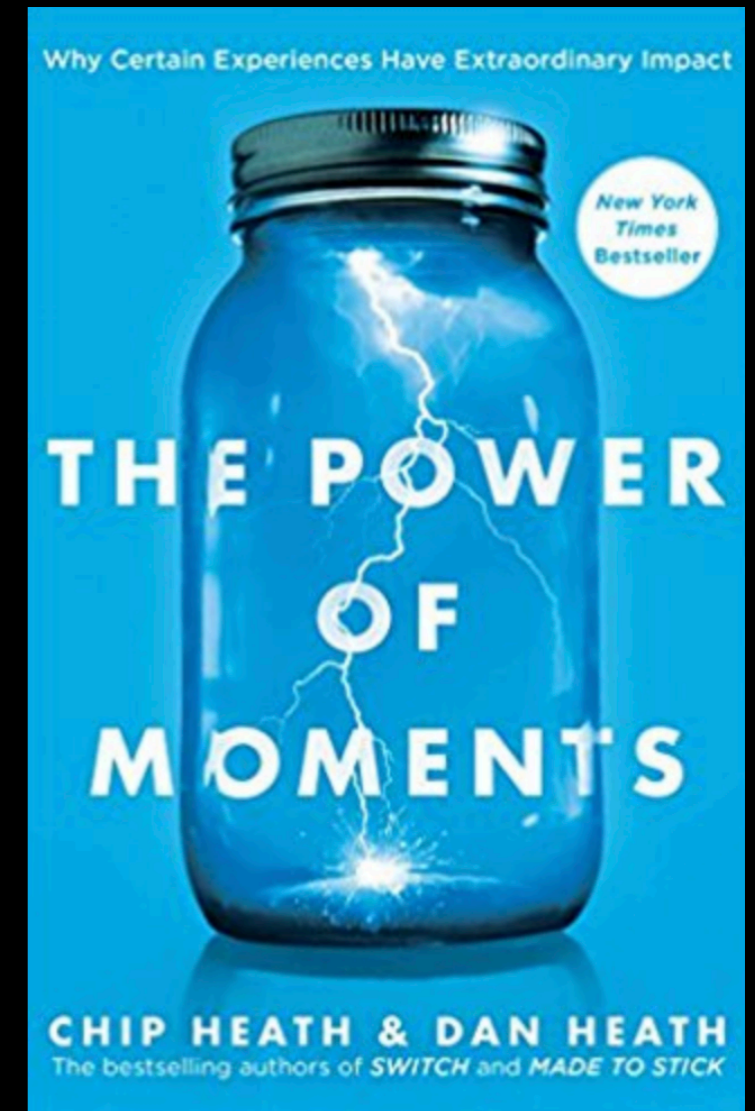
## WHY?

- Why have we discussed our memories of TV show songs?
- Why have we talked about the “turning points” of our K-12 career?
- Those of us in this room have the ability to impact thousands of kids in this community with the words we choose to use.
- A single, three minute conversation can change the course of a student’s entire life - for better or worse



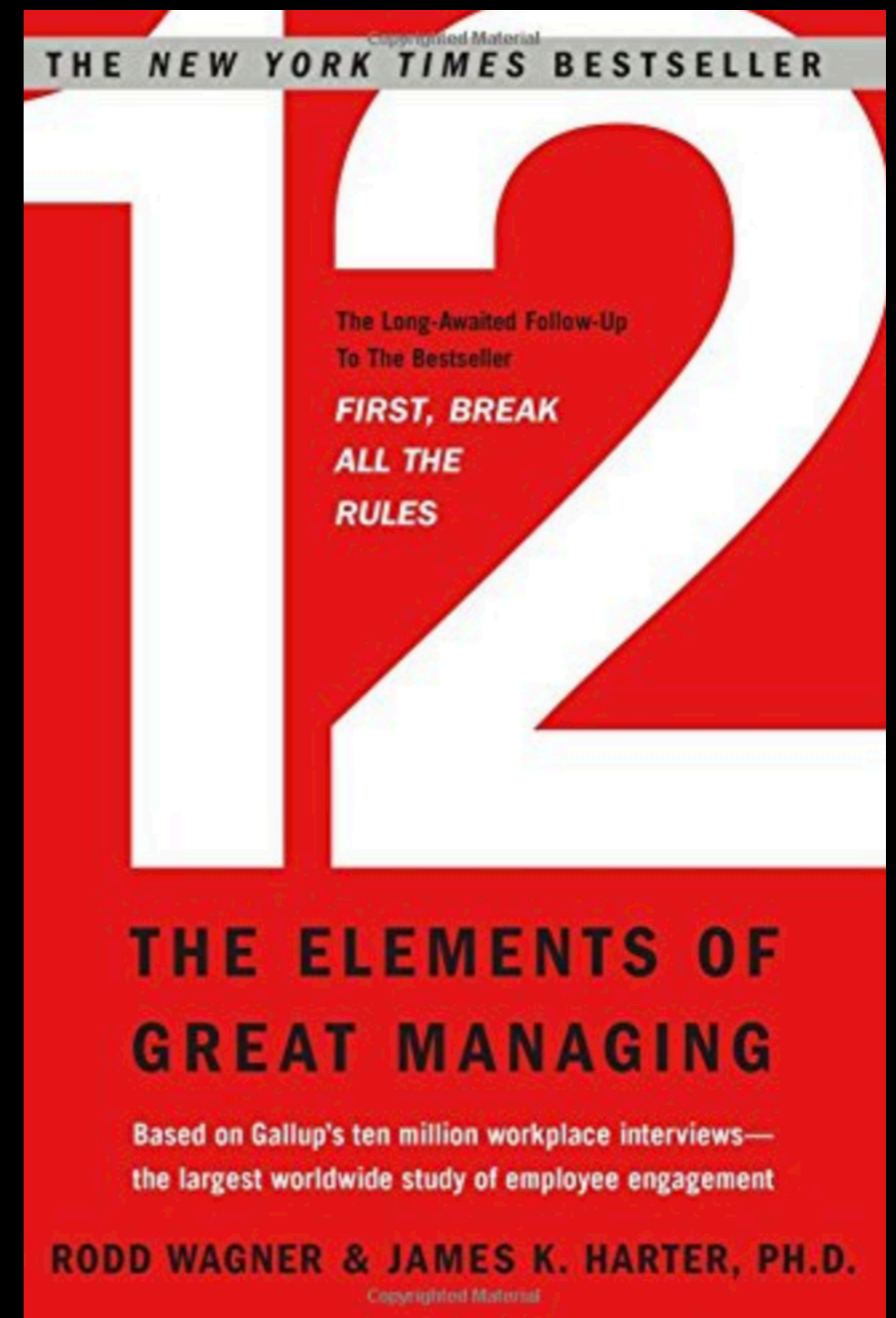
# THE POWER OF POSITIVE MESSAGES:

