DRAFT- Ideas to include in speech-(unedited ideas)

Theme- Be AWESOME, Change history, innovation

**AWESOME 84: The Next Chapter in Rockdale 84 History**

I hope you had a relaxing, restful summer. You all deserve it. As each year passes in education, I realize how hard the teaching profession has become. There are so many demands put on all of you and your plate is full each year. The opportunity to refuel is a key to continuing to do great work in school every year.

As we all know and appreciate, teaching is one of those rare professions where you draft a new chapter in your life and the lives of all of your students each year. This brings hope and possibility for AWESOME outcomes each year for all of your students. I know from what I have already learned about this school, is that all of you expect AWESOME things from all of your students and we, in turn, will continue to expect awesome things from all of you. My job is to enable all of you to continue to empower your students to do awesome things. I want all of you to have the right tools and resources to do this awesome work with your students. While we might not be able to provide all of you with everything you might want, we are responsible to support you throughout the year as you write this next chapter and make history with your students. We also trust that you'll take ownership of your own learning in the same way you want your students to own theirs. As lead learners, we need all of you to model that with your students and just as you want them to ask for help, we want you to do the same. Ask us for help and support and we will be there for you along the way, as you strive to provide awesome opportunities and attain awesome results for all of your students.

Education is complex with new standards, new assessments, new teacher evaluations, stacking even higher expectations upon all of us, coupled with reduced funding from the state. However, in the end, what is most important is the learning that occurs in each of your classrooms. Your passions and your students’ passions will be the focus of the next chapter in history that is written this year.

SHOW Video-

We can work hard to close achievement gaps by providing the best interventions for our students, but I also think we can accelerate growth and achievement for all students by capitalizing and leveraging our students interests and passions, strengths, and talents as inspired by Daniel Pink’s vision of Genius Hour.

Albert Einstein Quote- “Everyone is a Genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live it’s whole life believing that it is stupid.” What I think is the important message behind this quote is that as teachers, we can help all of our students to overcome obstacles and the impossible and end up awesome and remarkable. That’s what I want from all of our students here at Rockdale 84- to be awesome and remarkable, to climb this tree and do the impossible.

How do we do this? How do we climb this tree? My thoughts are by building on our district vision of Raising Achievement Mastering Success through 21st Century **Innovation.**

How can we work together to draft this next chapter and make history for all of our students? Through innovation. Innovation comes through personal inquiry. Steven Johnson, author of *Where Good Ideas Come From* promotes 7 patterns of innovation that are repeated in nature and culture. (List them on slide) Let’s use these patterns in our classrooms to spark ideas for innovation and continue to build a community of innovators in Rockdale 84. Let’s work together to develop a plan for a learning model that will apply the standards, use our technology to ignite 21st Century innovation, creativity and inquiry, and will result in growth for all of our students, and for all of you.

I have mentioned several times in this message, this school year starts the beginning of the next chapter in our students’ lives. Each year our students pass through our school a chapter begins and ends. At the end of the 2015-16 school year at graduation, we will share with our parents and community a summary and a reflection of the awesome accomplishments and growth that were included in this year’s new chapter in our students’ lives. A chapter that I will title “ AWESOME 84. “ What will we include in this year’s chapter that is unlike any other year at Rockdale 84? The content of the next chapter has yet to occur, but together we will write an awesome story that will include all of our students, our parents, our community, and all of you in this yearlong narrative of innovation, growth, and success for all students in Rockdale School District 84.

We know not every day will be awesome, but it's your wisdom and caring that our students will need each day to do awesome things. If you don't leave school the majority of the days with a smile on your face because you know you did awesome work, be sure you tell us. Talk to your principal, or talk to any of those supporting you, including me. If you're not happy, it's not likely your students will be either, and that's no way to spend 6 hours a day. My dream this year is that you and your students continue to think of this school as place where communities of learners gather do awesome work that matters to the world and to work together to make history. I'm excited to be a part of this chapter in this story as it develops this year, and in future years, leading to my ultimate vision for Rockdale 84’s attainment of the most awesome achievement award, Blue Ribbon School Recognition.

So go help kids to learn, to smile, and to belong. Ask them hard and interesting questions. Try new things. Innovate. Share what you're learning with us. Ask us for help. We'll work at providing the infrastructure and human capacity to make that happen for you. You defend your students and empower them, as we'll do the same for you. It's time for the next chapter of awesome learning. It begins right now. Go be awesome.

Play Song with school pictures-The Script

Hand out the Tshirts and books . Then do Marshmallow Challenge or other innovation teambuilding activity.