

August 21, 2017

Thank You to Certified & Teaching Staff

Dear TTSD Certified Staff and Teachers,

Because my long overdue departure from TTSD occurred at a very busy time of your school year, ...with June Graduation activities taking place and the last days of school for you all to deal with at about the same time, I fear I that I didn't get the chance to properly say good-bye to many of you who have made these past 16 years so special for me.

To help remedy that, I'd like to share with you a story: It's sort of a log story, but it's a really good story....

Several weeks ago I took, my son, Kevin, to "Bed, Bath and Beyond" in Tigard to get a pillow. For the record, I don't often venture into "Bed, Bath and Beyond", but made an exception on this particular occasion. Kevin and I found the perfect pillow for him, with a cover, and headed toward the check-out counter. The young woman at that check out spot was helping another customer, but looked right at me and started to smile, not the usual 'be nice to the customers' smile mind you, but a great big grin that covered her entire face. When my turn came, she immediately said, "Hi Dr. Albertson."

It's pretty rare for anyone in TTSD, including HS juniors and seniors to say hello using the "Dr." In front of my name, I've always thought it was nice to be on first name bases with everyone, especially the high school students. Of course I said 'Hi' back, but knowing she had the advantage on me, I asked her how it was that we knew each other, thinking it must have been recently at either Tigard High or Tualatin High School, ...those were the venues I ventured into most often, ...in the classrooms and at the extracurricular events....athletics, concerts, plays, art exhibits, etc. She said, 'neither', ...that it was at Fowler Middle School. I thought for a moment, and said to her, "Boy, it's been a few years since I've been to Fowler with students, ...at least 8 or 9". And she said, "Yes, it was 8".

She then refreshed my memory of how it was that we knew each other. Turns out I was invited by someone inside the District or at Fowler to be a presenter at Fowler's "Career Day Event", to talk to the 8th graders specifically about careers in the Clinical Sciences and Medicine. I had brought with me a short Power Point presentation and some 'equipment' to show and demonstrate for the kids, and needed a volunteer to assist me. There were at least 50 or 60 kids in that large group, and this young lady quickly volunteered. She came to the front of the class, sat at on a tall stool for me as I showed all there the 3 or 4 of the peripheral muscle/tendon reflexes with my reflex hammer, and had her listen to my heart beat with my stethoscope and tap out the rhythm on my shoulder. In addition to this hands on stuff, I reinforced the notion to the kids in that class how important it was to get really good grades in high school and then in college if they were serious about pursuing these career opportunities, because entry into professional schools was very competitive.

Of course, all the students really enjoyed see this young lady's deep tendon reflexes, ...they thought it was hilarious. And she obviously enjoyed doing all this for her classmates. What I didn't know at the time was that she had been thinking about some of these career paths, but not too seriously,until that afternoon with me at Fowler.

She told me she then buckled down academically, did well at Tigard High & graduated, went to Portland Community College, has done well there, and will soon be entering the Dental Hygienist Program at PCC. Of course I congratulated her, told her that news was fabulous, and that she was headed into a great career that would make a huge difference not just for her and her life, but for her future patients. Then, she thanked me for coming to Fowler, for telling her about all the interesting and rewarding medical career paths, and for letting her volunteer for that class,that it helped light a fire under her, and encouraged her to work hard and aim high. Obviously she did.

We unfortunately held up the check-out line at "Bed, Bath & Beyond" for way longer than we should have. As I walked out of the store with my son's pillow in hand, I stopped and I thought to myself that this young woman recognizing me, taking the time to re-introduce herself, and relay that story, sharing with me her future plans, and how she was looking forward to an exciting and rewarding career path and very successful future,and then thanking me for helping with it,that that one former student frankly made my entire 16 year TTSD school board tenure totally worthy it, ...totally!

Then, I thought of all of you.

So here are my final thoughts and farewell message to all of you:

What I did during my entire 16 years on the school board, even on my best days, quite frankly pales in comparison to what each of you do every single day of the school year (probably other days, too), both inside and around TTSD.

Each of you get the chance, the privilege actually, to influence one or more of our community's students, to connect with them individually, become a compass for them, and then very possibly re-directing their lives for the better. And when you do this, you might just be changing the world through these kids,making it a better place, and making each and every one of us better in the process.

For that never-ending effort and those personal triumphs, I will always applaud you. I have, from the start, had the greatest respect for each of you, your relentless hard work and for what you do for our schools and your students. You have been and will continue to be an inspiration to our entire TTSD community,but especially to me. I'm confident you'll 'carry on' this work and your dedication, this coming school year and for many years to come.

Thank you, for allowing me to be a small part of your TTSD lives, and for having the opportunity to get to know so many of you.

Have a grand 2017-2018 school year. Perhaps I'll see you around campus on occasion.

With this comes my very best regards and admiration,

Barry