



# SKYLINE HIGH SCHOOL

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE



March 1, 2021

There is a powerful instructional concept that really helps students to grow at every level. The concept is called the “zone of proximal development.” This idea is characterized by a teacher working with a student at a level just above where the student currently functions. Think back to having an infant. Parents talk to their baby in a language that is at a much lower level than their everyday speech. This helps a baby learn their first words and slowly improve at becoming verbal. A student who reads at a 9<sup>th</sup> grade level is challenged by content at a 10<sup>th</sup> grade level. When instruction is within the zone of proximal development, it challenges the student while not overwhelming them. A fifth grader trying to read a book intended for 10<sup>th</sup> graders might be able to sound out the words. However, the concepts will fly over their head as it is written well beyond their capacity to comprehend. This idea is helpful in providing support when students begin to struggle with a concept. Working to develop a strategy that ensures the teaching or support is just at that level beyond their current level, helps students have the greatest opportunity to learn.

I am so impressed with the students at Skyline as well as their families. I hear stories every week about how students receive support as they strive to build up their capacity to be resilient against adversity. Our community pushes students to excel. This is admirable. I also believe that many are providing an avenue of support that helps students grow as they struggle. Some students told me, this last week, that they sometimes feel that they are supposed to always be perfect in order to measure up at Skyline. I explained to them, and want to communicate clearly to all of you, that this is not the case. This school is working to provide a mechanism where students can struggle and develop. That often happens by way of less-than-perfect results. These results can also help us to become more as we make mid-course adjustments and change. Above all else, we need to value growth and honor the resilience it takes to push through adversity.

Please, tell us stories of teachers who have done something extraordinary at Skyline High School. Think about the four components of our RISE program. Teachers are working hard and doing amazing things to help students be Resilient, have Integrity, Support themselves and others, as well as achieve Excellence in its various forms. Feel free to participate as often as you see fit to recognize the great teachers we have at Skyline High School. Here is a link to the survey:

<https://forms.gle/mDQPY7xybBCKnpq97>.

This week, we will highlight Mr. Joe Pereira. Mr. Pereira is a Math Teacher and has served as the Head Coach for swimming for many years. His career has been long and full of success at the highest levels. He has coached swim for the entirety of his very long career. He has many region and state titles for both boys and girls swim. He recently was honored by his colleagues from across the state for his success as well as his longevity. Many of the coaches in the Salt Lake valley were once students of Mr. Joe Pereira. He is being recognized by the Skyline High School community:

“Joe Pereira teaches math and swimming and is the Head Coach of the Swim Team. Joe has the best interest of his students at heart, whether in the classroom or pool. He is caring and values the life lessons he can teach as well as academics and physical fitness. He is a great coach and a great teacher. He has impacted our family for many years, and we appreciate him!”

“I can't say enough positive about Joe. Joe has been the reason my daughter wanted to come to Skyline, and stay at Skyline, so that he could be her swim coach. He has worked with her while she has endured debilitating physical challenges. His support has been life changing for her. He always smiles and goes out of his way to make her feel important and valued as a person. His focus is on her as a person, not just how she would add to the team. He understands and communicates that swim team is great, but it is a tool for how to live and only a small piece of students' lives. His skills as a swim coach are amazing!!! He knows each swimmer and their abilities. He works with each one of his swimmers on an individual level so that they can excel. He knows how to work with various injuries (from what is wrong, to ideas of how to help, to what in their strokes may be aggravating the issue) and works with both the swimmer and the parent to help overcome these obstacles.”

Congratulations Mr. Pereira for all that you do for students and for making Skyline RISE!

Sincerely,  
Mitch Nerdin, Principal