

Welcome to the 2018-2019 school year!! What an awesome privilege it is to begin my new role as superintendent of the wonderful school district called Newton-Conover City Schools. I have served this great system for 5 years as an assistant and later associate superintendent. In that time I have found this system to truly be student-focused and innovative. I count myself very fortunate not only to serve Newton-Conover City Schools in a professional capacity but also to have my own children receive their education here.

One of the greatest things about being involved in education is that we do not have to wait until New Year's Eve to make revisions to our lives. Instead, we get to do it each year in August. The new school year offers the promise of a fresh start and a new beginning. I read a story recently about a man who made a 180 degree turn for the better in his life because he did not like the path he had been travelling on. His name was Alfred Nobel. He amassed a fortune as a manufacturer of explosives. His chosen vocation made him very wealthy. His chosen vocation also made him infamous.

A case of mistaken identity led to a dramatic life focus shift for Mr. Nobel. In 1888, Nobel's brother Ludvig had died in France from a heart attack. Thanks to poor reporting, at least one French newspaper believed that it was Alfred who had perished, and it proceeded to write a scathing obituary that branded him a "merchant of death" who had grown rich by developing new ways to "mutilate and kill." The error was later corrected, but not before Alfred had the unpleasant experience of reading his own death notice.

At that time, almost in an Ebenezer Scrooge-type turnaround, Nobel decided to donate a modern equivalent of \$265 million to create a series of prizes for those who confer the "greatest benefit on mankind" in physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, literature, and peace. The "merchant of death" became a "champion for world peace" simply because he wanted his legacy to be one of unity and love instead of death and destruction.

As we enter this new school year, I challenge staff, students, and parents to examine where you are in your life journey and choose to change your legacy

for the better!! It is through the purposeful, deliberate, daily choices and actions of individuals that the world is changed.

It is my hope that this year is amazing for all stakeholders in the Newton-Conover City Schools!!!!