



The Secret to Success

September 13, 2021

2.9 billion. That's the number of online results I received in about .55 seconds from my Google search of the word **success**. It's obvious that success is one of the most documented phenomena of our time. However, what I have found is that many of the most successful people have relied on the work of Earl Nightingale to frame their pursuit of success.

It was Nightingale who captured the secret of success through his relentless study of successful people and shared his findings in the following statement:

“Success is really nothing more than the progressive realization of a worthy ideal. This means that any person who knows what they are doing and where they are going is a success. Any person with a goal towards which they are working is a successful person.”

This philosophy captures the idea that success is a process. Success is a journey that we all can take as long as we are clear about our goal and our direction, and we are taking steps daily toward achieving that goal. I love this definition because it allows all of us to have access to success if we are clear about where we are going and the idea that we have is a worthy one.

As I meditated on this quote in search of a connection to the work we are engaged in at Crowley ISD, I found thoughts settling on this idea of **clarifying our goal** and **intentionally taking steps** in that direction. When you are clear about the learning targets, and students understand the goal of each lesson at the beginning, we increase the likelihood of reaching that goal in the end.



I learned this lesson about goal setting in middle school. I remember in Mrs. Walkoviak's seventh-grade math class when she had a student assigned to ask the daily question about the lesson goal for that subject on that day. Everyone was excited to get the job because she gave the questioner the authority to interrupt her if she did not clearly introduce the learning goal for the day. She would make us repeat the goal and translate it into language we understood. She was religious about goal setting, and as I am reading more about success, I now see why.

Setting goals is a lifelong skill that is present in the repertoire of many of the people we consider successful. I remember in seventh grade, Coach Brack and Coach Willoughby had a big wall where they displayed our weekly goals as a football team. The Bulldog Wall was covered with stickers of accomplishments that indicated whether we as a team, a unit and as individuals met the goals we had agreed upon the prior week.

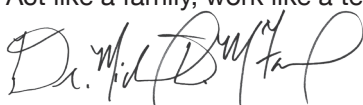
As I look back now, goal setting was an integral part of success, but it was often overlooked. What I know now is that goal setting is essential, and acting consistently in a manner toward that goal makes success tangible for us all.

Goal setting is the beginning of success. The important component in ensuring success is then working toward the goal and the consistent monitoring of progress toward that end. As we complete the first month of the 2021-22 school year, **please be sure to be deliberate and intentional about ensuring that the daily learning targets are clear for students and that students have an active role in goal setting.**

A critical part of our system of ensuring success is our reliance on growth toward the learning goals we have set. The beginning of the year (BOY) assessments should have been administered and a clear understanding of where students are today should be obtained from those results. Due to the impact of the pandemic on STAAR data, we recognize that we must build our systems on the information we collect from the BOY instruments and use this information throughout the year to measure progress. Our progress monitoring system, data walls, PLC process and action plans are all designed to ensure that we are doing the right things and going in the right direction. I am convinced that we are successful because of our daily efforts, and we will continue to achieve success for the students we serve as we remain focused on our goals.

We are becoming the top educational institution in Tarrant County, and our daily efforts are ensuring our success. **I challenge each of you to share this secret with your students and ensure they recognize that their success in life is predicated on identifying a worthy goal and working toward the accomplishment.**

Act like a family, work like a team and share the secret!



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