



Perspective Matters

November 1, 2021

*“We can complain because
rose bushes have thorns,
or rejoice because
thorn bushes have roses.”*



These words shared by Abraham Lincoln are still relevant today. **Your perspective and what you choose to focus on determines what you see and how effective you become.** What you see is informed by what you think, and what you think is influenced by your beliefs, emotions and experiences.

We are entering a time of year where it is natural to feel overwhelmed, overburdened and exhausted. If you are not intentional about filling your cup with hope, faith and positivity, then you will focus on things that drain your energy and you will find yourself seeing even more of those things.

As we are entering into this time of the year, I challenge you to **be intentional about staying focused on why we have all made choices to become an educator.** It wasn't the positive attention, the public recognition, the constant affirmation or the financial opportunities. It wasn't that, as educators, we would always be showered with appreciation and valued, respected or held in high regard. It wasn't for the glory, the popularity or the potential for financial prosperity.

If you are like me, we chose education and answered our calling because we had a desire to have an impact, to serve and to be a positive difference in the lives of the students, families and communities we serve.

You likely chose to become an educator because of what another educator either did, or didn't do, for you.

You chose to be an educator when you could have chosen any profession in the world, and it is important for all of us during these challenging times to reflect on why we chose this profession and recognize that everything that we ever wanted to do remains in front of us. What an awesome opportunity we have to serve and to live a meaningful life.

Is it challenging right now? Absolutely!

Is it overwhelming at times? You bet!

Does it seem unbearable right now? For sure!

I recognize that things are hard now for us all, but I want to remind you that even as hard as it is for us, many of our students are depending on us to give them our best. Their life chances depend on our actions daily. What we do matters and the perspective we adopt is critical to our long-term and short-term success.

Our daily actions are influenced by the perspective we bring to our job every day, and our perspectives will determine whether we are energized and hopeful or defeated and at the end of our rope. Our perspective will directly influence what we see and what we focus on as we carry out our responsibility.

I challenge each of you to intentionally see the value in what you do every day. We are directly influencing life chances of the next generation. We will have days where we are overwhelmed, we will have days where we don't feel effective and we will have days when we feel outright defeated. I encourage you to realize that on those bad days, you still remain as some child's best hope. If you can remember that, then it will hopefully change your perspective and remind you that feelings are temporary and things are never as bad as they feel or as good as they seem. It is your perspective that will make the difference – and that is what matters most.

With something to think about, I am Superintendent McFarland challenging you to rejoice because thorn bushes do have roses and, on our worst day, we are some child's best hope.

Act like a family and work like a team,



Mike McFarland, Ed.D.
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