

John W. Barile - Superintendent, Brookfield Public Schools

Convocation Remarks: Expectations & Urgency 2016

- **Welcome Address-** And so another New Year begins, I am so grateful to serve Brookfield. We have so much to be thankful for...
- I asked my wife, "What I should say this year?" (Michelle is a Grade 4 teacher)... her response – "John, I hate to break it to you but the staff really don't want to hear from you... they are really thinking about seeing their work friends who they haven't seen all summer, and what kind of spread Alfonso is putting on for breakfast."
- I want to start by thanking and acknowledging those who have done great work all summer and who've made this morning possible.
- Alfonso- new Whitson's Food Service Manager and his team
- Kathy Colavito and Lisa Gramling for organizing this morning's event
- How about our custodial and maintenance teams, and our secretaries – the buildings look great and the materials are always ready
- Teachers – especially those who volunteered their time to assist their principals with the many interview committee's at each building this summer
- Our principals and administrators- I so appreciate all of your work and commitment... I truly hope that you know that
- TSO Staff – you are here all summer and we know there have been many back office improvements this past year... we cannot operate without you e
- BOE- Welcome members Bob Belden and Tara Lerner - and thank you for your volunteer service to our community. The hours you give are remarkable. Thank you for all you do for all of in this room and of our students!
- How about our Music this morning... Flute Choir, great job Steve St. George and Special Chorus led by John Lamendola

Activity- Please think about your favorite teacher, advisor, coach or mentor... the one who has positively impacted your life the most.... Quickly... recount the 3-5 attributes of this individual.... Turn and share with your neighbor - 30 seconds and then switch and share...It was very easy to think about this person, I know...and you all know that our impact will last a life time

I ask you to remember to...

1. **Teach all of your students;** hold each and everyone to high expectations; do all you can to help each of them.
 - Not every student will be easy; not every student will be likable. But the measure of your teaching rests not just with how well you do with the brightest students or the most compliant students or the regular students, but how well you do with the struggling, resistant, withdrawn, and disabled student.
 - Many of the struggling students may communicate to you that they don't care about their learning. I would offer that underneath, **they're really wondering if you care about *their* learning...**

Samuel R. Hirsch said "The child is not there for you; but you are there for the child."

2. **Develop strong relationships with each child.** Every child across the nation at this time of year has the same major thought: **Who will my teacher be?** Will he/she **like me?** Will he/she **take an interest** in me? Will I feel comfortable in his/her classroom? Will I **feel safe** in his/her classroom? Research overwhelmingly indicates that relationships are critical to learning for most children. Kids want to connect with you as individuals, and you need to connect with them.
3. **Set an example for your students** – in your speech, the way you dress, your behavior, your decisions, your interactions. Students – whether in Kindergarten or Grade 12 – cue off of us, our every move. The old saying... "Your actions speak so loudly, I could not hear what you are saying."

Introduce Chairman Belden

We cannot underestimate the value of leadership and community values, including- High Expectations, Individual Worth, Hard Work, Accountability, Respect, Teaching & Assessing the Adopted Curriculum, Forming meaningful relationships and teaching each and every child. These are values our BOE works to uphold and model. Thank you Bob and Tara Lerner for being with us this morning.

Mr. Belden, our Board Chair, is working diligently and meeting with me weekly to ensure our mission to challenge inspire and prepare our students is realized in the most authentic way possible. Bob, thank you for your leadership and commitment.

Introduce Brian Kwas – BEA president... I am proud of meaningful relationship that has been established with the bargaining units and out teachers union.

J. Barile- Introducing the DECA Marketing students and Mrs. Garrett

- What do we stand for ... Excellence.

I would like to take a moment and align some of the elements of our slogan, the concept of 212 Degrees from last year's convocation with our mission, values, skills and assets.

- ***Create Your Tomorrow*** – personalized, future oriented optimism, The BHS students will share their experiences from this summer in just a minute.
- ***212 Degrees*** – Intentionally working at one's craft a little bit harder, smarter... improving to make the difference between achieving powerful results and existing in mediocrity
- ***Our Mission: To Challenge, Inspire and Prepare***
- ***Our Strategic Coherence Plan- Corner Stone Skills and Assets for our students...***
 1. Developing Meaningful Connections & Strong Character
 2. Becoming Critical Thinkers & Problem Solvers
 3. Communicating & Collaborating in person and across networks
 4. Acting Creatively & with an Innovative spirit

Introduce the BHS Marketing Team and Pam Garrett – the creators of Create Your Tomorrow - the BHS DECA/Marketing Team

Dan Macioce

Anuja Patel

Bibi Phadnis

Sam D'Aquila

Brenan Culhane

Oscar Urena,

Kora Kukk

Introduce Teacher(s) of the Year

BHS - Pam Garrett

WMS – Rachel Agati

HHES – Danielle Oliveir

CES – Shannon Pane

Introduce Dr. Ruby and Principals for New Staff Welcome

J. Barile Closing Remarks – System Coherence is predicated on four organizational drivers at both the school & district levels. Michael Fullan

1. Focused Direction
2. Cultivating a Collaborative Culture
3. Deep Learning for the adults- individually and as an organization
4. Securing Accountability – internal and external measures, we have to support one another in reaching our collective goals

As demonstrated this morning by our appreciation and welcoming of new members to our team and of course our magnificent students...we are fortunate & grateful to have you on our staff. This is an amazing school district.

