

STAFF DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER, 2016



The best teachers have the best students-every year. Todd Whitaker

Image from National Geographic

BOTTOM LINE

When you think about bottom lines you may think about what a business's dollar amount in sales are for the year, or the beliefs you may have about a certain topic that you are willing to fight for. As educators, I hope that we can all agree on three characteristics that should be our bottom line... Care, Concern, and Dedication. Do we care if we improve as educators, do we care if students are learning, do we care about our colleagues and how they are doing? I see this attribute of caring daily with our staff members. Helping a staff member in need, willing to write lesson plans for a teacher who is sick, staying after school to help a student who doesn't understand a concept, taking tickets at an activity when more help is needed and having a positive attitude about learning something new are just a few examples of Caring in action.

When we think of being concerned it can sometimes have a negative connotation. When we think of having concern in a positive manner, it is about being empathic and thinking more about others than yourself. This can be hard for some people, but when you can place yourself in the shoes of another staff member, a struggling student, or an angry parent, we have the ability to empathize but also be part of the solution and not the problem. We should be concerned when students are not learning what we expect. We should be concerned when we didn't communicate clearly with a parent who is finding out for the first time their child is failing a class at conferences. We should be concerned when members of our team are not pulling their weight. There is also a fine balance between concern and worry. Concern over the things we can control is thinking in the right direction. Worrying over things you cannot control leads to stress and anxiety. This type of concern is also damaging to our emotional state of mind, which can consume our lives.

Dedication is a word that has different meanings depending upon who you ask. Does dedication mean the amount of time we spend on something? Giving up something else in order to be dedicated to another aspect of our life like our career? If we simply state that we are dedicated to student learning and developing the whole child, we are on the right path as educators. Even though dedication may look different depending upon the individual. I do think that dedication does require a certain amount of time, planning, reflection, and results. I know we have a caring, concerned, and dedicated staff at Seward Public Schools. There are examples of these attributes that occur daily. We all need to believe that what we are doing will positively effect the future of not only our students, but society as a whole. Hubert Humphrey states it best, "The good old days were never that good. The good new days are today and better days are coming tomorrow. Our greatest songs are still unsung." May all of you have a Merry Christmas and great start to 2017!

The school district of Seward, in cooperation with parents and community, affirms that all students will have the skills to become productive and contributing members of a global community. The district is committed to the development of each student academically, emotionally, socially and physically.

