

November 2, 2011

Good Evening. My name is Chris Scarpino and I am a 1992 graduate of Canton South. Thank you for coming this evening. I am honored to speak to you tonight. When Mrs. Redmond asked me to speak to all of you, my first thought was what I am going to talk about. After thinking about it, I have decided that I will speak from my heart and tell you my thoughts on why we need new schools for the students and the community of Canton Local.

My family has walked the halls of Canton Local Schools since the 1940's. With my dad graduating in 1965, he and his brother has raised both of their families in Canton Local with grandkids that have graduated or will be graduating from Canton South. We have recruited family members from my mom's side to move to this area and join in the Wildcat traditions, so these walls mean a lot to us.

Most of you attending tonight have children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, nieces, nephews, maybe even friends that attend these schools. I want you to think about the technological changes that have occurred during your life time. Those of you that are grandparents or even great grandparents, when you wanted to converse with relatives back in the day, you wrote a letter, put it in the mail and it took 2 weeks for them to get it. By the time they got it, it was old news. Did you ever think that one day you would have computers to send messages instantly to anyone in the world? My first cell phone was one of the big bag phones that you left in the car and only used for emergencies. I never gave much thought that in fifteen years later, I would have the world at the palm of my hand. Did one ever think that we would be finding ways to use the sun and wind for electricity and batteries to operate cars.

Not only have we been through technological changes, look at the economy changes that we have been through. There used to be a day when you went to high school and was able to graduate and get a decent job to support a family. You could get jobs at Hoovers or Timken's with only a high school diploma. Not so much anymore. My favorite story to tell my kids is when I got my license gas was only 88 cents.

Now with all of these changes that we have endured over the last 50 years, think about that kindergartener that walked into Walker Elementary school on the first day of school. Think about what that young person is going to have to do to be competitive in the job market as they graduate from high school. They are no longer able to graduate and find a good job to support a family. It is a must that they extend their education whether they choose to go to college, further their education in a trade or join the military. It is time that we make this change for our students by updating their technology so they have effective learning. Give students more choices in their class schedules with classes that interest them. Join forces with area businesses to have mentorship programs so students can get a realization of what it is going to be like in a specific field that interests them. Not only do we need to develop our students educationally, but we need to develop them as a whole person. We need to give them more opportunities to seek out their interest whether it is through the arts, culinary arts, sports, clubs, and after school programs. The students are excited, they have been working on developing ideas on how to make the new school green. They have awesome ideas on what to do with the bricks of the old schools to keep "the wildcat traditions." They want 21st century labs for science, smart boards in every classroom, common student study areas, a greenhouse to grow their own vegetables for the Cafeteria and Wildcat Café. I could go on and on.

We have all been through some type of remodel whether it is at home, church or work. We all know that when you walk into the area that has been updated, how your attitude changes. I can only picture the faces of the students when they walk into the new schools for the first time. The excitement will be felt through the whole community and I would anticipate learning moving to whole new level. Who better than to provide these opportunities to our students than the Power of US, the Canton Local community. Thank you. *Mrs. Christine Scarpino*