

Hello Everyone,

It is a great honor for us to be here with you today. My name is Terry Smith, and I am the Director of the Bartleby Program at Elizabethton High School in Elizabethton, Tennessee.

I want to thank you for allowing us this opportunity to speak with you today. We especially want to thank Congressman Roe for inviting us here, and for all the tremendous work that he does for us in Eastern Tennessee.

I also want to personally express my appreciation for your Chairwoman Congresswoman Foxx, who I have known and been friends with for many years. I have personally seen what a fantastic educator Congresswoman Foxx is and has been for many years, before she ever became a member of Congress, and it is a great pleasure for me to be here to see her again.

I am here today along with our tremendous Elizabethton City School District Superintendent, Dr. Corey Gardenhour, and therefore what I say to you today is spoken on behalf of both of us.

First of all, I want to say how much respect we have for the work you are doing to improve education across our United States. You have been elected, and you serve on this committee, because you obviously care deeply about your students and about your schools in your District.

Our Bartleby Program and Elizabethton High School have had extraordinary success in recent years, and as a result, this year we were chosen as one of the 18 XQ Super Schools in the United States.

In fact, our growth and success this past year has been at such a high level, that the other 17 XQ Super Schools across the country now look to us as the leader.

With this honor, the XQ Institute and Emerson Collective have just awarded us with a \$2.3 Million grant that will help us to continue to grow and progress.

We have produced a Bartleby Program Handbook that we sent to you digitally this past week, and therefore you have a large amount of information about our Program and about our schools that you can refer to while I am speaking.

We have also printed 500 copies of our Handbook, and we have these copies available at our table in the Symposium if you would like printed copies.

Since I only have a few minutes to speak with you, and because you can read our Handbook to find out about the details of our Program, then I am going to focus on what we believe are the most important primary concepts that have led to our great student and school success. These are the three most important concepts that other schools across America can utilize in order to create the same amount of success that we have had.

First of all, the most important key to our success has been the complete buy-in of our entire school district, led by our excellent Superintendent Dr. Corey Gardenhour. Because of his great leadership, then every person in our school system, including our entire excellent school board, has bought in to our program, and every person in our District is a member of our great team.

In many school systems there are considerable amounts of bureaucracy and red tape that can hold back growth and innovation. However, Dr. Gardenhour and I have a tremendous working relationship, and he is completely open to the implementation of the ideas and plans that we formulate.

Therefore, we have been allowed to create anything for our program and for our school that we can dream of. And the results have been amazing.

As a result, the first primary concept that I want to mention is the importance of complete school district buy-in. The only way to create the growth and transformational change that we have created in our program and in our school is to have complete districtwide buy-in, starting at the top with the District Superintendent, and continuing with our School Board, Central Office administrators, school principals, school administrators, and teachers.

Every level of leadership must be working together as one great team, and that is what we have had in Elizabethton.

Our second primary concept is that our schools must allow their students to experience the outside world in order for the students to grow and develop in the ways that the 21st Century requires them to grow and develop. Therefore, schools must open themselves up into their communities, and create partnerships with all groups of people.

We have the most amazing community in Elizabethton, Tennessee that I have ever seen. It truly is an all-for-one and one-for-all community where everyone supports each other, and where the people in the community want to support their children and their schools.

At Bartleby, we have created 19 groups of people who we very successfully partner with. This is where my background of owning businesses and being a college professor and head of college departments has given us an advantage, because I am used to creating win-win partnerships with people from the outside world.

The 19 partnership groups we have created include public and private colleges and universities, community and technical colleges, regional corporations and businesses, local business entrepreneurs, regional and local non-profit organizations, local banks and credit unions, local community leaders, county and city political and governmental leaders, the city and county mayors, the Elizabethton City Council, the regional business and tourist organizations,

the Elizabethton library, the State of Tennessee Department of Education, educational foundations that specialize in online course offerings, our educational software company, our own educational structure that includes our Elizabethton City Schools central office and our Elizabethton City School Board, the XQ Foundation and other XQ Super Schools, and our students who are Bartleby alumni.

All of these partnerships allow us to create real world opportunities for our students that have allowed our students to grow in an immeasurable number of ways.

As an Appendix at the end of this presentation document, I have listed and provided the details for how we work with each of these 19 Partnership Groups.

Our third primary concept is that we focus a tremendous amount of attention on the speaking communication skills of our students. In today's world of social media and technology where many people do not communicate face-to-face, young people are not being given the opportunity to develop their skills of public speaking, group discussion, and one on one conversation.

My background owning a television station for many years, and as a college professor teaching courses such as business communications and senior capstones, allowed me to see the great advantage young people have when they can speak well, and gave me experience in helping young people to develop themselves into excellent public speaking presenters.

We took these concepts into our Bartleby Program, and the results for our students have been amazing. In fact, our students have become such outstanding presenters that they are always being asked to speak and present at national conferences like they did in San Francisco this past week, and to speak and present at universities to presidents, vice-presidents, professors, and college student leadership groups like they did recently at Tusculum University.

At Tusculum, as our students were presenting, the professors turned to the Tusculum Vice-President Dr. Paul Pinckley, and said their heads were exploding because of how great our students were at presenting.

In today's changing world, where it is estimated that 65% of all future jobs and careers have not been invented yet, then our young people must be flexible, and in order to be flexible then they must have great communication skills as a core attribute.

In any career field, the ability to be an excellent speaker gives someone a greater opportunity to be successful, and a greater opportunity to rise into a position of leadership in that field.

Our communication emphasis also includes developing within our students the skills of group discussion and one on one conversation, and this is where our second primary concept of opening the outside world to our students really pays tremendous dividends.

Through the 19 Partnership Groups that we create and that our students develop great relationships with, then our students become exceptional communicators in group discussions and one on one conversations.

Amazingly, our students are no longer intimidated when they speak with anyone, no matter how influential or powerful a position the other person has, because our students have come to realize that at the end of the day we are all human beings, and so for the most part we are all very much alike.

For example, East Tennessee State University President Dr. Brian Noland came to speak to our students because he had heard so much about them. During his speech, he asked one of our students a question that our student had been given no time to prepare for. However, our student stood up and answered his question with a lengthy and perfectly composed answer.

Dr. Noland was so amazed at the completeness and depth of the student's answer that he broke down the student's answer by showing how the answer had been so complete that it had covered every aspect and viewpoint related to the question. Dr. Noland said that he was so impressed by the answer that he would hire that student on the spot.

Therefore, our students have developed the tremendous communication skills needed for giving public presentations to large audiences, the excellent communication skills needed for group discussions, and the great emotional intelligence communication skills needed for outstanding and meaningful one on one conversations. The combination of all these communication skills have allowed our students to excel in every situation they are faced with.

In conclusion, thank you very much for allowing us the opportunity to be with you here today. I greatly admire all of you for who you are and for the tremendous work that you do.

If you have interest in reading about the details of our Program and our School, then you have the digital copy of the Bartleby Handbook that I sent to you through Congressman Roe's office last week, and we have printed copies of our Handbook available here at our Symposium table for you to have and to keep, if you would like printed copies.

Our fantastic Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Corey Gardenhour, will also be available to speak with you at our table if you have any questions for him.

It has been a tremendous honor for me to be here with you today.

Thank you very much.

Terry Smith
Director of the Bartleby Program
Elizabethton High School
Elizabethton, Tennessee