

Sample Speech:

Welcome Back to School

Good Morning.

Tipping Point. It's the name given to that one dramatic moment when everything changes all at once. Malcolm Gladwell wrote a highly successful book with that same title. Using real stories like the resurgence of Hush Puppies in the 90's and the declining crime rate in New York City, he explains how little things can make a big difference.

According to Gladwell, creating a tipping point requires three elements. The first is contagiousness; the second is little things can have big effects; and the third suggests that change happens not gradually, but in one dramatic moment.

Interestingly, some people in our school have good reason to believe a simple visit to a classroom during our annual head lice outbreak would prove the same thing.

More seriously, I believe that this year, we can create our own Tipping Point. Quite frankly, I believe we must.

To create our own tipping point, we must first spread the contagious, community wide belief that our school is a welcoming place for all. Did you know that when we open our doors next week, we will greet learners who speak 17 different languages? We need to demonstrate that our school welcomes everyone. Not just a few - but all. Not just some families - but all.

Next, we must understand that great opportunities to help others don't come everyday. Small ones do. Together, let's start with the small ones to create a big difference. It may be in the way we greet our students on the first day. Or it might be a suggestion we offer a colleague beginning their first year of teaching. It may simply be in the way we speak to each other on a daily basis.

Finally, we must recognize we cannot wait. If not this year, then when? I urge all of you to take action today. Don't wait. Look for the small things you can do to make our school a more welcoming place to learn.

In the words of the Elders of the Hopi Nation: The hour is here.

Show We Are The Ones.