*“Whatever you do, do not hurt a student’s pride - this can last with them for an eternity. However, when a teacher offers praise and support, this can lead to transformation. Or when a teacher points out the strengths of the student. A few minutes can change a life. These moments just don’t happen...thoughtful teachers made them happen.” - Dan Heath, The Power of Moments*



PRAISE: MORE THAN JUST FOR STUDENTS:

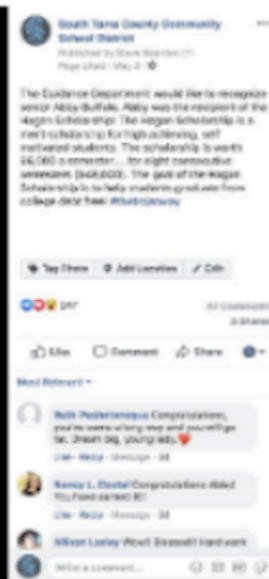
“Subjects who write and deliver a letter of gratitude to someone who had been especially kind but have never been properly thanked was statistically linked to increases in happiness and decreases in depression for up to a month after the communication. These positive changes happened to the person who GAVE the praise.” - Wagner & Harter, “12: *The Elements of Great Managing*”



# Tying it all together....

## Strategic Anchor 4: Inspire Success and Share OUR Story

*Core Value: We build our students' confidence and help them realize their potential*



Our students are doing amazing things every day. Every child brings unique talents and abilities to our buildings, and we believe it is our responsibility to ensure our students are aware of the special characteristics they possess. When our staff is intentional about sharing these positive messages, our students will build confidence and start to believe in themselves. When we create these special moments, our students will dream big and understand they have limitless potential.

Beyond expressing belief in our students, we must effectively communicate with our external community and stakeholders. We believe when information is shared, it must be timely, accurate, and transparent. Furthermore, we must be intentional about sharing our stories and celebrating our successes

with our families. Whether the positive messages are about our students or our staff, we believe our district has the power to enhance the culture and the perception of our entire community.

*We will share stories and celebrate success as well as any school district in the state*



- Grab your laptop (or a cell phone if you don't have a laptop)
- Every staff member is going to write a **positive postcard** to a student of their choice.
- Your goal is to build the **students's confidence in their abilities**. What are one or two strengths that you can praise in your message?
- Use JMC to find the address for the student.
- Think hard!! I'm sure you can think of one student who stands out in your mind.
- New to the district? Then write a positive note to another person who works in a school setting :)



South Tama County School District

1702 Harding Street

Tama, Iowa 52339

David,

I just wanted to let you know how impressed I am that you have your own YouTube Channel! You are very talented at making movies and are extremely creative ... Keep up the great work ☺ Dr. Smith

David Quie

610 Harmon St.

Tama, IA 52339



South Tama County School District

1702 Harding Street

Tama, Iowa 52339

Hey Michelle,

I wanted to let you know  
that I think you are an  
awesome student! You are  
very smart, kind, and you  
are a leader to your friends.  
You are going to do great in  
4<sup>th</sup> grade 😊 Dr. Smith

Michelle Aguilera-Lopez

1108 State St.

Tama, IA 52339



- Grab your laptop (or a cell phone if you don't have a laptop)
- Every staff member is going to write a **positive postcard** to a student of their choice.
- Your goal is to build the **students's confidence in their abilities**. What are one or two strengths that you can praise in your message?
- Use JMC to find the address for the student.
- Think hard!! I'm sure you can think of one student who stands out in your mind.
- New to the district? Then write a positive note to another person who works in a school setting :)



# AFTERNOON SESSION

## LEARNING GOALS

### • Content Objective

- By the end of today all staff will explore the new STC Strategic Plan and District Snapshot
- By the end of today all staff will understand that they have the power to dramatically impact our students' lives

### • Language Objective

- By the end of today all staff will share the "turning points" of their K-12 career with their colleagues