- You all have strong credentials.
- You come with much experience and expertise and a desire to work hard on behalf of students.

I suggest that you (even our most veteran employees) that you are also fortunate to be working for the Brookfield Public Schools:

- Brookfield has a strong history of honor, commitment, and excellence in education.
- We have a community that supports education.
- As faculty, staff or coach you make a difference in the lives of children.

- There is really good work going on – aimed at raising achievement for all students. And supporting our student’s emotional, social and physical well being.

You are **educators, in diverse roles, but all of you teach** in whatever capacity you serve our district. Teaching requires your **gifts** – with helping children to learn. It also **requires responsibility** as the parents and the community entrust their children to you. We must return students to their parents each afternoon, better than they were in the morning... *a little kinder, a little smarter, a little more focused.*

- It is truly a noble profession. It’s an awesome responsibility...
- I think that’s what makes it so special.

In being a professional for the Brookfield Public Schools, I have expectations of you....

I want to briefly make explicit my expectations of you. I wish to make them explicit because I owe you my honest opinion and beliefs.

- I absolutely believe you contribute significantly to Brookfield. I want to make sure you understand what is expected of you. I also want to assure you that while we set high expectations, you should already know that we also are committed to providing you with the support you may need to meet them.
- Everything you do is a reflection on the Brookfield Public Schools, your school, your colleagues, your principal, and me.
- *I expect you to smile and bring energy to your students, every day and help them **Create their Tomorrow....***

I want to leave you with an overarching concept that undergirds the expectations of kindness, commitment, communication, responsibility, continuous learning, and creating demonstrable results.

J. Barile - It's Urgency- We cannot *create our students' tomorrow*, our tomorrow, or your tomorrow without a sense of *urgency*. What do I mean by urgency?

- I do not mean frenetic, running around... trying to cram as much into a lesson or into a day as possible.
- *Contrary – I mean Thoughtful-Strategic Intentionality*
- **Urgency means** – consistent concentration of energy on the key focus points of the plan to accomplish your goals (whatever the plan)... It means that your mental energy is used to always be thinking about how you are going to help students reach their learning goals, the schools goals, the district's goals.
- It means your finger is on the pulse of every student, knowing their profile, understanding their data, being connected with them, connected with parents and colleagues
- Urgency also must include planning and preparation ... Every day you have opportunities to help improve your students, your craft, your school and the district.
 - **Plan intentionally.** Rarely will great accomplishment just happen by chance... *Luck is often defined as when preparation is coupled with opportunity.* However, in Brookfield we don't just throw ideas at the wall to see what sticks... **we act with deliberate purpose.**
- You should be acting with this urgency by preparing intentionally for the opportunities before you each and every day (we only have 180 chances each school year-we must make every moment count)...
- How else can we **Create Tomorrow?** unless we work on it today and each and every day.

In Brookfield we have:

- The technology in place and the ability to harness its potential for learning
- Abundance of intentional professional learning opportunities
- We Have Great kids- high graduation rate-our students attend competitive colleges
- Our students achieve academically-athletically- in the visual & performing arts
- Strong parent support
- We have made it through a tumultuous period in the district by demonstrating vision, courage and collaboration while staying focused on the students - commendations to all
- The town has generously provided significant funding for upgrading our facilities and all of the enhancements outlined in my Welcome Back letter to all of you- vertically aligned curricular tools and imbedded professional development, District coherence and a relentless focus on **what's real, right and true**
- To demonstrate this ... Did you know that 81% of our \$40,300,000 budget is for salaries and benefits... that's all of us in this room. That's 32.7 million dollars of 40 million – this town supports education and its educators.

We have....

- The desire of the people in this room to lead, be lead, and contribute
- The potential for greatness in all facets of the organization
- Dedicated faculty, staff and administration
- Folks, **We have no excuses**

We have all of the foundational assets for greatness. We are positioned to ascend on an amazing trajectory. We have come together and now we must capitalize on our strengths and become the cohesive model of excellence in education for Brookfield, for CT, our Nation, and among the finest in the World.

We have a lot to do and we are going to have a blast working on it together.

Let's get to work and **Create OUR Tomorrow!**

