

By Thomas Moore, Principal, Wethersfield High School
2013 High School Principal of the Year
Excerpted from his acceptance remarks on October 17, 2013

Good Evening everyone,

Rarely do I get angry and I pride myself on having infinite patience but I am quickly running out of patience with the educational critics who continue to say that our public schools are failing.

The truth is exactly the opposite. Public schools are wildly successful in more ways than I can count. Schools and education in 2013 are extremely complex systems. The needs of our children have grown exponentially over the past few decades. The changes in technology alone over the past 5 years are difficult to comprehend. When I became Principal at Granby Memorial High School in 1993 (back in the day) there was no e-mail or Internet capability, no CAPT, no bullying legislation, a teacher evaluation system that consisted of checklists and my school improvement plan was 2 pages.

Today we serve a more complex clientele fraught with all the socio-economic difficulties in our day and age. The expectations of our communities and parents are different, social media has become a 24-7 concern, legislation and unfunded mandates are overwhelming and our profession is vilified in the media (which I can't understand). Despite these impediments, public school educators on all levels do a great job on a daily basis.

- They make connections with students
- They motivate and inspire them
- They help them figure out how they will make their positive contribution to society
- They differentiate
- They instruct
- They assess
- They nurture

- They provide students with a caring advocate and we are successful each and every day.

What a great legacy for anyone involved in schools. We can say that we are helpful to children as they struggle to gain their identity and make their way into the world.

Thank you for allowing me to share my professional life with all of you and, again, thank you for this recognition tonight.