

Looking back over your high school career, what would your message to your School Board be on improving the education of those who follow you?

I feel very fortunate to have grown up in Hannibal, Missouri, America's Hometown. From Veterans Elementary School, to Hannibal Middle School, to Hannibal High School, I would not be the person I am today without the quality of the education I received in the Hannibal School District. Looking back over my academic career, there are three aspects I would like to address to to enhance the future education of the generations to come.

The first topic I would like to address is technology. We live in a world where technology is continuously growing and improving at an exponential rate. Although some technology has the reputation of only being a distraction in the classroom, the truth is technology can actually be used as a very powerful tool for education and a positive force in the lives of students. For example, the use of Chromebooks (laptops made by Google) in the classroom has made a positive impact in my education. In my anatomy class, we access the internet to research the newest medical studies to keep us up-to-date with the most accurate information. Integrating technology into the classroom is a definite way to reach diversity in learning styles and prepares students for the real world environment. However, sometimes we cannot access the Chromebooks when they are already being used by another class. By investing in more Chromebooks and other new technologies, technology can be used to help better the education of the students of HHS.

In addition to incorporating more technology into teaching, another piece of advice I would give my School Board would be to offer Advanced Placement courses to our students. When talking with students from other school districts, they are always surprised when I tell them that my high school does not offer AP courses. Advanced Placement is a program created by the College Board which offers college-level curricula and examinations to high school students. American colleges and universities may grant placement and course credit to students who obtain high scores on the examinations. Taking AP courses is a way to challenge yourself academically and show colleges you are serious about your education. There are many benefits to these more challenging courses such as saving money on tuition, developing college-level academic skills, demonstrating your passion for learning to college admissions officers, and creating more flexibility in college courses.

The third and very important suggestion would be to keep investing in the professional development of our valuable teachers and administrators. Joyce Meyer once said, "Teachers can change lives with just the right mix of chalk and challenges." I have always had inspiring teachers. Some have gone above and beyond the teacher's responsibility to a student. Providing a collaborative learning and work time for teachers and administrators insures a higher quality of education for all students. Creating an enthusiasm for learning is the key to keeping students engaged. Though it is essential to be consistent, I believe it is also important for a teacher to instruct in a variety of ways. Teachers should continually expand their knowledge and skills to implement the best educational practices. For business and community leaders, the quality of a community's education system relates directly to the economic success of the community.

I am very grateful for my teachers, administrators, and School Board members. The dedication and hard work of the administrators and educators in the Hannibal School district is

unparalleled. I will always be thankful to my teachers for guiding me, inspiring me, and making me who I am today.