



Superintendent's HOPE Note - March 2023

Curiosity is the Wick in the Candle of Learning

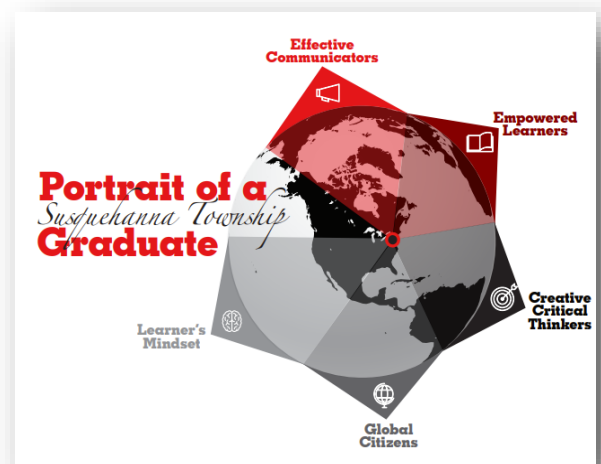
I wish I could say I wrote this title. It is a quote from William Arthur Ward, and it is appropriate for this month's Portrait of a Graduate focus, A Learner's Mindset. So, what piques your curiosity? What do you enjoy researching or learning about in your spare time? What about that topic(s) intrigues you? I'd suggest that curiosity about that topic is what allows you to expand your learning on a particular topic.

According to one study, curiosity prepares the brain for learning and may develop pathways to improve memory and retention. In other words, there is a reason why my 76-year-old father can identify, catalog, and rate every NASCAR engine on race day. He has always been intrigued by NASCAR, NHRA, and Top-fuel Dragsters. Although he has never driven one of those multi-million dollar vehicles, he has amassed an impressive body of knowledge about the subject from sheer curiosity and a learner's mindset.

According to a [study](#) from the University of California, participants were more likely to remember unrelated or secondary information if that information was followed by information that piqued participant curiosity. Participants not only remembered stimuli that they found intriguing, but they could remember information or pictures that were not of interest if that information was shared after an item of interest. Let's use my father as an example. My father has absolutely no interest in shoe shopping (trust me on this). However, if I started our conversation with a NASCAR reference, he would be more likely to remember and retain information related to my shoe shopping spree because it followed my NASCAR reference.

Curiosity is just one component of a learner's mindset, but it is critical. Learners are more likely to retain essential information and engage when portions of the learning pique their interest, and new ideas challenge them. I am not suggesting that we teach learners only those things that interest them. However, if we can foster curiosity by connecting with the learners themselves, we increase their capacity to develop positive attitudes about learning, embrace challenges and develop positive beliefs about learning.

- Embrace curiosity to experience new ideas.
- Possess the desire to learn, unlearn, and relearn.
- Find and maximize opportunities to actively listen and elicit diverse perspectives from others.
- Develop positive attitudes and beliefs about learning.
- Persists and achieve a goal when faced with challenges and obstacles.



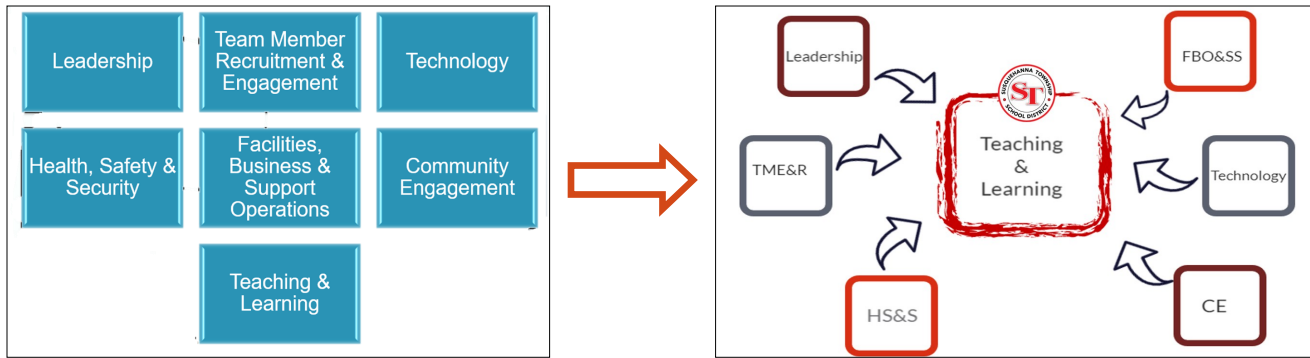
Visit the district's webpage to see the [Strategic Plan](#) and the full [Portrait of a Graduate](#)

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All HOPE Teams Meeting: A Focus on Teaching and Learning

The district held its annual All HOPE Teams meeting to discuss progress toward targets in our 3-year strategic plan and supporting initiatives on which we focused this school year. A team of teachers, administrators, and support staff spent the day reviewing each of our seven Critical Success Factors (CSFs), as we have done for over six years.

Our T&L focus for 2022-2023 has been: 1) MTSS/Advisory, 2) High Yield Instructional Strategies, and 3) Focused Professional Development. We restructured our review to prioritize the Teacher and Learning (T&L) CSF during this year's HOPE Team meeting. We asked ourselves, "How can all other CSFs more directly support Teaching and Learning?"



The teams reviewed our [Teaching and Learning Plan](#) developed during our Teaching and Learning Summit in May of 2022. During the summit, we also created our Portrait of a Graduate (POG) and key actions that will, if achieved, increase student performance and allow the district to realize our POG fully. We strategically aligned key actions to each of the six CSFs outside T&L.

In May of this year, they will reconvene to identify key action items from the Teaching & Learning Plan to expand and initiate during the 23-24 school year, and these initiatives will become our strategic focus for the 2023-2024 school year.

Piece of the Puzzle



Randi Olley

Please join me in celebrating Randi Olley as this month's Piece of the Puzzle. Randi has diligently restructured and organized the special education office since her arrival. The system she has designed makes filing records and documents not only more easily completed for the Special Education Department but also for the other departments sharing district office file storage space. Orderly filing of records and documents is an essential piece of our district's operations.