



Beechwood Weekly

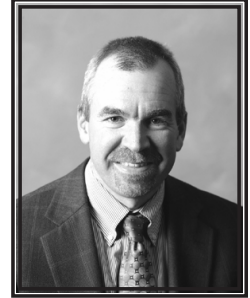
Wednesday, December 14 2016



Principal's Message

"Three Good Things"

I would like to start this message with a confession: I have been feeling more stressed than usual lately. There it is. I said it. I am not sure exactly why I have been feeling this way. Could it be the housing crisis, or maybe a surprising national election? Is it possibly challenging behaviors in the Middle School or worries about teacher retention? Throw in a little of the usual holiday anxiety and the next thing I know my anxious thoughts are dominating my mind, resulting in a negative script, that is, to be honest, not healthy.



So what to do? I was reminded today of a practice that I learned from our Resilience Consultant Chris, and it is called "3 Good Things". You may already know this, but our minds are actually programmed to protect against things we perceive as threats. As a result, it is much easier for our brains to go down a negative path rather than down a hopeful, positive one. To combat this, we have to work at thinking positively. One proven way to retrain our brains is to reflect each day on three good things that happened that day. We write them down, give them a name and fill in a few details about why the event was positive. It takes about 10 minutes. Here are three good things that I can identify from last week:

1. **Great Board Meeting on Thursday.** We have two new Board Members, Ernesto Reyes, who is a Beechwood parent originally from El Salvador and Melody McGlaughlin, who is a former Beechwood parent, and an African-American resident of Belle Haven. The addition of these two new members represents a positive change on the board because our membership now more truly represents the ethnic diversity of the Beechwood community. My favorite part of the meeting was listening to Ernesto and Melody talk to each other about raising children in the modern world. Despite coming from two very different backgrounds they were able to find common ground on this fact: Parenting is really hard!

2. **Working with my daughter Emily.** What a great experience it is to be able to witness the great work Emily is doing here at Beechwood. She is the first teacher to arrive each day and I am proud to see her meeting the challenges that come when you are learning how to be a teacher. It makes me smile to see her helping our first and second graders to work out their conflicts, to learn to read and to explore the exciting world of Science. At the end of the day, she and I come home and share the funny things that the kids say and talk about ways that she can be more effective in the classroom. This is a very "good thing."

3. **Holiday Party at Mrs. Connolly's.** Kathy Connolly and I have worked together at Beechwood for 23 years now. She is another special person who I admire very much. On Friday she hosted a party at her house for the Beechwood Staff. What made this evening a "good thing" was that all members of our Community were represented, not just the teachers. There were Beechwood parents, there were Beechwood students, there were former Beechwood teachers, there were husbands, wives, daughters and mothers. Everyone was laughing and enjoying each other's company. It was a delightful evening that reminded me how fortunate I am to be associated with Beechwood.

Those are my "Three Good Things" for today and I can honestly say that now that I have written them down, I feel better. If you are experiencing a tendency toward the negative, I hope that you will try this practice as a means of trying to stay positive in the New Year!

-Mr. L