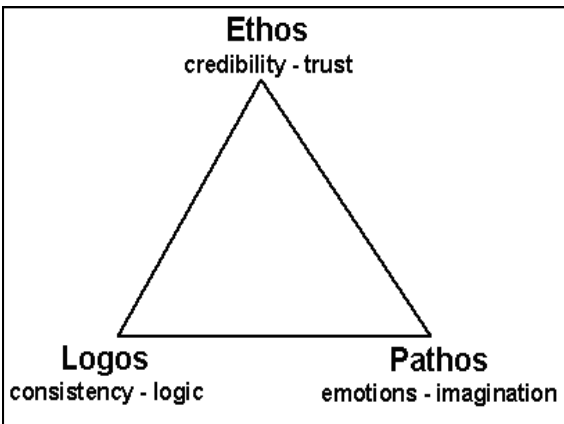


**What We Can
Do When We
Are Brave
Together**
MMSA, 2012

“Courage is not the absence of fear, but the judgment that something else is more important than that fear.”

-- Ambrose Redmoon,
band manager,
and incidentally,
he's a quadriplegic



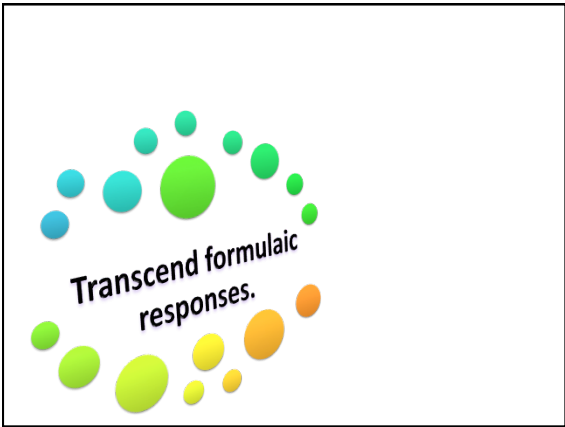
Jesse, Writer's Voice, and
Barber's Adagio

Consider:

	Nobody cares
Rhodes Scholarship	what we teach
Candidate struggles	
	They're not
Hypocrisy	doing this in
happens	upper grade
daily	levels...

#1 Most
Common
Characteristic
among the
state Teachers
of the year....

No nation can be both ignorant and free.”
-- George Orwell



Acts of Courage

- Curriculum is a manifestation of an ever changing construct – society...
- Retain autonomy: Pacing guides, not mandates; teach out of sequence as warranted
- Ask the larger questions of what we do
- Manifest expertise
- Invite critique
- Let students design a teacher report card...and really reflect on the input
- Go for National Board Certification
- Teach the way students best learn, not the way we best learn

CP RUSA

Whoever
does the
editing,
does the
learning..

What should a
lawyer never do
in a court trial?

**Get students to ask more
questions than we do**

Our future depends on this one here.

Negating Students' Incorrect Responses While Keeping Them in the Conversation

Act interested. "Tell me more about that..."

Empathy and Sympathy: "I used to think that, too," or "I understand how you could conclude that..."

Alter the reality:

- Change the question so that the answer is correct
- That's the answer for the question I'm about to ask
- When student claims he doesn't know, ask, "If you DID know, what would you say?"

Negating Students' Incorrect Responses and While Them in the Conversation

Affirm risk-taking

Allow the student more time or to ask for assistance

Focus on the portions that are correct

Remember: Whoever is responding to students is processing the information and learning. Who, then, should be responding to students in the classroom? Students.

[http://www.ted.com/talks/
dan_meyer_math_curriculum_makeover
.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_meyer_math_curriculum_makeover.html)

General Westmoreland

**When it comes to courage,
the important thing is this:
To be able at any moment
to sacrifice what we are for
what we could become.”**

-- Charles DuBois

“A hero is no braver than an ordinary man, but he is braver five minutes longer.” - Emerson

**Our greatest
Compass Rose:**

Doubt

**The Top Two
Dozen Things
I Would
Change
If I Was Truly
Brave**

1. Adjust the school's master schedule to support best practices, not sacrifice best practices to support the master schedule.
2. Make it easier to let ineffective and/or toxic teachers and principals go.
3. Ask principals who demand lesson plans from teachers to be submitted for review each week to present their principal plans to be submitted for teacher review each week
4. Choose to teach the students no one else wants to teach.

5. Change the report card format so it more accurately reflects responsive teaching and what really happens in a classroom.
6. Publicly question NCLB, Value Added Measures, RTI, RTTT, Common Core, and every other state, provincial, or Federal education mandate from any political party currently in power from now until I retire to make sure they reflect sound pedagogy, not politics.
7. Mandate all students and teachers get residential, outdoor education experiences of a week or more.

8. As a white guy with little about which to complain, remain attentive to racism and even go around the country sensitizing colleagues and communities, both white and of color, about racism and how to end it.
9. Openly discuss controversial subjects with my colleagues in a compassionate atmosphere – intelligent design vs evolution, recording zeroes or 50's, phonics vs whole language
10. Remove some of the standards we have to teach. There are too many. We cannot physically, emotionally, and intellectually teach all that we are supposed to teach. This isn't watering down; it's actually increasing what students learn.

- 11. Finally accept the reality and research and start all middle and high schools at 9:30 in the morning or later.
- 12. Keep myself open to correction from those who care enough about my students and about me to correct me.
- 13. Require that reading be taught as a separate course to all students at least up through sophomore year of high school.
- 14. Dedicate myself to working in impoverished and low performing schools

- 15. Dedicate myself to working in affluent and high performing schools
- 16. Get parents in the classroom every day, surprising me and students, showing up unannounced.
- 17. Change teacher evaluation systems so that most evaluations are done by those who have demonstrated mastery in teaching that subject area.
- 18. Video podcast my major lessons so parents can watch on-line and students can review them at home as necessary.

- 19. Accept the new democratization of knowledge.
- 20. Let students have personal technology with them in the classroom, and if they don't have it, find a way to get it.
- 21. Return vocational training to middle schools.
- 22. Write editorials, speak up about schools on the sports bleachers, church picnics, and other community gatherings.

- 23. Make a law that we cannot take students out of P.E. or the fine or performing arts to double-up on their math or reading remediation for state exams
- 24. Every week, battle the two greatest threats to the educational achievement: poverty and complacency.

Letter from
Matt's Dad

(Published in *Meet Me in the Middle*, Stenhouse Publishers)
